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EXECUTIVE

Date: Thursday, 14 March 2019

Time: 2.00pm

Location: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Ian Gourlay (01438) 242703 ian.gourlay@stevenage.gov.uk

Members: Councillors: S Taylor OBE, CC (Chair), Mrs J Lloyd (Vice-Chair), R Broom, J Gardner, R Henry, J Hollywell, R Raynor and J Thomas.

AGENDA

PART 1

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2. **MINUTES - 13 FEBRUARY 2019**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 13 February 2019 for signature by the Chair.

Page Nos. 5 - 12

3. **MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

To note the following Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees –

Environment & Economy Select Committee – 31 January 2019

Community Select Committee – 12 February 2019

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 18 February 2019

Page Nos. 13 - 26

4. **THIRD QUARTER REVENUE MONITORING REPORT 2018/19 - GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

To consider the Third Quarter Monitoring Revenue report 2018/19 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

Page Nos. 27 - 38

5. THIRD QUARTER CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2018/19 - GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

To consider the Third Quarter Capital Monitoring report 2018/19 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

Page Nos. 39 - 48

6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

To consider the Housing Revenue Account Asset Management Strategy.

Page Nos. 49 - 132

7. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE FOR QUARTER THREE 2018/19

To consider the Corporate Performance statistics for Quarter Three 2019/20.

Page Nos. 133 - 172

8. CO-OPERATIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME DELIVERY 2018/19

To consider a summary of the delivery of the Co-operative Neighbourhood Management (CNM) Programme to date and the outline plans for 2019-20 delivery moving forwards.

Page Nos. 173 - 188

9. URGENT PART I BUSINESS

To consider any Part I business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

Page Nos.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.
2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

11. PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 13 FEBRUARY 2019

To approve as a correct record the Part II section of the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 13 February 2019.

Page Nos. 189 - 192

12. HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS WRITE OFFS GREATER THAN £10,000

To consider Housing Benefit Overpayments Write Offs greater than £10,000.

Page Nos. 193 - 196

13. FORMATION OF A WHOLLY OWNED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT COMPANY - BUSINESS PLAN AND FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

To consider the Business Plan and financial projections relating to the formation of a wholly owned Housing Development Company.

Page Nos. 197 - 330

14. REGENERATION SCHEME UPDATE AND THE DISPOSAL OF FOUR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES AT GILES CRESCENT (FORMER WEDGEWOOD WAY SCHEME / DU PONT SITE)

To consider an update on the regeneration scheme and the disposal of four properties at Giles Crescent (former Wedgewood Way Scheme / Du Pont site).

Page Nos. 331 - 352

15. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

NOTE: Links to Part 1 Background Documents are shown on the last page of the individual report, where this is not the case they may be viewed by using the following link to agendas for Executive meetings and then opening the agenda for Thursday, 14 March 2019 – <http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/council-meetings/161153/>

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 13 February 2019

Time: 2.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Sharon Taylor OBE CC (Chair), Mrs Joan Lloyd (Vice-Chair), Rob Broom, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Ralph Raynor and Jeannette Thomas.

Start / End Time: Start Time: 2.00pm
End Time: 3.45pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No apologies for absence were received.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - 23 JANUARY 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 23 January 2019 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.

3 **MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES**

In relation to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2019, the Leader asked that an All Member Briefing be arranged early in the 2019/20 Civic Year on the Council's emerging IT Improvement Strategy, including costs and intended outcomes.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the following meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees be noted –

Community Select Committee – 9 January 2019
Community Select Committee – 24 January 2019
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 29 January 2019

4 **FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2019/2020**

The Executive considered a report for recommendation to Council concerning the 2019/20 General Fund and Council Tax Setting.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that the report was largely unchanged from the draft General Fund budget considered by the Executive on 23 January 2019. She outlined the areas in the report that had changed.

The Leader undertook to circulate to Executive Members the report prepared by the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates) which provided useful information on the methodology used for the calculation of the Council Tax Base.

The Leader asked officers to closely monitor the single person occupancy rate for Council Tax; and requested that the Leader's Financial Services Group give further consideration to premiums for 2020/21.

The Leader referred to some recent misinformation provided to residents regarding the Council's budget. The Leader stated that SBC had reduced its General Fund from £15Million in 2008 to £9Million in 2019. She commented that this had not been a wilful act of the Council, but had been necessitated due to a £5Million reduction in Government Grant funding over that period. In addition, the Council had needed to achieve further savings to cover pressures such as inflation and fuel costs over the same period.

The Executive noted that the words "Draft General Fund Budget" needed to be inserted at the end of Paragraph 4.1.1 of the report.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 27 February 2019:

1. That the 2018/19 revised net expenditure on the General Fund of £10,063,500 be approved.
2. That a final General Fund Budget for 2019/20 of £8,802,520 be proposed for consultation purposes, with a contribution from balances of £48,446 and a Band D Council Tax of £210.57 (assuming a 2.99% increase).
3. That the General Fund Summary, as shown at Appendix A to the report, be approved.
4. That the Risk Assessments of General Fund Balances and the minimum level of General Fund reserves of £2,671,410, as shown at Appendix B to the report, be approved.
5. That the contingency sum of £400,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2019/20 (unchanged from 2018/19).
6. That the 2019/20 proposed Fees and Charges increase of £219,790 (Appendix C to the report) be approved.
7. That the 2019/20 proposed Financial Security Options of £798,552 (Appendix D to the report and including fees and charges detailed in Appendix C) be approved.
8. That 2019/20 business rate gains totalling £400,000 above the baseline assessment be ring fenced for town centre regeneration (SG1) (Paragraph 4.6.7 of the report refers) be approved.

9. That 2019/20 business rate gains totalling £364,830 above the baseline assessment be used to increase General Fund balances for 2019/20, (Paragraph 4.6.7 of the report refers) be approved.
10. That 2019/20 business rate gains totalling £275,000 above the baseline assessment be transferred to the NDR allocated reserve for 2019/20, (Paragraph 4.6.7 of the report refers) be approved.
11. That the 2019/20 Council Tax Support scheme be approved, as set out in Section 4.8 of the report.
12. That the advice of the Assistant Director (Finance and Estates) on the robustness of the draft budget and the adequacy of reserves (Appendix G of the report) be noted.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

5 **FINAL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2018/19 - 2023/24**

The Executive considered a report for recommendation to Council concerning the Capital Strategy 2018/19 – 2023/24.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources explained the major variances in the Strategy since the Draft version considered at the 23 January 2019 meeting of the Executive.

The Executive noted the different approach for the Bus Station project identified in Section 4.4 of the report, in the absence of certainty of receipt of Growth Deal 3 monies.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following proposals be recommended to Council on 27 February 2019:

1. That the revised General Fund and HRA 2018/19 capital programme, as detailed in Appendix B and Appendix C to the report, be approved.
2. That the draft 2019/20 General Fund Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix B to the report, be approved.
3. That the draft 2019/20 HRA Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix C to the report, be approved.
4. That the updated forecast of resources, as summarised in Appendix B (General Fund) and Appendix C (HRA) to the report, be approved.
5. That the Council's investment strategy for non-treasury assets (Section 3.2 of the report) be approved.

6. That the approach to resourcing the General Fund capital programme, as outlined in the report, be approved.
7. That the actions required to ensure the General Fund programme is funded, as outlined in Paragraphs 4.3.11-4.3.12 of the report, be noted.
8. That the 2018/19 increase in the year end underspends contribution from the General Fund to the Capital Reserve, if they are realised (Paragraph 4.3.13 of the report), be approved.
9. That the approach to funding the cost of the bus station prior to the release of Growth Deal 3 monies, as outlined in Section 4.4 of the report, be approved.
10. That the growth bids identified for inclusion in the Capital Strategy (Appendix A to the report) be approved.
11. That the return of Right to Buy one for one receipts, as outlined in Section 4.10 of the report, be noted.
12. That the 2019/20 de-minimus expenditure limit (Section 4.11 of the report) be approved.
13. That the 2018/19 contingency allowance (Section 4.8 of the report) be approved.
14. That the work undertaken by Leader's Financial Services Group on behalf of the Executive in reviewing and challenging the General Fund Capital Strategy be noted.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

6 **ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS 2019/20**

The Executive considered a report for recommendation to Council concerning the Annual Treasury Management Strategy, including Prudential Code Indicators, for 2019/20.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources referred to the replacement pages 192 and 206 of the agenda which had been tabled at the meeting.

The Leader corrected some misinformation which had been provided to residents concerning the forecast allocation of cash reserves. She commented that the whole of the £60Million cash reserves set out in the pie chart in Paragraph 4.4.6 of the report had been allocated; the Council made loans to other Local Authorities, but these were repaid with interest; and the £2Million allocated for sprinkler systems in tower blocks had been a decision approved by the Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following recommendations be made to Council:

1. That the Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20 be approved.
2. That the draft prudential indicators for 2019/20 be approved.
3. That the minimum revenue provision policy be approved.
4. That it be noted that no changes are being proposed to treasury limits contained within the Council's treasury management policies.
5. That the investment services provided to Queensway Properties LLP (see Paragraph 4.12.3 of the report) be noted.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

7 **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

The Executive considered a report in respect of the proposed Community Engagement Framework, which outlined the Council's co-operative approach to engaging local residents and community groups.

The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods & Co-operative Working that the Framework contained some aspirations to better utilise web platforms and social media to engage with residents and groups. This would build on existing engagement mechanisms, such as community mapping and youth engagement through the Youth Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Community Safety & Equalities thanked the positive contributions from the Community Select Committee and Portfolio Holder Advisory Group in the preliminary work which had led to the production of the Framework document.

The following comments were made regarding the report:

- Every consultation exercise carried out by the Council should take account of the spirit of the principles contained in the Framework document, including consultation on statutory matters, such as planning documents;
- The Framework document should pay regard to the need to balance the expectations of different parts of the community on consultation issues;
- Some clearer Case Study examples of the good co-production between residents and partners in the design of new services should be included in the document, rather than simply focussing on the involvement of residents once a project had been established;
- Reference should be made to the expectation that, for social value reasons, all contractors employed by the Council would be expected to adhere to the principles set out in the Framework document.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the draft Community Engagement Framework, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be noted.
2. That the Strategic Director (MP), following consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Communities, Community Safety & Equalities and Neighbourhood & Co-operative Working, be delegated authority to finalise the Community Engagement Framework and arrange its publication.
3. That the need for development of a related toolkit and training programme to support the effective implementation of the framework across council departments after final publication of the completed framework be noted.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

8 **URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

The Chair advised that she had accepted an urgent item of business regarding North Hertfordshire College, which would be considered in the private (Part II) part of the meeting.

9 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That, under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 to 7 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.
2. That having considered the reasons for the following items being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

10 **WEST OF STEVENAGE DEVELOPMENT**

The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of land option agreements to enable access to the West of Stevenage development site.

It was **RESOLVED** that the recommendations in the report, and two additional recommendations, be approved.

Reason for Decision: As contained in the report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

11 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

North Hertfordshire College

The Chief Executive updated the Executive on matters regarding North Hertfordshire College.

CHAIR

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STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 31 January 2019

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Michael Downing (Chair), Lloyd Briscoe, Jim Brown, David Cullen, Lizzy Kelly, Andy McGuinness, Sarah-Jane Potter and Simon Speller.

Also Present: Councillor John Gardner (Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration).

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 7.33pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Matthew Hurst and Adam Mitchell, CC.

Councillor Simon Speller declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 3 – Reimagining Fairlands Valley Park, as he was a District Commissioner for Stevenage Scouts, who had an informal lease on The Canyon Activity and a lease for a premises in Shephall View, which were used as bases for the scouts using the facilities in the Park.

2 **MINUTES - 3 DECEMBER 2018**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Environment & Economy Select Committee meeting held on 3 December 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **REIMAGINING FAIRLANDS VALLEY PARK**

The Select Committee received a presentation from the Culture, Wellbeing and Leisure Services Manager regarding the review of the strengths and weaknesses of the current offer in terms of both the quality and commercial viability of the services provided at Fairlands Valley Park, together with future opportunities for improving the offer.

The Chair welcomed the Executive Member for Environment & Regeneration to the meeting, and proceeded to provide the Committee with an overview of the history of the Park.

The Culture, Wellbeing and Leisure Services Manager's presentation outlined the scope of the review; background; the current offer; finance; strengths and weaknesses; and future opportunities, including:

- There was sufficient space and suitable landscaping to create a co-ordinated outdoor activity offer that would complement the water sports activity and provide a sustainable, year round income stream for the site. This may include a more attractive high ropes facility with zip wires, climbing, archery, nature trails, team-building, woodland craft, bike and segway hire etc.;
- There was sufficient space and suitable landscaping to provide additional attractions that appealed to children and families and were supported by a strong business case e.g. adventure golf;
- There was an opportunity to combine these new income generating activities with improved free to access facilities, such as adventurous play areas, outdoor gym and picnic areas.
- There was an opportunity to explore development of a higher quality food and beverage offer which better met modern expectations and complemented activity on the site. This could even extend to a 'destination' restaurant offer which capitalised upon the attractive setting and drew visitors from a wider area
- There was an opportunity to explore development of additional, indoor activity, such as Clip and Climb, softplay etc., to provide a year round offer and additional income streams;
- There was an opportunity to explore development of conference and/or training facilities on the site, linked with team-building activities and possibly function space;
- There was an opportunity to optimise the ecological interest of the site through better interpretation/signage linked to nature trails and woodland walks;
- To improve access point signage to the various locations around the Park;
- Increasing usage and activity on the South Field; and
- An opportunity to promote more events linked to the cultural strategy.

In terms of short term opportunities, the Culture, Wellbeing and Leisure Services Manager advised that these could include:

- Improve the external appearance of the building frontage;
- Clear up the compound and improve the appearance of the area;
- Continue to work with Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL) to improve the pay and play offer and change opening hours to reflect user demand in the park;
- Work with Parks and Open Spaces to consider the Park as part of an overall parks strategy, linking to considerations around an overall leisure strategy for the town; and
- In light of the end of the leisure contract in 2023, review the best management options for the future delivery of services with the Park.

The Executive Member for Environment & Regeneration commented that Fairlands Valley Park was an important feature in the Borough, forming the town's largest area of green open space and woodland. He was supportive of any proposals to improve the facilities on offer in the Park, and suggested that a short term priority should be to consider ways to provide improved toilet facilities and times of opening for park

users.

The Chair read out the views of the Executive Member for Children, Young People & Leisure and a Member of the Committee, both of whom had been unable to attend the meeting, regarding the review.

The following comments were made by Select Committee Members regarding the presentation:

- Possible adaptations to allow users of the Park to be able to enjoy a continuous walk around the main lake would be welcomed;
- Some general housekeeping work was required in terms of the presentation of the Sailing Centre/Café building, communal area in front of the building and the compound;
- Officers should continue to work with SLL to provide a more accessible offer for pay and play and free activities which did not require pre-booking and specialist skills such as sailing courses;
- Some work would be required to resolve some of the existing issues relating to the Park before addressing aspirational opportunities;
- The review should be rolled out to community groups that used the Park, together with residents' groups that bordered the Park in Chells, Pin Green, Bedwell, Shephall and Broadwater;
- The opening hours of the café at the sailing centre were restrictive;
- The hours of operation of the toilet facilities at the sailing centre should be expanded (ie. they should not solely be available during hours when the café was open);
- It should be stressed to residents that the review was aimed at increasing the offer in the Park, and that it would not be considering any alternative uses for the land (eg) residential use;
- Increased signage in the Bedwell area, directing people to the Park, would be welcomed;
- The review needed to balance activities for which there were charges/fees payable against the informal use of the Park;
- The various restrictions in the Park made it difficult to put on community based events in the Park, such as fun runs etc.;
- Public Transport access to the Park was extremely limited;
- Lighting in certain areas of the Park could be improved;
- The dilapidated bandstand should be refurbished so that it can be used for small events;
- The condition of the car park on the south side of the Park should be improved;
- Consideration should be given to widening some of the paths/cycleways, with appropriate signage on path surfaces.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the comments of Members of the Select Committee be taken into consideration by officers in the ongoing work on the review, and that the theme be put forward as a potential review item for the Select Committee for 2019/20.

2. That wider consultation on the Fairlands Valley Park Review be carried out with users of the Park, including organised and non-organised groups, and with students in local schools.

4 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

5 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Not required.

6 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 12 February 2019

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Sarah Mead (Chair), Adam Mitchell CC (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, John Mead and Simon Speller

In Attendance: Cllr M Downing (Chair – Environment & Economy Select Committee), Cllr M Mckay (Chair – Audit Committee) and Cllr J Thomas (Portfolio Holder – Housing, Health and Older People)

J Capon (SBC Sport and Wellbeing Manager), J McManus (HCC Director of Public Health), M Partridge (SBC Strategic Director), J Prescott (SLL Corporate Health and Wellbeing Manager) and S Tomlinson (Chief Executive Officer – Mind in Mid Herts)

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 8.15pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs L Harrington, S-J Potter and T Wren.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - 24 JANUARY 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Community Select Committee meeting held on 24 January 2019 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **PUBLIC HEALTH DISCUSSION ITEM WITH HCC DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Director of Public Health presented the Healthy Stevenage Strategy 2018-2022 Progress Dashboard for 2018/19, NHS Long Term Plan Overview Report (released in January 2019) and NHS Long Term Plan (Opportunities and Challenges) Summary to the Committee. The dashboard indicated that the statistical position of Stevenage was significantly worse than that of other districts in the County in the following areas:

- Gap in life expectancy at birth between area and England as a whole (male and female)
- Excess weight in 10-11 year olds

- Obesity in 10-11 year olds
- Average number of portions of vegetables consumed daily (adults)
- Emergency admissions for injuries due to falls in people aged 65-79

The NHS long Term Plan Overview Report itemises the following commitments:

- A new service model for the 21st century
- More NHS action on prevention and health inequalities
- Further progress on care quality and outcomes
- Providing NHS staff the backing they need
- Digitally-enabled care to go mainstream across the NHS

Members were informed that the NHS plan attempts to be a system wide prevention plan and the report acknowledges that the NHS cannot deliver this on its own. The issues of long-term funding for Public Health and Social Care still remain unresolved. It was pointed out that the NHS had a mixed record on prevention. The NHS was struggling to cope with demand for services. The NHS will need the skills, experience and commitment of the County Council, District Councils and Voluntary Sector to deliver public health initiatives. In this regard, the Director of Public Health highlighted that by providing warmer homes across the town, SBC was contributing towards the reduction of cold weather related illnesses.

Members were informed that HCC will be making a case for more funding from the NHS. The Director of Public Health emphasised the need for collaborative working and more consultations among central government, NHS organisations and local authorities. The Director of Public Health suggested that SBC and other local authorities do more to hold the NHS to account. It was also suggested that the Council invites the Secretary of State for Health to Stevenage to get first-hand understanding of the town's health initiatives.

It was noted that mental health and learning disabilities did not appear to get much attention in the NHS Long Term Plan and the Healthy Stevenage Strategy. Mental health stigma was still an issue in some sections of society. The Committee welcomed the move away from the institutionalisation of significant numbers of mental health patients. However, there did not appear to be bespoke support provisions for the various mental health categories. Mental health services had been affected by cuts in health and social care funding. It was acknowledged that the Stevenage Health Strategy did not have initiatives to support all learning disability cases.

Members suggested that there should be a focus on building resilience into the health system rather than a reactive approach. Members sought clarification on the structure and funding for the Sustainability & Transformation Partnerships (STPs).

In response to a question, the Director of Public Health informed the Committee that mental health support was beginning to improve following the introduction of counsellor and mental health nurse working teams in schools. It was recommended that people with learning disabilities be more widely consulted on issues that affected them.

Healthy Stevenage Update - The SBC Health and Sport Strategy Manager provided an update on the Healthy Stevenage Strategy and the success of programmes delivered to date. Members were informed that the Strategy was launched in April 2018 by Stevenage Borough Council in collaboration with the Healthy Stevenage Partnership. A range of initiatives had been delivered through multiagency working using different funding streams. These initiatives were linked to cultural initiatives such as cycling. The key priorities for 2018 included the following:

- Reducing physical inactivity levels in adults and children
- Reducing obesity levels of adults and children
- Improving mental health and wellbeing for all
- Reducing the prevalence of smoking
- Promoting and enabling older people's independence
- Improving health promotion
- Partnership working with the NHS and Public Health

In response to questions, the Health and Sport Strategy Manager informed the Committee that:

- Residents enrolled on the Active Herts project through referrals
- The Active Herts project was fully funded in liaison with Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL)
- Learn to ride fees were set by the Cycling Hub and not prescribed by SBC
- There was no evidence to suggest that the cycling fees were outpricing potential participants
- The fees were based on a cost recovery basis and were not linked to class size
- Following a pilot cooking course, the Community Project team was using a targeted approach to enrol participants on future courses

It was suggested that the drop in smoking prevalence could be attributed to the increase in the uptake of vaping, clampdown on illicit tobacco products and a drop in the number of pregnant smokers. There was research evidence supporting the view that vaping was more effective in assisting smokers to quit than other products.

The Committee commended the Council for receiving the Excellence in Public Health Award and its selection by the LGA to feature as a case study in the 2019 Public Health Annual Report. Members were informed that Stevenage had also been featured in the District Councils Network Report. It was noted that it was unusual for a District Council such as Stevenage to be featured in the Public Health Annual Report.

Diabetes - In the absence of the diabetes/diet expert, the Chair narrated her health experiences before and after her diabetes diagnosis in August 2018. The Chair told the Committee that she was made aware of her pre-diabetic condition about 20 years ago. Since then, she has noticed a general lack of understanding of diabetes and vast disparity of knowledge particularly among health professionals. Due to the lack of readily available information on diet and lifestyle for diabetic patients, the Chair ended up relying on self-help books. The Chair managed to lose weight after making lifestyle changes and following a recommended diet regime for diabetes

patients. The NHS enrolled the Chair onto the X-PERT Diabetes course that helps diabetes patients to identify their own health risks and to set their own goals. She waited three months to go on the HCC-funded course. The funding for this course has now stopped and in its place they intend to roll out the DESMOND Course. The benefits of the group learning course include the following:

- Understanding the condition of diabetes including complications
- Details of food substitutes
- Illustrations of ingredients and food dishes
- Guidance on portion size
- Understanding food labelling

The Chair contrasted the weekend course with the four hour DESMOND NHS training course for people with type 2 diabetes. Personal accounts appeared to indicate that the DESMOND course was not as beneficial as the X-PERT Diabetes Course. The X-PERT and DESMOND courses were previously funded by the NHS via the County Council.

It was noted that there were probably a lot more people in Stevenage who had pre-diabetic conditions or had diabetes but who were not getting necessary support at early stages. The Chair pointed out that there will be a number of people who have Type 2 Diabetes who are unaware that they have the condition and that these people are at immediate significant risk of heart attack and stroke. The premature heart attacks and stroke figures contained on the Health report may well be due to Type 2 Diabetes. Members also noted that it appeared some health care decisions were primarily based on funding implications rather than clinical considerations.

The Chair made a plea to HCC and other organisations represented at the meeting to campaign for X-PERT Diabetes Course funding for Stevenage. The Chair also recommended the following:

- Public Health campaign in Stevenage featuring diabetes
- Diabetes Awareness Strategy and publicity campaign
- SBC gets more involved in encouraging residents to adopt healthy lifestyles

The Chair emphasized the importance of lifestyle change as a means of reducing the prevalence of Type 2 diabetes.

The Director for Public Health acknowledged that more diabetes patients benefitted from the six week X-PERT than the DESMOND course. The Director made an undertaking to:

- Check funding options for diabetes patients
- Find out the reasons for the discontinuation of the X-PERT course in preference to the DESMOND course
- Assess the feasibility of re-introducing the X-PERT course to diabetes patients in Stevenage
- Collaborate with SBC in designing the diabetes awareness campaign

The SLL Corporate Health and Wellbeing Manager informed the Committee that SLL

will consider allocating part of the recently secured Lottery funding to the proposed Stevenage diabetes campaign. SLL was in consultations with Diabetes UK on a project to introduce a campaign bus in Stevenage.

Members noted the following:

- Due to funding limitations, public health was not always a high priority for health providers
- Health and social care providers were likely to deliver more benefits to communities by targeting a few initiatives
- Those at risk or suffering from diabetes will make healthier food choices if the food industry used the same “traffic light type” food labelling system on the front of food products
- Delays in diagnosis resulted in an escalation in cost of treatment

Mental Health – The Committee received an update on mental health issues for Stevenage. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Mind in Mid Herts - a voluntary organisations specialising in mental health - informed Members that Mind in Mid Herts used a collaborative and holistic approach to promoting mental wellbeing. One of the organisation’s objectives was to tackle stigma associated with mental health. The CEO highlighted the organisation’s funding constraints and general funding problems faced by third sector organisation. The CEO expressed gratitude for the subsidised rent arrangement with SBC. Members were informed that the third sector played a vital role of augmenting the main health service providers and offering choices to patients. It was acknowledged that in some cases, third sector organisations produced better clinical results than the public sector at a cheaper cost. It was noted that the NHS spent less than local authorities on services such as drug and alcohol treatment.

The Committee noted the funding challenges faces by voluntary organisations. It was suggested that third sector organisation maximise opportunities to collaborate with the NHS, local authorities and other health and social care providers. Members acknowledged the growing mental health cases among young people.

In response to issues regarding funding for voluntary organisations, the Director of Public Health highlighted current initiatives that were aimed at streamlining health service delivery. Plans were in place to create locality health forums and to have one such forum per district. It was pointed out the need for local authorities to play a bigger role in the allocation of NHS funds. It was stated that Members should be empowered to hold NHS organisations to account. It was suggested that there could be an overall improvement in health of residents if the NHS spent less on acute care and more on locality needs. The Director of Public Health recommended that local authorities adopt a co-ordinated approach in negotiations for health and social care funding.

The Strategic Director informed Members that the Council was working collaboratively with health care partners in the region. The partnership was focussed on delivering key objectives such as reducing child obesity. The partnership was progressing towards the goal of having one health forum per district. The Strategic Director indicated that it was vital for local authorities to be consulted on proposed

savings related to the Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) initiative.

Stevenage Healthy Hub – The SLL Corporate Health and Wellbeing Manager provided an update on the Healthy Hub. The Manager highlighted the following:

- 14,200 visitors to the Hub as of the end of January 2019
- 813 exercise referrals
- 534 walk in/advice only visits
- More than 12,600 partner's appointments
- About 300 visitors were signposted rather than referred to partner organisations such as Mind in Herts
- Focus on spreading the prevention message
- Finalist in the WOW! Awards after an intervention by a member of staff prevented a member of the community from taking his own life
- Plans to launch a Diabetes awareness group
- Plans to launch a health awareness publicity bus for Stevenage

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the NHS Long Term Plan Report is noted
2. That the update on Healthy Stevenage Strategy is noted
3. That the Hertfordshire County Council Director of Public Health provides an update on funding for diabetes courses
4. That the Hertfordshire County Council Director of Public Health provides an update on arrangements for the Sustainability & Transformation Partnerships
5. That the Portfolio Holder (Housing, Health and Older People) liaises with HCC regarding funding for diabetes awareness training
6. That the SBC Health and Sport Strategy Manager provides statistics on the uptake of cycling courses and learn to ride fees from the Cycle Hub

4 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

5 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Not required.

6 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Date: Monday, 18 February 2019

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Lin Martin-Haugh (Chair), Philip Bibby CC (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Jim Brown, Michael Downing, Jody Hanafin, Michelle Gardner, Lizzy Kelly, John Mead, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC and Sarah-Jane Potter.

Start / End Start Time: 6.00pm
Time: End Time: 7.30pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor James Fraser.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 15 JANUARY AND 29 JANUARY 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees held on 15 January and 29 January 2019 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **PART I DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

Minutes of the Executive – 23 January 2019

The Committee noted the comments of the Executive.

Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees

The Committee noted the comments of the Executive.

Final General Fund and Council Tax Setting 2019/20

The Committee noted the discussions at the Executive including the request that the Leader's Financial Services Group give consideration and closely monitor the single person occupancy rate for Council Tax premiums for 2020/21.

Officers referred to an issue that had been raised regarding some recent misinformation which had been discussed at a residents' group in connection with the Council's budget.

Following concerns raised by Members regarding the provision of replacement recycling bins and boxes, officers agreed to request the Assistant Director (Stevenage Direct Services) to write to Members advising them of the current proposal for replacements.

In response to a question regarding staff affected by efficiencies, the Chief Executive advised that steps were in place to ensure that compulsory redundancies were the last resort for the Council.

Members were pleased to note that the Council's digital plan included the issue of accessing committee papers electronically resulting in the reduction in printing costs.

Final Capital Strategy 2018/19 – 2023/24

The Committee noted the comments of the Executive. Members noted the update on the Capital Programme Investment Strategy.

Annual Treasury Management Strategy Including Prudential Code Indicators 2019/20

The Assistant Director (Finance and Estates) referred to a replacement page 206 of the agenda which had been tabled at the meeting and corrected a figure on page 192 of the report.

In relation to the misinformation which had been provided to residents around the Council's cash reserves, the Assistant Director advised that the £60million referred to in the report had been allocated to various schemes. Members requested that officers ensure that this is clearly communicated where possible to ensure the public was fully informed.

Community Engagement Framework

The Community Development Manager introduced a report summarising the draft development of a Community Engagement Framework which built upon the recommendations from the review into resident engagement undertaken by the Community Select Committee.

The Committee noted the comments of the Executive on the report.

In response to a question, officers advised that the new Community Engagement Framework was still in development but there would be further work around engagement with Councillors to ensure ward Members were introduced to the Resident Involvement/Neighbourhood Wardens and Community Development Officers working in their areas. Officers advised that the role of the Community Development Service would be to support and encourage residents groups and attend resident meetings in their allocated areas through a practical framework and toolkit approach.

In relation to Diversity and Inclusion, Members were interested in how the Council reached out to minority groups around the Town. The Community Development Manager agreed to contact Councillor Michelle Gardner when looking to undertake any work around resident involvement for the Council in building diversity in groups and services.

In terms of locality working, Members were concerned with the thinking behind the initial breakdown of areas but was advised that these areas could change once other Business Units within the Council came on board with locality working.

Members thanked the Community Development Officer and the wider team for their work in this area.

4 **URGENT PART 1 DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

5 **URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS**

None.

6 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That, under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 to 7 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by SI 2006 No. 88.
2. That having considered the reasons for the following items being in Part II, it be determined that maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighed the public interest in disclosure.

7 **PART II DECISIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee noted the comments of the Executive.

8 **URGENT PART II DECISIONS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

9 **URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

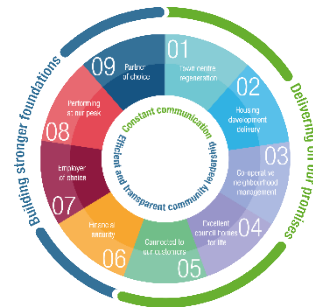
North Hertfordshire College

The Chief Executive updated the Committee on matters regarding North

Hertfordshire College.

CHAIR

Meeting EXECUTIVE
Portfolio Area Resources
Date 14 MARCH 2019



3RD QUARTER MONITORING REPORT GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE

KEY DECISION

Authors Katia Cousins 2383 and Keith Reynoldson 2403
Contributor Finance Team and Budget managers
Lead Officers Clare Fletcher 2933
Contact Officer Clare Fletcher 2933

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Council undertakes a review of all revenue and associated budgets on a quarterly basis. This is the 3rd quarter monitoring report for 2018/19.
- 1.2 To update Members on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected 2018/19 net expenditure and seek approval for the revisions to the 2018/19 revenue budgets.
- 1.3 To update Members on the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected 2019/20 net expenditure and seek approval for the revisions to the 2019/20 revenue budgets.
- 1.4 To update Members on the General Fund and HRA Financial Security options approved for 2018/19.
- 1.5 To update Members on the Council's reserves and balances available to support revenue expenditure and to seek approval for revisions to the allocated reserves.

- 1.6 To update Members on any new Financial Security options that contribute to the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account savings target.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

General Fund

- 2.1 That the 2018/19 3rd quarter General Fund projected net decrease in expenditure of £80,890 be approved
- 2.2 That it be noted that the cumulative changes made to the General Fund net budget remain within the £400,000 (increase) variation limit delegated to Executive.
- 2.3 That the progress of the 2018/19 approved savings, growth bids and carry forwards be noted.
- 2.4 That the 2019/20 pressure of £118,420 be approved. The ongoing pressure is £51,800 with £66,620 being for one year only.
- 2.5 That the new carry forward requests of £80,000 be approved.

Housing Revenue Account

- 2.6 That the 2018/19 3rd quarter decrease in the net HRA deficit of £966,030 be approved.
- 2.7 That the progress of the 2018/19 approved savings, growth bids and carry forward requests be noted.
- 2.8 That the 2019/20 ongoing pressure of £17,000 be approved.
- 2.9 That the new carry forward requests of £507,470 be approved.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 General Fund Working Budget

Since the 2018/19 General Fund net revenue budget of £9,107,740 was approved by Council on 28th February 2018 Members have approved net budget changes as detailed in the following table.

Table One – 2018/19 General Fund Working Budget	Working Budget £
Original Budget	£9,107,740
3rd Quarter 2017/18 net decrease	(£56,800)
3rd Quarter Carry forwards	£405,000
4th Quarter 2017/18 net decrease	(£116,970)
4th Quarter Carry forwards	£338,100
1st Quarter 2018/19	£195,750
2nd Quarter 2018/19	(£177,170)
November MTFs	£699,600
Draft Budget Report (Exec 13-12-18)	(£275,670)
Final Budget Report (Exec 23-1-19)	(£56,080)
Total Net Budget Approved to Date	£10,063,500

3.2 Housing Revenue Account Working Budget

3.2.1 The HRA revenue deficit budget of £2,756,630 was approved at Council on 30 January 2018. Subsequently Members have approved 2018/19 budget changes as detailed in table two below.

Table Two – HRA Working budget	Working Budget £
Original Budget	2,756,630
3rd Quarter Carry forwards	217,870
4th Quarter 2017/18 net decrease	(7,000)
4th Quarter Carry forwards	82,270
4th Quarter principal repayment	1,241,000
1st Quarter 2018/19	135,400
1st Carry forwards	(60,000)
2nd Quarter 2018/19	25,750
Draft Budget setting (Exec 13-12-18)	(424,830)
Budget setting (Exec 23-1-19)	93,830
Total Working Budget	4,060,920

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION

4.1 General Fund Budget Review

4.1.1 As a result of the 3rd quarter budget monitoring review the General Fund net expenditure is projected to decrease by £80,890, including carry forward requests of £80,000. This means the net change in the General Fund projected expenditure is a decrease of £890 once carry forward requests are excluded.

4.1.2 Pressures and savings identified during the 3rd quarter are listed in table three below.

Table Three - Budget Alerts - General Fund		Budget change 2018/19 £	GF Impact 2018/19 £	HRA Impact 2018/19 £	GF Ongoing 2019/20 £	GF One Year Only 2019/20 £	Carry forward request £
	Service Area:						
Income							
	Commercial Rent	(75,140)	(75,140)				
	New Burdens Brexit Funding	(17,500)	(17,500)			(17,500)	
	Loss of rent from increased voids on Indoor Market Stalls	12,750	12,750				
	Delay in Building Control loan repayment	36,470	36,470			53,970	
	Property and Design demand led external income	72,570	72,570				
Expenditure	Brexit related activities	17,500	17,500			17,500	
	Security and Fencing for Fairlands Valley Farmhouse	38,100	38,100				
	Refuse and Recycling advertising to be reassessed	(17,130)	(17,130)				
	Issues with road sweeper purchased last year - additional cost for hire of another road sweeper	20,000	20,000				
	Shared Revenue & Benefits Service - salary under spends	(59,360)	(59,360)				
	CRM Implementation - Licence costs				26,000		
	Property and Design compliance contract	(70,000)	(70,000)				
Carry Forward	Communities Contribution Received	(30,000)	(30,000)				30,000
	Customer Services carry forward to cover FTC	(32,000)	(32,000)				32,000
	Town Twinning carry forward request	(18,000)	(18,000)				18,000
Other		40,850	129,210	(88,360)	25,800	12,650	0
TOTAL BUDGET CHANGES REPORTED THIS QUARTER		(80,890)	7,470	(88,360)	51,800	66,620	80,000

4.2 3rd Quarter variances

4.2.1 **Commercial Rent** – occupancy rates at the Business Technology Centre (BTC) have increased and some rent reviews and lease renewals for commercial shops and offices across the borough has resulted in higher than projected rental income of £75,140 (2% of total commercial rent income). The new BTC contract commences on 1st April 2019 and the Financial Security options presented to the February Council reflected an increase in income on that contract for next year. Commercial property rent has also been increased in the 2019/20 budget by £24,320, (Financial Security option SE1 refers).

- 4.2.2 **Brexit New Burdens Funding** – funding has been received from the Government to support Local Authorities as they prepare for Brexit of £17,500 in 2018/19 and 2019/20. This funding will be used for Brexit related activities.
- 4.2.3 **Indoor Market** – During the 3rd quarter the Indoor Market had six stalls terminate their contract and one new stall holder. This has led to loss of rent of £12,750. The Indoor Market is projected to make a deficit in 2018/19 of £38,390. At the end of December 2018/19 out of the 132 available stalls, 40 stalls are vacant (69.7% occupied). The 2019/20 budget assumes 103 (currently 92) occupied stalls generating £435,000 income and a surplus of £28,810. No budget pressure in 2019/20 has yet been reported.
- 4.2.4 **Building Control** – In August 2017 the Council partnered with six other local authorities to form Hertfordshire Building Control Ltd to reduce current and future predicted costs building control and mitigating erosion of income from Approved inspectors (private companies).
- 4.2.5 When the company was set up all partners provided a loan (£107,000 each) to the new company. The original business case assumed that loan repayments would commence in 2018/19, however this is now projected to start in 2020/21. The Building Control company has requested that the loan is reprofiled based on their revised cash flow need, due the initial time delay in setting up the company. The respective Hertfordshire CFO's have met with the company to agree the charges for the forth coming year and have reviewed the revised cash flow. The loan interest is payable at 4% which is significantly higher than that achieved on investment balances, (1.15% estimated for 2019/20) and should yield £12,840 over the two years, (built into the revised projections). There is also an increase in contract costs relating to statutory elements of the building control service increased by £4,630 in 2018/19 and £26,930 from 2019/20, which was not known at the time the budget report was completed
- 4.2.6 **Property and Design** – demand led external income is lower than anticipated by £72,570, mainly due to less contract work from other local authorities. This will be reviewed as part of the 5th Tier Business Unit Review currently under way. The team have been working on more capital projects so salaries charged to capital have increased income, but this is offset by a compensatory pressure from Agency staff costs.
- 4.2.7 **Fairland Valley Farmhouse** – Security and fencing to the Farmhouse and perimeter has led to £38,100 pressure. The sale of the Farmhouse is currently in progress.
- 4.2.8 **Refuse and Recycling Advertising** – an in year saving of £17,130 for refuse and recycling advertising is reported as the Assistant Director of Stevenage Direct Services (SDS) has requested a review of the effectiveness of advertising placed.
- 4.2.9 **SDS Road Sweeper** – one road sweeper purchased last year is not road worthy which has led to the hire of a substitute vehicle. The pressure of £20,000 is 50% of the overall cost to hire the vehicle and compensation of 50% is being sought from the supplier of the original vehicle.
- 4.2.10 **Compliance Contract** - There is a saving on the compliance contract of £70,000. The compliance contract has been retendered with the new contractor putting together a schedule of works following condition surveys of council buildings covered by the contract.

4.2.11 **2019/20 General Fund Budget** – The 3rd quarter General Fund review has identified a net pressure of £118,420. The ongoing pressures are

- Customer Relationship Management licence costs £26,000 – the current CRM system will be out of maintenance from 2019/20 so a new system will be procured
- Other minor pressures £10,800 – less than £5,000 each

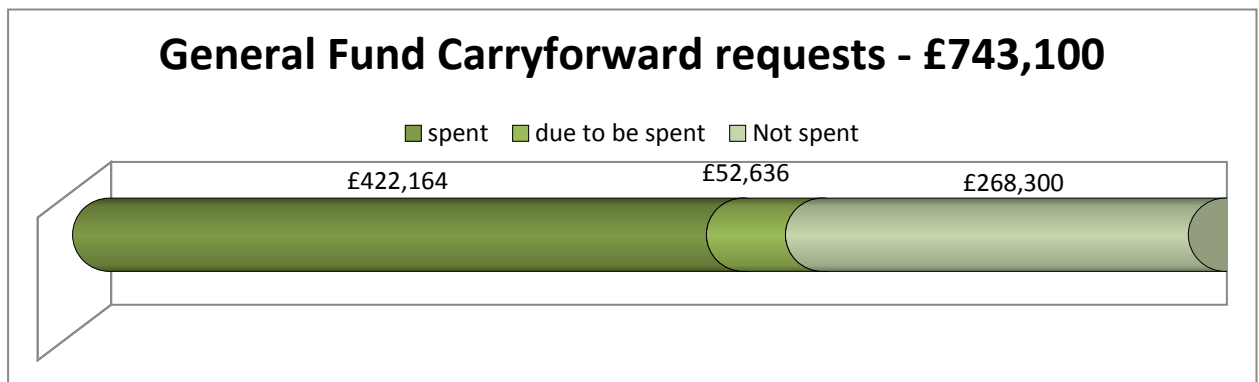
The 2019/20 one year only pressure of £66,620 is mainly from the Building Control Partnership (see 4.2.4)

The ongoing pressure may require a review of the Financial Security savings target and any revision will be considered in the next MTFS update.

4.2.12 **Other updates** – There is no income and expenditure variances reported for CCTV however it should be noted the SIAS Audit Recommendations were reported to the CCTV Joint Executive in October as part of the overall CCTV Governance Review. This Council has led the review working with the three partner councils. The Officer Management Board have commissioned legal advice to scope options for future governance and the future of both the partnership and the CCTV company. The finance team are working with the service on option appraisals for consideration, which may impact on income and expenditure projections.

4.3 Approved Carry forwards 2018/19 (General Fund)

4.3.1 Members have already approved total carry forward requests of £743,100



4.3.2 Carry forward requests continue to be monitored and following successful recruitments an assessment will be made and any necessary carry forwards will be requested at the 4th quarter. The unspent carry forwards relate to;

- Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse project £145,000 will be spent by the end of this financial year or used in 2019/20 to ensure the service is fully funded for 2019/20.
- Apprentice funding of £80,000 not required has already been returned to New Homes Bonus and has been reused to meet any NHB funding shortfall in the next financial year.
- Homelessness Support Grant of £43,300 is likely to be requested to carry forward to use in 2019/20.

4.4 New carry forward requests 2019/20

4.4.1 Carry forwards are requested for the following

- A £30,000 contribution received from the Hertfordshire Growth Fund will fund a Community Buildings Officer in 2019/20
- The Customer Service Centre £32,000 to fund a temporary Planning and Resource management post until November 2019
- Town Twinning request £18,000 to part fund the tri-partite (Stevenage, Germany and France) reunion to be hosted by Stevenage between the 4th and 8th July 2019. In year underspends are requested for carry forward for the year that Stevenage hosts town twinning, to fund the additional expenditure. The budget is not increased in the hosting year.

4.5 Financial Security Options and growth proposals approved for 2018/19

4.5.1 As part of the 2018/19 budget setting process Financial Security savings of £342,400 were approved and implemented. 91% of the total Financial Security options approved have been achieved.

Savings option FS2 on street parking (as reported to Executive at 1st quarter) is delayed due to Herts Highways having lodged an objection to the planning application. The latest estimate is that £10,000 of the £40,000 saving is likely to be achieved resulting in pressure of £30,000.

4.5.2 Growth proposals totalling £470,370 were approved for the General Fund in 2018/19 and these are on target to be spent.

4.6 2018/19 General Fund Out turn position

4.6.1 Following the 3rd quarter review the General Fund balance as at 31 March 2019 is projected to be £4,177,368 as detailed in table four.

Table Four:	
General Fund Balances	£
Original Net General Fund Budget	9,107,740
Approved budget changes	955,760
Net Working budget approved to Date	10,063,500
3rd Quarter review	(80,890)
Total Net Expenditure post Q3 review	9,982,610
less core resources	(8,694,861)
Transfer (to)/from General Fund balances	1,287,749
General Fund balance 31/3/18	(5,465,117)
Transfer (to)/from General Fund balances	1,287,749
Projected General Fund balance 31/3/19	(4,177,368)
Allocated Revenue Reserves 31/3/19	(1,401,101)
Allocated Capital Reserves 31/3/19	(422,203)
Total General Fund balances (estimated 31/3/19)	(6,000,672)

4.7 Allocated Reserves

- 4.7.1 The total value of allocated reserves as at the 1 April 2018 was £2,849,582.
- 4.7.2 Total allocated revenue reserves as at the 31 March 2019 are forecast to be £1,401,101 and capital reserve of £422,203 remain unchanged from the 2019/20 budget report.

4.8 Investments and Loans

- 4.8.1 There are no significant changes to the Treasury Management Report approved by Council on 27th February 2019.

4.9 Housing Revenue Account – Budget review

- 4.9.1 As a result of the 3rd quarter budget monitoring review the HRA net deficit is projected to decrease by £966,030. However, from this underspend there are requests to carry forward expenditure budgets totalling £507,470.
- 4.9.2 Pressures and savings identified during the 3rd quarter are listed in table five below.

Table Five - HRA		Budget change 2018/19 £	HRA Impact 2018/19 £	GF Impact 2018/19 £	HRA Ongoing 2019/20 £	Carry forward request £
	Service Area:					
Income	Rent Income	32,023	32,023			
	Other Housing Income	65,400	65,400			
Expenditure	Salary Underspends	(261,410)	(261,410)			
	Electrical Works Contract	(544,040)	(544,040)			302,000
	Transformation Fund	(205,470)	(205,470)			205,470
	HRA Policy & Performance	(67,530)	(67,530)			
	Council Tax on Void Property	75,750	75,750			
	Arrears Management Legal Costs	16,130	16,130			
	Careline	(18,840)	(18,840)			
	Communal Area Maintenance	(40,000)	(40,000)			
	CRM Implementation Licence Costs				26,000	
Other		(18,043)	(18,043)	0	(9,000)	0
TOTAL BUDGET CHANGES REPORTED THIS QUARTER		(966,030)	(966,030)	0	17,000	507,470

- 4.9.3 **Rent, Service Charges, and HRA Income** – Income has been revised downwards by £32,023 for this quarter. This relates to the removal of an estimate of rent for Asquith Court for temporary accommodation. Due to the timing of the redevelopment of the site and the costs of bringing the units back into use it has now been decided not to go ahead with the temporary accommodation.

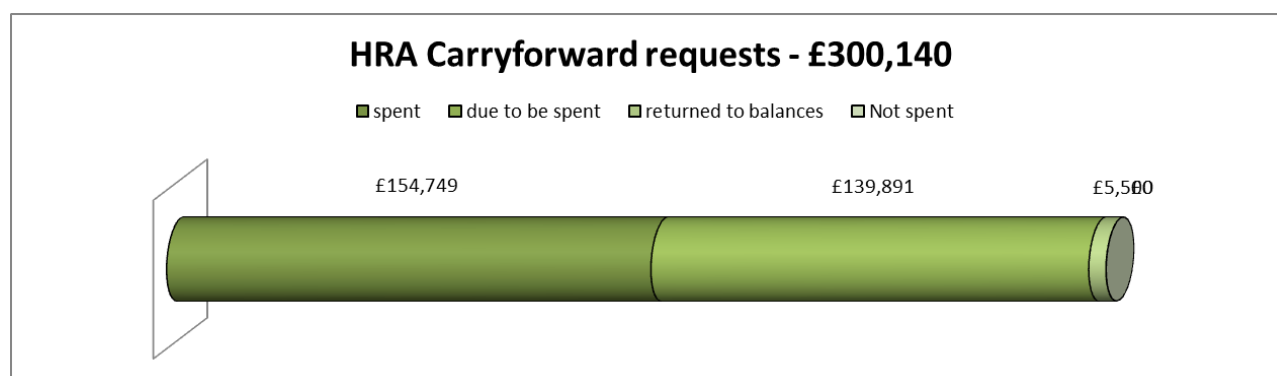
- 4.9.4 **Other Housing Income** – There are three areas of other housing income that are projected to be below the budget by £65,400 in total;
- Communal heating charges have been reduced by £19,310, mainly due to properties taken out of management for redevelopment schemes
 - Facilities charges on decommissioned sites see a reduction in income of £32,040
 - Aerial income £14,050 from communication companies has reduced following rationalisation of their sites. This budget has already been reduced for 2019/20 and included in the Final HRA Budget report.
- 4.9.5 **Salary under spend** – There is a projected saving against salaries and related costs of £261,410, against a working budget of £6,156,550. A full budget monitoring exercise on staffing was not completed until after the January Budget Report went to Executive. There are several reasons for this variance;
- Some posts have been held vacant while Business Unit Reviews have been taking place and as this process concludes are expected to be filled
 - There have been difficulties in recruiting new staff in some areas, notably in Income Maximisation.
- 4.9.6 **Electrical Works Contract** – The mobilisation of the new electrical works contract has been delayed and as a consequence this budget has been mainly unspent during 2018/19 by £544,040. This contract has been set up to put in place a comprehensive testing programme that will cover all properties over a ten year cycle. There were initial difficulties in procuring the works on the preferred time framework, of ten years, which led to a delayed commencement date. In order to make sure that a smooth rolling programme is maintained and a peak is not created at the start of the contract, work needs to be spread out over the first year of operation. It is estimated that first year costs will be higher than later years, as the programme has been targeted at properties that are likely to need improvement works to bring them up to contract standard. Therefore, there is a request to carry forward £302,000 to next year bringing the total available budget for 2019/20 to £654,020, a similar level to the 2018/19 original budget.
- 4.9.7 **Housing Transformation Project** – There is a carry forward request of £205,470 against the housing transformation budget. The approved budget was profiled over three years at £500,000 per year. However, the timing of the work has led to carry forwards as some project costs are due to fall at the back end of the three year programme. Significant progress has already been made with phase 1 of the programme complete. The next phase of work includes the transformation of the housing advice service, roll out of electronic document management, installation of the Northgate customer service module to improve workflows and the overall customer experience, and a project to review and improve standard letter templates for customers.
- 4.9.8 **HRA Policy and Performance** – The HRA Policy and Performance Team has been carrying several staff vacancies pending a Business Unit Review that has now been completed. A saving of £67,530 is projected.
- 4.9.9 **Council Tax on Empty Property** – The budget for council tax on void properties is likely to be overspent by £75,750 for the year. Empty properties attract a premium of 50% on the original council tax if they are left long term vacant and this has increased costs. This is due to the number of properties taken out of management

for development purposes. The actual cost for April to December 2018 is £95,315 and the projected full year is £134,500.

- 4.9.10 **Arrears Management Legal Costs** – There is projected to be a £16,130 overspend on legal costs, relating to possession orders, as more cases are being referred to legal. These budgets are directly linked to activity and the recovery of rent owed to the Council and should result in maintaining rent collection rates and keeping arrears figures on the HRA low. The debt provision is closely monitored and in the future may reduce if rent arrears decrease as a result of successful legal action. There is likely to be a time lag in seeing increased income for these cases.
- 4.9.11 **Careline Costs** – There is a saving of £18,840 on Careline charges from North Herts DC, as they have received and allocated a rebate on supported housing for a second year. This is an in year reduction only.
- 4.9.12 **Communal Area Maintenance** – The budget of £40,000 will not be spent this year but it is going to be part of a wider work programme review for the next financial year.

4.10 Approved Carry forwards 2018/19 (HRA)

- 4.10.1 Members have approved HRA carry forward budgets totalling £300,140.



- 4.10.2 Overall, £154,749 of the total £300,140 has been spent at quarter 3, with a further £139,891 expected to be spent by the year end.

- 4.10.3 In total £5,500 of carry forward requests can be returned to HRA balances for CCTV work that will not be required in the current year.

4.11 HRA Financial Security Options and growth proposals approved for 2018/19

- 4.11.1 As part of the 2018/19 budget setting process financial security savings of £225,960 were identified. At the 3rd quarter £209,122 are on schedule to be achieved and £16,838 are not likely to be met. The failed savings are from various equipment and advertising budgets which will be reviewed in 2019/20.
- 4.11.2 Growth proposals totalling £365,090 (in addition to the £500,000 Housing Transformation Fund) were approved for the HRA in 2018/19. At quarter three, £325,981 of this amount is due to be spent by the year end. There are two schemes, totalling £58,710 that will not be spent;

- Financial Security option HG4 Decant of Kenilworth Close £43,710 – this was to fund a Development Liaison Officer for 2 years. The post has not yet been recruited to and there is likely to be a carry forward request in the 4th quarter for the whole of this budget if no appointment is made.
- Financial Security option HG2 Relocation incentive £5,000 – the growth approved was £15,000

4.12 2018/19 HRA Outturn position

4.12.1 Following the 3rd quarter review the HRA balance as at 31 March 2019 is projected to be **£21,019,774** as detailed in table six.

Table Six – Housing Revenue Account Out-turn Position	£
Original Budget	2,756,630
Approved budget changes	1,304,290
3rd Quarter adjustments	(966,030)
Projected net deficit post 3rd Quarter review	3,094,890
HRA balance brought forward 1/4/18	(24,114,664)
Deficit in year	3,094,890
Projected HRA balance 31/3/19	(21,019,774)

4.13 2019/20 HRA Budget

4.13.1 The 3rd quarter budget review has identified additional budget pressures of £17,000 for 2019/20. This is made up of;

- CRM licence costs £26,000 – the current CRM system will be out of maintenance from 2019/20 so a new system is to be procured
- Other various savings totalling £9,000

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 This report is financial in nature and consequently financial implications are included above.

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 The objective of this report is to outline the projected General Fund and HRA net expenditure for 2018/19 and the impact on the General Fund and HRA balances. While there are no legal consequences at this stage Members are reminded of their duty to set a balanced budget.

5.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.3.1 This report summarises external and internal factors that impact on approved budgets and recommends changes to those budgets in year. Budget changes identified for future years that could adversely impact on groups covered by statutory equality duties will be incorporated into the budget setting process which includes Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA). None of the budget changes reported will change any existing equalities and diversity policies.
- 5.3.2 The service department has been asked to look at the equalities and diversity implications in the increase in void re-let times and any potential impact on protected groups.

5.4 Risk Implications

- 5.4.1 A risk based assessment of General Fund balances is undertaken and reported to Council as part of the General Fund Budget setting process. The required level of 2018/19 General Fund balances was calculated at £2,760,570. This report forecasts General Fund balances of £4,177,368 and allocated reserve balances of £1,401,101 which is above the minimum balances required.
- 5.4.2 The HRA balances are projected to be £21,019,774. The level of HRA balances or revenue reserves risk assessed for 2018/19 is £2,144,950. The projected HRA balance is currently above the risked assessed level. However, it should be noted that the HRA holds balances for future debt repayments and the capital programme across a 30 year business planning period.

5.5 Policy Implications

- 5.5.1 The budget framework represents a development of a policy led budgeting approach across Council services and the overall Medium Term Financial Strategy.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

BD1 FINAL GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2018/2019 Council 28th February 2018

BD2 FINAL HRA RENT SETTING AND BUDGET REPORT 30th January 2018

Meeting: EXECUTIVE

Portfolio Area: Resources

Date: 14 MARCH 2019

3RD QUARTER MONITORING CAPITAL PROGRAMME - GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT



KEY DECISION

Authors – Anita Thomas Ext. 2430
Clare Fletcher Ext 2933
Contributor – Lee Busby Ext. 2730
Finance team and budget managers
Lead Officers – Clare Fletcher Ext. 2933
Contact Officer – Clare Fletcher Ext.2933

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update on the Council's 2018/19 and 2019/20 capital programme and seek approval for the revisions to the General Fund capital programme
- 1.2 To update Members on capital resources available to fund the capital programmes.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the 2018/19 General Fund capital programme net decrease in expenditure of £3.870Million be approved as summarised in section 4.1
- 2.2 That the 2018/19 Housing Revenue Account capital programme net decrease in expenditure of £0.911Million be approved as summarised in section 4.2.
- 2.3 That the 2019/20 General Fund increase in capital expenditure of £3.015Million (slippage from 2018/19) be approved, as summarised in paragraph 4.1.3.
- 2.4 That the 2019/20 HRA increase in capital expenditure of £1.036Million (£911K slippage from 2018/19 and £125K vehicles) be approved.

3 BACKGROUND

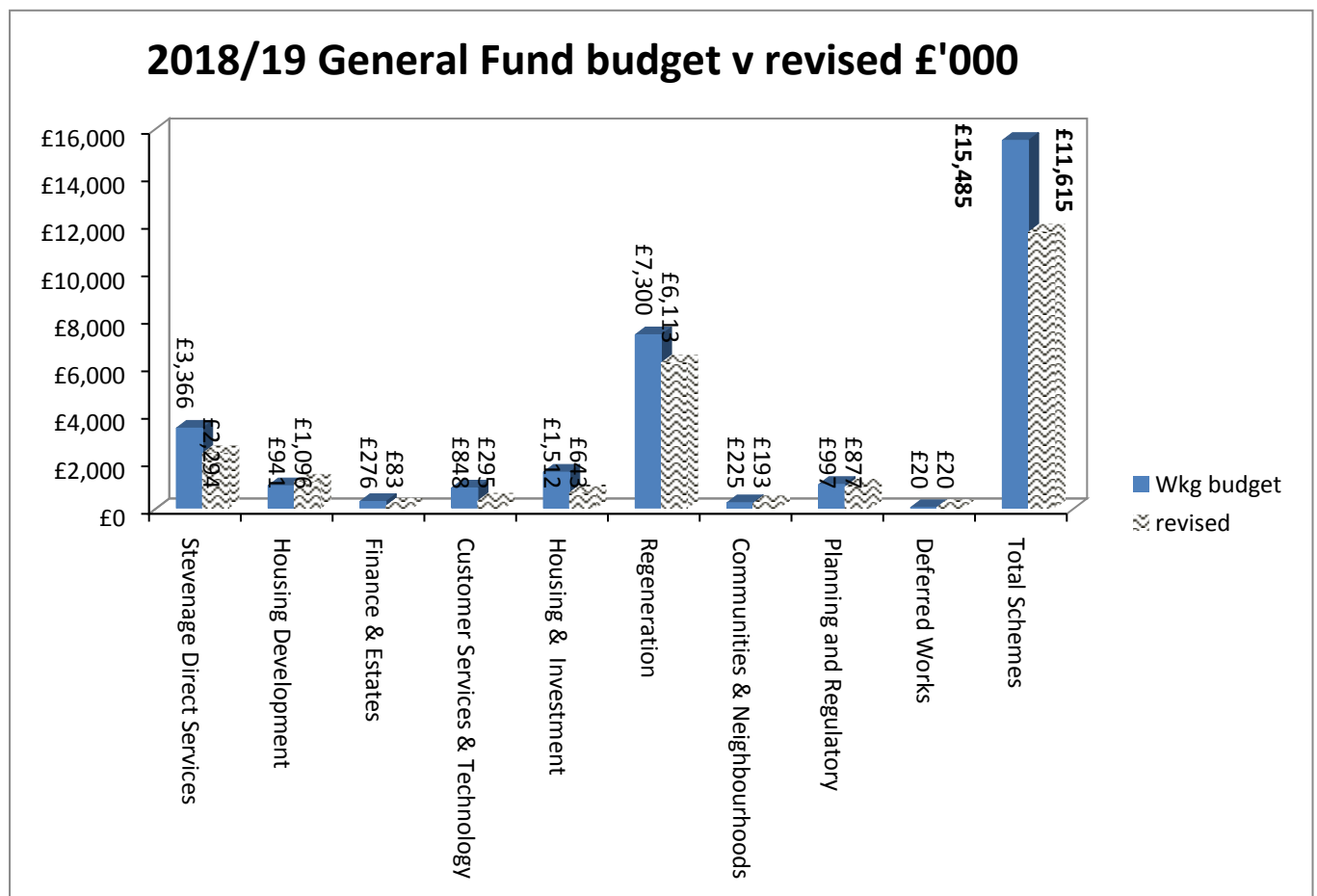
3.1 The latest 2018/19 capital programme was approved at Council on 27 February 2019. The 2018/19 programme totals for each fund were;

- General Fund £15,484,880
- Housing Revenue Account £23,527,800

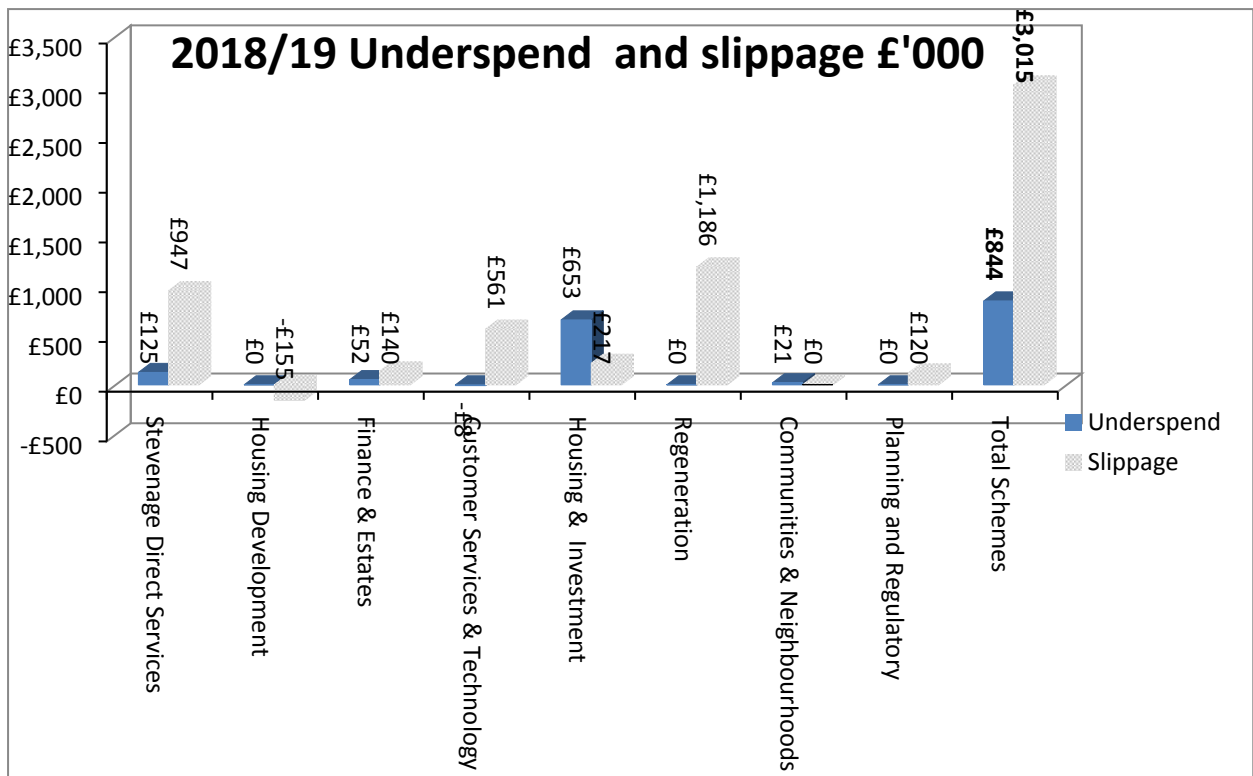
4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 2018/19 General Fund Capital Programme

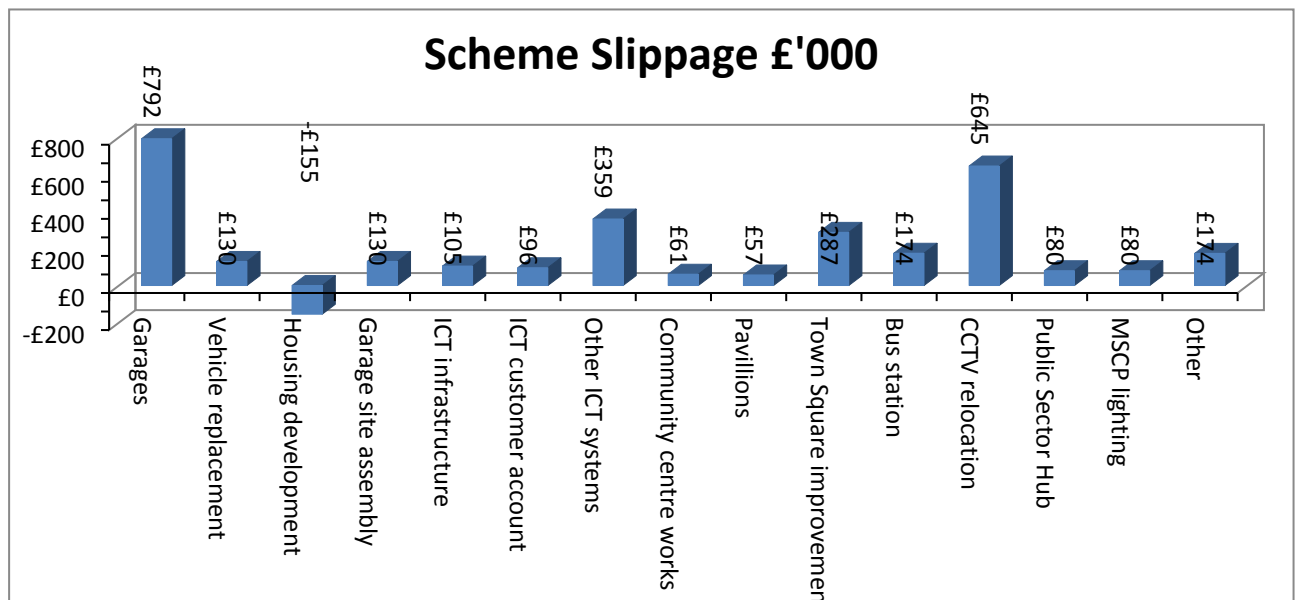
4.1.1 The 2018/19 General Fund capital programme of £15.485Million (detailed in backing document BD1) has reduced by £3.870Million to £11.615Million.



4.1.2 The net reduction in projected spend by Business Unit is summarised below and £3.015Million of this relates to scheme slippage.



4.1.3 The main areas of **scheme slippage** are summarised in the following chart with explanations for the larger areas of slippage.

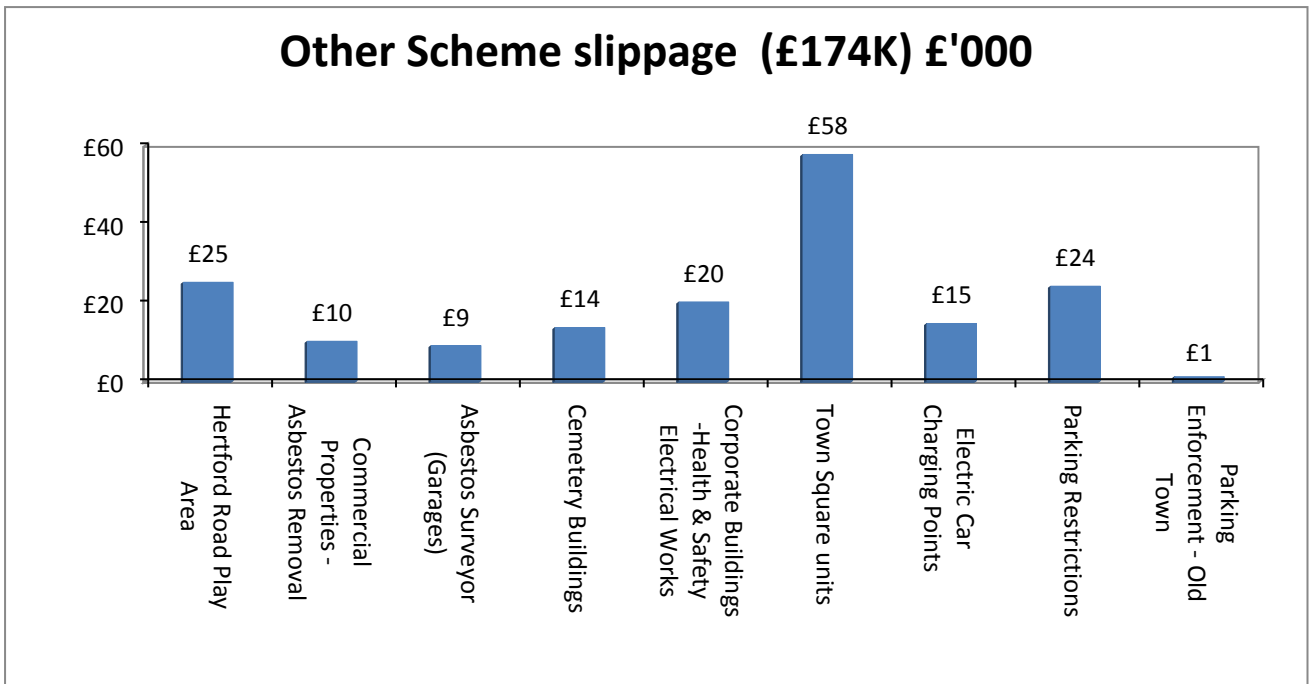


4.1.4 **Garages**- Two further pilot sites have been commenced in order to test and confirm operational arrangements with a view to the remainder of the works commencing in the new financial year. The works will be completed by the Major Repairs Contract (MRC) contractor.

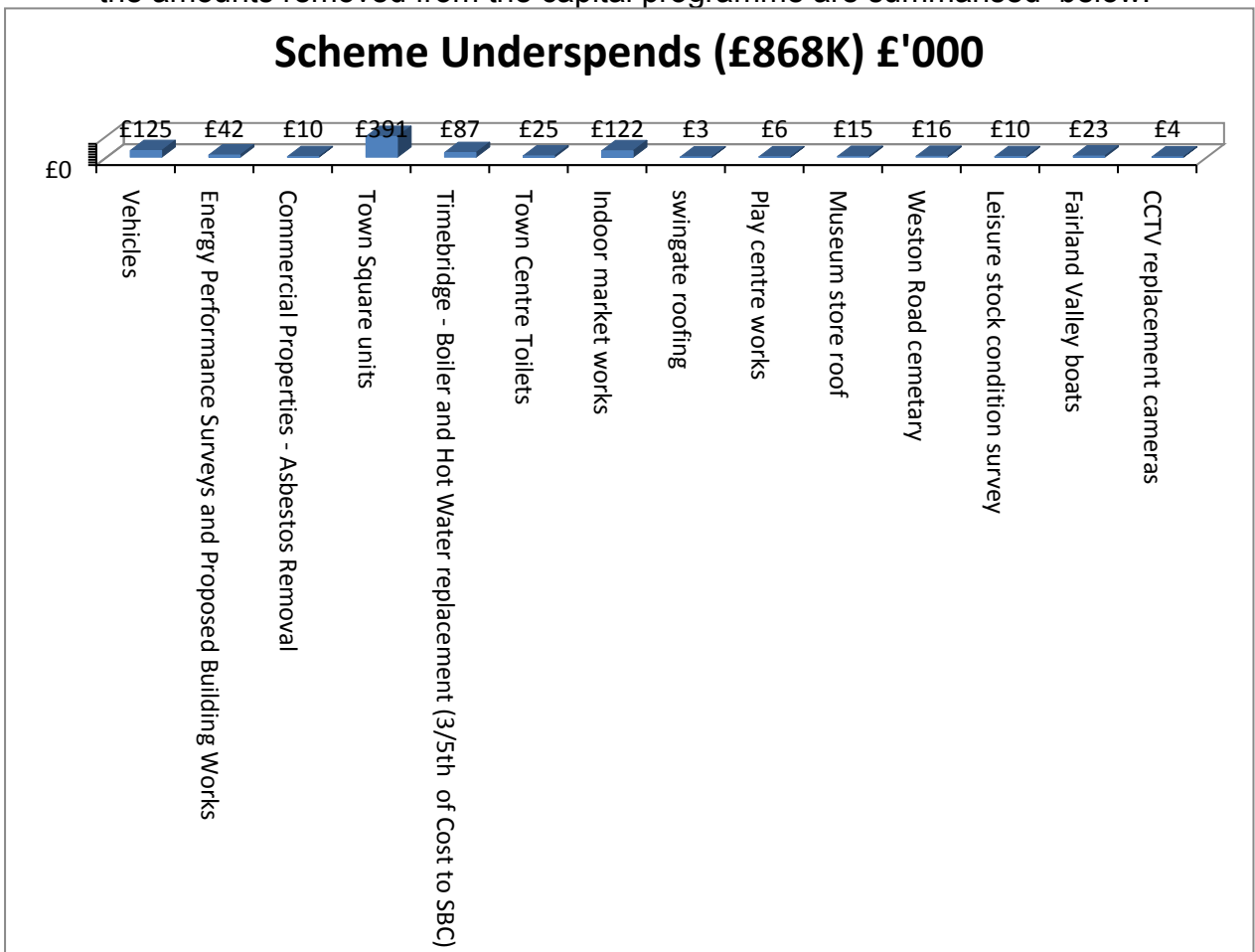
- 4.1.5 **Vehicles** - The working budget was £1.872Million with 86% projected to be delivered in year with a further £130K or 7% of vehicle purchases slipping into the next financial year. The slippage relates to specialist grave digging equipment which, following demonstrations and site testing did not meet the council's requirements resulting in the need to consider alternative products and a delay to an order being placed.
- 4.1.6 In addition five new caretaking vehicles totalling £125K (7%) were included in the fleet replacement, although they are part of Stevenage Direct Services Business Unit, they provide a service to the HRA and should be funded from the HRA. These vehicles are scheduled to be delivered in 2019/20 and have been removed from the General Fund programme and included in the HRA 2019/20 capital programme and funded from HRA resources.
- 4.1.7 **Housing Development** - The Ditchmore re-development scheme is now projected to spend a further £155K than profiled in the 2018/19 budget. There is approved funding in 2019/20 to fund the increase in spend and this is requested to be brought forward. Overall the scheme remains on budget.
- 4.1.8 **Garage Site Assembly** - Sites for disposal have been identified but rely on the acquisition of privately owned garages and other site assembly issues. Revised sites were identified as part of the garage report to the October 2018 Executive and these will be progressed in 2019/20. The underspend of £130k has been requested for slippage.
- 4.1.9 **ICT expenditure** – During Quarter 3 the Council appointed a new ICT Strategic Partnerships Manager who has been working in conjunction with the Assistant Director for Corporate Services to develop a new ICT strategy and supporting investment programme. Officers are continuing to work with Microsoft to identify future investment requirements which will help shape the new ICT Strategy and determine the three year ICT capital programme. The new strategy and roadmap is in development and is due to be reported to the Executive in June 2019.
- 4.1.10 The ICT Partnership Board have been reviewing and testing projects to ensure they align with the emerging strategy. Marketing testing and tendering for key ICT projects and deliverables is currently underway. At the 3rd quarter £552K of ICT associated spend has been allocated but is likely to be delivered in 2019/20 and is requested to be carried forward into the next financial year.
- 4.1.11 As part of the 2019/20 budget setting process Members have allocated additional staffing resources to deliver the ICT hardware and software programme. These include a new Microwave Link between Cavendish depot and Daneshill House, upgrade of the desktop environment, and security and storage requirements.
- 4.1.12 **Digital Services** - There is slippage of £33K relating to internet and the HR system for the purchase of additional modules now planned for 2019/20. The remaining £414K relates to schemes linked to the Future Town Future Council (FTFC) priority, Connecting to Our Customers. Three schemes, accounting for

£272K of that spend, are for the customer account, waste and recycling system and the new CRM system. Business cases have been drawn up and are being further developed to ensure that capital provision will deliver the required outputs and that the associated on-going revenue costs as a result of their implementation are affordable. A revenue pressure relating to the new CRM system has been included in the revenue monitoring report to this Executive.

- 4.1.13 There is slippage of £1.18 Million on four **Regeneration** schemes, of which £645K relates to the **CCTV relocation**. The progression of this scheme is reliant on third party cable providers to allow the scheme to be delivered. As a result the majority of the expenditure is now expected to be spent in 2019/20. However, the contractor is on site and negotiations with the cable providers are on-going, raising the possibility of increased expenditure this year, in which case the relevant spend will be brought forward. The other tenants in Swingate House are being relocated in the intervening period in readiness for SG1.
- 4.1.14 As part of the 2019/20 Capital Strategy report a request was made to bring forward £400K for **Town Square Improvements** from 2019/20, however based on current projections £287K of that funding is now likely to be spent in 2019/20. A planning application has already been submitted for the first part of the works to the surrounding buildings.
- 4.1.15 The Capital Strategy to February Council identified the funding needed (£6.1 Million) for the new **bus station**. In addition to that money, the Council was funding some up front design costs totalling £416K to enable the project to progress. It is now anticipated that only £242K will be spent in 2018/19, with a further £174K requested to be slipped into 2019/20.
- 4.1.16 There is also slippage of £100k in relation to the **Hub**. This was money which was brought forward to facilitate any design work which was required ahead of the RIBA 1 design process starting, but a focus on exploring additional interest from healthcare providers has meant that this money is not required until 2019/20.
- 4.1.17 The lighting improvements in the **MSCP car parks** has yet to be procured and will be started after the cladding works have been completed as part of the Park Place Development.
- 4.1.18 The remaining slippage of £174K (shown in the chart in para 4.1.3) is further detailed in the chart below and relates to schemes which are scheduled to be delivered in 2019/20.



4.1.19 In addition to the scheme slippage identified above there are scheme underspends of £880K (and overspends of £25K, which includes the removal of the caretaking vans of £125K as outlined in paragraph 4.1.5. A summary of the amounts removed from the capital programme are summarised below.

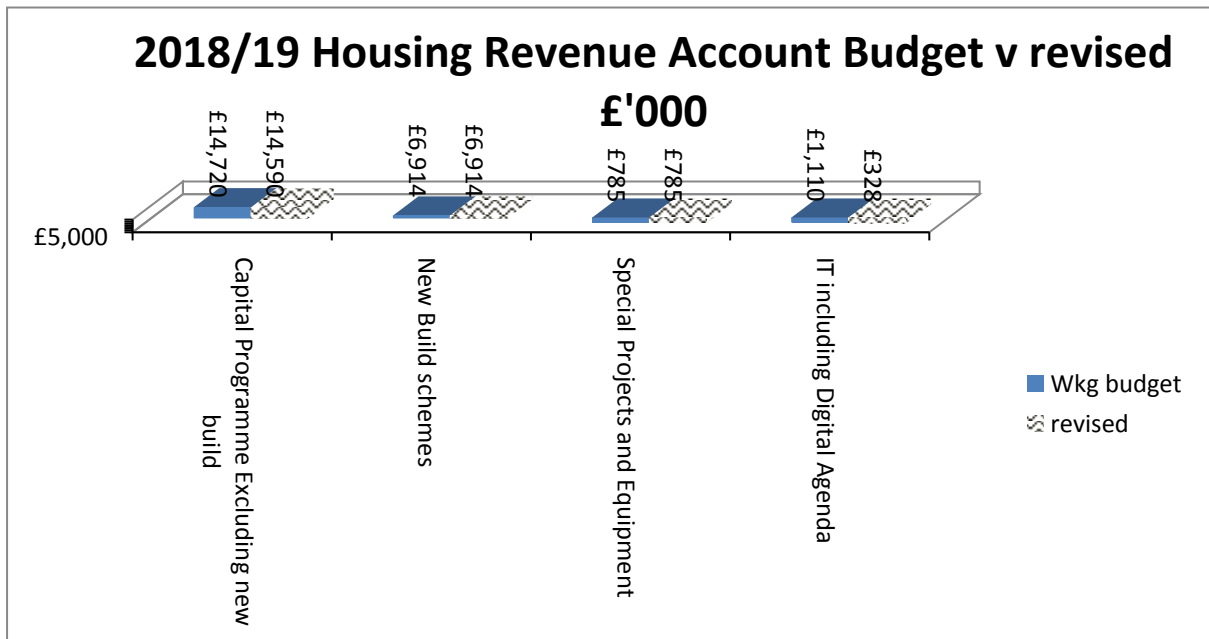


- 4.1.20 There is an underspend relating to units 3-29 **Town Square** of £391K, this relates to roofing works which have now been withdrawn due to the impending regeneration of the area. These works were funded from the Regeneration Assets reserve.
- 4.1.21 The works to **Timebridge boiler** cost £20,700 compared to the initial estimated cost of £108,000 because they were jointly funded by SBC and HCC and the scope of work was greatly reduced by HCC, the landlord following joint negotiations.
- 4.1.22 Budgeted works to the **indoor market** originally costed at £212K are now projected to cost £90K. These works related to lighting, heater replacements and electrical distribution boards. Work to the distribution boards have been completed. Anticipated lighting and heating unit failures have not occurred and officers have re-evaluated the options available. Replacement of components on heating units has resulted in extending the life of these units and a saving in the capital programme. In addition, fewer lighting unit replacements have been required contributing to an overall saving to the capital programme of £122K.
- 4.1.23 As part of a scheme to increase usage of the lake at Fairlands Valley officers identified a budget of £23K for pedaloes. Following discussions with the site operator the pedaloes have been purchased by SLL and SBC are no longer required to fund them.
- 4.1.24 There were minor overspends totalling £25K which are offset by the under spends identified above.
- 4.1.25 There is currently a further un-quantified pressure relating to the water management system at the leisure centre. Initial estimates for the works are in the region of £50K, however a detailed survey will be commissioned and the outcome will be included in a future capital report. It is anticipated these works will be required early in 2019/20.

4.2 **2018/19 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme**

- 4.2.1 Changes to the HRA capital strategy were reported as part of the Final Capital Strategy in February (Council 27/2/2019). The 2018/19 HRA capital programme of £23.528Million has reduced by £911K to £22.617Million as detailed in backing document BD2. The underspend of £911K is requested to be slipped into 2019/20.
- 4.2.2 ICT schemes account for £781K of the slippage which includes Connected to Our Customers and priority online tenant services, (see also para 4.1.12). Included in the slippage are ICT projects that support the housing transformation project such as on line tenant self-service and online application forms. These ICT solutions have been purchased and are due to

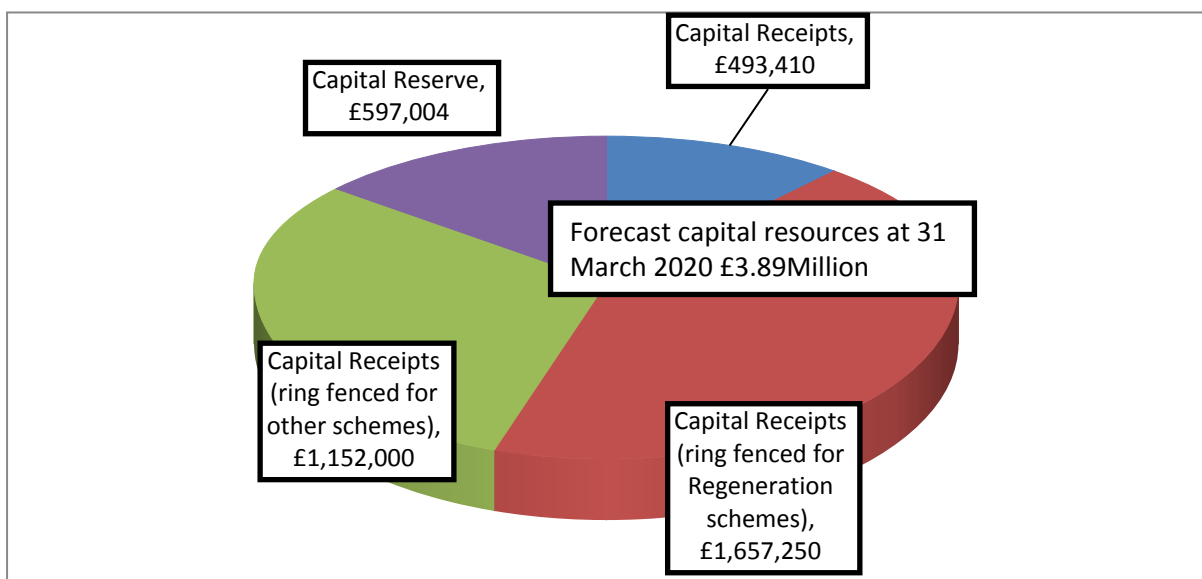
be rolled out in the coming months. Part of the budget is requested to be carried forward to 2019/20 to complete the implementation of these schemes.



4.3 Capital Resources General Fund

4.3.1 Projected capital receipts for the current year have been reviewed with no anticipated changes to those reported in the February Capital Strategy.

4.3.2 After financing the General Fund 2018/19 capital programme, the projected capital receipts and capital reserve are now estimated to be £3,899,664 at 31 March 2020 (£1,090,414 not ring-fenced), which is, £514,710 higher than the Capital Strategy report to February Council, because of underspend identified in this report. Forecast capital resources are summarised in the chart below.



4.3.3 Despite this increase in capital resources the CFO's recommendation is that part of the capital programme for 2019/20 remains on hold until sufficient receipts are realised or on track to be delivered. This is because of the level of receipts to be achieved in year versus the balance remaining at the year end.

4.4 Capital Resources Housing Revenue Account

4.4.1 The HRA had 19 right to buy (RTB) sales to the end of the 3rd quarter (27 RTB's in 17/18 to 3rd Quarter). As at 1 March 28 RTB sales had been completed, (one sale if exempt from pooling) and the projection for the full year is now 32 RTB's.

4.4.2 As Members are aware one for one receipts arising from RTB sales can only be used to part finance new social housing and must be spent within a three year timeframe. Receipts arising in 2016/17 must be spent during 2019/20 and the timing of expenditure will be critical in the next twelve months. Officers continue to monitor spend and look at opportunities to spend one for one receipts to minimise any requirement to return receipts to government.

4.5 2019/20 capital programme for General Fund and HRA schemes

4.5.1 Slippage of £3.015Million for the General Fund and slippage of £0.911Million for the HRA schemes to 2019/20 has been incorporated into this report (para 4.1.3 and 4.2.1).

4.5.2 The HRA capital budget for 2019/20 has been increased by £125k for the purchase of replacement caretaker vehicles.

4.5.3 The newly identified pressure relating to water management system at the leisure centre, is not currently included in the General Fund capital programme as full scoping and costing of the scheme has not yet been completed.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 This report is of a financial nature and financial implications are contained within the body of the report.

5.1.2 The cumulative changes made to the original General Fund and HRA capital budgets remains within the £250,000 (increase) variation limit delegated to the Executive for each fund.

5.2 Legal Implications

5.2.1 None identified at this time.

5.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications

5.3.1 Spending departments complete EqIA where appropriate. This report has not identified any changes to the capital programme which would trigger a review of existing EqIA's.

5.4 Risk Implications

5.4.1 The Capital programme is funded from a number of sources including capital receipts and borrowing. The timing and value of the capital receipt cannot be known with certainty.

5.4.2 HRA new build programme is funded 30% by one for one RTB receipts. These receipts need to be applied to eligible schemes within three years of receipt. If spend is incurred after the three year time frame it is no longer eligible and the receipt has to be returned to government with interest calculated at base rate plus 4%.

5.4.3 The capital programme includes numerous external contracts and third parties which can influence the deliverability of the programme. Any delays to contract procurement and/or mobilisation can cause planned expenditure to slip. Regular procurement meetings are held with Officers to mitigate the risks of the procurement process.

5.4.4 While cash balances are high the treasury management policy is to use internal borrowing. When actual borrowing is taken interest rates may be higher than those prevailing now. The Council manages this risk by reviewing and updating its cash flow forecast and Treasury Management strategy regularly.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- BD1 – General Fund Capital Strategy
- BD2 – Housing Revenue Account Capital Strategy
- Capital Strategy 2018/19 – 2023/24 – Council 27th February 2019

Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area Housing & Investment
Date 14th March 2019



HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2018-2023

KEY DECISION

Authors Lydia Butcher | 2308
Andrew Garside | 2545
Lead Officers Jaine Cresser | 2028
Contact Officer Lydia Butcher | 2308

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To seek approval of the Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024.

1.2 HMAB

For information the housing management advisory board, and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan working group, have considered the strategy and endorsed its proposed approach.

PHAG

Members were in support of the AMS however made some recommendations in the way that data tables and graphics could be presented to make the context clearer. It was discussed that data could be presented in a number of different ways and these amendments have been made as appropriate.

Members also observed that Stevenage had several property types of varying age range and this issue had to be taken into consideration in the AMS.

Some properties were hard to let due to bedroom sizes and bedroom size data has now been incorporated into the stock data tables within strategy.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the HRA Asset management strategy in Appendix D be approved subject to any suggested amendments resulting from the executive.
- 2.2 That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director (Housing and Investment) in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People to finalise the strategy and related action plan.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Housing Asset Management Strategy (AMS) seeks to set out the underlying principles which sit behind excellent asset management for SBC and the key strategic projects and programmes to ensure the council derives maximum value from its assets whilst providing high quality homes for our tenants.

3.2 Benefits

The asset management strategy will allow us to meet our strategic goals of having fit for purpose, safe, well maintained and well presented stock, with a view to optimising housing development opportunities where appropriate.

Below are some examples of the benefits to be seen over the lifetime of the strategy.



3.3 HRA business plan

The AMS is one of the main components of the wider HRA business plan. The three core elements of the HRA business plan are as follows;



The HRA business plan is SBC’s strategic plan for managing, maintaining and developing its housing stock. It sets out the council’s short-to-medium term plans and priorities for its housing management services and provides a long term (30 year) perspective on stock investment and financial planning.

The plan focuses on the core business of managing and investing in the council’s residential properties and associated HRA-owned land.

3.4 The AMS inter-relates with a range of strategies that together form the council's corporate strategy framework. In developing the strategy, careful regard has been given to aligning housing objectives and plans with FTFC corporate objectives and priorities and other key strategy documents. A range of programmes, policies and plans enable the council to implement the improvements, activities and investment needed to meet its housing objectives.

3.5 **A new direction**

In recent years the AMS has focused on the delivery of the Decent Homes Standard and long term investment in the existing stock based on stock condition and life cycle projections, but has not taken due account of development options and regeneration plans. The AMS now has a wider scope than was previously the case and explores options for undertaking rationalisation and redevelopment of the councils housing stock and land assets, where this has the potential to support the council's wider financial, regeneration and affordable housing objectives.

3.6 In developing the 2019 AMS the Housing Quality Network (HQN) asset management strategy toolkit and best practice example has been utilised to ensure the document contains all the vital and necessary information to enable a focussed, efficient and endorsed approach to asset management.

3.7 Although the AMS sets out the strategy for the housing assets, it is important that they are considered and managed in the context of SBC's General Fund assets, as any major investment project will almost inevitably require some 'trade off' between the HRA and General Fund. This situation will particularly arise where either set of assets are experiencing significant investment or redevelopment such as:

- Maisonettes situated above commercial/retail units
- Garages adjacent to housing
- Local neighbourhood centres, comprising a mixture of shops, community buildings and housing.

3.8 The strategy contains a series of key strategic aims and associated objectives. The objectives are subsequently summarised in the action plan, which will become the principal method for reporting and monitoring the delivery of the strategy.

3.9 Local and national policies have been considered as part of a framework to inform the strategic approach and the aim of this strategy is to explain some of the key policies that will impact on our approach to asset management.

3.10 **AMS – 2014**

In the previous 2014 strategy the output of the asset review focussed on 4 main challenges;

- To continue to maintain homes to the decent homes standard
- To undertake a programme of re-investment in poorly performing properties to ensure a positive return from all our assets
- To ensure that the existing sheltered stock is fit-for-purpose, through investment and re-modelling
- To ensure that procurement activities are robustly planned and delivered and achieve value for money

3.11 A number of outcomes were achieved through the 2014 asset review; including;

- Conversion of hard to let sheltered bedsit accommodation to self-contained 1 bedroom flats.
- Creating additional units in existing assets to increase their viability and provide additional accommodation for example Silkin Court and Wellfield Court.
- Sites identified for disposal and redevelopment due to not being sustainable in the long term for example Walpole & Asquith Court.
- Works carried out and further works planned to improve our retained sheltered accommodation including communal works and remodelling.
- Further schemes identified where additional accommodation can be created and in doing this make asset groups sustainable in the long term.

3.12 **AMS - 2019**

In developing the 2019 refreshed version the HQN asset management strategy toolkit and best practice example has been utilised to ensure the document contains all the vital and necessary information to enable a focussed, efficient and endorsed approach to asset management.

3.13 The 2019 strategy moves the focus more towards understanding the viability and redevelopment opportunities of the councils housing stock and land assets. The housing stock represents the council's most valuable asset and its largest liability in investment terms. The condition of the council's properties is also of central importance to our tenants and they consistently select the improvement of their homes and a good repairs service as their top priorities. The proposed strategic approach is to focus on the following core strategic aims;

- **All property to be well maintained and well presented**
- **To promote growth and regeneration**
- **To reduce carbon footprint and improve sustainability**
- **To reduce repairs costs**

In order to meet these strategic aims, a series of objectives have been set with a linked action plan for each objective. The objectives are detailed in **APPENDIX A – AMS strategic objectives**.

- 3.14 To support the strategy a one page ‘plan on a page’ has been designed to detail the strategy’s structure, approach, and key areas of focus.

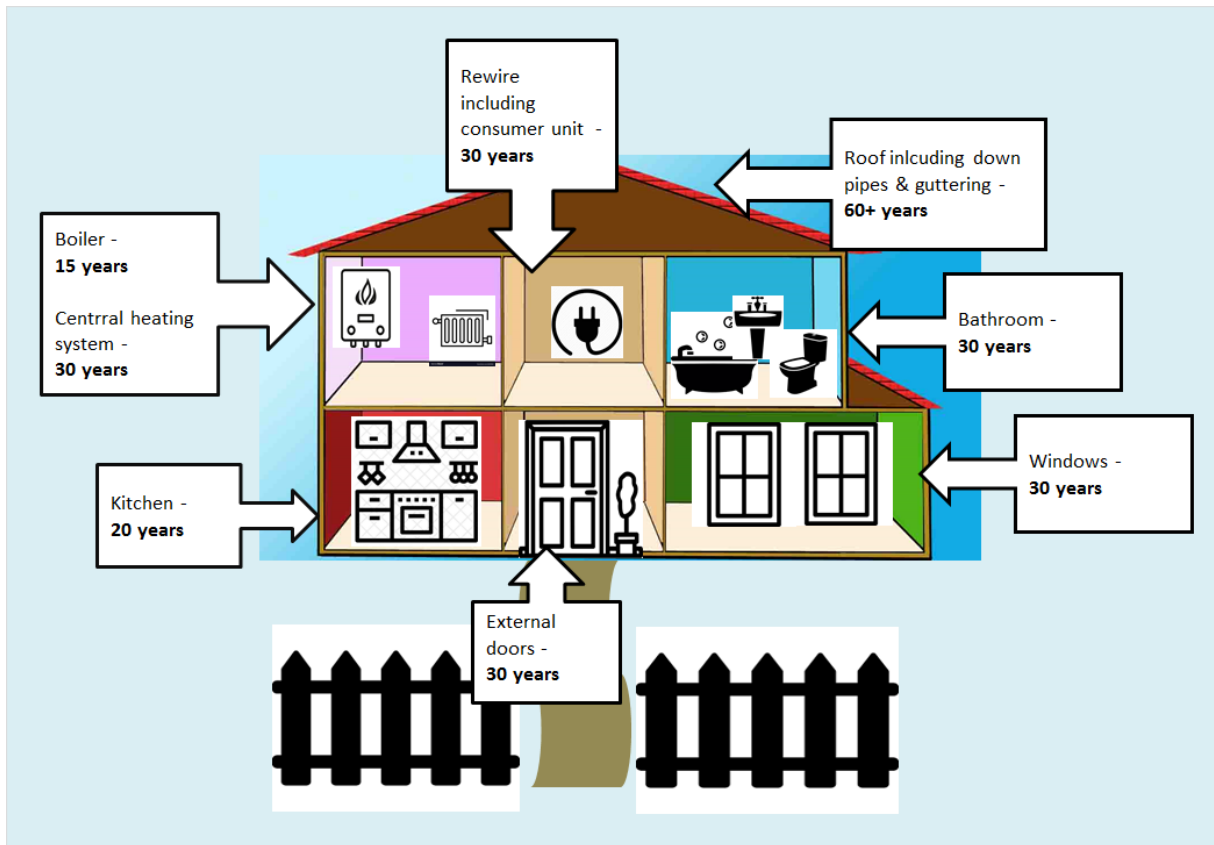
As well as detailing the AMS structure it highlights the key aims, objectives, and associated tasks to achieve the desired outcomes.

The ‘plan on a page’ can be found in **APPENDIX B – AMS Plan on a page (print A3)**

- 3.15 The strategy action plan will be regularly reviewed by HMAB and refreshed as appropriate. Costs associated with delivering the strategy will be reviewed annually as part of the MTFS. Full governance for the strategy will be outlined in the final draft document.

3.16 **THE ASSET MANAGEMENT STANDARD**

The asset management standard is currently based on decent homes lifecycles, meaning the timeframe in which a property element meets the end of its maintainable life.



The new AMS action plan looks at reviewing asset management lifecycles with consideration being given to the fact that planned maintenance programmes are to be cyclically budgeted for and delivered, keeping the housing stock maintained and well presented for longer. The review will be completed with full consultation with customers and key stakeholders.

3.17 **Housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS)**

As the decent homes standard is set to move towards a focus on building safety the HHSRS will become an ever more important focus when assessing a property.

HHSRS replaced the fitness standard as the statutory element of the Decent Home Standard in 2006. HHSRS is a risk assessment procedure and is concerned with avoiding or at the very least, minimising potential hazards.

To be decent, a dwelling should be free of category 1 hazards, and the existence of such hazards should be a trigger for remedial action unless practical steps cannot be taken without disproportionate expense or disruption.

3.18 HHSRS is captured during stock condition surveys and this strategy action plan looks at how that information is fed back into planned programmes of work or repairs and maintenance schedules.

3.19 **STRATEGIC ASSET PERFORMANCE MODEL**

Key to delivering the AMS is the need to assess the current viability of the council's stock. It is essential to not only consider viability in terms of financial investment but to look at ways to optimise the stock and review the potential for future opportunities. The 2019 asset performance model will look at factors around; demand, asset performance, opportunity for development, financial investment and neighbourhood influences to name a few. The draft strategic asset performance model can be found in **APPENDIX C – Strategic asset performance model**.

3.20 The new AMS will review the 2014 performance model and assess the current position of the stock based on this criteria. We will include results for the Government's -1% rent decrease, which was introduced for four years from April 2016, to ensure that we can review where our stock would sit with and without this financial impact. The stock will then be assessed against the new performance model using more detailed and comprehensive criteria, which also considers housing development factors for example development opportunity and the potential for increasing housing density.

3.21 It is critical at this stage to consider other influences such as outcomes of the general fund viability model to ensure that all opportunities are exploited and that the housing stock is optimised. This could include looking at redevelopment of garage sites and neighbourhood centres.

3.22 **REDUCED REPAIRS COSTS**

A key piece of work resulting from the strategy will be to identify a way in which reduction in repairs costs can be measured.

3.23 **Planned maintenance**

The strategy will take account of the need for planned maintenance following our major improvement programmes and a budget will be allocated for this. A requirement for this budget has been identified in the HRA business plan.

A cyclical planned maintenance approach should reduce day to day maintenance of these elements. However in order to support this ideology, we first need to understand what repairs budgets are being spent on. It is expected that over the last 5 years a shift in repairs being reported and those we respond to has significantly changed however further work needs to be carried out to fully understand the shift and the impact on the HRA.

3.24 **Repairs process review**

The strategy action plan has identified that a robust audit of repairs will help us to identify where cost reductions can and should be made. This may include not only the repairs that we carry out but strengthening internal processes for example following through with appropriate recharging to

tenants where applicable. This work must complement the planned investment programmes and ensure that whilst repairs costs can be reduced tenants still receive the same level of excellent service and homes continue to be well maintained.

3.25 **Impact on our tenants**

It is widely considered that a well maintained and well-presented housing stock can have a positive impact on the way tenants and customers feel about their homes and neighbourhoods and this in turn can help to drive down repairs and maintenance costs. With the regeneration of Stevenage town centre and other substantial improvements/developments being carried out across the town, it is important to ensure the quality of our stock keeps pace with the changes that are taking place. This in turn should aid the ongoing generation of pride and a sense of community amongst residents from all housing tenures.

3.26 **KNOWN CHALLENGES**

A number of significant challenges during the life of the strategy have been recognised but the full implications are not yet known. These relate to statutory changes that may not only affect the standards to which we physically maintain and improve our assets but in the way that they are managed. Most significantly last year the Government issued a green paper seeking views on the government's vision for social housing providing safe and secure homes which is further referred to below.

3.27 **The Social housing green paper**

The tragic fire at Grenfell shone a spotlight on social housing and its residents and has led to the need for greater recognition that social housing residents' voices need to be heard.

The Hackitt Review also addresses the need to review decent homes standards with a focus on building safety and an overhaul of building regulations in relation to this.

Although at this time we do not know the full extent of the impact of these changes it is imperative to consider these as part of the strategy and the associated risks these changes may bring.

Following the Grenfell fire tragedy the Government issued a green paper to consult on its safety management proposals. The paper outlined the desire to rebalance the relationship between residents and landlords, to tackle stigma and ensure social housing can be both a safety net and a springboard to home ownership.

3.28 The social housing paper sets out five principles, which it says will underpin a 'new, fairer deal for social housing residents'. These principles are;

- Ensuring homes are decent and safe

- Effective resolution of complaints
- Empowering residents and strengthening the regulator
- Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities
- Finally, but also crucially expanding the supply of new homes.

We have captured these principles in our 4 broad areas that are detailed in our property aims. When it comes to expanding supply, the Council's emerging development strategy recognises the importance of promoting all tenures of housing so that the acute housing needs are met.

3.29 The Green Paper proposals are likely to have a financial impact on the HRA business plan that is currently unknown. They will also affect the way we approach building safety, resident engagement regarding safety issues, and the requirement for more safety focussed roles in the delivery of our planned programmes of work.

3.30 The Government wants to use the Green Paper to consider a review of the decent homes standard - areas to be considered are:

- whether the decent homes standard is demanding enough and reflects Government priorities
- whether safety measures that now apply to the private rented sector, covering smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, should also be applied to social housing
- whether the energy performance of social homes should be upgraded to Energy Performance Certificate Band C by 2030 wherever practical/affordable

3.31 Any enhancement to the decent home standard could have significant financial implications for our housing business plan.

3.32 A corporate health and safety action plan has been specifically designed to address the key recommendations outlined in the Hackitt review and will be included in AMS action plan

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

4.1 The housing stock represents the council's most valuable asset and its largest liability in investment terms. The condition of the council's properties is also of central importance to tenants and they consistently select the improvement of their homes and a good repairs service as their top priorities.

- 4.2 The asset management strategy will allow us to meet our strategic goals having fit for purpose, safe, well maintained and efficient stock, with a view to optimising housing development opportunities where appropriate.
- 4.3 Best practice approaches have been considered in the development of the strategy.
- 4.4 All options are contained within the strategy.

4.5 **Consultation**

HMAB have been briefed on the approach to the strategy and have endorsed the principles of the document. Before the final strategy is presented to Executive we will have consulted with the following groups;

- Housing management and advisory board
- HRA business plan working group
- Assets and capital board
- Portfolio holders advisory group

5 **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial Implications

There are no changes to the current MTFS as a result of the proposed strategy. However, there are a number of potential impacts highlighted in 3.27 that could have a financial impact in future years. If realised, these potential costs would need to be accommodated within the HRA business plan, but the recent lifting of the HRA borrowing cap should enable the flexibility to meet these demands.

6 **APPENDICES**

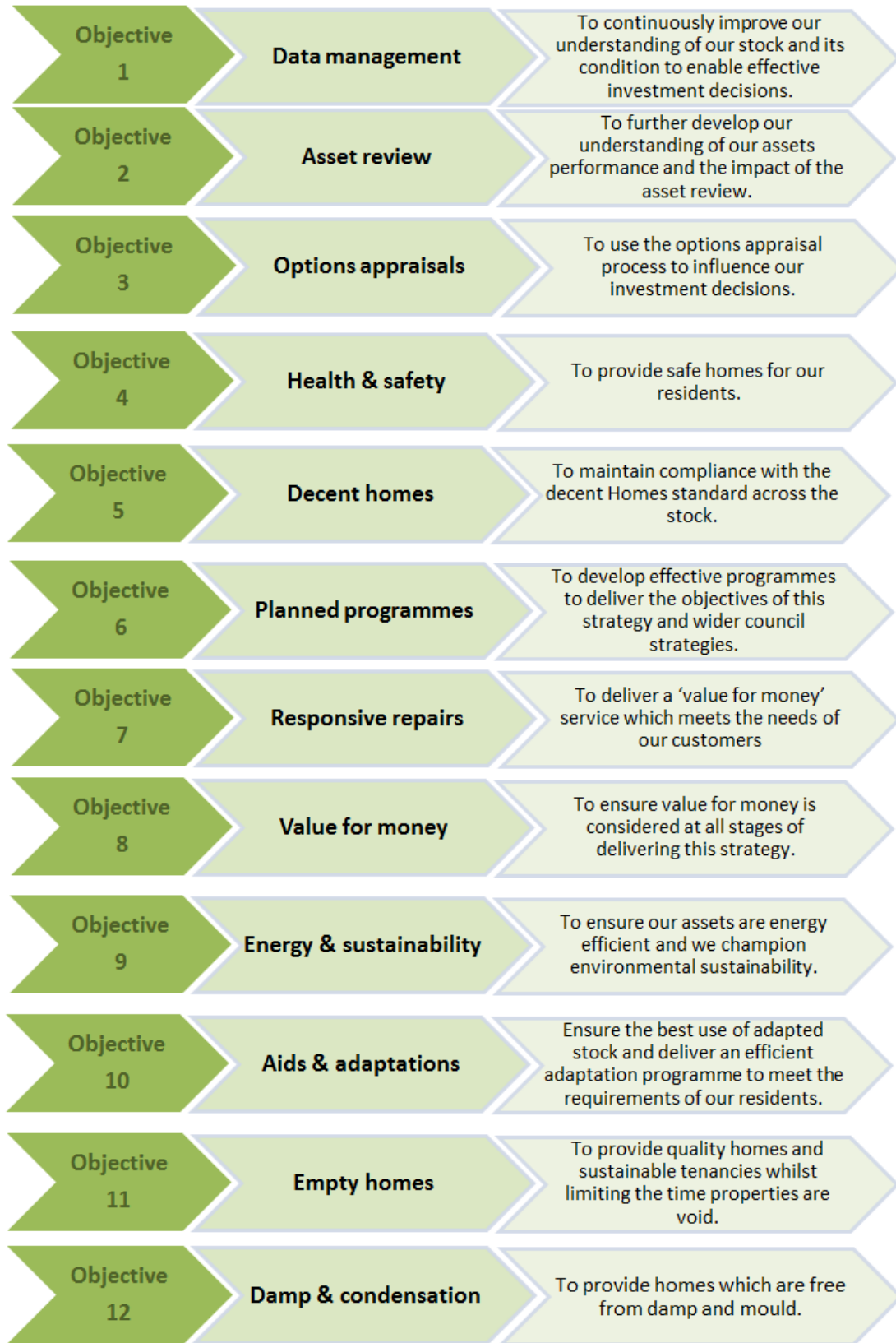
- A APPENDIX A – AMS strategic objectives
- B APPENDIX B – AMS Plan on a page (A3)
- C APPENDIX C – Strategic asset performance model
- D APPENDIX D – Draft Asset Management Strategy

7 **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

BD1-BD3 Appendices to Draft Asset Management Strategy

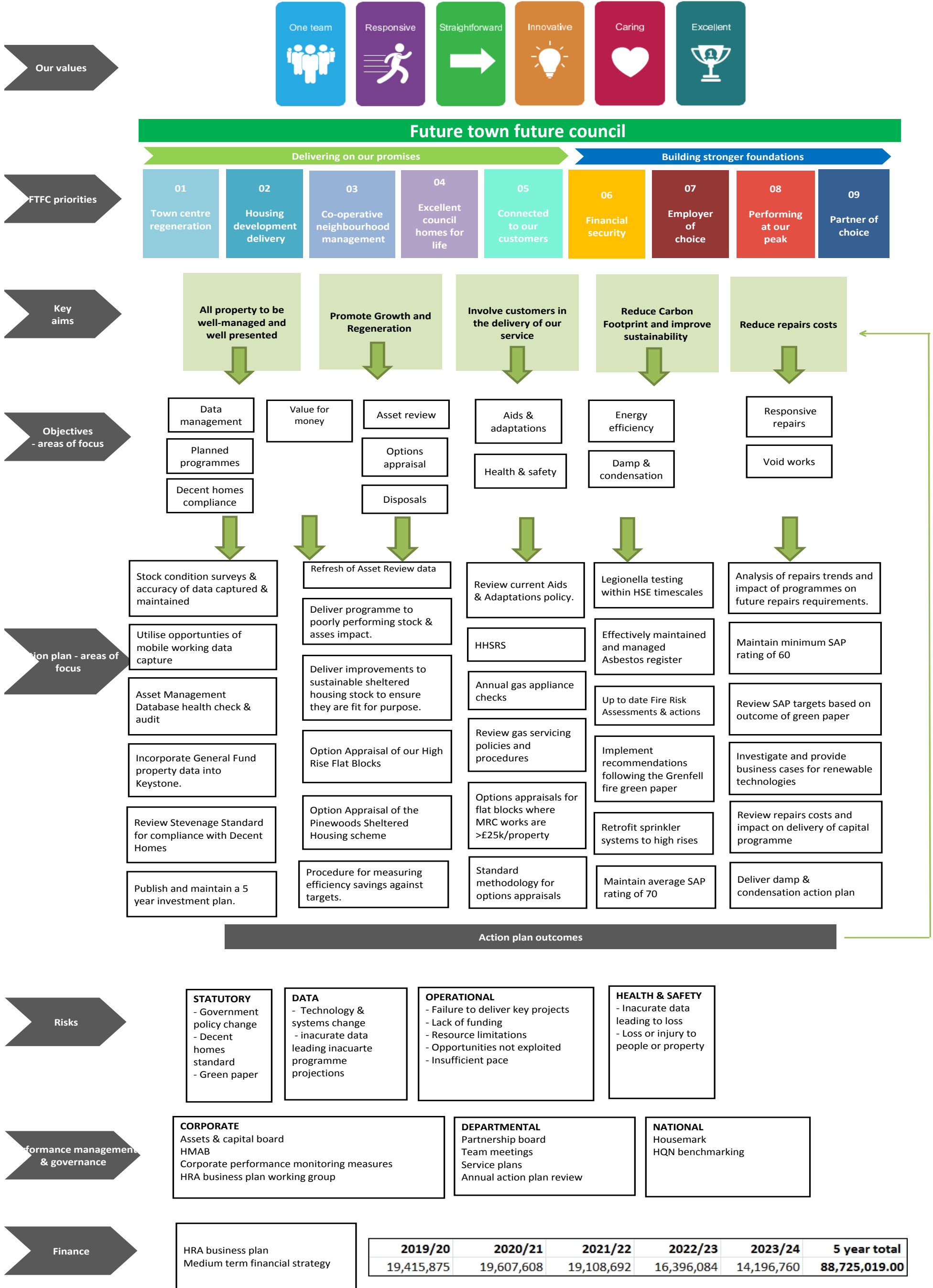
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APPENDIX A – AMS Strategic objectives



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HRA ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - PLAN ON A PAGE

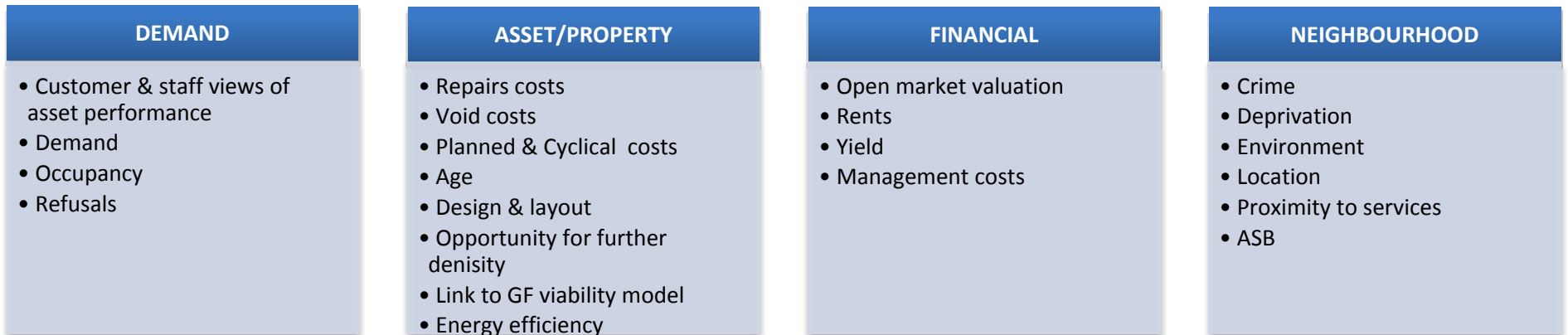


Asset management approach - Continuous process of 'Plan', 'Do', 'Review'; taking input from the Councils Corporate Plan Priorities and changing and updating to meet service needs, variations to the changing property environment, and requirements for management of risk. This enables clarity of direction, flexibility and speed of action to deliver a first class service and an effective and efficiently managed portfolio.

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STRATEGIC ASSET PERFORMANCE MODEL

STRATEGIC ASSET PERFORMANCE MODEL TESTS



CLASSIFICATION GROUPING

CLASS A -(GREEN)

- Well Performing and sustainable assets continue to invest.

CLASS B - (AMBER)

- Assets which may have some issues, review required to re-classify as red or green.

CLASS C - (RED)

- Assets which are less well-performing and need further review and/or option appraisal.

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HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2019 to 2024

Housing asset management strategy 2019-2023

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Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

1.0 Introduction

The housing stock represents the council's most valuable asset and its largest liability in investment terms. The condition of the council's properties is also of central importance to tenants and they consistently select the improvement of their homes and a good repairs service as their top priorities.

In the context of self-financing, ensuring finite resources are used in the most cost effective manner is key to the council's asset management and business planning approach. It is essential to have a sound understanding of the asset base and future investment requirements and options in order to achieve this.

The Housing Asset Management Strategy (AMS) seeks to set out the underlying principles which sit behind excellent asset management for SBC and the key strategic projects and programmes which will ensure that SBC derives maximum value from its assets.

SBC has had significant success in implementing the plan outlined in the previous asset management strategy 2014, with the key objectives;

- to continue to maintain homes to the decent homes standard
- to undertake a programme of re-investment in poorly performing properties to ensure a positive return from all our assets
- to ensure that the existing sheltered stock is fit-for-purpose, through investment and re-modelling
- to ensure that procurement activities are robustly planned and delivered and achieve value for money

Projects including but not limited to;

- delivery of a significant decent homes and external works programme
- conversion of hard to let sheltered bedsit accommodation to self-contained 1 bedroom flats.
- creating additional units in existing assets to increase their viability and provide additional accommodation for example Silkin Court and Wellfield Court.
- disposal and redevelopment of some sheltered accommodation identified as not being sustainable in the long term for example Walpole & Asquith Court.
- works carried out and further works planned to improve our retained sheltered accommodation including communal works and remodelling.
- further schemes identified where additional accommodation can be created and in doing this make asset groups sustainable in the long term.

This success demonstrates the benefits of an active asset management strategy, flowing from the Council's leadership and vision, aimed at delivering 'excellent council homes for life'.

This new asset management strategy for 2019-2024 builds on the success of the previous plan and responds to the changes and influences that are likely to affect Stevenage over the next five years.

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

It is a challenging environment with on-going budgetary pressures across the public sector together with major changes and developments in the town centre, the delivery of the council's housing development and communities and neighbourhood programmes, and critically major changes to government policy and standards within housing.

Delivery of a successful asset management strategy is a key component in enabling Stevenage to grow and prosper.

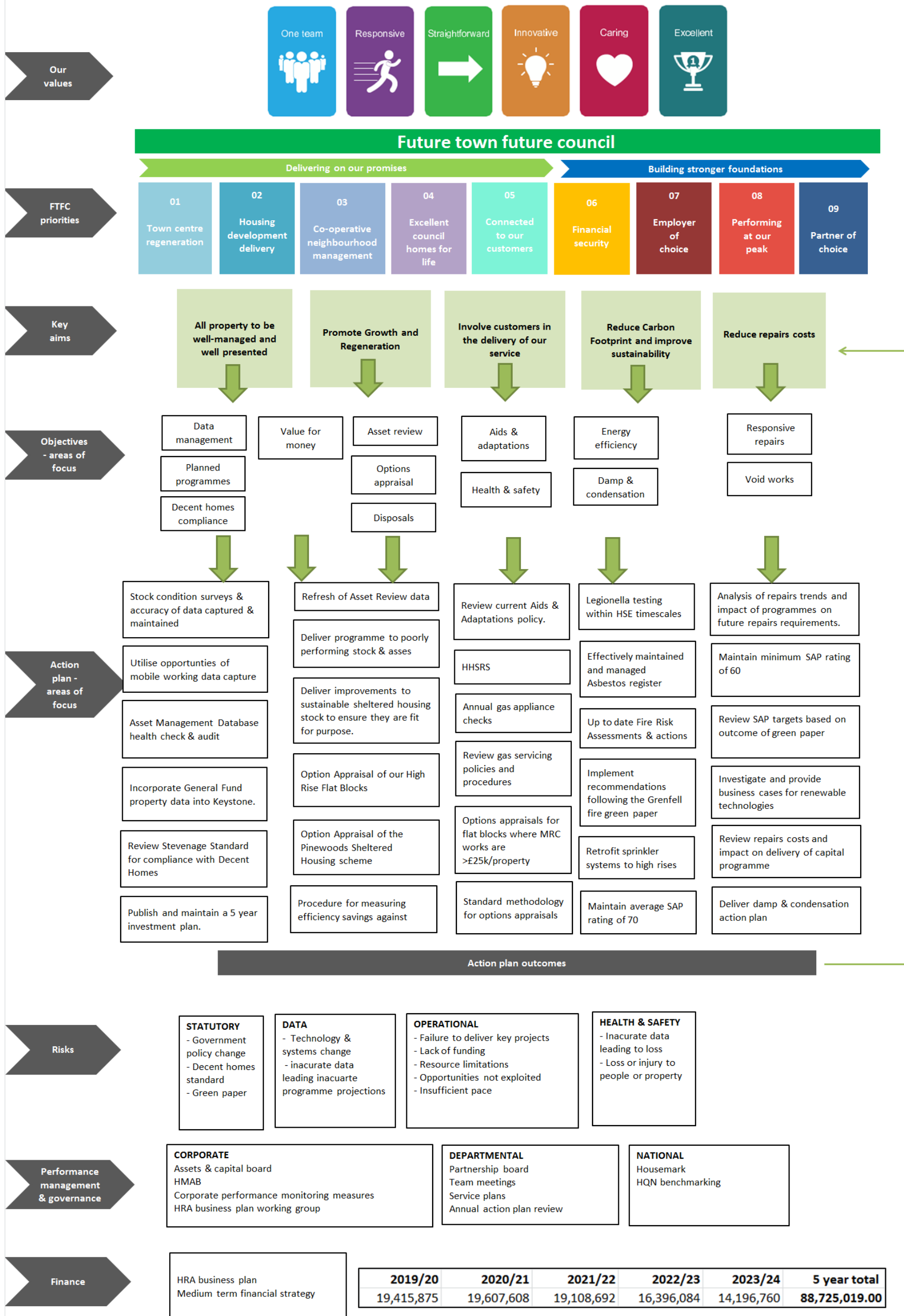
In recent years the AMS has focused on the delivery of the Decent Homes Standard and long term investment in the existing stock based on stock condition and life cycle projections, without building in rationalisation and regeneration plans. The AMS now has a wider scope than was previously the case and explores options for undertaking rationalisation and redevelopment of the councils housing stock and land assets, where this has the potential to support the council's wider financial, regeneration and affordable housing objectives.

Although the AMS sets out the strategy for the housing assets, it is important that they are managed in the context of SBC's General Fund assets, as any major investment project will almost inevitably require some 'trade off' between the HRA and General Fund. This situation will particularly arise where either set of assets are experiencing significant investments or redevelopment such as:

- maisonettes situated above commercial/retail units
- garages adjacent to housing
- local neighbourhood centres, comprising a mixture of shops, community buildings and housing.

The 2019 asset management strategy has been summarised in a one page graphic 'Plan on a page'.

HRA ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - PLAN ON A PAGE



Asset management approach - Continuous process of 'Plan', 'Do', 'Review'; taking input from the Councils Corporate Plan Priorities and changing and updating to meet service needs, variations to the changing property environment, and requirements for management of risk. This enables clarity of direction, flexibility and speed of action to deliver a first class service and an effective and efficiently managed portfolio.

2.0 Strategic aims

Throughout this document there are a series of key strategic aims and subsequent objectives, key actions and outputs for each objective are highlighted with a series of green boxes. The action tasks are subsequently summarised in the **action plan at section 9.0**, which will become the principal method for reporting and monitoring the delivery of the strategy.

The strategy focuses on the following key strategic aims;

- **All property to be well managed and well presented**
- **To promote growth and regeneration**
- **To involve customers in the delivery of our service**
- **To reduce carbon footprint and improve sustainability**
- **To reduce repairs costs**

The ambition with these core aims is to provide Stevenage customers' homes that are fit for purpose, sustainable, and in thriving and desirable neighbourhoods.

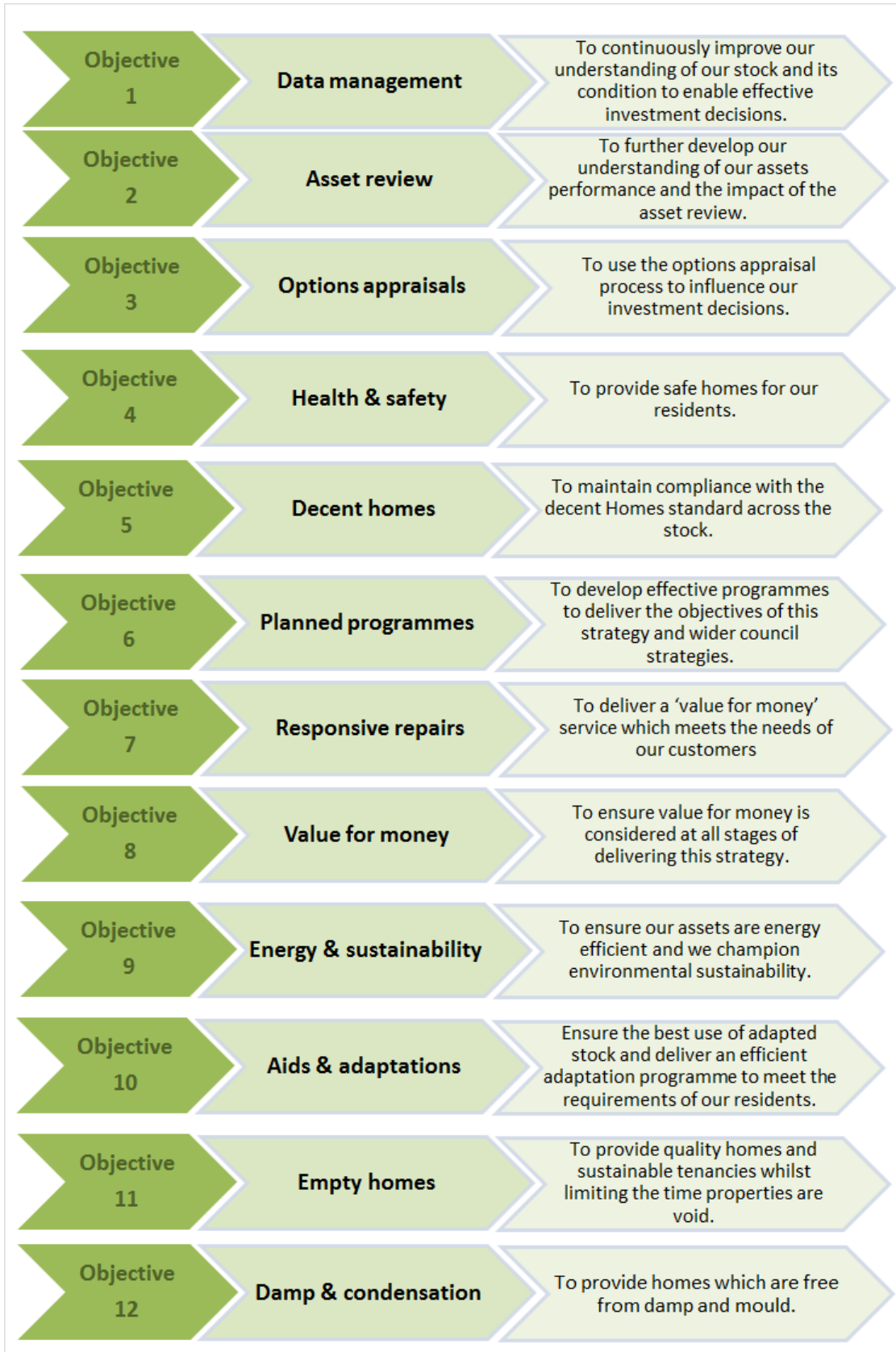
2.1 Involving our customers

One of the strategy's key aims is to involve residents in the delivery of our service. This key aim links directly to the councils Future Town Future Council priority 05 Connected to our customers.

We are committed to deliver social value through all of our investment programmes, and this is scored element of all our major procurement exercises. This ensures that we can leave a lasting legacy for all residents of Stevenage not just our tenants.

We are committed to include residents in shaping the delivery of the strategy and over the life of this strategy we will develop suitable approaches to enable us to this. We will engage with customers to seek their opinions on all reviews we carry out.

2.2 Strategic objectives



3. Context

This strategy is part of a framework of local and national policies and the aims of this strategy is to explain some of the key policies that will impact on our approach to Asset Management.

3.1 National Context

A number of national policies impact on asset management, principal among these are:

- Compliance with the Decent Homes Standard
- Reducing carbon emissions and improving energy efficiency
- Meeting all legislative compliance regarding Health & Safety

During the lifetime of this strategy there are other potential changes to legislation and regulations which is likely to impact on the way we manage and maintain our assets including:

- Changes to Fire Safety Legislation
- Carbon Reduction Targets
- Welfare Reform
- High Value Voids
- Changes to rent setting regulations

3.2 Local Context

Links to other Corporate Strategies including context

The AMS is one of the main components of the wider HRA business plan. The three core elements of the HRA business plan are as follows;



Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

The HRA business plan is SBC's strategic plan for managing, maintaining and developing its housing stock. It sets out the council's short-to-medium term plans and priorities for its housing management services and provides a long term (30 year) perspective on stock investment and financial planning.

The plan focuses on the core business of managing and investing in the council's residential properties and associated HRA-owned land.

The AMS inter-relates with a range of strategies that together form the council's corporate strategy framework. In developing the strategy, careful regard has been given to aligning housing objectives and plans with FTFC corporate objectives and priorities and other key strategy documents. A range of programmes, policies and plans enable the council to implement the improvements, activities and investment needed to meet its housing objectives.

Property assets cannot be managed in isolation to other over-arching Council policies and strategies, as they are closely linked to the achievement of our strategic priorities. These key priorities are summarised within the Council's Corporate Plan and Summary Action Plan. The diagram below shows the main strategy documents influencing property decisions.



Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

Stevenage Council approved proposals for a new programme called Future Town Future Council in October 2015. It consists of nine key focused programmes that aim to deliver improved outcomes and real change for Stevenage residents over the five year period (up to 2020)(see Appendix A). This forms the basis of the new Corporate Plan. Further details can be obtained via the following link - (<http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/15953/33537/20596/Co-op-Future-Council-Corporate-Plan-2017.pdf>)

The **Corporate Plan 2016 – 2021** includes the following ambitions:

- Increase the number of social and affordable homes in Stevenage (FTFC 05)
- Create a vibrant town centre where people want to live, work and play (FTFC 06)
- Improve the accessibility of our services and the customer experience (FTFC 07)
- Work with our communities to improve our neighbourhoods (FTFC 08)
- Provide high quality homes to our tenants and leaseholders. (FTFC 09)

This plan is ambitious and to help deliver on these core values, the Council will need to be:

- A financially resilient Council with enough resource to deliver its priorities (FTFC 01)
- Have the right people, skills and knowledge (FTFC 03)
- Become a smart Council with improved performance (FTFC 02)
- Have stronger partnerships with key agencies to deliver our priorities (FTFC 04)

The Asset Management Plan will support the delivery of these core objectives. The Council will be using its valuable resources (people and property) to ensure effective and efficient management of the corporate estate.

3.3 Housing Development

Housing remains a key priority for Stevenage residents and for the Council as it is quite clear that Stevenage needs more affordable homes:

- The current Strategic Housing Market Assessment highlights that 575 new affordable homes are required per annum.
- More than 9000 social houses have been lost through Right to buy since 1981.
- There are 2500 people on the Council housing register.

The New Council Housebuilding programme is progressing well and is detailed in the table below:

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

Table 6: Current Council Housebuilding programme

	Estimated/Completed/Onsite	1 Bed Flat	2 Bed Flat	3 Bed Flat	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	4 Bed House	5 Bed House	Total
Archer Road	Completed	8	9		9	4			30
Vincent Court	Completed				4				4
Kilner Close	Completed	1	2			1	1		5
Twin foxes	Completed	6	8						14
Wedgewood Way	Completed					6			6
Ditchmore Lane	Onsite	4	6						10
Gresley Way	Onsite	6			8		1		15
Burwell Court	Onsite	9	6						15
Kenilworth Close	Onsite	113	92		8	19	2	2	236
29 Shephall	Estimated	3	6						9
Symonds Green	Estimated	16	10	3					29
North Road	Estimated	12	9						21
Buy Backs	Completed				2	2			4
Open Market Aq	Completed								63
Local plan site	Estimated	170	352	23		10	14		569
Local plan site	Estimated	50	50		18				118
Local plan site	Estimated	50	50						100
Local plan site	Estimated	26	14						40
Total		474	614	26	49	42	18	2	1225

Key ambitions of the programme include:

- An improved offer for Older People as part of the new build programme.

As with all development programmes, they need to be reflective of the economic and environmental conditions that are in-force at any given time. The Council's ambition to develop housing in the HRA co-exists with a need to derive income and develop more tenures of affordable and sub-market housing that meets the needs of the Towns wider population. The housing crisis is something that affects many people including those on average or above average incomes whilst it is acknowledged that the need for a reduced level of public subsidy to help this group of people may be appropriate. As such the Council is investigating the set-up of a Development Company that will allow it to hold stock other than the tenures that exist within the HRA, such as private rented and sub market rented products.

Design & Specification

Whilst site constraints and specific scheme needs will influence the precise property types used the general principles to apply to design will include:

- High levels of thermal comfort to promote low cost in use - controlled through Design Guide
- Standard Employer's Requirements to ensure robust and cost effective maintenance, prudent quality installations of kitchens, bathrooms and fittings.
- Aesthetically pleasing design with good useable floor spaces.
- Future technology friendly for ease of instalment for digital media and peripherals associated with entertainment to life style medical aids

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

Employers Requirements

The Standard Employer's Requirements would be a detailed technical brief, informed by the design guide, but which could be utilised as a contractual specification, with suggested contract amendments. This will be the contractual starting point for all new developments. This would be produced with assistance from a suitable building surveyor / employer's agent, and would again require internal consultation with relevant departments. A base position will be the Employers Requirements used within the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account developments already completed.

The Standard Employer's Requirements will deal with the technical aspect of the build approach and would not be focussed on design. The document would detail for instance kitchen finishes, doorway widths, and heating requirements.

Some aspects of The Standard Employer's Requirements would be liable to change depending on particular project conditions and requirements. However, it is used as an agreed starting point, and any deviations from it would need to be clearly flagged by the Employer's Agent and agreed by the WOC.

Supply of New Schemes

Stevenage Council has wide ranging housing ambitions that span the need to make commercial gains, provide affordable housing and achieve place shaping priorities such as neighbourhood regeneration. Therefore the supply of new homes into the HRA could emerge from a number of sources. Careful consideration will be to be given to achieving value for money and assessing the availability of both direct HRA funding and grants such as 1-4-1 funding. The deliverability of projects together with land assembly needs are also other important factor.

It general terms new schemes will emerge from the following land opportunities:

Brownfield Developments – HRA and General Fund

New homes built on disused or derelict sites. This type of project would cover demolition of existing buildings, such as unused and derelict office spaces. Larger schemes are often generated by brownfield opportunities.

Garage Sites – General Fund

There may be a number of under-utilised garage sites within the Borough. These spaces may have stopped functioning for their original intended purpose due to increasing car dimensions and are often used for general storage. The lack of a revenue stream can lead to dereliction.

Hidden Homes – HRA

This refers to less obvious small opportunities such as estate block parking or WC conversions and hard-standings. This could also cover small - medium sized "in-fill" sites on existing estates such as building onto blank flank walls, and disused parking areas.

Non-standard stock (Airey Homes) and failing HRA assets

Failing stock or prefabricated homes create longer term maintenance issues for the Council and often fall into considerable disrepair. Where a small terrace or group of such homes can be found, demolition and redevelopment could be explored by the HRA and General Fund.

Sheltered / Supported

Some of the current accommodation could be in need of renewal and it may be beneficial to review in terms of being “fit for purpose”. Decommissioned sheltered or supported schemes could potentially create large development opportunities that also reduce the burden for programmed cyclical works.

All of these opportunity types could be explored via local officer knowledge and specific capacity studies over time.

Housing Development Company

The creation of a Housing Development Company will allow the Council to utilise its general fund assets in a mature way and benefit from the uplift created by the development process, the additional new build premium, as well as increasing the scope for creative development and cross asset development. The traditional route of disposal on the open market by auction (followed by many local authorities) limits the time and creates arbitrary pressures that stifle consideration for alternative uses. It is believed that the Council’s current asset portfolio that includes a number of community centre sites and shopping parades could provide an opportunity for housing led regeneration that also creates better community and retail assets.

Clearly the size of the scheme together with its cost and time for delivery impacts heavily on the investment needs of the project. The Council will always need to balance its other commitments and statutory service provisions with any investment decision in development activity. Therefore project specific consideration will be given to schemes to determine their best route for delivery that balances the risk, reward and time frame of activity. There will be some schemes that the Council elects to deliver it self and others where it carefully seeks an appropriate Joint Venture partner from the private sector.

3.4 Communities and Neighbourhoods

Community Engagement Framework

The council’s Community Engagement Framework sets out how the council will engage with the town’s residents and communities in order to shape services and to ensure the council meets the diverse needs of the town’s residents.

This is a council-wide framework but recognises the unique function of the council's housing services and the need to give a voice to council tenants and leaseholders. This is facilitated through forums such as the Housing Management Advisory Group, Asset Management Group and Customer Scrutiny Panel. This might also be facilitated through special interest groups such as the Disability Panel or

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

through youth engagement mechanisms such as the Youth Council. The framework also seeks to capture the council's ambitions in diversifying the profile of residents involved to accurately reflect the town's population and will be seeking to explore opportunities through technology and web-based platforms to extend community engagement in council services. A focus remains on facilitated place-based social action in neighbourhoods, where local communities come together to address a particular need or ambition. The council might enable this through mechanisms such as Local Community Budgets, Rent in Kind for council premises, or licences to occupy. The council provides community development support to all residents groups who want to get more involved and will facilitate consultation and engagement on the issues most pertinent to local communities.

Co-operative Neighbourhood Management Programme

Co-operative Neighbourhood Management forms part of the Future Town, Future Council Programme and reflects a £multi-million investment programme in neighbourhood improvements from 2017-2023. These improvements include play area renewals, a litter bin replacement programme and public realm improvements as determined through local consultation. The programme focuses on 2 wards per year on an agreed schedule over the life-time of the programme. The programme is driven by the council's co-operative principles and therefore looks to co-design solutions to neighbourhood issues with local residents and empowering local communities wherever possible to lead projects and activities. The programme will seek to dovetail with other council programmes to ensure maximum impact within neighbourhoods and greatest social dividend for local residents.

Social Strategy and Partnerships

The Communities and Neighbourhoods Business Unit take a strategic lead for town-wide strategies relating to health and wellbeing, community safety, and social inclusion. These strategies reflect council ambitions to improve the wellbeing of local residents and are overseen the the Stevenage Together Partnership. A number of work streams and activities flow from these programmes and place-shaping work across the town will need to consider how it positively impacts on a number of these agendas. The community development service also commissions the advice services contract, currently held by Citizens Advice Stevenage, providing advice and support to residents across the town.

Anti-Social Behaviour and ASB

The Business Unit provides the council's ASB service, which includes ASB related issues around housing tenants and leaseholders. The service also provides the Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse Service and No More (drug and alcohol) Service, available for those whose council tenancies are impacted but either issue.

Social Value and Wealth Creation

As part of the council's Co-operative Commitment the Communities and Neighbourhoods Business Unit is currently looking at opportunities to further embed social value within commissioning and procurement processes and support wealth creation within communities.

Housing older person's strategy

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

The council is currently developing an older persons strategy to ensure that we future proof our approach to housing for future generations. Residents in Stevenage of all tenures are being consulted to ensure that we shape our housing services to the future needs and demands of the town.

3.5 Defining Asset Management

The AMS planning process is a continuum, as described in the Asset Management Wheel:

Figure 6: The Asset Management Wheel



External consultants (Ark) were engaged to carry out a Financial Appraisal and Sustainability Assessment of the Housing Portfolio which completed stages 1 and 2 of the Asset Management Wheel.

The HRA Business Plan 2014 set out priorities and plans for the housing investment programme over the medium to long term. At that point, the strengths of many assets had been identified and the plan

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

clarified future investment requirements. But for others further question had been raised, where further survey work, consultation and option appraisals were required. Since 2014, different elements of the programme have moved into the latter stages (4-6) of the wheel.

The hub of the wheel is the HRA Business Plan. This will define the priorities along with financial and other resources available on an on-going basis. The evolving AMS will make different demands on the Business Plan and the council will need to progressively review and refine the priorities for investment, as options and strategies for individual assets are developed.

The council will work to an annual planning cycle, where the financial appraisal and sustainability assessment of the housing portfolio is updated and reviewed against available resources within the HRA Business Plan. As such, the Business Plan will determine the annual budget in relation to the HRA capital programme in the future and investment will be largely ring-fenced and feed into the annual service delivery plan.

As the emerging AMS will require commitments to long term investment programmes or projects, some of up to 10 years duration, there will only be limited scope to vary the budgets year to year. The strategic investment decisions being taken progressively year to year are therefore the council's business commitments to its housing assets (to invest, disinvest or redevelop).

4. Profile of the Housing Portfolio

4.1 Property types

Overview

The council's housing stock includes a range of property types and ages (see table 1 below) and has some particular characteristics as a result of Stevenage's status as the first post-war new town. The property types include a mixture of houses (predominantly terraced), low rise flats and multi-storey flat blocks. Construction types are variable as a result of the trialling of non-traditional methods associated with the new town's development brief. A high proportion (76%) of the stock was built in the period 1945-1973 and 46% of the council's properties are either flats or non-traditionally constructed houses.

The housing stock is generally supported by HRA-owned land, including 480 communal areas in 145 locations around the borough and incorporating hard and soft landscape, car parks, footpaths, boundary walls, fences and retaining walls.

Table 1: Property Type Details

Dwelling type	Total	% of stock
Houses	4752	60.16%
Flats & maisonettes	2710	34.31%
Bungalows	437	5.53%
Total	7899	100.00%

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

Table 2: Council Housing by No. Bedrooms at 1 April 2018

Beds	Maisonette	Flat	House	Bungalow	Total	% of Total
Bedsit(s)		320			320	4.05%
1		1594		316	1910	24.18%
2	15	684	1297	100	2096	26.54%
3	87	10	3058	21	3176	40.21%
4			350		350	4.43%
5			44		44	0.56%
6			3		3	0.04%
Total	102	2608	4752	437	7899	100.00%

Source: Keystone Asset Management System - April 2018

4.2 Age of Stock

The age distribution of the stock in the table below shows that the majority of the stock (3903 – 49%) were constructed in 1945-1963.

Table 3: Council Housing by Age of property at 1 April 2018

Age Band	No of Properties	%
Pre 1945	150	1.90%
1945-1963	3903	49.41%
1964-1973	2066	26.16%
1974-1989	1516	19.19%
1990 onward	264	3.34%
Total	7899	100.00%

Table 4: Council owned housing stock including leasehold properties

Tenure	No of Properties	%
Social rented	7,899	84.81%
Leasehold	1,415	15.19%
Total	9,314	100.00%

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

Table 5: Number of dwellings that are non-decent at 1 April 2018

	Number of dwellings
No. non decent dwellings	1,936
Dwellings with category 1 hazards (HHSRS)	30
Dwellings not in a reasonable state of repair	1,911
Dwellings without reasonably modern amenities and services	66
Dwellings without a reasonable degree of thermal comfort	12

4.3 Non-Traditional Stock

Within SBC's housing stock there are a number of different non-traditional constructions which use Pre-cast Reinforced Concrete (PRC) as a significant element of the construction. A number are classified as 'defective' under part XVI of the Housing Act 1985. However the majority have already been over clad with External Wall Insulation (EWI) to help protect the external fabric, prolong the life of and improve the energy efficiency of these properties. The remainder form part of programmes of work currently being delivered to provide EWI where required.

4.4 Sheltered Housing

SBC currently has 18 sheltered housing schemes, including two flexi care schemes and one supported housing scheme at Symonds Green that also provides community support to residents in the area. Two of these schemes Walpole & Asquith Court are currently being de-commissioned, ahead of these sites being developed. The new development includes the provision for sheltered units.

4.5 Right to Buy

The number of dwellings owned by SBC, has declined through right to buy sales, whilst at the same time, demand for social housing has increased steadily. New legislation forcing the sale of higher value void properties will potentially reduce property numbers further. SBC has plans to replace properties through building new housing.

4.6 Stock Valuation

There are two housing stock valuations; one is for the stock used as council houses, called Economic Use – Social Housing Value (EU-SHV) and this is £607,235m. The other is the vacant possession value (effectively market value) and this over £1.6 billion.

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

The approach used by the council is to undertake a full re-evaluation of 20% of the stock every year, with a desktop review of the remainder, informed by the results of re-evaluation.

4.7 Leasehold Properties

There are 1415 leasehold properties currently and these are distributed throughout the stock, there are 26 blocks where all properties are leasehold.

The majority of works in the past has been focused on the Decent Homes Standard and internal works, the change of focus to external and communal area works will require substantial consultation with leaseholders to allow works to progress. Where appropriate, leaseholders will be recharged for their share of the costs for any works carried out.

4.8 Governance

Within the past 12 months, a new Asset and Capital Board (ACB) has been set up under the direction of the Strategic Director.

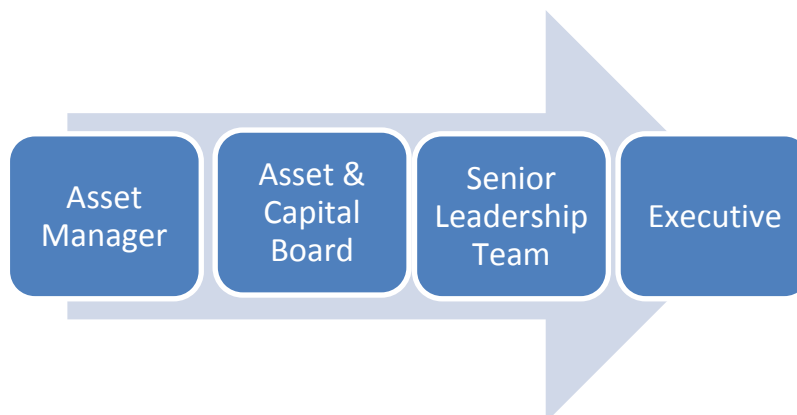
Asset and Capital Board

It is the intention of this Board that ACB play a key role in preparing and implementing the corporate objectives within the new emerging Asset Management Plan for both GF and HRA assets. The Board is chaired by a Strategic Director and supported by the Assistant Director (Finance & Estates). This will provide a forum for a high level discussion and decision forum on recommendations coming forward from the Locality review work, one Public Estate and other property initiative (Housing Development and Regeneration). Membership of this group includes Senior Officers from across the Council including Property and Housing Investment, Estates, and Housing Development.

Senior Leadership Team

The outcomes from the ACB are escalated to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as appropriate.

Having the correct organisational framework in place is an essential step in being able to develop and deliver effective corporate asset management. Aligning the new FTFC structure with other relevant parts and activities of the Organisation is critical in ensuring that asset management is properly connected and integrated with the Council's overall management and planning of its resources and services.



5. OBJECTIVES

5.1.0



A series of stock condition surveys were undertaken by independent surveyors, Savills and King Sturge, during the period 2005-2008 and the data was externally validated by Tribal consultants in 2010. As a result, 88% of the council's stock has been surveyed and the information will be continually improved and updated through an on-going rolling programme of surveys. In addition, independent engineers, Curtins Consulting, carried out a risk assessment and structural survey of high rise and non-traditional housing stock in 2006 and this survey was updated and validated in 2010, enabling anticipated structural repair costs to be identified.

All stock data is held on the Keystone asset management database, which is administrated by the asset management team. This provides a comprehensive single data source for condition information, works programmes, renewal and cyclical maintenance history. The database is used to carry out planned maintenance modelling scenarios and provides information for business plan forecasts as well as detailed work programmes, proposed contract works and assessments of progress in meeting the Decent Homes standard. The intention is to expand the information held in Keystone to include stock condition data for our General Fund properties.

In addition to survey information details of all completed works are captured and updated in the data base to maintain the accuracy of the data.

5.1.1 Approach to Stock Condition Surveys

Following the initial surveys carried out by consultants we have introduced a programme of stock condition surveys carried out by the internal team.

We have set a target to survey a minimum 20% of the stock each year to maintain the accuracy of our stock condition data and ensure each property is surveyed once every 5 years.

Stock condition data is key in ensuring our future investment costs are robust and provide a sound base for future planning. The condition data is also used to generate planned programmes of work to maintain and improve the condition of the stock, prolonging the life of the assets and their continued contribution to the HRA.

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 1 – Data Management

Action 1: Establish a programme of stock condition surveys to ensure the accuracy of property data is maintained.

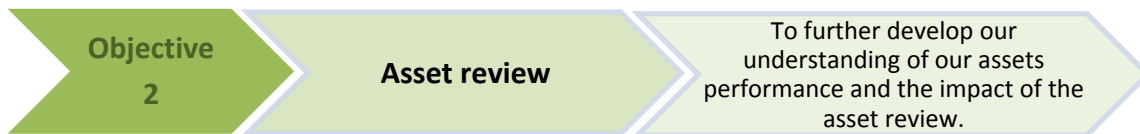
Action 2: Ensure all data is captured through responsive repairs and voids.

Action 3: Make further use of mobile working to capture data.

Action 4: Carry out an audit and health check of the Asset Management Database.

Action 5: Incorporate General Fund property data into Keystone.

5.2.0



5.2.1 Background

The council carried out a review of its Asset Management Strategy in 2014, which included a detailed analysis of the housing assets and their investment requirements over the 30 year business plan period. This section details the outcomes of the 2014 review, progress since the review, the latest position and recommended actions during the life of this strategy. The asset review included a comprehensive review of the financial performance of individual and groups of assets.

The review focused on two main areas:

- Defining the true financial performance and investment requirements of the housing stock, relating to this the HRA capacity and the financial demands of development.
- Addressing sustainability in its fullest sense, recognising the importance of neighbourhoods and economic factors, as well as dwellings themselves, in influencing demand and then addressing assets or asset categories with fundamental sustainability problems.

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5.2.2 Stage 1 of the Review

Consultants analysed the council's stock by applying an asset grading model, which scored properties on the basis of cost and qualitative factors, and by examining the financial impact of properties on the 30-year HRA. As a result, a series of asset groupings were identified, as described in table 7 below.

Table 7: Asset Management Groupings

Short Description	Full Description
Sustainable Sheltered	Sheltered schemes where capital investment has been/is being made. These are therefore expected to be sustainable for 10 - 15 years before further review is required.
Medium Term Sustainable Sheltered	Sheltered schemes where capital investment should be contained to minimum necessary to sustain 5 - 10 year productive use of sheltered housing. Demand likely to tail off progressively or potential to intensify service.
High Investment Sheltered	Sheltered Schemes where capital costs are extremely high and it is difficult to justify continued investment in the longer term and more strategic intervention is required.
Tower Blocks	Tower Blocks which require full reinvestment and upgrading. Fully sustainable for lettings in the longer term (larger accommodation/few bedsits), subject to investment and robust housing management once block upgrades are completed.
Flats for Upgrade	Generally smaller blocks of flats which are 'tired'. Expected to be sustainable from a lettings perspective, subject to full investment and upgrading, which in most blocks will involve the de-conversion of bedsit accommodation.
Archway Flats	Small flats and maisonettes which are built over communal access roads and paths. They suffer from cold bridging and noise nuisance. Units are mainly bedsits.
Maisonettes Over Shops	Maisonettes and flats constructed over shops / small commercial units. Remodelling, reinvestment or replacement likely to be required.
Special Needs Use	Stock which is currently used for supported housing to meet specific needs.
Redevelopment Schemes	Blocks of flats / groups of properties where ongoing investment is not considered advisable
Bungalows for Review	These bungalows have been highlighted through the asset grouping review as having a negative impact on the HRA, but are expected to be sustainable.
Data review	These assets have been highlighted as having a negative impact on the HRA, but the reasons for this are not immediately clear to the staff who know the stock well.
Sustainable but Potentially Challenging	For these assets some individual indicators highlight some low scores. This may be due to one off data sets on small samples. The staff who know the stock well grade this stock as reasonable
Disposals	Stock considered appropriate for private sector disposal.
Held for Road Widening	Property mothballed pending decision on Stevenage Western expansion
All Other Stock (Long Term Sustainable)	Assets where planned investment is at benchmark levels and are considered sustainable.

The outcome of the initial review was that 5,496 units (i.e. 66% of the total housing stock), was deemed to be sustainable in the long term and fell within the 'all other stock' category in the above table. This meant that no particular housing or asset issues were identified and, provided SBC continues to make planned investment at sustainable levels (as provided for in the HRA Business

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Plan), these assets should continue to meet housing need and make a positive contribution to the HRA.

The remaining 34% of the assets fell within the other categories. These properties were identified as being potentially 'challenging' as they performed relatively poorly, based on their score in the asset grading model and their financial impact on the HRA. The outcomes for each grouping are detailed in table 8.

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Table 8: Asset Review (Stage 1): Potentially Challenging Asset Groupings

	No. of asset groups	% of Asset groups	Number of dwellings	% of total stock	30 year average planned programme	Annual planned programme spend	30 Year Planned Spend	% of total spend	Average rent collected	Average repairs/ voids/ cyclical	Rent less repairs/ void/ cyclical	Balance per unit per annum	30 Year HRA Impact	Group1	Group 2	Group 3	
A	Sustainable Sheltered	11	4.00%	359	4.34%	£1,416	£508,442.97	£15,253,289	9.12%	£3,867	£961	£2,905	£1,489.19	£16,038,583	1	10	0
B1	Medium Term sustainable Sheltered	7	2.55%	275	3.32%	£1,487	£409,030	£12,270,913	9.63%	£3,787	£1,021	£2,766	£1,279	£10,548,032	1	6	0
B2	High Investment Sheltered	4	1.45%	117	1.41%	£1,680	£196,603	£5,898,094	4.02%	£3,704	£1,056	£2,647	£967	£3,394,206	2	2	0
C	Tower Blocks	5	1.82%	269	3.25%	£1,769	£475,886	£14,276,584	9.51%	£3,949	£910	£3,039	£1,270	£10,250,026	0	5	0
D	Flats for Upgrade	35	12.73%	594	7.17%	£1,685	£1,001,017	£30,030,523	11.27%	£3,247	£840	£2,407	£722	£12,864,193	1	31	3
E	Archway Flats	20	7.27%	25	0.30%	£1,248	£31,199	£935,981	0.26%	£2,753	£1,018	£1,735	£487	£365,552	5	9	6
F	Maisonettes Over Shops	6	2.18%	52	0.63%	£1,922	£99,935	£2,998,060	1.12%	£3,608	£1,006	£2,628	£706	£1,102,015	3	3	0
G	Special Needs Use	1	0.36%	30	0.36%	£1,726	£51,791	£1,553,722	0.74%	£3,581	£2,735	£846	£-880	£-792,329	1	0	0
H	Redevelopment Schemes	1	0.36%	21	0.25%	£1,913	£40,175	£1,205,257	0.45%	£4,463	£1,807	£2,655	£742	£467,632	0	1	0
I	Bungalows for Review	2	0.73%	2	0.02%	£1,813	£3,626	£108,788	0.02%	£0	£50	£-50	£-1,863	£-111,788	1	1	0
J	Data review	9	3.27%	49	0.59%	£2,454	£120,225	£3,606,750	1.22%	£3,883	£989	£2,894	£440	£647,010	0	5	4
K	Sustainable Assets	60	21.82%	985	11.89%	£1,618	£1,593,855	£47,815,637	12.62%	£3,366	£789	£2,577	£959	£28,323,949	0	52	8
L	Disposals	2	0.73%	6	0.07%	£2,228	£13,367	£401,013	0.13%	£3,299	£967	£2,332	£104	£18,777	0	0	2
M	Held for Road Widening	1	0.36%	1	0.01%	£780	£780	£23,401	0.01%	£0	£1,389	£-1,389	£-2,169	£-65,058	1	0	0
SUB TOTALS		164	60%	2785	34%	£1,632	£4,545,934	£136,378,011	60%				£994	£83,050,800	16	125	23
ALL OTHER STOCK		111	40%	5496	66%	£1,431	£7,867,506	£236,025,184	40%	£5,182	£714	£4,468	£3,036	£500,624,885	0	21	90
TOTALS OVER ENTIRE STOCK		275	100%	8281	100%	£1,499	£12,413,440	£372,403,196	100%	£4,627			£2,349	£583,675,684	16	146	113

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5.2.3 Stage 2 of the Asset review

The next stage of asset review was to consider the options for the challenging assets and to scope specific recommendations for each group, in order to assist the council in developing its asset management plan.

As part of this assessment, a further 617 units of the stock were re-classified as being sustainable in the long term. In addition, the 30 properties for special needs use, whilst demonstrating seemingly poor financial performance, were assessed as having considerable social value and were considered to be sustainable on that basis. This resulted in the number of long term sustainable assets increasing to 6143 units, representing 72.2% of the housing stock.

The following asset groups were separated for specific assessment or recommended action.

Table 9: Asset Groups Assessed

Description	Asset Groups	Units	% of Total	Action
Long Term Sustainable Assets (including Special Needs)	159	6,143	72.2%	Retain and continue to invest in line with planned programme requirements.
Poorly Performing Assets - Reinvestment Option Appraisals	85	1,090	13.1%	Actions detailed below
Sheltered Housing	22	751	9.1%	Actions detailed below
Tower Blocks	5	269	3.2%	Actions detailed below
Other Groups	4	28	0.3%	Schemes being held for redevelopment, disposal and road widening.
TOTALS	275	8,281	100%	

The asset review identified three key challenges facing the future investment needs of the existing housing stock.

The key challenges and the actions identified to address them are set out below. The resultant investment requirements have been built into the HRA Capital Programme.

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a.) Poorly Performing Challenging Assets

The Challenge

The group of 1090 assets identified as poorly performing and where the financial impact on the HRA is potentially low or negative consist of the following stock groups.

Table 10: Classification of Poorly Performing Assets

Groups	Type	Asset Groups	No. of Dwellings
D	Flats for Upgrade	35	594
E	Archway Flats	20	25
F	Maisonettes over Shops	6	52
I	Bungalows for Review	2	2
J	Data Review (Anomalies)	9	49
K	'Sustainable' but potentially challenging	13	368
TOTALS		85	1,090

Response

Site surveys were carried out to provide an understanding of the strengths and weakness of each asset grouping. This was followed by a comprehensive desktop review for each of these asset groups.

For each group, the type and level of investment was determined along with the relative urgency. The objective was to improve the stock so as to make tenancies sustainable, reduce turnover and so underwrite the strength of the long term revenue contribution to the HRA.

The range of typical scheme recommendations includes the following:

- Keep as is (and potentially review data)
- Upgrade public realm
- Upgrade and remodel (this mainly involves bedsit and archway flat remodelling)
- Sell balance of units (change tenure)
- Demolish and redevelop
- Open market disposal
- Area/sub area master plan

For each of these, some standard capital cost assumptions were generated, which can be summarised as follows:

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Table 11: Investment Cost Assumptions for the Poorly Performing Assets

Option	Standard Capital Cost
Keep as is	No capital cost
Upgrade public realm	£9,000 per rented unit plus £4,800 per leased unit
Upgrade and remodel	£35,000 for flats; £20,000 for archway; £50,000 to convert archway to house
Sell balance of units	Capital receipt invested in works
Open market disposal	Capital receipt invested in works
Demolish and redevelop	Not part of this costing exercise
Area/sub area master plan	Not part of this costing exercise

For all schemes, once investment has been made, it is anticipated that this will have one or more of the following effects:

- That the annual investment per unit per annum remains as that contained in Keystone.
- Responsive and void costs return to normal levels – assumed at £350 and £150 per unit per annum respectively.
- Rental income is achieved at 97% of potential rent (rather than the historically low ‘actual rent collected’ at these schemes).
- Where bedsits are to be remodelled, the rental income on ‘lost’ units is removed but the income on retained and remodelled units (which will have increased in size) have been enhanced by £20 per unit per week.
- Where individual units are recommended for sale the assumed sales income has been introduced, at 90% of the open market value, assuming sale with vacant possession.

For each scheme, there is an assumption as to when the work would be undertaken, prioritising the most (financially) challenged schemes first. They smoothed the major investment over years 2 – 10 of the current business plan (assuming year 1 is the current year), so as to allow lead in time for the first schemes and then a steady programme both of work and capital spend.

The outcome was a comprehensive financial model for each of the 85 schemes, which compared the current 30 year Investment and Expenditure profile and Net Present Value, with a revised profile. The outcomes were considered at scheme level and overall, to adjust the prioritisation and conclusions for each scheme and to propose a 9 year programme of investment and forms part of the basis of the financial assumptions in the business plan.

Based on these proposals, a provision has been made in the Business Plan to deliver the programme of works to the poorly performing assets. The proposed programme has been amended to reflect pressures on the Business Plan and now consists of a longer term programme commencing in 2017/18 and finishing in 2028/29.

2018 Updated Position

Works have been carried out to re-model some poorly performing stock including hard to let bedsit accommodation. All of the converted accommodation are now fully let and have an increased rental value as a result of their conversion.

Other works have been scoped for delivery during the asset review programme including creating additional accommodation in under crofts and other underutilised spaces. Re-modelling of areas within some poorly performing flat blocks will also be incorporated in the MRC programme.

Work is underway to refresh the Asset Review and introduce an enhanced Strategic Asset Performance Model, please refer to **table 14** at the end of this section. The refresh will allow us update our assets performance and what the impact has been from changes since the original review including improvement works and the introduction of the 4 year rent reduction.

b.) Sheltered Schemes

The Challenge

The council has previously commissioned an independent review of its sheltered assets, which identified 10 schemes that were considered to have sustainability problems and to be at risk of experiencing longer term demand and/or physical problems. As part of the asset review, consultants focused on these schemes, and categorised them as follows:

- Red**

 - A scheme is categorised as red where there are issues relating to the physical nature of the scheme, its repair or condition, the degree of local demand/competition or a combination of these factors such that SBC needs to take significant action within the short term. The action might be major investment and remodelling, or assessing potential for decommissioning as sheltered housing and re-use, redevelopment or disposal.

- Amber**

 - A scheme is categorised as amber where there is a probable requirement that major investment, development or re-utilisation of a scheme will be required within 10 years. The view is that amber schemes are unlikely to sustain good long-term demand without the identified actions or investment. In some instances a sustainable scheme may have development potential, perhaps as extra care housing. If, in the consultants opinion, this should be realised in the coming 10 years then the scheme would also be categorised as amber.

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Green

A scheme is categorised as green where it is essentially sustainable in the long term (up to 30 years) in its present form. Nonetheless there are likely to be some improvement and upgrading works required to meet minimum quality standards and to maintain a healthy demand profile.

The distribution across the sustainability categories of the Stevenage sheltered stock which was subject to the consultants assessment process is shown in the table below:

Table 12: Sheltered Stock Sustainability Categorisation

Category	No. Schemes	No. Dwellings
Red	4	132
Amber	5	208
Green	1	110
Total	10	450

Based on their assessment of these schemes, which represent the more problematic half of the portfolio, the consultants judged the overall sustainability challenge in SBC's sheltered to be manageable. Overall the quality of the stock and the extent of likely future demand compared favourably with the situation faced by many other social landlords.

Response

Preferred Options by Scheme

When considering the appropriate response for the council to the findings of the consultant's assessment of the 10 schemes, a number of options which could apply were identified. These were:

- A – Improvement and retention as older people's housing
- B – Significant remodelling for continuing older people's housing use
- C – Remodel or redeployment for alternative use
- D – Redevelopment by SBC
- E – Disposal

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The following breakdown emerged of preferred options across the various schemes:

Table 13: Breakdown of Options for the Assessed Sheltered Schemes

Option	Units
Option A Improvement and retention as older people's housing	237
Option B Remodelling for continuing older people's housing use	81
Option C Remodel or redeployment for alternative use	0
Option D Redevelopment by SBC	132
Option E Disposal	0

Medium Term Sustainable - Green and Amber Schemes

The consultants provided costed proposals for modernising the amber and green schemes they assessed, through a programme of improvements and re-modelling and a provision has been included in the HRA Business Plan.

Unsustainable Sheltered - Red Schemes

Of the schemes that have been assessed as being unsustainable three schemes form part of the future housing development programme. The fourth scheme has been released from the development programme but will be part of a further option appraisal prior to any significant investment on the scheme.

2018 Updated Position

Works have been completed in a number of our sustainable sheltered schemes to ensure these are fit for purpose in the future. Schemes have been delivered to re-model communal areas including garden spaces, re-modelling of bedsit accommodation which has historically been hard to let using communal facilities no longer required.

Plans are progressing for the three red schemes and some have already been decommissioned. An option appraisal for the fourth red scheme will be carried out as part of this strategy.

Plans have been developed and are being procured to provide additional accommodation in some schemes to further enhance the schemes and their viability.

Additional schemes are being developed providing further improvements which will be delivered during the life of this strategy.

c.) Tower Blocks

The Challenge

The council has five high rise tower blocks which have a relatively low Net Present Value (NPV). Although the flats are relatively energy efficient they suffer from poor internal communal areas and unattractive public realm areas outside the blocks.

The tower blocks are, however, relatively popular, with good Parker Morris space standards and a low number of bedsits. The four town centre tower blocks are also in central locations and as such as represent significant assets which should be utilised to support the Council's wider priority to regenerate the town centre.

The Council also has significant land holdings in the areas around the tower blocks which may offer opportunities for new build at higher densities.

Response

An Options Appraisal will be commissioned to look at potential opportunities for regeneration of the tower blocks and surrounding areas whilst at the same time improving the financial position of the HRA, enhancing income earning potential and reducing exposure to high planned maintenance costs for some existing assets.

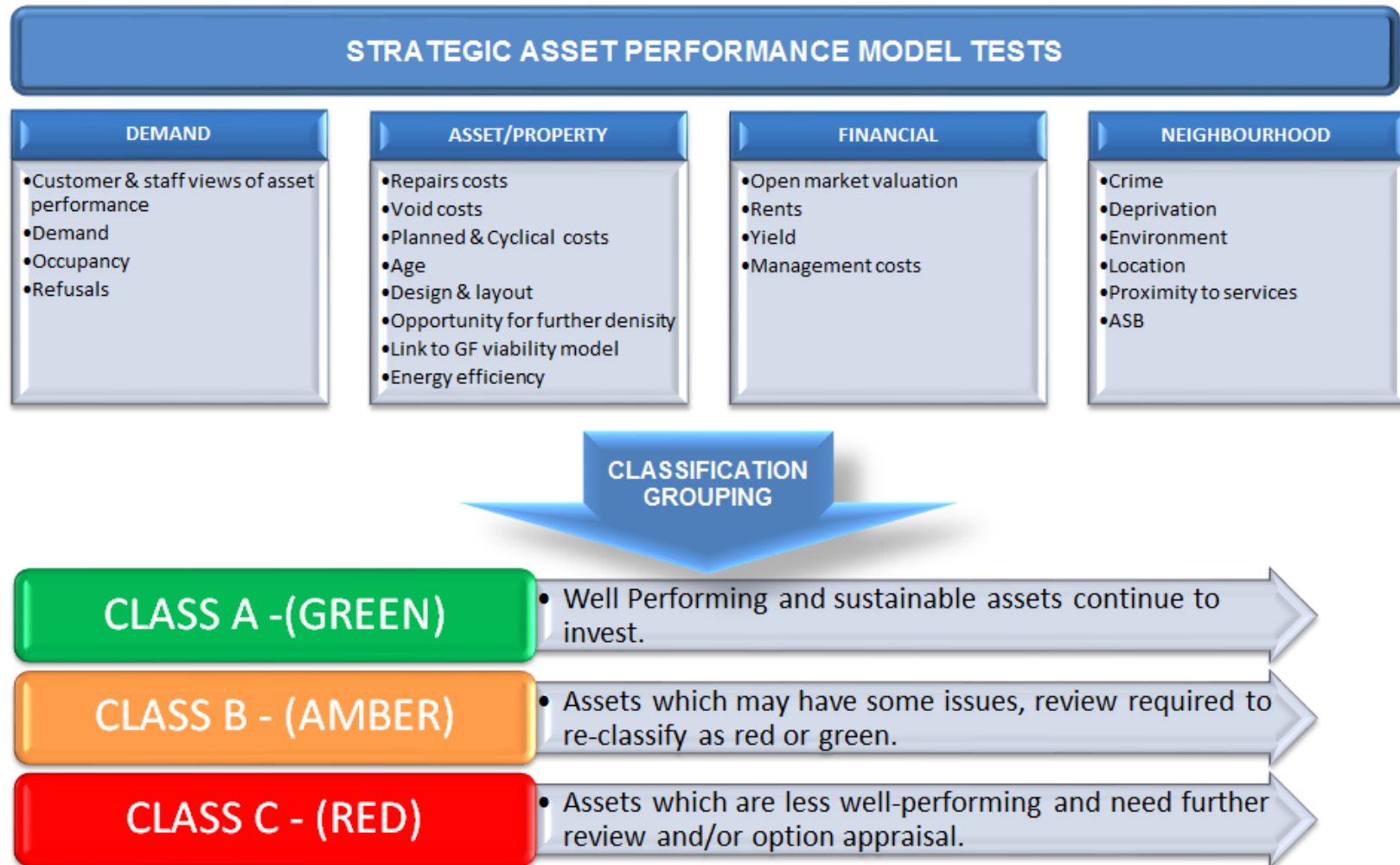
2018 Updated Position

The viability assessment and options appraisal for our tower blocks is planned for 2019/20 and this will inform the future strategy for these assets.

The process will include detailed surveys and assessment of the viability from both a financial and social perspective.

Table 14: Strategic asset performance model

STRATEGIC ASSET PERFORMANCE MODEL



ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 2: Asset Review

Action 1: Carry out a refresh of the Asset Review data to ensure asset classifications remain unchanged and assess the impact of the rent reduction.

Action 2: Deliver the programme of improvements to the poorly performing stock and measure the impact.

Action 3: Deliver the programme of improvements to the sustainable sheltered housing stock to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Action 4: Undertake an Option Appraisal of our High Rise Flat Blocks prior to any non-essential major investment.

Action 5: Undertake an Option Appraisal of the Pinewoods Sheltered Housing scheme prior to any non-essential major investment.

5.3.0



5.3.1

Through the Asset Review a number of asset groups will require further detailed analysis before any future investment is approved. The Options Appraisal process will be followed for these groups of assets to determine the best solution. The outcome and recommendations from Options Appraisal will be considered by the Asset & Capital Board.

There may be a number of outcomes from including:

- Retain and continue to invest
- Change of tenure
- Remodelling
- Demolition & redevelopment
- Demolition & disposal
- Disposal

The requirement for Options Appraisals has been identified for some stock which either did not form part of the Asset Review or where circumstances have changed since the review. Those areas identified include the following:

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- High Rise Flat Blocks
- Flat Blocks where investment in individual flats exceed £25k
- Sheltered Housing Schemes (Pinewoods can we include the name?)

We will develop standard Options Appraisal templates in line with those used through the Asset Review. This will include scoring the solution against a number of criteria including Social, Financial and Environmental.

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 3: Options Appraisal

Action 1: Establish a standard methodology for carrying out options appraisals.

Action 2: Carry out options appraisals for flat blocks where works exceeding £25k/property are required through the Major Refurbishment Contract.

5.4.0



SBC has a legal duty to ensure all residents live in a safe environment and a number of the key areas of compliance are covered in this section. All areas of compliance are covered by separate individual policies and procedures for each area, each of these are being reviewed during the life of the strategy.

The compliance team are responsible for all areas of compliance and a series of planned programmes which ensure we meet our obligations.

5.4.1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The HHSRS assesses the health and safety risks within a property. If a property fails the HHSRS it automatically fails the Decent Homes Standard. All HHSRS failures are treated as urgent and addressed at the earliest opportunity. The identification of HHSRS failures are being carried out as part of the ongoing stock condition survey.

Refresher training for front line staff will be delivered as part of this strategy to ensure failures are identified.

5.4.2 Gas Servicing

We have a legal obligation under the Gas Regulations 1998 to annually check the safety of all gas appliances, pipework and associated fittings within our stock.

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The current arrangements for gas servicing is through an external contractor and the contract for this work is due to be re-tendered during the life of this strategy. SBC will also ensure compliance with gas safety regulations across all the work streams delivered through this strategy.

5.4.3 Fire Safety

We have an obligation under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to carry out Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) in all our Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The fire risk assessment process is managed internally on an ongoing basis by surveyors within the compliance team. The fire risk assessment process drives both any remedial works and a planned programme of works to ensure fire safety integrity within our properties. We work closely with Herts Fire & Rescue to both ensure compliance and test fire safety procedures.

Effective day to day management of fire safety will involve support and assistance from teams across the council including caretakers, repairs and our customers to ensure we achieve the most effective outcome.

Alongside the FRA process there is an inspection and servicing programme for all our fire safety related equipment this includes emergency lighting, fire alarms, fire extinguishers and blankets.

A full review of our fire safety compliance has been carried out following the Grenfell tragedy in June 2017 and SBC will act on any recommendations coming from the subsequent inquiry.

As a result of the review we have established a fire safety action plan to ensure our continued compliance with regards fire safety, this will include any emerging best practice including any changes to building regulations.

We have also completed a feasibility study on the suitability of our high rise blocks for the retrofitting of sprinkler systems, which will be delivered as part of this strategy.

5.4.4 Asbestos Management

We have a duty to comply with the Asbestos Management Regulations 2012 and follow best practice relating to domestic properties. Our asbestos register is contained within our asset management system keystone and managed by the compliance team.

All communal areas have been surveyed and details of these surveys are held within our asbestos register. All asbestos is managed in situ until it is appropriate to remove. We have an annual programme of re-inspection for all communal areas where asbestos has been identified.

Asbestos surveying and management are monitored through the compliance team and appropriate surveys are carried out prior to any works being carried out.

5.4.5 Legionella

Our policy for the control of legionella is designed in accordance with the Approved Code of Practice L8. The code recommends that we carry out routine testing of communal water systems.

Risk assessments of individual sites are used to identify the testing and inspection regime including the frequency. The compliance team are responsible for management of Legionella risk across the stock.

5.4.6 Electrical Safety

We are currently delivering a programme of electrical inspection through our voids and internal works programme. As part of our review of compliance a programme of electrical inspections is being introduced and will be delivered through this strategy. An annual programme of periodic testing to residential properties and communal areas will be delivered to ensure electrical safety.

5.4.7 Social housing green paper

The tragic fire at Grenfell shone a spotlight on social housing and its residents and has led to the need for greater recognition that social housing residents' voices need to be heard.

The Hackitt Review also addresses the need to review decent homes standards with a focus on building safety and an overhaul of building regulations in relation to this.

Although at this time we do not know the full extent of the impact of these changes it is imperative to consider these as part of the strategy and the associated risks these changes may bring.

Following the Grenfell fire tragedy the Government issued a green paper to consult on its safety management proposals. The paper outlined the desire to rebalance the relationship between residents and landlords, to tackle stigma and ensure social housing can be both a safety net and a springboard to home ownership.

The social housing paper sets out five principles, which it says will underpin a 'new, fairer deal for social housing residents'. These principles are;

- Ensuring homes are decent and safe
- Effective resolution of complaints
- Empowering residents and strengthening the regulator
- Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities
- Finally, but also crucially expanding the supply of new homes.

We have captured these principles in our 4 broad areas that are detailed in our property aims. When it comes to expanding supply, the Council's emerging development strategy recognises the importance of promoting all tenures of housing so that the acute housing needs are met.

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The Green Paper proposals are likely to have a financial impact on the HRA business plan that is currently unknown. They will also affect the way we approach building safety, resident engagement regarding safety issues, and the requirement for more safety focussed roles in the delivery of our planned programmes of work.

The Government wants to use the Green Paper to consider a review of the decent homes standard - areas to be considered are:

- whether the decent homes standard is demanding enough and reflects Government priorities
- whether safety measures that now apply to the private rented sector, covering smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, should also be applied to social housing
- whether the energy performance of social homes should be upgraded to Energy Performance Certificate Band C by 2030 wherever practical/affordable

A corporate health and safety Hackitt report action plan has been specifically designed to address the key recommendations outlined in the Hackitt review and is included as an appendix to the AMS action plan in **AMS APPENDIX A – HACKITT REPORT ACTION PLAN**

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 4: Health & Safety

Action 1: Gas Servicing – Ensure all gas appliances are checked on an annual basis

Action 2: Gas Servicing – Modify policies and procedures to reflect upcoming changes to legislation regarding the frequency of safety checks.

Action 3: Fire Safety – Implement the recommendations following the feasibility studies into retrofitting sprinkler systems to high rise flat blocks.

Action 4: Fire Safety – Implement any recommendations from government reviews following the Grenfell fire.

Action 5: Fire Safety - Ensure all Fire Risk Assessments and the resulting actions are up to date.

Action 6: Asbestos - Ensure the Asbestos register is effectively maintained and managed.

Action 7: Legionella: Check all water systems that could be susceptible to Legionella within the timescales laid down by the Health & Safety Executive.

Action 8: Deliver corporate H&S Hackitt report action plan appendix A.

5.5.0



5.5.1

The Stevenage decent homes programme has been in place since 2007/08. Part of the council’s promise to tenants at the time that the ALMO was established was the implementation of the Stevenage Decent Homes Standard. This means that all key internal decent homes elements (kitchens, bathrooms, rewires, heating) in a property that fail the standard on age or condition are replaced in annual planned work programme, in order to minimise inconvenience for tenants and to maximise operational efficiencies, wherever possible works will be carried out at the same time. In November 2011, the council re-affirmed its commitment to achieve the Stevenage Decent Homes standard for its council housing stock.

Significant progress has been made in reducing the level of non-decency from a position of 54% in April 2008. A level of only 8% non-decency was achieved in December 2015, although the level has increased again since then as more properties have become non decent. At March 2017, 19.5% of homes were non decent. Stevenage, being a ‘New Town’, has the complication that many of the building components fail, in bulk, at the same time. This is a consequence of having stock that was built within a much smaller time period than may be the case with other Authorities who possess a more diverse stock portfolio. This creates sudden shifts in the ratio of decent homes and manifests as substantial peaks of non-decency on our Business Plan. The Council’s housing stock is currently in one of these peaks. The programme of major works that are funded through our Business Plan will start to address this over the next 5 years.

Table 5: Non decent homes by failure criteria * some dwellings fail on more than one criterion

Stock number at 1 st April 2018	7899	% of stock
Non decent dwellings at 1 st April 2018	1936	24.50
Dwellings with category 1 hazard under HHSRS	30	0.38
Dwellings not in a reasonable state of repair	1911	24.19
Dwellings without reasonably modern amenities and services	66	0.84
Dwellings without a reasonable degree of thermal comfort	12	0.15

5.5.2 Decent Homes & Stevenage Standard

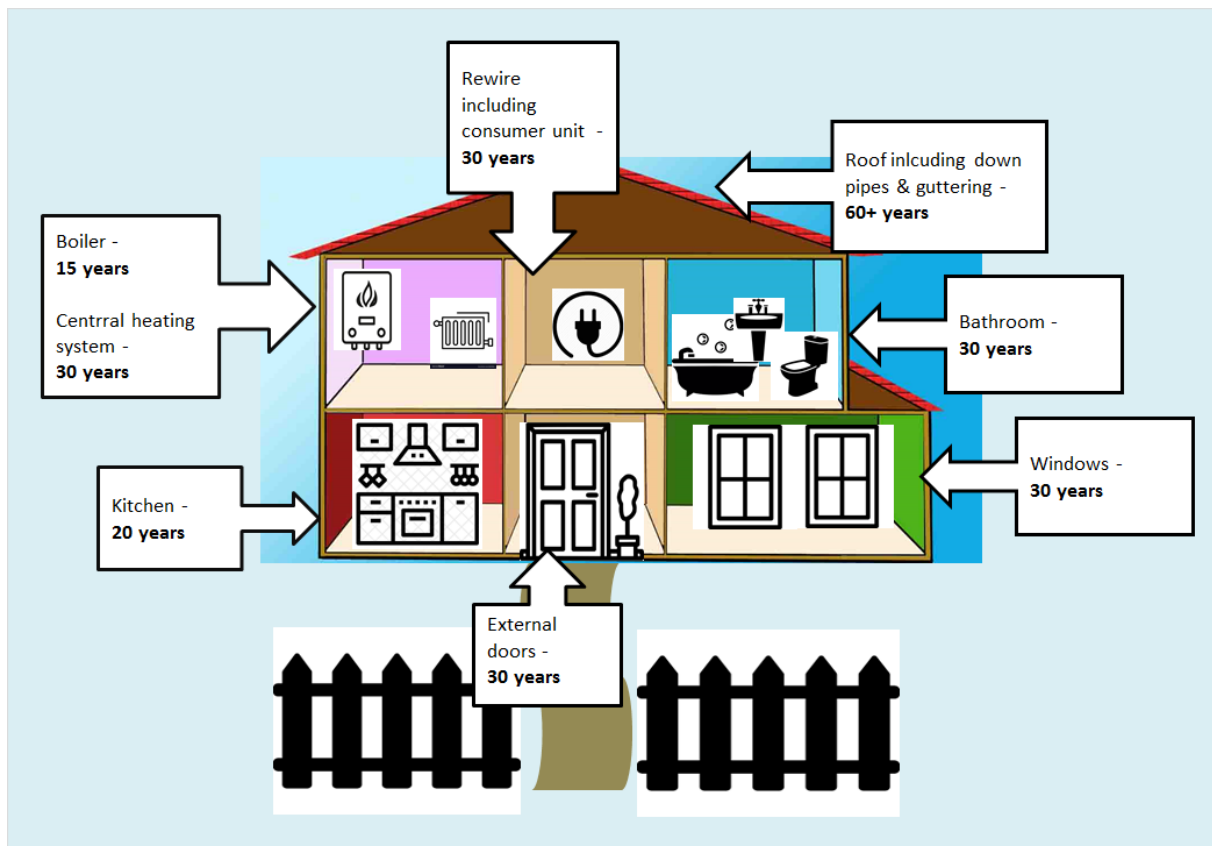
Decent Homes is only a minimum baseline. Under the Stevenage Standard all assets must

- Meet HHSRS Standards
- Meet Decent Homes Standards
- Be situated within a block (for flats) and wider neighbourhood, where residents feel safe and secure
- Have well designed and maintained communal areas and external communal space.

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The Stevenage Standard will be reviewed during the life of this strategy to ensure it provides a suitable standard going forward. The image below demonstrates the current asset management standard that based on decent homes lifecycles, meaning the timeframe in which a property element meets the end of its maintainable life.

The AMS action plan looks at reviewing asset management lifecycles with consideration being given to the fact that planned maintenance programmes are to be cyclically budgeted for and delivered, keeping the housing stock maintained and well presented for longer. The review will be completed with full consultation with customers and key stakeholders.



5.5.3 Social housing green paper

Following the tragic fire at Grenfell, The Hackitt Review addresses the need to review decent homes standards with a focus on building safety and an overhaul of building regulations in relation to this. Full implications of the green paper are outlined in section 5.4 however those related to decent homes are summarised below.

The Government wants to use the Green Paper to consider a review of the decent homes standard; areas to be considered are:

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- whether the decent homes standard is demanding enough and reflects Government priorities
- whether safety measures that now apply to the private rented sector, covering smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, should also be applied to social housing
- whether the energy performance of social homes should be upgraded to Energy Performance Certificate Band C by 2030 wherever practical/affordable

Although the full implications of these changes are not yet known we must be prepared for a radical overhaul of our decent homes approach and the financial implications of this. Any enhancement to the decent home standard could have significant financial implications for our housing business plan. If realised, these potential costs would need to be accommodated within the HRA business plan, but the recent lifting of the HRA borrowing cap should enable the flexibility to meet these demands.

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 6 - Decent Homes Compliance

Action 1: Carry out a review of the Stevenage Standard for compliance with Decent Homes.

Action 2: Review decent homes replacement timescales

Action 3: Make necessary amendments to decent homes standard following final recommendations from social housing green paper and Hackitt review.

5.6.0



5.6.1 Stock Investment Principals

- (i) All investment decisions must seek to contribute to affordable warmth for the residents (by reducing running costs for a warm and comfortable home) and to SBC's commitment to reduce carbon usage.
- (ii) Residents must be consulted on investment decisions, both in any review of options or priorities and in programme and project implementation planning. This will include full Section 20 Consultation with leaseholders, where necessary.

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- (iii) All investment programmes should be grouped in sensible geographical and stock phases, so as to minimise disruption to any group of residents at any time and to ensure a distribution of investment across the town.
- (iv) Delivering the AMS will involve substantial capital investment year to year. As well as upgrading and maintaining housing assets, investment should contribute to localised regeneration – creating a noticeable improvement in and around each project.
- (v) The investment programmes should seek to develop added value through developing training, apprenticeships and local employment opportunities.

5.6.2 Investment Priorities

All future investment decisions will be based on the principals within the investment priorities outlined below:

Table 15: Investment Priorities

Priority	Description	Examples
Health & Safety	To comply with all Health & Safety regulation/legislation.	Gas Regulations, Asbestos Management, Water Safety, Fire safety etc.
Legal Requirements	To comply with all legal requirement as a social housing landlord.	Housing and landlord acts, DDA, Right to Repair etc.
Government Policy	To comply with government standards.	Decent Homes Standard, Energy Targets etc...
SBC Policy	To meet the objectives of wider council policy & strategy. e.g. Future town future council. Responsive repairs and voids policies.	Stevenage Standard, Repairs Standard, Voids standard.
Local Requests	Requests which fall outside of the categories above	Requests from Councillors, Community, MP, Residents, Staff etc.

5.6.3 Programme Development

In the development of programmes of work SBC will work within the priorities set with section 7.2. Programmes will be developed to deliver the aims of this strategy within the financing identified through the HRA Business Plan. This strategy will also need to be reviewed if there are any significant changes impacting on the HRA Business Plan and the available funding.

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The Asset Management Team will develop all programmes using the stock intelligence gathered and in conjunction with others including:

Residents
Finance, Procurement and Legal
Housing Management

The analysis of repairs trends will also inform future programmes to ensure these have the maximum impact on reducing our ongoing maintenance costs.

Information from estate inspections carried out by other teams such as tenancy and caretaking will also inform future programmes.

The Asset Management Team will develop and maintain a 5 year investment plan which will include details of properties due to receive work under the plan.

Using the intelligence we gather through stock condition surveys and other information sources we will produce planned and preventative maintenance programmes of work. These programmes will help to reduce demand for responsive repairs and prolong the life of the stock whilst increasing customer satisfaction.

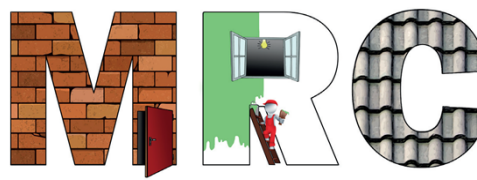
5.6.4 Major Refurbishment Contract (MRC)

In previous versions of this strategy investment has focused on internal works to dwellings and external works to houses. This was a requirement in order for us to meet our obligations under Decent Homes, as these were responsible for the majority of Decent Homes failures.

As our focus and priorities move away from internal works, our MRC programme will deliver major works to 550 low and medium rise blocks across Stevenage over 5 years.

During the life of this strategy there will be a significant investment in our flat blocks. The works which will form part of this programme include:

- Structural Repairs and Alterations
- Internal and external wall coverings
- Communal area flooring
- Communal decoration
- Landlords' Electrical Systems and Door Entry Systems
- Communal Doors
- Signage
- Roofing
- Windows
- Footways and Hardstanding



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5.6.4 Internal Works

Our internal planned works programme will continue to be delivered to ensure our stock remains decent. A new contract will be re-procured at the end of 2018, to ensure a contractor is in place to deliver the full programme of works.

This programme includes upgraded kitchens, bathrooms, electrics and heating. Works will be included in the programme if they require replacement before 2022. They will be assessed based on two different criteria; if they are old or if they are in poor condition.

Old: This means that the element is older than its expected lifecycle. These are defined as follows; kitchens over 20 years, bathrooms over 30 years, Boilers over 15 years, heating systems including radiators over 30 years and electrics over 30 years.

Poor condition: This means that the element is in disrepair and only has a remaining life of 4 years or less before a full upgrade would be required.

The criteria will be reviewed as part of the final recommendations of the social housing green paper and the decent homes lifecycles review detailed in the decent homes section of this document 5.5.0.

5.6.5 External Works

A programme of windows, doors and external wall insulation is being delivered across the town to improve thermal comfort of tenants homes. This work is being undertaken to street properties outside of the MRC contract.

5.6.6 Communal Heating Programme

Our 2015-2018 HRA Asset Management plan identified the need to replace existing communal heating systems in 15 sheltered housing blocks. The current communal heating stock is nearing the end of its useful working life. Spare parts for boilers and controls will eventually become obsolete and the systems are inefficient. Work is necessary to ensure SBC have modern and efficient stock that remains well maintained and compliant with regards to statutory obligations.

Works required under this contract include the replacement of gas fired boilers with more efficient condensing boilers, replacement of distribution pipework serving individual dwellings, installation of heat meters and where feasible the inclusion of renewable technology such as gas absorption heat pumps and combined heat and power systems (CHP).

5.6.7 Lift Refurbishment Programme

Lift refurbishment is planned to 24 lifts across the Council's housing stock as well as some corporate buildings.

Work within these properties will be carried out with occupants and residents remaining in occupation throughout the duration of the works and will be planned to ensure disturbance is minimised and safe access and egress to each individual building is maintained at all times. Works will be planned and sequenced in a way that minimises the impact on occupants.

5.6.8 High Rise Sprinkler Retrofit

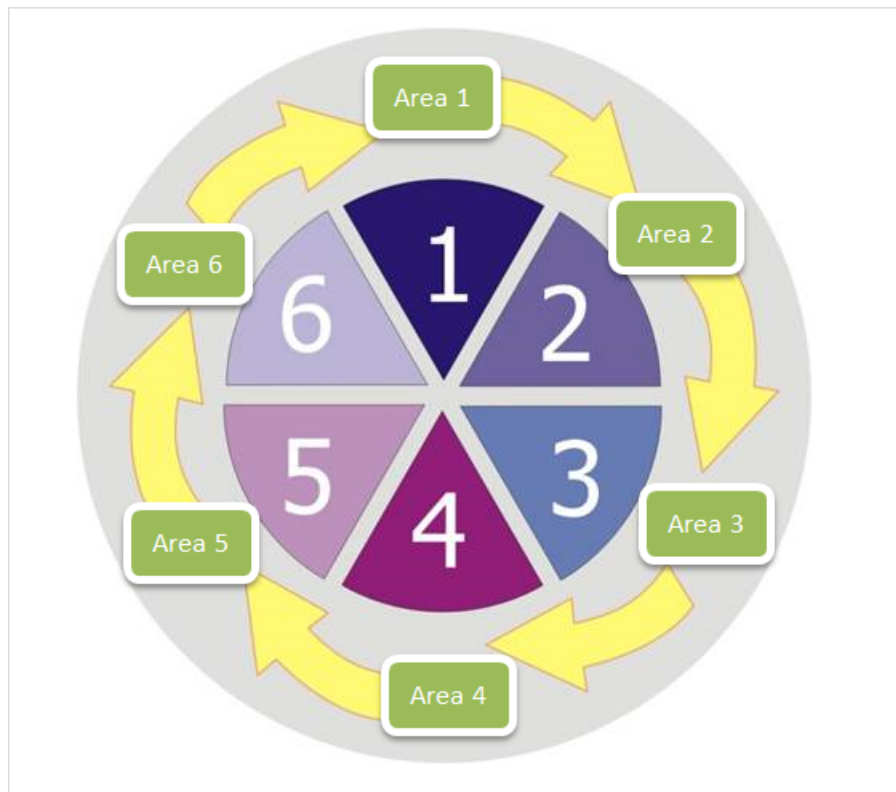
£2m has been secured in order to deliver a programme of sprinkler installations at our 7 high rise blocks. This decision was made in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire, and a recommendation was made to the Councils executive following industry guidance as a result of the London tragedy. Further details are given in section 5.4.0 of this document.

5.6.9 Planned maintenance

The lack of a robust planned maintenance programme in the past has contributed to poor condition of some of our properties and placed additional pressure on our responsive repairs costs. With the continued delivery of significant capital investment in our stock through programmes such as MRC it is vital that we put in place a planned programme of maintenance to prevent avoidable degradation of the stock and help control responsive repairs costs.

The requirement for a budget to support a planned programme of maintenance has been identified in the HRA business plan. Works delivered through a planned maintenance programme would include painting, gutter clearance, flooring, fencing, hardstanding's and other works to maintain the condition of our stock.

The intention is to deliver this as a 6 year cyclical programme as details below:



ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 5: Planned Programmes

Action 1: Publish and maintain a 5 year investment plan.

Action 2: Carry out an analysis of repairs trends to inform works programmes and the impact of these programmes on future repairs requirements.

5.7.0



5.7.1 Responsive Repairs

The council's repair service is delivered by an in-house Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), which is responsible for responsive repairs and works to void properties. It carries out approximately 22,000 repairs a year.

The council aims to provide a customer-focused repairs service, which achieves high levels of performance, customer satisfaction and good value for money. In this respect, its objectives are closely aligned to the 'Home Standard' set out in the HCA's Regulatory Framework, which places expectations on registered providers to:

- Ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas which demonstrates an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money.
- Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time.
- Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

The DLO currently provides the core services including but not limited to carpentry, fencing, electrics, plumbing and roofing in house. The glazing, drainage and cleaning services as well as others are subcontracted out to a preferred and compliant list of contractors. It is the ambition of the DLO to take in house any of these services that are financially viable to keep costs to a minimum and ensure complete control over standards on its assets.

As part of the strategic redirection the DLO which was known as the Repairs and Voids team has been rebranded to the Repairs and Maintenance team. This still incorporates empty homes in the

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department but moves the focus onto maintaining its assets. The caretaking services have been added to this section to fit into the maintenance focused approach which is part of the overall estate management strategy.

It is the intention of the DLO to add a new category of trade for employees called Repairs Maintenance Operative to do the basic maintenance tasks to reduce the repairs at a later date. The council's asset management strategy links in with the estate management strategy trying to reduce future investment challenges faced in relation to the existing housing stock. Key challenges facing the repairs service can be summarised as follows:

- Improve the customer journey by providing a more proactive approach to maintaining our properties
- Establish a cost effective way of working by reducing costs of future regeneration by maintaining the stock to a high standard
- To ensure roles and responsibilities are clear and understood by all to allow quicker fixes before a problem and cost of resolution escalates
- Mitigate health and safety risks such as slips, trips and falls with a proactive rather than reactive service
- Reduce call outs, costs and improve satisfaction by fixing right first time instead of temporary fixes. This includes replacing with new when its more commercially viable

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 7: Responsive Repairs

Action 1: To carry out review of repairs costs and the impact on the delivery of the capital programme

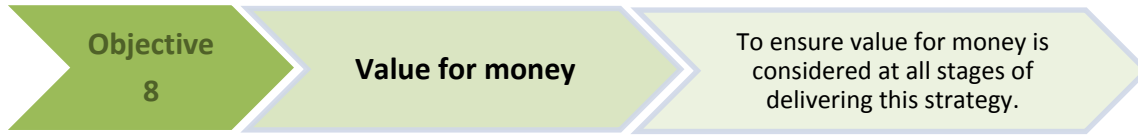
Action 2: Establish a mechanism for measuring reduction in repairs costs following delivery of the strategy

Action 3: Analyse the in-house teams ability and financial viability to take on subcontracted works in-house

Action 4: Review the structure, processes and systems used by the DLU as a whole to ensure the service being providing is the best possible

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5.8.0



Key to delivery of the Asset management Strategy is ensuring we achieve value for money. We have set a target within the business plan of achieving a 1.5% efficiency saving through procurement, value engineering and other opportunities to achieve efficiencies.

The work undertaken through the Asset Review will seek to ensure that poorly performing properties are providing a positive Nett Present Value (NPV) to the HRA.

The asset management strategy is underpinned by the procurement of a number of long term contracts to deliver packages of work in the most cost effect way. This helps ensure we maximise the available funding and benefits to our residents.

Within the HRA business plan a 1.5% efficiency saving has been set which will be achieved through efficient procurement of works and measured through the annual business plan review process.

We will also ensure value for money through the use of the strategic asset review model to inform decision of where investment is appropriate or alternative options should be pursued.

Programmes of planned maintenance will deliver a cyclical planned maintenance approach and in turn should reduce day to day maintenance and repairs costs. One of the actions from the AMS will be to establish an effective way for measuring the impact on repairs costs following major programmes of work.

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 7: Value for money

Action 1: Agree procedure for measuring efficiency savings against the published targets.

5.9.0



5.9.1

To address the issues of climate change the Government have set bold targets to reduce the national impact on the environment, which aim to cut carbon dioxide emissions by four fifths by 2050. To help

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combat the significant environmental challenges faced, the Government intends to ensure Britain plays its part in reducing CO2 emissions; makes homes more energy efficient; reduces the costs of heating homes; helps combat fuel poverty and meets required energy needs.

Domestic homes alone account for a quarter of Britain’s carbon dioxide emissions, therefore the council is tackling these issues directly within our housing stock.

In recent years, the council has been successful in reducing energy usage and improving the efficiency of the housing stock through a major programme of installing highly efficient gas boilers and by taking advantage of grant funding available to social landlords to undertake loft and cavity insulation. These measures have not only contributed towards reducing CO2 emissions but also towards tackling fuel poverty amongst tenants.

In 2015 the council published its Warm Homes for Life Strategy. This strategy looked at a number of improvements to the councils housing stock alongside the 2014 asset management plan. The overall strategic aims for the warm homes for life strategy were;

1. To provide warm, well insulated, energy efficient and affordable homes.
2. Improve the wellbeing of our residents
3. Contribute to mitigating climate change by reducing CO2 emissions associated with the housing stock

Stevenage Borough Council, are committed to ensuring that our residents’ homes are warm, well insulated, energy efficient and environmentally sustainable. The 2019 AMS objectives still supports these goals. Our major works programmes that are detailed in the above sections help us work toward achieving this goal.

The below table demonstrates the work completed to reduce carbon emissions and improve thermal comfort in tenants homes over the last few years.

	Heating	EWI	Cavity Wall Insulation	Loft Insulation	Windows	Doors	Roofing including upgraded loft insulation
Completed in 2015/16	188	134	0	185	221	455	1341
Completed in 2016/17	26	297	168	14	131	177	191
Completed in 2017/18	30	350	150	0	300	300	350

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As a result of these works SBC housing stock compares well to national averages in energy performance as detailed in the section below.

Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) data

SAP is the acronym for Standard Assessment Procedure and RDSAP is a reduced version of the procedure specifically for the energy assessment of existing dwellings where SAP would not be appropriate because of the difficulty in assessing such things as U-Values of insulation etc.

Resulting from an energy audit of the property, the SAP is a numerical indication of the energy efficiency of the property. It reflects the heating and insulation standards of the property, but not the householder's income. A target SAP rating of 60 will remove most households from fuel poverty, although this may be difficult and expensive to achieve in certain types of properties, such as those with solid walls.

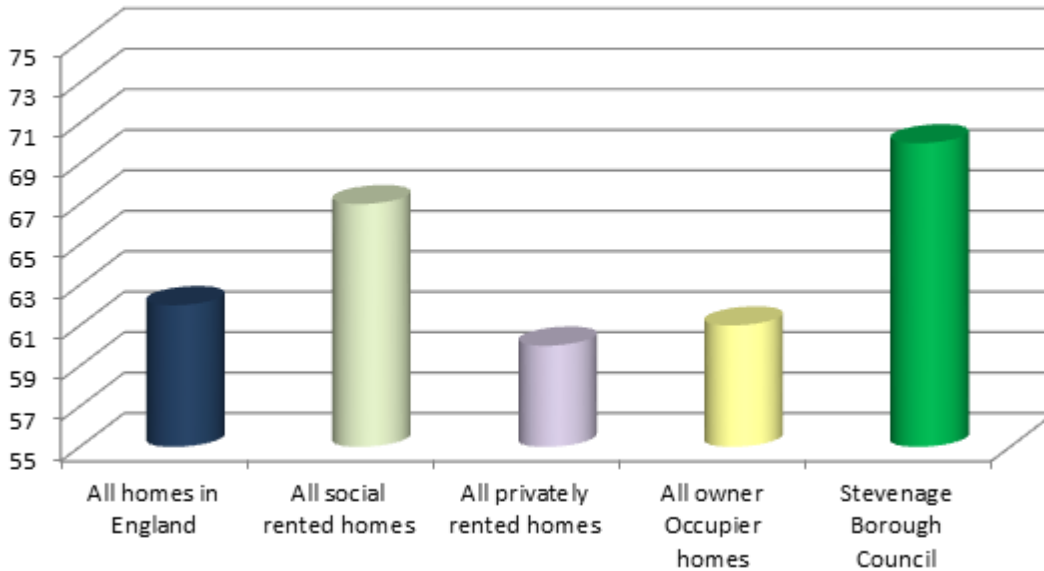
Stevenage housing stock has an average SAP rating of 70, this compares well to national averages and ensures that the majority of those living in council owned homes are not forced into fuel poverty because of a poorly performing home.

The councils SAP data is continually updated with information about works completed to our housing stock to improve the energy efficiency rating. As and when the RDSAP data requirements are updated small changes in the rating may be seen. We continually work to ensure our rating stays within the targets we have set for ourselves and above the national average.

The average SAP ratings from the 2016 English housing survey are as follows;

Housing tenure	Band	Rating
SBC housing stock	C	70
All social rented homes	D	67
All homes in England	D	62
Owner occupier homes	D	61
Private rented homes	D	60

SAP comparison against national averages
 'English Housing Survey 2016'



Energy Efficiency Rating	
	Current
Very energy efficient - lower running costs	
(92 plus) A	
(81-91) B	
(69-80) C	70
(55-68) D	
(39-54) E	
(21-38) F	
(1-20) G	
Not energy efficient - higher running costs	
England & Wales	EU Direct 2002/91/

In 2015-2018 we saved our tenants a total estimated £853,000 on their heating bills.

That's an average of over £170 saved per household!

SBC housing stock average rating

We will continue to maintain an average rating of 70 and minimum rating of 60 to ensure that the condition of properties are not forcing tenants into fuel poverty.

5.9.2 Social housing green paper

The social housing green paper summarised in section 5.4.0, seeks to address whether the energy performance of social homes should be upgraded to Energy Performance Certificate Band C by 2030

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wherever practical/affordable. As our average rating already falls within this band we have significantly less work to achieve this than other local authorities, however those homes that currently fall below the average will need to be reviewed as part of the asset review to determine how much improvement work is financially and sustainably viable. The final recommendations from the green paper will allow us to assess the situation with more information.

5.9.3 Renewable technologies

We will continue to pilot new technologies and research potential new projects that can improve the efficiency of the housing stock further.

In 2018/19 we will investigate further the options for solar power. Solar power is the conversion of sunlight into electricity. Photovoltaics convert light into electric current using the photovoltaic effect.

Solar panel electricity systems, also known as solar photovoltaics (PV), capture the sun's energy using photovoltaic cells. These cells don't need direct sunlight to work, they can still generate some electricity on a cloudy day. The cells convert the sunlight into electricity, which can be used to run household appliances and lighting.

This project will investigate the cost effectiveness of installing solar power in homes and assess the benefits that are achievable by the Council and its residents.

Future year's projects will assess new technologies as and when they develop in the market and opportunity for SBC to take advantage of these arise.

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 8: Energy and sustainability

Action 1: Maintain an average SAP rating of 70

Action 2: Achieve a minimum SAP rating of 60

Action 3: Review targets based on outcome of green paper

Action 4: Continue to investigate and provide business cases for renewable technologies

5.10.0



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5.10.1

Since the introduction of Care in the Community in 1990, the demand for aids and adaptations has been increasing. Demand is being driven by greater awareness of assistance available and an increasing incidence of disabled persons present in the community, not least because of an ageing population profile.

The incidence of disability and the need for support rises with age; however the need to provide adaptations to maintain independent living is an issue for people of all ages leading to complex household needs.

Stevenage Borough Council will, subject to availability of funding, provide aids and undertake adaptation work, to council owned properties occupied by disabled, chronically sick and frail people, where it is reasonable to do so.

Works are generated by referrals from the Occupational Therapist (OT) at Herts County Council (HCC) and other professionals involved from the NHS. The referral is sent to SBC following a visit to the resident to carry out an assessment of needs. Residents are required to contact Social Services directly to start the process.

The Council must have a referral from HCC before accepting any works. The OT will assess each circumstance on a case by case basis and make recommendations to the Council for works to be considered. Aids and adaptations can be referred for either adults or children living in the home.

The Council will review the case to assess the feasibility of the recommended works in the property. Our team work closely with HCC and the NHS, as well as own internal Lettings and Supported housing teams to assess each situation and review alternative options where appropriate, looking for the best solution, for example moving someone to more suitable accommodation.

There are two types of work, mandatory and discretionary.

Mandatory work; this includes work that is designed to help people to be as independent as possible and remain in their own home. This may include for example, adapted showers, grab rails, and external ramps. Other work may also include extensions to the home, to provide ground floor bathing and sleeping facilities.

Mandatory work is further categorized by the OT into urgent or standard. Urgent works must be completed within 76 working days (3 months) and standard works must be completed within 134 working days (6 months), budget permitting.

Discretionary work; this work is categorized as lifestyle adaptations, for example, scooter charging points and external hard standings etc.

This work is considered at end of the financial year if there is sufficient budget left.

A review of the Aids & Adaptations policy will be carried out during the life of this policy.

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 9: Aids & Adaptations

Action 1: Complete a review of the current Aids & Adaptations policy.

Action 2: Implement any recommendations from the review

5.11.0



Empty Homes is part of the repairs function. The main objective of the service is to take a void property and make it a liveable standard in the quickest time possible to minimise rent loss. At the time of the property being at void the assets are viewed to see what works need to be completed. These Voids are categorised as Standard, Major and Management.

It is the ambition of the DLU to complete as much of this work as possible in house where it makes sound financial sense and doesn't impact on the rent loss figures.

The systems used are going through a review to ensure the best practises are being followed and the most cost effective service is being provided. For example a better record being kept and easier access of our asset information will allow for recharges to former tenants to be completed on an increased regularity.

ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 11: Empty homes

Action 1: Complete a review of the current Empty Homes systems, procedures and policies

Action 2: Implement any recommendations from the review

5.12.0



Damp and condensation remedial work does not fall under the capital programme however it is delivered by the Housing & Investment team as this is a significant and often complex element of work requiring specific skills in correct diagnosis and recommending relevant improvement works.

The Damp and Condensation Strategy was reviewed by the Scrutiny and Select Committee on 29 November 2016. Executive Member responses were received on 10th March 2017 to the recommendations agreed by the Scrutiny select committee on 11th January 2017.

Previous approaches focussed on dealing with the symptoms and not the cause, and this new approach will reverse this with a proactive approach the investigating the root cause of such issues.

Following additional resource appointed to support the delivery of the strategy, the recommendations have been reviewed and an improvement and action plan has been developed that incorporates these recommendations and further actions identified to ensure continued improvements to the delivery of the service. This will ensure that the building assets and internal environment are maintained to a health and safety and habitable standard that will lead to enhanced customer satisfaction.

Ongoing discussions will be held with the council's internal Repairs and Void team to consider their capacity to deliver a greater volume of the damp and mould repairs and remedial works. Alternative procurement solutions for contractors will also be considered.

A policy is being drafted that will underpin the delivery of the damp and condensation service.

A majority of cases include requirements to remedy general disrepair which have contributed to the problems in houses and flats. Identified work is coordinated with the necessary teams, including teams undertaking major external and internal work, and the repairs and voids team.

Many homes have large family units and lifestyles which sometimes are not suited to either the house type and size and the building elements/services and finishes which are present. These factors often contribute to the conditions found to exist.

The action plan and its component parts will assist the council to inspect, identify and remedy damp and mould issues at the earliest opportunity where this is possible.

Please refer to **AMS APPENDIX B – DAMP & CONDENSATION ACTION PLAN**

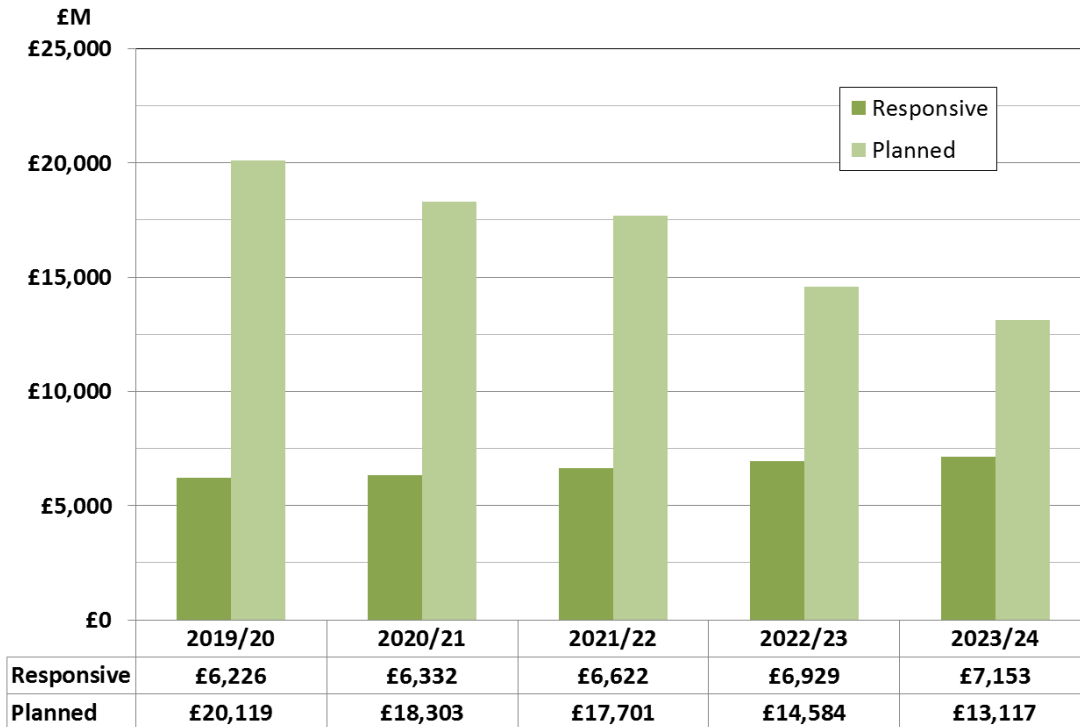
ACTIONS FOR OBJECTIVE 12: Damp & condensation

Action 1: Deliver the damp and condensation action plan in Appendix B

6.0 Funding the strategy

Funding for the strategy will be found from within the ring fenced HRA account and, where appropriate, from other capital financing sources. As previously mentioned in this strategy, resources for asset management are allocated through the HRA Business Plan and the business planning process, which feeds into the setting of the Council’s annual budget. The graph below shows the 2019/20 Budget and the amounts currently in the HRA Business Plan, over the following four years, for responsive and planned maintenance.

HRA Business Plan - 5 Year Maintenance Costs



This graph shows that current plans allow for £33.3 million for responsive and cyclical works and £83.8 million for planned and major works.

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There are no changes to the Council's current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as a result of the AMS. However, there are a number of potential issues highlighted in the strategy that could have a financial impact in future years. If realised, these potential costs would need to be accommodated within the HRA Business Plan, as part of the normal annual planning process and would be prioritised against other emerging demands on the account. However, the recent lifting of the HRA borrowing cap will enable greater flexibility to meet these demands.

7.0 SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

The housing stock represents the council's most valuable asset and its largest liability in investment terms. The condition of the council's properties is also of central importance to our tenants and they consistently select the improvement of their homes and a good repairs service as their top priorities. The proposed strategic approach is to focus on the following core strategic aims;

- All property to be well maintained and well presented
- To promote growth and regeneration
- To reduce carbon footprint and improve sustainability
- To reduce repairs costs

The asset management strategy will allow us to meet our strategic goals of having fit for purpose, safe, well maintained and well-presented stock, with a view to optimising housing development opportunities where appropriate.

Below are some examples of the benefits to be seen over the lifetime of the strategy.

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8.0 RISKS

The risks associated with delivering this strategy are outlined in the Housing & Investment operational risk register.

Please refer to **AMS APPENDIX C - INVESTMENT OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER**

9.0 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANACE

The outcomes of the strategy will be reviewed against the strategy action plan as detailed in section 9.0.

The below groups will also have annual reviews of the strategy;

- Assets & capital board
- Housing management advisory board
- HRA business plan working group

Performance will continually be monitored through corporate performance monitoring measures, partnership board, and service plans and teams meetings.

Benchmarking

We are members of the Housing Quality Network Best practice in Asset Management Group. This covers a wide range of issues and enables us to learn from others in developing our strategy and ensuring continuous improvement.

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We also carry out benchmarking against Housemark data on a quarterly basis in relation to major works and capital administration costs to benchmark our Asset Management service with similar organisations, as a way of improving value for money and drive up standards. This helps us to establish performance improvement targets.

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10.0 5 Year HRA Capital Programme

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Totals
5 year capital programme	19,415,875	19,607,608	19,108,692	16,396,084	14,196,760	88,725,019.00
Internal works total	1,751,290	1,725,670	1,822,910	1,799,870	4,600,000	11,699,740.00
MRC works total	12,635,135	12,828,698	12,852,782	11,841,421	4,291,760	54,449,796.00
External works total	800,000	760,000	650,000	550,000	3,100,000	5,860,000.00
M&E planned works total	1,640,650	1,616,370	1,582,210	0	0	4,839,230.00
Health & safety total	984,230	980,940	992,510	989,840	990,000	4,937,520.00
Asset review total	1,025,400	1,111,260	607,770	600,000	600,000	3,944,430.00
Other HRA schemes total	579,170	584,670	600,510	614,953	615,000	2,994,303.00

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

9.0 Action plan

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN				
OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	ACTION	OWNER	TARGET COMPLETION DATE/YEAR OF STRATEGY DELIVERY
1. Data Management	To continuously improve our understanding of our stock and its condition to enable effective investment decisions	Establish a programme of stock condition surveys to ensure the accuracy of property data is maintained.	Operations manager – investing in homes and properties (IHP)	2019/20
		Ensure all data is captured through responsive repairs and voids.	Operations manager – IHP	2019/20
		Make further use of mobile working to capture data.	Operations manager – IHP	2019/20
		Carry out an audit and health check of the Asset Management Database.	Operations manager – IHP	2019/20
		Incorporate General Fund property data into Keystone.	Operations manager – IHP	2019/20
2. Asset Review	To further develop our understanding of our assets performance and the impact of the asset review	Carry out a refresh of the Asset Review data to ensure asset classifications remain unchanged.	Asset management team (AMT)	2019/20
		Deliver the programme of improvements to the poorly performing stock and measure the impact.	AMT	2019-2024

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN				
OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	ACTION	OWNER	TARGET COMPLETION DATE/YEAR OF STRATEGY DELIVERY
		Deliver the programme of improvements to the sustainable sheltered housing stock to ensure they are fit for purpose.	AMT	2019-2024
		Undertake an Option Appraisal of our High Rise Flat Blocks prior to any non-essential major investment.	AMT	2019/20
		Undertake an Option Appraisal of the Pinewoods Sheltered Housing scheme prior to any non-essential major investment.	AMT	2019/20
3. Option Appraisals	To use the options appraisal process to influence our investment decisions	Establish a standard methodology for carrying out options appraisals.	AMT	2019/20
		Carry out options appraisals for flat blocks where works exceeding £25k/property are required through the Major Refurbishment Contract.	AMT	2019-2024
4. Health & Safety	To provide safe homes for our residents	Gas Servicing – Ensure all gas appliances are checked on an annual basis	Compliance manager	2019-2024
		Gas Servicing – Modify policies and procedures to reflect upcoming changes to legislation regarding the frequency of safety checks.	Compliance manager	2019-2024

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN				
OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	ACTION	OWNER	TARGET COMPLETION DATE/YEAR OF STRATEGY DELIVERY
		Fire Safety – Implement the recommendations following the feasibility studies into retrofitting sprinkler systems to high rise flat blocks.	Fire safety surveyor	2019/20
		Fire Safety – Implement any recommendations from government reviews following the Grenfell fire.	Compliance manager	TBC
		Fire Safety - Ensure all Fire Risk Assessments and the resulting actions are up to date.	Fire safety surveyor	2019-2024
		Asbestos - Ensure the Asbestos register is effectively maintained and managed.	Compliance manager	2019-2024
		Legionella: Check all water systems that could be susceptible to Legionella within the timescales laid down by the Health & Safety Executive.	Compliance manager	2019-2024
		Deliver corporate Hackitt report action plan appendix A	Compliance manager	TBC
5. Decent homes compliance	To maintain compliance with the decent Homes standard across the stock	Carry out a review of the Stevenage Standard for compliance with Decent Homes.	Operations manager – IHP	TBC

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN				
OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	ACTION	OWNER	TARGET COMPLETION DATE/YEAR OF STRATEGY DELIVERY
		Review DH replacement timescales	Operations manager – IHP	TBC
		Implement any changes to DH standard following Green paper consultation outcome	Operations manager – IHP	TBC
6. Planned Programmes	To develop effective programmes to deliver the objectives of this strategy and wider council strategies	Publish and maintain a 5 year investment plan.	AMT	2019/20
		Carry out an analysis of repairs trends to inform works programmes and the impact of these programmes on future repairs requirements.	Operations manager – IHP / Service manager R&V	2019/20
7. Responsive repairs	To deliver a ‘value for money’ service which meets the needs of our customers	To carry out review of repairs costs and the impact on the delivery of the capital programme	Operations manager – IHP / Service manager R&V	2019/20
		Establish a mechanism for measuring reduction in repairs costs following delivery of the strategy	Operations manager – IHP / Service manager R&V	2019/20
		Analyse the in-house teams ability and financial viability to take on subcontracted works in-house	Service manager R&V	2019/20

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN				
OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	ACTION	OWNER	TARGET COMPLETION DATE/YEAR OF STRATEGY DELIVERY
		Review the structure, processes and systems used by the DLU as a whole to ensure the service being providing is the best possible	Service manager R&V	2019-24
8. Value for Money	To ensure value for money is considered at all stages of delivering this strategy	Agree procedure for measuring efficiency savings against the publish targets.	Operations manager – IHP	2019/20
9. Energy Efficiency	To ensure our assets are energy efficient and we champion environmental sustainability	Maintain an average SAP rating of 70	AMT	2019-24
		Achieve a minimum SAP rating of 60	AMT	2019-24
		Review targets following outcome of green paper recommendations	AMT	TBC
		Continue to investigate and provide business cases for renewable technologies	AMT	2019-24
10. Aids & Adaptations	Ensure the best use of adapted stock and deliver an efficient adaptation programme to meet the requirements of our residents	Complete a review of the current Aids & Adaptations policy.	Programme manager	2019/20
		Implement any recommendations from the review of it	Programme manager	2019-2024

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-2024

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN				
OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION	ACTION	OWNER	TARGET COMPLETION DATE/YEAR OF STRATEGY DELIVERY
11. Empty homes	To provide quality homes and sustainable tenancies whilst limiting the time properties are void	Complete a review of the current Empty Homes systems, procedures and policies	Service manager R&V	2019/20
		Implement any recommendations from the review	Service manager R&V	2019-24
12. Damp and condensation	To provide homes which are free from damp and mould	Deliver damp and condensation action plan Appendix B.	Programme manager	2019-24

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Meeting: EXECUTIVE

Portfolio Area: All

Date: 14 March 2019

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE QUARTER THREE 2018/19

NON-KEY DECISION

Authors – Richard Protheroe/Chloe Norton Ext. 2938/2501

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Lead Officer – Scott Crudgington Ext. 2185

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To highlight the Council's performance across key priorities and themes for quarter three 2018/19.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the delivery of priorities which form the Future Town, Future Council Programme and performance of the Council across the key themes for quarter three 2018/19 together with the latest achievements be noted.
- 2.2 That the review of contractual arrangements for the management of health and safety compliance and measures implemented to ensure regulations continue to be met are noted and endorsed (para 3.90 to 3.91).
- 2.3 That arrangements to meet new regulations (introduced October 2018) relating to the Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation be noted and endorsed (para 3.102 to 3.105)
- 2.4 That the resource planning implemented to provide a sustainable solution to meeting the level of customer contacts through the Customer Service Centre and provide a more consistent level of service to customers are noted and future plans endorsed (para 3.115 to 3.121).
- 2.5 That the improvements in sickness management practice be noted and future plans endorsed (para 3.131 to 3.135).

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3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members approved the Cooperative Corporate Plan in December 2016. It reflects the Council's continuing focus on cooperative working and outlines the key outcomes and priorities for the town over the next five years through the Future Town, Future Council (FTFC) Programme as seen in Figure 1.

Future town future council



Figure 1: Future Town, Future Council Programme

- 3.2 The FTFC Programme was reviewed at March 2018 to ensure that it continued to reflect the Council's priorities. As it was apparent that working in partnership is embedded in the culture of the Council and there is a strong framework for future collaboration with other public sector bodies, the Partner of Choice Programme was closed. Development of partnerships continues as part of day-to-day business and any new shared service proposals will be considered and implemented within the Financial Security Programme.
- 3.3 Council services are organised into nine Business Units across three themes: Customer, Place and Transformation and Support. This structure is focused on delivering the right services, to the right standards, at the right time for the town's residents and businesses, using the most cost/resource effective delivery models.
- 3.4 In addition to monitoring progress on the delivery of the FTFC Programme, performance across these (Council Service) themes is monitored throughout the year to highlight achievements and identify any areas for improvement.
- 3.5 A complete set of performance measures across all themes (FTFC programme, and the customer, place, and transformation and support themes) is attached as Appendix One. Summaries of performance measure result status are outlined at paragraph 3.7 (FTFC focus) and paragraph 3.86 (Corporate Focus).

Future Town, Future Council Programme progress update

- 3.6 The focus and scope of the FTFC programmes is outlined in Appendix Two. Delivery of the agreed outcomes is monitored to ensure that the Programme remains on track.

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- 3.7 In addition to the monitoring of programme milestones, fifteen measures aligned to FTFC delivery were monitored and reported on for April to December 2018. The overview of FTFC focused results for April 2018 to December 2018 is outlined below:

Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)
15	12	2	1

- 3.8 Improvement activity for the performance measure results that did not achieve target is outlined in the relevant programme - Paragraphs that refer are indicated below:

- Compl4: Percentage of stage 2 and 3 complaints upheld fully or partially (housing), April to December 2018 target 40%, achieved 43.08% - paragraph 3.34 refers
- CNM2g: Garage void rate: April to December 2018 target 12%, achieved 12.81% - paragraph 3.48 refers
- CTOC1: Customer complaints responded to within corporate deadline, April to December 2018 target 95%, achieved 89.66% - paragraph 3.57 refers

- 3.9 Programme delivery updates for the FTFC Programmes together with an outline of any focused activity being implemented to keep the programmes on track are set out in the following paragraphs.

External Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes

Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration Programme

3.10 Programme Outcomes

- A new vibrant town centre delivered through a phased regeneration programme.
- Two major regeneration schemes to advance – one completed by 2021 and one to begin 2019/20.

- 3.11 During 2018/19 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Beginning the first phase of the town centre regeneration, working with our development partner
 - Signing off the Development Agreement for SG1
 - Working with Mace to develop and consult on plans for SG1

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- Opening the visitors' centre to showcase our history as well as our ambitious future
- Progressing more detailed plans for a public sector hub in the town
- Progressing the public realm improvements within the town centre
 - Completing improvements to the Market Place and wayfinding signage
 - Developing plans to improve the Town Square
- Establishing the 'Stevenage Works' local labour market and employment initiative in conjunction with partners

3.12 Programme Delivery Update

3.13 The Regeneration team are working closely with the Council's preferred developer Mace, to progress the development agreement for the first phase of town centre regeneration (SG1) and anticipate the signing of the development agreement will be completed during quarter four.

3.14 Construction work has started on the redevelopment of Queensway North. The Council has partnered with one of the UK's leading mixed-use developers, Reef Group, to spearhead the £50m regeneration scheme comprising the former Marks & Spencer and adjoining retail parade. The development consists of approximately 45,000 square foot of new retail and restaurant space, a gym, new offices, an innovation and technology centre, and 116 apartments.

3.15 Following completion of public realm improvements to Market Place, a launch event was held in December to celebrate its completion which was well attended. The revitalised Market Place is now a 'family-fun' orientated street that will encourage family visits to the town centre through a new adventure themed play space for families as well as an attractive space to relax and enjoy the town centre that will give new life to a central part of the town's retail core.

3.16 The installation of thirty (wayfinder) signs to help residents and visitors find town centre shops and services is near completion and art installation panels for the monoliths will be installed in January. The Wayfinding system couples the provision of an accurate functional system of navigation with high quality design.

3.17 Plans are progressing to open a visitor centre for residents and other visitors to the town to gain an understanding of the town centre developments and what the Stevenage of the future looks like.

Housing Development Programme

3.18 Programme Outcomes

- Increased number of affordable houses in Stevenage.

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- Improve access to the housing market in Stevenage for greater number of residents.
- 3.19 During 2018/19 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Completing and letting 54 new high quality homes across a number of design and build schemes.
 - Starting design work on a further 267 new/replacement homes across a range of planned schemes that deliver wider place shaping benefits.
 - Consulting with the public and securing planning permission for the Kenilworth Close site, including plans for the flagship older persons housing scheme to meet the needs of the town's ageing population.
 - Exploring the viability of other potential areas of development across the town including opportunities to work in partnership with other providers.
 - Continuing to work with partners to enable the delivery of affordable homes.
- 3.20 **Programme Delivery Update**
- 3.21 The Kenilworth (236 homes) scheme was granted planning permission and work is now being carried out to identify the best route for delivery of the scheme. The delivery proposal for this to be considered by the Executive in April 2019. Included within this scheme is provision for new retail shops, a new community centre and an independent living scheme for older people.
- 3.22 The six new build homes at the Wedgewood Way site are complete and the properties have been transferred into the ownership of the Council.
- 3.23 The contractor for Burwell Court and Ditchmore Lane is on site and both developments are progressing well. At Burwell Court the second floor brickwork has been completed with the roof expected to be completed by the end of March, 2019 thereby giving a very visible indicator to local residents that the scheme is progressing.
- 3.24 Architectural and site preparation work is currently being completed for the following three development sites during 2019/20:
- The North Road Scheme - 21 homes: in a blended modern and period style: Plans have been finalised and submitted to planning and are expected to be considered at the April Planning Committee.
 - The Symonds Green Scheme - 29 homes: public consultation was carried out in December, and feedback is being sought via the Council's Facebook page. A planning application will be submitted by the end of February 2019.
 - The Shephall Way Scheme - 9 homes: The planning application is being prepared and it is expected to be submitted for planning by the end of February 2019.

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- 3.25 The Council's Housing Development programme has facilitated the completion of 168 (affordable) homes to December 2018. Thirty-six homes will have been delivered since the beginning of the financial year.
- 3.26 A further two open market acquisitions have been completed. One of these properties will be converted into seven units of temporary accommodation to enhance the supply of this property type and assist the Council to meet the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Excellent Council Homes Programme

3.27 Programme Outcome

- Transforming the Housing and Investment service to better meet the needs of its customers.
- 3.28 During 2018/19 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Using customer insight information to develop a better understanding of customers' views and requirements, to enable provision of a more bespoke housing service for each individual customer and improved cohesion with services to the neighbourhood.
 - Continuing to improve the way staff and customers use technology.
 - Commencing implementation of mobile working in order to save time and enable staff to access information whenever and wherever it is needed.
 - Beginning to digitalise the housing service offer in order to provide customers with an additional channel of communication and an opportunity to self-serve.
 - Working with members of staff to create a lean, efficient and cohesive workforce that will work towards a 'One Team' approach and a 'Customer First' culture.

3.29 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.30 The review of the 5th tier management structure for Housing and Investment began in November. The proposals include a new leaner and more efficient staffing structure that is in line with the Council's Target Operating Model. Consultation with staff closed in December and feedback received is being reviewed. This will be further progressed within quarter four and is anticipated that the new structure will be in place from April 2019.
- 3.31 An external review on how the Council could further enhance the use of its current digital housing system has been completed. Plans will now be developed to implement the enhancement recommendations.
- 3.32 A range of new digital services are being implemented to help enhance service efficiency, these include:
- Electronic Document Management – this system now holds key customer, property and case management documents which will reduced the need for physical storage space and provide instant access to documents that will

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enable staff to better address customer enquiries at the first point of contact. Go live is planned for the beginning of March 2019 following extensive staff training.

- A new mobile digital application - this application is allowing housing support staff to spend more time out in the community as they now have access and update customer records on the go. Other service teams are appraising how the technology could help to enhance future service delivery.
- Implementation of Northgate Task Manager – this has led to an increase in collection of court costs as the system automatically starts to collect such costs once an account is clear of arrears. The improved functionality is also now automating the production of key government returns.

3.33 The Tenancy and Income team has undertaken a study of Universal Credit to better understand the journey and claiming patterns of current Universal Credit recipients. Further customer surveys are planned to gain more insight into the experiences of claimants as the numbers increase to help inform future service delivery.

3.34 Initial improvement in the nature and quality of customer feedback is evident as demonstrated by the level of complaints progressing to stage 2 & 3 in the following table. Performance continues to be monitored to determine any further interventions required.

Initial improvement - monthly performance for October to December		
October 2018	November 2018	December 2018
71.43%	57.14%	25.00%

- Compl4: Percentage of stage 2 and 3 complaints upheld fully or partially (housing), target 40%, April to December 2018 achieved 43.08%

Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management Programme

3.35 Programme Outcomes

- Residents feel that they can work with the Council and other organisations to help meet the needs of the local area.
- Staff better understand the town's communities and through doing so are more able to facilitate the change that is required.
- Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the Council and residents, and help to give people pride in the place they live.
- The Council's Community centres are efficiently run, well-managed and most importantly, meet local needs.

3.36 During 2018/19 the programme is primarily focused on:

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- Responding to priorities identified through engagement with residents of St Nicholas and Martins Wood in 2017/18, by making significant investment in those wards to improve public spaces and the quality of life of local people. The focus will be on youth engagement/ provision, street lighting, parking issues resolution, open spaces and grounds maintenance and health and wellbeing.
- Engaging with ward Members, partners and communities on the next phase of planned investment in the wards of Bedwell and Longmeadow.
- Investing £230k in outdoor play sites in Bedwell and Longmeadow.
- Seeking Council agreement to a sustainable model for the provision and management of community centres.
- Award and alignment of the works contract for the Garage Improvement Programme with the delivery of the Major Refurbishment Contract works to achieve economies of scale including an enhanced social value offer.
- Supporting residents in becoming more active members of their community, who make a positive contribution to the town and local area.
- Designing a council-wide framework to support officers and Members in effective and meaningful community engagement.
- Creating a more streamlined approach to increase and enhance volunteering within the Council.

3.37 Programme Delivery Update

3.38 Neighbourhood improvements in St Nicholas and Martinswood are being carried out. These include improvements to paths, street signs and verges. Additional enhancements including the installation of new litterbins and improvements to shrub beds which are due to be completed during quarter four.

3.39 Community mapping and engagement exercises are being used to inform the future use of participatory budgets (approximately £6,000). This dedicated resource is likely to be used in partnership with local businesses and community groups celebrating the diversity of the local area.

3.40 A series of ward walkabouts with senior officers, elected ward members and have been carried out to highlight areas in need of attention, inform future projects and celebrate recent successes.

3.41 Following consultation with children and young people earlier in the year, improvements have been delivered to 4 play areas in Longmeadow and Bedwell (Fairlands Valley Park, Blenheim Way, Holly Leys and Balmoral Close) and all opened in time for the October half term holiday.

3.42 A new approach to the identification and implementation of local improvement priorities is now being taken, informed by learning attained as a result of the partnership with University of Hull (UoH), University of Sheffield (UoS) and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Improvements will

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be delivered over two years with the first year focused on community engagement and involvement. Stevenage has been praised by UoH, UoS and DCMS for its open, honest and learning based approach to enabling social action partnership (ESAP).

- 3.43 Council officers have commenced discussions with residents from the Bedwell and Longmeadow Wards for the next phase of the programme. A special 'Our Neighbourhood' forum will be launched in both areas to explore current expenditure, mapping and delivery. The new co-operative forums will involve partners, business and local residents and will be co-ordinated by Community Development Officers from the Council.
- 3.44 The Executive received a report on the progress of the Community Centre Review during quarter 3. Consultation on the future of Council owned community centres also commenced during quarter 3 to help inform a new sustainable operating model. This will include exploring options relating to community association participation and structures under a new Cooperative Compact. This together with wider community consultation and focus groups will help shape the future provision of community buildings and services.
- 3.45 The Council's Community Select Committee completed a review of resident involvement during quarter 3 and a set of clear actions have been incorporated into a new Community Engagement Framework and toolkit which is due to be considered by the Executive during February 2019.
- 3.46 During October 2018 the Executive agreed for the garage refurbishment work to be added to the Council's major flat block refurbishment contract. The project team is now working with contractors to inspect and agree a work plan for the garage blocks that are to receive improvements in quarter 4. Refurbishment work has commenced on two pilot sites to test and finalise operational procedures that will be used across the remainder of the programme. Liaison with tenants and private garage owners is also now underway to ensure access arrangements are in place.
- 3.47 The Council is inviting private owners of garages in council garage blocks to take advantage of the reduced rates that it has obtained through the Major Works Contract.
- 3.48 Officers are identifying garage sites that attract anti-social behaviour so that by working co-operatively with local residents alongside the refurbishment work, these issues can be removed.
- The garage void rate is slightly higher than projected: April to December 2018 target 12%, achieved 12.81%

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Connected to our Customers Programme

3.49 Programme Outcomes

- Use of self-service is encouraged, so more time can be spent with customers that need extra help.
- Increased customer satisfaction for residents interacting with key services.
- Online customer data will be protected, better used to provide useful insight, and the technology reliable.
- The Council uses technology to meet its ambitions and make its workforce more modern, efficient and responsive to customer needs.
- A simple and clearer website with more self-service choices.

3.50 During 2018/19 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Launching a new customer strategy that sets out our ambitious plans to improve customer service, including a 'Promise' to our customers about how we aim to deliver a consistent customer service standard across the Council.
- Improving our online offer by delivering a simple and clearer website and straightforward on line self-service options for key routine transactions, helping our customers to self-serve on line and involving customers and staff in designing and testing new digital products and services before we launch them.
- Making sure our customer service centre is effectively resourced to meet customer demands and answer calls in a reasonable time; and is easy to use, especially for people who need it the most.
- Supporting our overall customer service offer and efficiency by improving back office processes and technology within the Council, and making sure all personal data is secure.

3.51 Programme Delivery Update

3.52 Slippage has occurred within the programme mainly due to reduced staffing capacity and legacy IT infrastructure challenges. A new Assistant Director Digital Services and Transformation (Caron Starkey) has been recruited who will be responsible for developing a new digital strategy and reviewing and rebasing the programme. In addition two project managers have been recruited to help to move a number of the digital projects forward.

3.53 Key digital initiatives underway include:

- A new corporate website - Zengenti has been commissioned to deliver the Council's website and the key development requirements that will guide the delivery of the new website that better meets customer needs have been agreed. A cross party Member group has been established to help inform the development of the new website.

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- A new Customer Relationship Management System and Digital Platform: Procurement for these new systems is due to take place in quarter 4 and will be launched in quarter three 2019/20.
 - Northgate housing online service module - This will facilitate the provision of self-serve functionality for all modules of the Housing Management system to include in summary:
 - Housing Advice
 - Homelessness and Allocations
 - Tenancy Services
 - Income
 - Property purchase and leasehold service charges
 - Supported housing and repairs.
 - A new waste and recycling management system - this will replace existing spreadsheets, lists and paper records. This project will be a key enabler for mobile working for the freighter crews, providing more timely and detailed performance data, and online customer self-service. The business case for the new system is due to be considered by the Strategic Leadership Team during February 2019.
- 3.54 A series of IT Infrastructure enhancements are being implemented to provide a more reliable and secure service that supports delivery of more digital solutions for customers and staff. Elements of capital funding required have been established in the Capital Programme and through the budget setting process for 2019/20.
- 3.55 Work is being carried out to ensure the Council is compliant with new online accessibility legislation. All new web material must be fully compliant and a timeline for compliance of existing websites and mobile apps has been defined within the regulations.
- 3.56 Customer service training was delivered to housing staff in October/November across Housing, Investment, the Customer Service Centre and Customer Focus Teams by Hamilton Mercer focused on strengthening customer service skills. Customer champions will ensure that the skills attained are fully embedded so staff are helpful, efficient and professional when interacting with customers.
- 3.57 The Senior Leadership Team monitors the performance and management of customer feedback across business units and directs that responsible officers respond promptly, professionally and comprehensively within a reasonable timeframe. There is a positive performance trend however the number of complaints responded to within the corporate deadline is unlikely to meet the end of year 95% target.

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CTOC1: Customer complaints responded to within corporate deadline Target 95%		
April to June 2018	April to September 2018	April to December 2018
83.66%	88.02%	89.66%

Internal Facing Future Town, Future Council Programmes

Financial Security Programme

3.58 Programme Outcomes

3.59 As set out in Figure 2: Financial Security Work streams.



Figure 2: Financial Security Work streams.

3.60 During 2018/19 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Identifying Financial Security options that meet the three year target (£2.2 million General Fund and £1 million Housing Revenue Account)
- Managing budgetary efficiency through regular monitoring, analysis of trends and robust challenge of spend as part of the efficiency work stream.
- Setting targets and deliver savings against each individual Financial Security work stream including Fees and Charges.

3.61 Programme Delivery Update

3.62 The Financial Security Programme Board has been refreshed with new terms of reference ready for adoption. New templates have been set up for each strand to monitor:

- The delivery of 2019/20 options
- Progress of future 2020/21 and beyond options approved at the November Executive meeting
- New options across the six workstreams.

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- 3.63 The Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy (2018/19 – 2022/23) and Business Plan Update were reported to the November Executive.
- 3.64 The 2018/19 Mid-Year Treasury Management Review and Financial Security Report setting out the Financial Security options for the Housing Revenue Account and General Fund were also reported to the November Executive. Targets for both funds have been revised, firstly in the Financial Security report (November) to reflect the shortfall in 2019/20-2021/22 target (£438K for General Fund and £450K for Housing Revenue Account) and then again in the Final Housing Revenue Account budget report to the January Executive (£650K 2020/21-2022/23) and the draft General Fund report to the January Executive (£1.2Million 2020/21-2022/23).
- 3.65 There remain significant pressures as identified in the General Fund report considered by the Executive in January which will mean that the Financial Security targets will need to be revised to meet a contribution to balances in 2022/23.
- 3.66 The proposals for fees and charges have been through a rigorous challenge process by the Fees and Charges Group and considered by the Leader's Financial Security Group and have now been approved by the Executive. A new, three year approach to reviewing fees and charges has also been adopted.
- 3.67 **Employer of Choice Programme**
- 3.68 **Programme Outcomes**
- Improved employee engagement.
 - Right person, right place, right time – recruiting/retaining staff to hard to fill posts.
 - Improved managerial competency.
 - Improved reputation as a place to work.
 - Evidence of staff progressing to higher grades and new roles.
- 3.69 During 2018/19 the programme is primarily focused on:
- Establishing a compelling employer brand with a competitive pay and benefit offer.
 - Developing and implementing a competency framework for staff from Grade 1- 9 of the Council's pay structure.
 - Managing Organisational Change effectively with a new appraisal process and valuing staff's health and wellbeing.
 - Enabling new ways of working to equip staff for the future including policies, practices and culture.
 - Developing digital skills and tools to enable staff self-service.
 - Creating a new Learning and Development Strategy.

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3.70 Programme Delivery Update

- 3.71 The Council received an Armed Force Covenant Silver Award in November, recognising the Council as an employer of choice for ex-service personnel and reservist employees.
- 3.72 The new corporate intranet was successfully launched during quarter 3 and officers have received a lot of positive feedback from users. Early analytics show that there has been a significant take up in the use of the new collaborative tools including the establishment of thirty-five officer network groups that enable innovation, improved communication, shared learning and knowledge transfer across the organisation.
- 3.73 A 4th Tier Leadership Network has been established with an initial meeting in December. A poll is currently running on the intranet to see what development areas are most popular amongst the 4th tier leadership team. Further events are planned from February 2019 onwards.
- 3.74 The Stevenage Borough Council Competency Framework for levels up to grade 10 was shared with Trade Unions in December completing consultation with staff. This will sit alongside the leadership competency framework that was implemented in 2017. The launch of the framework to staff is being planned for quarter four.
- 3.75 A corporate wide pay and benefits review has commenced with an initial focus on standby and callout payments.
- 3.76 Manager training events were delivered during December to further support the implementation of the REAL Conversations approach. R.E.A.L. Conversations is a rolling appraisal process which gives employees regular and on-going opportunities to:
- *Review* and appraise their contributions
 - *Engage* in discussing their well-being, their objectives and priorities
 - *Act* by doing what is most needed for them and the team at that time and
 - *Learn* through sharing any ambitions they might have or thoughts about skills and knowledge that might be useful to them now or in the future.
- 3.77 The HR Payroll system is being further developed to allow employees to self-serve and request learning and development via the system. This will allow for improved intelligence in regards to learning and development requirements across the organisation and an improved training programme.
- 3.78 Further charitable events in the workplace have been carried out during quarter three to include 'dress-down' days that encourage officer engagement and raise money for charities. Further discussions regarding future activities for 2019/20 have been scheduled and a calendar of activities is being developed for circulation.

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Performing at our Peak Programme

3.79 Programme Outcomes

- The provision of high quality performance management tools.
- Streamlined governance structures that ensure effective and timely decision making.
- A strong performance culture is embedded across the organisation.

3.80 During 2018/19 the programme is primarily focused on:

- Enhancing business insight through data connectivity and ensuring service managers have the right skills to use the performance management tool robustly to analyse information and make informed decisions that result in improved services for customers.
- Embedding the performance culture through the effective use of new tools and procedures, to enable lasting performance improvement.
- Completing a review of arrangements for decision making (scheme of delegation) to ensure continued robust and efficient decision-making by council officers at the appropriate level of seniority.

3.81 Programme Delivery Update

3.82 The Corporate Performance and Improvement Team are continuing to further exploit the Council's business intelligence system (InPhase). This now includes the capture and enhancement activity relating to corporate governance and business unit governance.

3.83 Arrangements for the update of business unit risk and associated mitigation activity through InPhase are progressing. A business unit risk pilot has been conducted for the Corporate Services Business Unit, with teams now managing their risks within InPhase. Learning from this is being used in the rollout to Stevenage Direct Services and other service areas. Implementation of this new digital service will enhance organisation-wide transparency that will better inform decision making.

3.84 The arrangements in place for officer decision making (scheme of delegation) were approved by Council in December. The speed and transparency of decision making will be considerably improved; officers are clearly empowered to make certain decisions, improving the speed of decision making and providing clarity and transparency of decision making. Work is proceeding on the development of the equivalent scheme for Executive delegated functions.

Corporate Performance highlights and areas for improvement

3.85 Results for the full set of current corporate performance measures across all themes (FTFC programme, and the Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support themes) are attached as Appendix One. The overview of corporate focused results for April 2018 to December 2018 is outlined below:

3.86

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Number of Measures Reported	Meeting or exceeding target	Amber Status (within a manageable tolerance)	Red Status (urgent improvement action required)	Not Available
42	32	0	7	3(*)

(*Results for three measures relating to Community Safety are not available – paragraph 3.96)

3.87 A summary of highlights and areas for improvement for April 2018 to December 2018 is set out in the following paragraphs across the three key delivery themes: Customer, Place, and Transformation and Support.

A: Customer Theme

3.88 The Customer Theme incorporates the following Business Units:

- Housing and Investment
- Communities and Neighbourhood

Housing and Investment

Homelessness Preventions (BV213)

3.89 Despite embedding three new members of staff during quarter 3 the Housing Options Team achieved the projected number of homelessness preventions.

Spotlight: Health and Safety compliant Council buildings

3.90 The Council Compliance Manager has reviewed the management arrangements associated to health and safety compliance. Officers are working with the current contractor to ensure that regulations are met and certification provided promptly. Performance is now improving steadily. Third party audits will be completed in the future to help provide quality assurance.

- Assets 5a: Percentage of (Council) assets known to be Health and Safety compliant (statutory), target 100%, September 2018 achieved 90%, December 2018 achieved 98%
- Assets5b: Percentage of (Council) assets known to be Health and Safety compliant (as per SBC enhanced definition), target 100%, September 2018 achieved 91.70%, December 2018 achieved 97%

3.91 The current compliance contract expires at the end of the financial year and the team are working with the exiting contractor to ensure a smooth transition as well as beginning the mobilisation of the new contract to ensure that it is fit for purpose and the monitoring arrangements are clear.

Communities and Neighbourhood

3.92 During the third quarter a number of successful community events were delivered by the council and local partners. This included specific commemorations around the centenary of the end of WW1, which culminated in the Armistice Day Parade in the Old Town.

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- 3.93 To mark 100 years of Suffrage Stevenage Museum successfully secured additional funds to drive a youth education programme and launch a dedicated exhibition in December. Suffrage was also the theme for the town's annual Fireworks Event, which saw over 30,000 residents in attendance.
- 3.94 The council also worked in partnership with Community Park Life to host an Oktoberfest event on King George V Playing Fields.
- 3.95 The Youth Council at the Council meeting in October presented its plans to broaden youth voice and engagement in local issues. This has since led to an increase in youth council members and the development of new engagement opportunities to ensure young people across the town are involved in shaping plans and services.

Community Safety

- 3.96 The Police have been implementing a new Crime Recording System called ATHENA and are adopting a revised approach to reporting. The accuracy of performance figures is now being assessed prior to formal reporting.
- 3.97 Stevenage Against Domestic Abuse (SADA) has secured funding of approximately £168k from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to help resource both SADA and the No More Service until March 2021.
- 3.98 The SADA service also led the activities for the White Ribbon Campaign and associated 16 Days of Action in November which saw over 15 champions come forward from across the council.
- 3.99 The Council became the first local authority in Hertfordshire to sign up to the Modern Slavery Charter. The Charter represents a commitment from the Council to actively challenge business practices which may enable modern slavery to occur.

B: Place Theme

- 3.100 The Place Theme incorporates the following Business Units:
- Planning and Regulation
 - Stevenage Direct Services
 - Regeneration
 - Housing Development

(The Regeneration and Housing Development Business Units are primarily focused on delivery of the Stevenage Town Centre Regeneration and Housing Development Programmes of FTFC. Delivery updates for these programmes are summarised in paragraphs 3.10 to 3.17 and 3.18 to 3.26 respectively)

Planning and Regulation

- 3.101 Planning applications continue to be determined within corporate and statutory targets.

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Spotlight: Licensing Houses of Multiple Occupation

- 3.102 New licensing regulations were introduced on 1 October 2018 for Houses in Multiple Occupation. Mandatory licensing is no longer limited to just HMOs of 3 or more storeys. The requirement for the HMO to be occupied by 5 or more persons, from 2 or more households, remains unchanged.
- 3.103 The Council has encouraged owners to apply for licenses through mailshots, advice and publicity and had previously developed a comprehensive knowledge of where HMOs are in Stevenage. Extensive development work was carried out on the Council's Uniform database to ensure the HMO Licensing module was available in order to facilitate effective tracking of applications through the licensing process. The majority of the landlords who did not submit applications have been contacted and have elected to downsize their properties to accommodate fewer tenants, avoiding the need for them to seek a licence. Staffing resources were prioritised to accommodate the anticipated influx of applications.
- 3.104 The Act makes it a criminal offence if a person controlling or managing an HMO does not have the required licence. A person found guilty of such an offence will be subject to an unlimited fine. Breaching any condition of a licence is also an offence, punishable by an unlimited fine. The Council has the ability to impose financial penalties for breaches of the legislation. Initially informal action will be taken against any landlord that does not apply for a licence when required. Ultimately formal action may be considered. Similarly, any breach of conditions will initially be dealt with informally, but if the breach continues or is serious, legal proceedings or financial penalty will be considered.
- 3.105 To date 174 additional properties are the subject of a licence application; this is in addition to 48 that were licensed prior to October 2018. Most applications have now moved to the Notice of Intention stage and all will be inspected prior to licences being issued. Seventy-three licences have been issued, 23 are pending consultation and 58 are awaiting inspection or notice of intention (as at 5 Feb 2019).
- Percentage of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) that are broadly compliant with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Housing Act 2004), December 2018 target 92.5%, achieved 87.5%.

Stevenage Direct Services (SDS)

- 3.106 During quarter 3, the Environmental Performance and Development Team delivered activities with Green Space Volunteers that amounted to approximately 250 hours of volunteer time being given to enhance community green spaces around the town, including maintenance of the Town Centre Gardens.
- 3.107 During November, the team also worked in partnership with Yes Futures to provide 60 Stevenage secondary school students with an opportunity to carry out volunteer work across the town that included maintenance and

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enhancement of the Weston Road Cemetery, Fairlands Valley Park and Town Centre Gardens. The Yes Futures 'Play Your Part' days are a chance for students to realise the benefits of volunteering and learn more about their local area. The Chief Executive of Yes Futures contacted the team to advise of the brilliant experience the students received and thank the team for their work in hosting.

- 3.108 Refuse from Stevenage households is now collected in bulk from Cavendish Road following new arrangements agreed with Hertfordshire County Council. Collection crews no longer need to travel to tip waste collected resulting in reduced time to complete collection rounds and associated financial savings (estimated £90k). The new arrangements are proving successful.
- 3.109 Two Hundred and Seventy households were invited to participate in a pilot for the use of recycling bags instead of the blue and black boxes currently provided. Consultation has been carried out with participants at the half way point of the trial period and these are being analysed. Focus group sessions are to be held at the end of January 2019 with residents interested in providing further feedback.

Repairs and Voids

- 3.110 Turn-around times for property repairs and voids remain a major area of focus for the Repairs and Void team. Officers have adopted a case management approach to ensure each case is effectively dealt with. This coupled with efforts to review and improve processes has improved performance and productivity:
- RepTime1: Emergency Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), December target 1 day, achieved 0.47 day.
 - RepTime2: Urgent Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), December target 5 days, achieved 3.99 days.
 - RepTime3: Routine Repairs - Average end to end repairs time (days), December target 20 days, achieved 9.81 days.
- 3.111 The time taken to re-let general needs standard voids (requiring minor works prior to re-let) continues to improve (Target 32 days, April to June achieved 29 days, April to Sept achieved 27.5 days, April to December achieved 27.3 days). However, turn-around times for general needs properties requiring major works and sheltered properties continue to exceed target.
- 3.112 Officers have introduced a number of initiatives to reduce these void times including:
- Seeking to relet properties (that meet the lettable standard) and schedule major works while the tenant is in the property and not when void.
 - A collaborative approach between the Housing Investment and Empty Homes Teams, including co-locating both teams to improve communication.

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- General Needs Voids – Major Works, target 65 days, April to Sept 2018 achieved 93.53 days, April to December 2018 achieved 83.24 days.

3.113 Key Performance Indicators that are impacted by hard to let properties will be reviewed. Proposals will be developed for new indicators that highlight the Council's work to adapt or convert certain housing types to better match demand in the market place (e.g. conversion of studio apartments to one bedroom flats). Conversion works require more time than a major works repair and skew actual performance data under the existing arrangements where data relating to conversions is incorporated with repair data. Proposals will be considered with a view to introduce more relevant performance measures for the 2019/20 financial year.

C: Transformation and Support Theme

3.114 The Transformation and Support Theme incorporates the following Business Units:

- Corporate Services
- Digital and Transformation
- Finance and Estates

Corporate Services

Spotlight: Customer Services

3.115 Service delivery through the Customer Service Centre (CSC) was identified as a focus for improvement (spotlight) at quarter 3 2017/18 (March 2018 Executive). This focus will be retained until initial performance improvement is sustained across the full set of CSC measures.

3.116 The CSC Improvement Plan has continued to support the recovery of performance levels during quarter three 2018/19. The Assistant Director (Corporate Services) is continuing to work closely with the CSC and back office service teams to review the Council's customer service approach and to identify additional governance and operational interventions that could further strengthen the CSC Improvement Plan.

3.117 Historical performance data demonstrates performance in the Customer Service Centre (CSC) is closely related to the amount of skilled advisers available.

3.118 Activities to recruit, train and on-board specialist skills has reduced the number of vacancies. Staff resourcing levels as at 31 December 2018 stood at 96% with further recruitment arrangements underway. The improved training delivery and upskilling of CSC Advisers is having a positive impact on performance with improvement now evident. However, performance results for January 2019 are likely to be impacted by a new housing system upgrade and reduced resource as a result of two multi skilled members of staff leaving. Performance is not forecast to achieve the 2018/19 targets despite an upward performance trend.

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- CSC4: Percentage of telephone calls to the Customer Service Centre answered within 20 seconds, target 55%, April to September 2018 achieved 40.9%, April to December achieved 48.4%.

Initial improvement - monthly performance for October 2018 to Jan 2019				Forecast if staff levels remain at full establishment level
October	November	December	Jan 2019	April 2018 to March 2019
55.7%	67.6%	76.6%	54.1%	49.6%

- CSC12: Percentage of calls abandoned in the Customer Service Centre, April to June/Sept 2018 target 8%, April to June 2018 achieved 13.9%, April to Sept 2018 achieved 17.1%, April to December 2018 target 7%, achieved 14.4%

Initial improvement - monthly performance for October 2018 to Jan 2019				Forecast if staff levels remain at full establishment level
October	November	December	Jan 2019	April 2018 to March 2019
11.2%	8.2%	4.7%	13.6%	15.1%

3.119 Collaborative working with other service areas across the organisation is also key to driving further improvements in performance. Following a successful pilot, initial improvements are being developed for the housing repairs services provided through the CSC.

3.120 Self service facilities through the Connected to our Customers Programme are being planned to help meet service demand for walk-in customers.

- CSC5: Percentage of walk-in customers to the Customer Service Centre served within 20 minutes, target 80%, April to June 2018 achieved 69.7%, April to Sept 2018 achieved 65.2%, April to December 2018 achieved 71.8%

Initial improvement - monthly performance for October 2018 to Jan 2019				Forecast if staff levels remain at full establishment level
October	November	December	Jan 2019	April 2018 to March 2019
62.57%	81.32%	84.17%	81.83%	78%

3.121 Effective resource planning will help ensure that sufficient staff are available to meet the rise and demand of customer contacts to provide a more consistent level of service to customers. Management have adopted a new approach to ensure a continued focus on coaching and development.

3.122 Customer satisfaction with Customer Service Centre remains high (88.4%).

Technology

3.123 The Shared IT Partnership governance arrangements continue to be enhanced during 2018/19. The Shared Services Partnership Board is

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overseeing the development and implementation of a single IT strategy that will deliver the Council's digital transformation ambitions and ensure that services are delivered that meet customer needs and are fit for the future.

- 3.124 The Shared IT Service is working with Microsoft to develop a programme of activity to enhance IT infrastructure and resilience. A draft ICT strategy & road map is anticipated during March 2019. This will outline a two year plan for approval due to the scale of the work and level of financial resource required.
- 3.125 The IT Steering Group and the IT Programme Management Office (IT PMO) function facilitates delivery of the projects that support the Council's Future Town, Future Council programme and the Council's Business Unit Reviews (and their equivalent programmes at East Herts Council) alongside the day to day IT service.
- 3.126 The new Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager is assessing performance management arrangements to ensure that robust information is provided to support delivery of the Council's digital transformation ambitions, operational frameworks to drive forward service improvement using International IT Service Management Standards and core service delivery.

Our staff

- 3.127 Staff Appraisals: The Council's Human Resources Team worked with service managers during quarter three to ensure that all Council staff appraisals and objective setting meetings were completed and that 'REAL' conversations (appraisal meetings) are taking place. Status is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and performance to December 2018 has improved.
- Appraisal completion rate to corporate deadlines, target 100%, April to September 2018 achieved 90.1%, April to December 2018 achieved 99.1%.
- 3.128 Agency Usage: There are three type of agency use within the Council. Firstly there are a number of short term assignments within SDS to cover sickness and leave; this will be resolved with the next phase of the SDS Business Unit Review. The second category is interim assignments to cover key strategic roles within the establishment whilst we progress through the change programme of Business Unit Reviews, examples of these assignments include Communications, Finance, IT and Estates, and these will conclude when the permanent appointments are made. The third category is the one off project based agency assignments. Agency usage is likely to remain slightly higher whilst we progress through the change programme of Business Unit Reviews.
- 3.129 Recruitment is underway for a number of key posts across the Council that will enhance capacity and key skills. The Fourth Tier management reviews are nearing completion, with Stevenage Direct Services and Corporate Services commencing staff consultation on a set of staffing proposals during quarter three.

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- Agency usage as a percentage of the total workforce, target 10%, April to September 2018 achieved 14.4%, April to December 2018 achieved 11.5%.

3.130 Health and Safety: To ensure and maintain corporate wide oversight and clarity on health and safety compliance and performance across the Council, a new corporate health and safety governance structure has been established that provides assurance to senior management that health and safety assessments and activity across the Council are being effectively managed.

Spotlight: Sickness Absence

3.131 The reduction in the level of sickness absence has been sustained this quarter.

- Sickness absence rate threshold for twelve months to December 2018 2018 per fte 8 days, twelve months to September achieved 8.91 days, twelve months to December achieved 8.57 days

3.132 At December 2018, 4 out of 10 business units were achieving their individual sickness absence service targets. Stevenage Direct Services sickness absence levels have also decreased and are now only slightly above target. Service managers are provided with access to real time sickness information to support absence management through the HR system 'MyView'.

3.133 The Council are also in the process of preparing to implement a third party sickness absence provider (First Care) who will provide a nurse led sickness reporting facility for all employees, which will provide advice and challenge on fitness for work to both individuals and managers and ensure consistency of approach/advice on sickness absence. They will also follow up to ensure appropriate application of policy and return to work and provide regular and timely management information. Work continues on the development to implement First Care and we are awaiting the final recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on sickness absence before we take any further steps.

3.134 Officers from the Human Resources Team continue to support managers with managing sickness absence cases and long term absence has reduced from 60% to 52% of overall absence.

3.135 The Senior Leadership Team will continue to monitor the performance and management of sickness absence until revised policy and practice results in a sustained reduction in levels of sickness absence.

Finance and Estates

3.136 The Revenues and Benefits service continue to exceed targets for Council Tax collection rates and Housing Benefit processing times.

- Percentage of Council Tax collected (BV9), April to December 2018 target 89%, achieved 90%.

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- Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events (NI181)
 - April to June 2018 target 14 days, achieved 10.35 days.
 - April to September 2018 target 12 days, achieved 8.88 days
 - April to December 2018 target 11 days, achieved 8.12 days.

Senior Leadership Team perspective

3.137 High levels of performance across all three key delivery themes (Customer, Place, Transformation and Support) that were evident at the end of 2017/18 have been sustained for April to December 18, to include the following:

- The number of households in temporary accommodation has been maintained below the thresholds set.
- The determination of planning applications exceeded national targets.
- The collection rate for Council tax exceeds the target set
- The time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events continues to exceed target.

3.138 The Senior Leadership Team request that the Assistant Directors responsible for areas of improvement focus assess the factors impacting on performance and develop/implement plans that will provide sustainable performance improvement.

3.139 At September 2018, the following improvement plans were identified for ongoing focused monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team:

- Implementation and application of the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- Improving the performance in the Customer Service Centre through a revised service model that will enhance resilience and increase the availability, skills and knowledge of customer service advisers.
- The management of sickness absence and alignment to the Council's health and well-being policy.

Homelessness Reduction Act

3.140 The activity carried out to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act and the restructuring of the Housing Advice and Homelessness Team (to Housing Options and Supply) have contributed to an improvement in the number of homelessness preventions over the last two quarters and this level of performance is forecast to be sustained.

3.141 The newly formed Housing Options and Supply Teams have achieved the additional preventions through a number of actions to improve performance:

- A training programme for all housing advice staff was carried out during quarter 1 2018/19.
- Training on the Homelessness Reduction Act which came into force 3 April 2018 was provided for other housing teams and services during quarter 1 2018/19.

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- Enhanced working practices to include a new process of the same caseworker managing and supporting a person/household presenting as homeless to appropriate resolution/conclusion.
 - BV213: Homelessness preventions, April to Sept 2018, target 180, achieved 182. April to December target 270, achieved 279
- 3.142 The Assistant Director Housing and Investment will continue to monitor performance and advise the Senior Leadership Team should there be any indications that the performance level is not being sustained.

Customer Service Centre

- 3.143 The Customer Service Centre has started to implement improvement activity that is having an initial positive impact on performance but the Senior Leadership Team will continue to monitor performance to ensure that performance improvement is being sustained into the new performance year (that commences April 2019).

Sickness Absence

- 3.144 The reduction in the level of sickness absence has been sustained this quarter.
- Sickness absence rate threshold for twelve months to December 2018 2018 per fte 8 days, twelve months to September achieved 8.91 days, twelve months to December achieved 8.42 days
- 3.145 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is carrying out a scrutiny review of the Council's sickness management arrangements. The review is focused on factors that are or may be affecting sickness absence within the organisation. Enhancement activities being considered include:
- The development and implementation of a staff communication plan prior to the introduction of First Care with a focus on the aim to improve staff well-being and post implementation of First Care measure the return on investment
 - HR to work with Members to identify specific interventions which might help reduce sickness absence associated with stress, anxiety and depression and sickness absence specifically associated with the undertaking of the Business Unit Reviews.
 - HR to ensure that the impact of ill-health and pressure on officers that are carers is considered and reflected in the Council's sickness policy and other Council policies.
- 3.146 The Senior Leadership Team will continue to monitor the performance and management of sickness absence until revised policy and practice results in a sustained reduction in levels of sickness absence.
- 3.147 At December 2018, the following improvement plans have been identified for ongoing focused monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team:

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- Improvement plans being implemented to ensure that compliance with Health and Safety regulations is effectively monitored and recorded (paragraph 3.90 refers)
- Arrangements to meet new regulations (introduced October 2018) relating to the Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation (paragraph 3.102 to 3.105 refer)
- Agreeing and embedding the new future service model in the Customer Service Centre to continue to enhance resilience and increase the availability, skills and knowledge of customer service advisers resulting in sustained performance improvement (paragraphs 3.115 to 3.121 refer)
- The management of sickness absence and alignment to council health and well-being policy. (paragraphs 3.131 to 3.135 refer)

3.148 In addition, the development and implementation of the IT strategy will continue to be monitored by the IT Shared Service Partnership Board to ensure that services are delivered that meet customer needs and are fit for the future.

3.149 The Council's approach to performance management and monitoring allows the organisation to proactively identify issues and challenges and ensure prompt management intervention. The fluid nature of the framework enables the Senior Leadership Team to amend targets to ensure that they continue to reflect revisions to service delivery models where necessary and to support and drive forward additional improvements in services for the benefit of internal and external customers.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1 The information presented in this report is collated from the information provided to monitor delivery of the Future Town, Future Council Programme and corporate performance for the quarter. It aims to give Executive an overview of the achievements the Council has made for the year to date, with a focus on the current quarter and identifies plans for continued improvements in some areas to ensure the Council is fit for the future.
- 4.2 The Senior Leadership Team and Service Managers have been consulted to determine the appropriate content and to identify the key achievements.
- 4.3 A number of areas have been identified in section 3 of this report where a particular focus on improvement is required and outline plans have been set out. The Executive is recommended to note and endorse these improvement plans.

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5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

5.1.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations contained in this report. However, officers responsible for improvement activity identified will need to identify and consider any resulting financial implications.

5.2 Legal Implications

5.2.1 There are no direct legal implications from the recommendations contained in this report. However, officers responsible for improvement activity identified will need to identify and consider any resulting legal implications.

5.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications

5.3.1 The report outlines performance against key priorities that form the Future Town, Future Council Programme and performance of the Council across key business unit themes. Where necessary, Equality Impact Assessments will be completed for improvement activity identified.

5.4 Risk Implications

5.4.1 There are no direct significant risks to the Council in agreeing the recommendation(s). Officers responsible for developing performance improvement plans will need to consider any risk implications from the improvement activity identified.

5.4.2 The Council has an embedded approach to risk management that mitigates any adverse effect on delivery of the Council's objectives and internal control processes and also provides good governance assurance.

5.5 Other Corporate implications

5.5.1 Improvement activity outlined may impact on the development of future policy or procedure.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Executive Report 12 December 2018: Corporate Performance Quarter Two

APPENDICES








- Appendix One: Compendium of performance results
- Appendix Two: Future Town, Future Council Programme Scope/Focus

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Executive Report Appendix One

Key to Performance Status

Symbols

-  Red Status - Focus of improvement
-  Amber Status - Initial improvement activity identified
-  Green Status - Any variance from target manageable
-  Green Plus Status - Exceeding expectations
-  New measure - Performance results not required
-  No data results
-  Missing value

	Corporate Theme	Target to 31/12/17	Actual to 31/12/17	Status at 31/12/17	Target to 31/03/18	Actual to 31/03/18	Status at 31/03/18	Target to 30/06/18	Actual to 30/06/18	Status at 30/06/18	Target to 30/09/18	Actual to 30/09/18	Status at 30/09/18	Target to 31/12/18	Actual to 31/12/18	Status at 31/12/18	Target to 31/03/19
⊕ VGC1: Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas certificate	Customers	100.0%	100.0%	★	100.0%	100.0%	★	100.0%	100.0%	★	100.0%	100.0%	★	100.0%	100.0%	★	100.0%
Assets5b: Percentage of assets known to be health and safety compliant (as per SBC definition)	Customers			»			»			»	100.00%	91.70%	▲	100.00%	97.00%	▲	100.00%
Assets5a: Percentage of assets known to be health and safety compliant (Statutory)	Customers			»			»			»	100.00%	90.00%	▲	100.00%	98.00%	▲	100.00%
CS8: Anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population	Customers	29.75	31.49	●	33.10	37.75	▲	10.50	8.21	☆	22.00	?	?	31.00	?	?	35.00
NI15b: The rate of violence against the person (victim based crime) per 1,000	Customers	30.13	25.65	☆	33.07	33.58	★	8.50	?	?	17.00	?	?	26.00	?	?	33.07
BV213: Homelessness preventions	Customers	270.0	177.0	▲	360.0	231.0	▲	90.0	101.0	☆	180.0	182.0	★	270.0	279.0	★	360.0
CS9: Criminal damage per 1,000 population	Customers	7.75	9.93	▲	9.13	12.86	▲	3.50	?	?	6.70	?	?	9.80	?	?	12.00
⊕ ECHFL-EW1: Percentage of tenants satisfied with external works completed (for the current quarter)	Customers	85.0%	96.7%	★	85.0%	95.5%	★	90.0%	93.9%	★	90.0%	89.0%	★	80.0%	89.7%	★	80.0%
⊕ ECHFL-IW1: Percentage of tenants satisfied with internal works completed (for the current quarter)	Customers	80.0%	36.4%	▲	80.0%	44.0%	▲	80.0%	93.9%	☆	80.0%	94.3%	☆	80.0%	95.7%	☆	80.0%
⊕ ECHFL1: Percentage of Homes maintained as decent	Customers	83.8%	83.7%	★	75.4%	75.8%	★	77.2%	77.3%	★	79.8%	80.0%	★	82.6%	82.6%	★	75.3%
NI15a: Number of households in temporary accommodation at end qtr	Customers	110.00	85.00	☆	110.00	46.00	☆	100.00	60.00	☆	100.00	65.00	☆	100.00	61.00	☆	100.00
⊕ BV66a: Rent collection rate	Customers	97.8%	98.3%	★	98.8%	98.9%	★	93.6%	94.4%	★	96.3%	96.8%	★	97.8%	98.6%	★	98.7%
EAA1: Customer satisfaction with CSC customer service	Future Town, Future Council	90.0%	88.5%	★	90.0%	89.0%	★	90.0%	89.7%	★	90.0%	88.4%	★	90.0%	88.4%	★	90.0%
EoCrec: Time to recruit	Future Town, Future Council			»			»	45.00	34.50	☆	45.00	38.50	☆	45.00	42.00	★	45.00
FS1a (LACC1): Percentage GF approved savings removed from GF budget for current year	Future Town, Future Council			»			»	98.00%	98.64%	★	92.00%	89.90%	★	92.00%	89.90%	★	92.00%
FS2a (LACC2): Percentage HRA approved savings removed from HRA for current year	Future Town, Future Council			»			»	91.00%	91.15%	★	91.00%	86.70%	★	91.00%	86.70%	★	91.00%
CTOC1: Percentage of customer complaints responded to within deadline	Future Town, Future Council	95.00%	97.10%	★	95.00%	94.40%	★	95.00%	83.66%	▲	95.00%	88.02%	▲	95.00%	89.66%	▲	95.00%
WebSat1: Customer satisfaction with Council website	Future Town, Future Council			»			»	0.11	0.24	☆	0.11	0.26	☆	0.15	0.28	☆	0.20
EoC4c: Percentage of flexible working arrangements in place	Future Town, Future Council			»			»	25.00%	22.76%	★	25.00%	26.23%	★	25.00%	24.88%	★	25.00%
FS4 (Futsav2b): Percentage of HRA savings identified to meet three year target	Future Town, Future Council	64.0%	27.6%	▲	41.3%	40.6%	★	2.5%	5.2%	☆	29.3%	56.6%	☆	33.5%	54.3%	☆	46.3%

	Corporate Theme	Target to 31/12/17	Actual to 31/12/17	Status at 31/12/17	Target to 31/03/18	Actual to 31/03/18	Status at 31/03/18	Target to 30/06/18	Actual to 30/06/18	Status at 30/06/18	Target to 30/09/18	Actual to 30/09/18	Status at 30/09/18	Target to 31/12/18	Actual to 31/12/18	Status at 31/12/18	Target to 31/03/19
EoC4a: Percentage of apprentices in post as percentage of workforce.	Future Town, Future Council	2.3%	2.2%	★	2.3%	1.6%	●	2.5%	1.4%	▲	2.5%	2.7%	☆	2.5%	3.0%	☆	2.5%
HDD1b (formerly NB1) - New Build Spend v Budget of development activity that is contracted	Future Town, Future Council	95.0%	91.6%	★	95.0%	97.9%	★	90.0%	96.3%	★	90.0%	95.5%	★	90.0%	97.7%	★	90.0%
CNM2g: Garage Voids as a percentage of stock	Future Town, Future Council	12.00%	12.05%	★	12.00%	12.06%	★	12.00%	12.62%	●	12.00%	12.62%	●	12.00%	12.81%	●	12.00%
EoCint: Percentage of roles filled by staff employed within the Council	Future Town, Future Council			»			»	20.00%	38.30%	▲	20.00%	39.02%	▲	20.00%	36.94%	▲	20.00%
FS3 (Futsav1b): Percentage of GF savings identified to meet three year target	Future Town, Future Council	63.0%	59.1%	●	62.6%	63.2%	★	21.1%	30.3%	☆	39.8%	78.7%	☆	47.4%	81.6%	☆	69.9%
Compl4: Percentage of stage 2 & 3 complaints upheld fully or partially (Housing)	Future Town, Future Council	40.00%	58.24%	▲	40.00%	51.28%	▲	40.00%	44.00%	●	40.00%	38.30%	★	40.00%	43.08%	●	40.00%
HDD1d: Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) by the Council (since 2014)	Future Town, Future Council			»			»	133.00	134.00	★	148.00	149.00	★	148.00	168.00	★	160.00
Rep-Time3: Average end to end repairs time (days) - Routine Repairs	Place			»			»	20.00	14.84	☆	20.00	10.83	☆	20.00	9.81	☆	20.00
NI191: Residual household waste per household (kgs)	Place	392.00	383.00	★	510.00	522.00	●	133.00	134.95	★	254.00	246.36	★	386.00	383.00	★	519.00
NI192: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Place	43.0%	40.3%	●	43.0%	38.0%	▲	42.1%	43.6%	★	43.5%	42.0%	★	41.5%	40.0%	★	40.0%
Rep Cost1: Average responsive repair cost per dwelling	Place	206.73	237.18	▲	275.69	327.07	▲	80.25	59.77	☆	160.50	146.03	☆	240.75	222.17	☆	321.00
Rep-Time2: Average end to end repairs time (days) - Urgent Repairs	Place			»			»	5.00	4.97	★	5.00	4.50	☆	5.00	3.99	☆	5.00
VoidsGN: The time taken to relet standard general needs voids	Place	27.78	33.18	▲	26.00	32.11	▲	32.00	29.89	☆	32.00	27.49	☆	32.00	27.32	☆	32.00
VoidsGNMW - The time taken to relet major works general needs voids	Place	55.00	98.38	▲	51.25	105.35	▲	65.00	72.25	▲	65.00	93.53	▲	65.00	83.24	▲	65.00
BTC1a: New jobs created through Business Technology Centre	Place			»			»	10.00	51.00	☆	30.00	87.00	☆	70.00	121.00	☆	125.00
ELL1a: Percentage of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) that are broadly compliant	Place			»			»			»			»	92.50	87.50	▲	92.50
BTC1b: New business start up in Business Technology Centre	Place			»			»	5.00	30.00	☆	15.00	49.00	☆	30.00	58.00	☆	52.00
NI157b: Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	Place	65.0%	98.6%	☆	65.0%	94.9%	☆	65.0%	89.5%	☆	65.0%	90.2%	☆	65.0%	90.2%	☆	65.0%
NI157a: Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	Place	80.0%	96.8%	☆	80.0%	96.8%	☆	80.0%	96.4%	☆	80.0%	96.8%	☆	80.0%	97.0%	☆	80.0%
NI18d: Food establishments in the area broadly compliant with food hygiene law	Place	95.0%	96.0%	★	95.0%	96.0%	★	95.0%	97.0%	★	95.0%	96.0%	★	95.0%	94.2%	★	95.0%

	Corporate Theme	Target to 31/12/17	Actual to 31/12/17	Status at 31/12/17	Target to 31/03/18	Actual to 31/03/18	Status at 31/03/18	Target to 30/06/18	Actual to 30/06/18	Status at 30/06/18	Target to 30/09/18	Actual to 30/09/18	Status at 30/09/18	Target to 31/12/18	Actual to 31/12/18	Status at 31/12/18	Target to 31/03/19	
+	ECH-Rep3: Percentage repairs appointment made and kept	Place	95.00%	97.08%	★	95.00%	96.98%	★	95.00%	96.23%	★	95.00%	95.76%	★	95.00%	99.26%	★	95.00%
+	ECH-Rep4: Percentage repairs fixed first time	Place	90.00%	84.88%	▲	90.00%	83.82%	▲	87.50%	89.35%	★	87.50%	92.13%	★	87.50%	97.47%	☆	87.50%
+	ECHFL5: Percentage of Repairs service customers satisfied (telephone survey)	Place	95.00%	92.50%	★	95.00%	94.05%	★	90.00%	89.84%	★	90.00%	93.44%	★	90.00%	96.07%	★	90.00%
+	Rep-Time1: Average end to end repairs time (days) - Emergency Repairs	Place			»			»	1.00	0.28	☆	1.00	0.45	☆	1.00	0.47	☆	1.00
+	NI157a: Percentage of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	Place	60.0%	87.5%	☆	60.0%	90.0%	☆	60.0%	100.0%	☆	60.0%	100.0%	☆	60.0%	100.0%	☆	60.0%
	CSC4: Percentage of telephone calls to the CSC answered within 20 secs	Transformation and Support	55.0%	51.8%	●	55.0%	52.8%	●	55.0%	39.8%	▲	55.0%	40.9%	▲	55.0%	48.4%	▲	55.0%
	CSC13a: Percentage of calls to the CSC resolved within the CSC (by CSC advisors)	Transformation and Support			»			»	65.00%	64.20%	★	65.00%	64.20%	★	65.00%	65.10%	★	65.00%
	CSC5: Percentage of walk-in customers to the CSC served within 20mins	Transformation and Support	85.0%	73.6%	▲	85.0%	71.5%	▲	80.0%	69.7%	▲	80.0%	65.2%	▲	80.0%	71.8%	▲	80.0%
	NI181: Time taken (days) to process housing benefit new claims and change events	Transformation and Support	12.00	9.95	★	10.00	7.16	☆	14.00	10.35	☆	12.00	8.88	☆	11.00	8.12	☆	9.00
	Pe1: Total Human Capital - measures Workforce Stability	Transformation and Support	85.0%	85.3%	★	85.0%	89.0%	★	85.0%	85.6%	★	85.0%	86.0%	★	85.0%	84.0%	★	85.0%
	Pe2: Agency Usage as a percentage of total workforce	Transformation and Support	12.0%	9.6%	☆	10.0%	11.1%	●	10.0%	13.0%	▲	10.0%	14.4%	▲	10.0%	11.5%	▲	12.0%
	BV9: Percentage of council tax collected	Transformation and Support	88.5%	88.8%	★	96.5%	96.4%	★	33.0%	33.7%	☆	61.0%	60.8%	★	89.0%	90.0%	☆	96.8%
	BV10: Percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year received by the authority	Transformation and Support	89.0%	89.1%	★	98.5%	98.6%	★	36.0%	36.4%	☆	62.0%	61.6%	★	89.0%	88.2%	★	99.0%
	Pe4a: Sickness Absence Rate for the Current Workforce (FTE)	Transformation and Support	8.00	9.28	▲	8.00	9.50	▲	8.00	9.71	▲	8.00	8.91	●	8.00	8.42	★	8.00
	Pe6: Appraisal completion to meet corporate deadlines	Transformation and Support	100.0%	99.8%	★	100.0%	100.0%	★	100.0%	73.3%	▲	100.0%	90.1%	▲	100.0%	99.1%	★	100.0%
	Cust1: Percentage complaints progressing to stage 2 and 3 that are upheld or partially upheld	Transformation and Support	40.0%	42.9%	●	40.0%	43.7%	●	40.0%	38.2%	★	40.0%	37.3%	★	40.0%	38.6%	★	40.0%
	CSC12: Percentage of calls abandoned in the Customer Service Centre	Transformation and Support	4.0%	9.2%	▲	5.5%	9.7%	▲	8.0%	13.9%	▲	8.0%	17.1%	▲	7.0%	14.4%	▲	6.0%

Appendix Two.

Future Town, Future Council Outcomes and Focus for 2018/19

External Facing Programmes

1. Stevenage Centre Town Centre Regeneration Programme

1.1. Programme Outcomes

- A new vibrant town centre delivered through a phased regeneration programme.
- Two major regeneration schemes to advance – one completed by 2020/21 and one to begin 2019/20.

1.2. Programme Overview

- 1.3. Regeneration of the town centre is the Council's number one priority and was the priority most often placed in residents' 'top three' in the town-wide survey undertaken this year. The Council wants to make Stevenage a destination of choice through delivering a new vibrant town centre, with quality shopping, office and leisure facilities.
- 1.4. The Council officially announced the appointment of Mace as the development partner for Town Centre regeneration in February. Mace, the international development and construction company behind some of the world's landmark developments, will be undertaking the first phase of regeneration (SG1).
- 1.5. Stevenage is now the single largest regeneration zone in the East of England. The key building blocks of SG1 include:
- **Stevenage Core** – signature public space, new retail, residential, restaurants and cafes; and other civic uses.
 - **New Public Sector Hub** - new health facilities, a library, civic spaces and offices.
 - **Southgate Park** – which will include new residential apartments, a linear park and potentially a new urban primary school.
- 1.6. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:
- Signing off the Development Agreement for SG1.
 - Working with Mace to develop and consult on plans for SG1.
 - Progressing more detailed plans for a public sector hub in the town.
 - Completing improvements to the Market Place and wayfinding signage as well as developing plans to improve the Town Square.
 - Establishing the "Stevenage Works" local labour market employment & training initiative in conjunction with North Herts College and Job Centre plus.

- Opening the visitors' centre to showcase the history of Stevenage as well as ambitious future plans.

2. Housing Development Programme

2.1. Programme Outcomes

- Increased number of affordable houses in Stevenage.
- Improve access to the housing market in Stevenage for greater number of residents.

2.2. Programme Overview

2.3. Providing decent, affordable homes appropriate to the needs of residents is one of the Council's key priorities. The Council is meeting this priority by delivering its own new build programme.

2.4. The Council progressed well with the adoption of the new Local Plan during 2017/18. A successful Public Examination of the plan was held, with the independent Planning Inspector giving a positive report after listening to the views of residents and businesses. The Council is now working with the Government to get the plan adopted. The plan should then provide the certainty to encourage developers to bring forward their schemes to provide a range of housing, including a proportion of affordable homes.

2.5. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Completing and letting 54 new high quality homes across a number of design and build schemes.
- Starting work on a further 267 new/replacement homes across a range of planned schemes that deliver wider place shaping benefits.
- Consulting with the public and securing planning permission for the Kenilworth Close site, including plans for the flagship older persons housing scheme to meet the needs of the town's ageing population.
- Exploring the viability of other potential areas of development across the town including opportunities to work in partnership with other providers.
- Continuing to work with partners to enable the delivery of affordable homes.

3. Excellent Council Homes Programme

3.1. Programme Outcomes

- Transforming the Housing and Investment service to better meet the needs of its customers.

3.2. Programme Overview

- 3.3. The Council's aim is to provide high quality, efficient and effective housing services. The Council has committed through the Excellent Council Homes programme to transform its housing services to better meet the needs of its customers.
- 3.4. During 2017/18 work started on Phase 1 of the programme to implement digital improvements and new ways of working and to provide staff with tools and skills to deliver excellent customer service. These improvements lay the essential foundations for Phase 2 of the programme, which will continue the delivery of digital improvements, embed new ways of working and enable customers to benefit from improved access to services through a wide range of methods, including online self-service services and additional support for those who need it.
- 3.5. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:
- Using customer insight information to develop a better understanding of customers' views and requirements, to enable provision of a more bespoke housing service for each individual customer and improved cohesion with services to the neighbourhood.
 - Continuing to improve the way staff and customers use technology.
 - Commencing implementation of mobile working in order to save time and enable staff to access information whenever and wherever it is needed.
 - Beginning to digitalise the housing service offer in order to provide customers with an additional channel of communication and an opportunity to self-serve.
 - Working with members of staff to create a lean, efficient and cohesive workforce that will work towards a 'One Team' approach and a 'Customer First' culture.

4. Co-operative and Neighbourhood Management Programme

4.1. Programme Outcomes

- Residents feel that they can work with the council and other organisations to help meet the needs of the local area.
- Staff better understand the town's communities and through doing so are more able to deliver the change that is required.
- Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the council and residents, and help to give people pride in the place they live.
- The Council's Community centres are efficiently run, well-managed and most importantly, meet local needs.

4.2. Programme Overview

- 4.3. The Co-operative Neighbourhood Management programme sets out how the Council will work with communities to improve the

neighbourhoods. Through working together with residents and other partners the Council believes public spaces can be made more attractive and in turn help to give people pride in the place they live. The programme was formally launched at Stevenage Day in June 2017 and is complemented by a new 'Our Neighbourhood' area on the Council's website.

4.4. Expenditure on the programme in 2017/18 amounted to £459,353, which was used for public realm and playground improvements in addition to the neighbourhood warden scheme. A total of £491,600 New Homes Bonus (NHB) has been allocated to fund further improvements and the neighbourhood wardens in 2018/19. In addition, £40,000 NHB will fund a pilot to trial community involvement in decision making in the wards where the programme has been implemented.

4.5. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Responding to priorities identified through engagement with residents of St Nicholas and Martins Wood in 2017/18, by making significant investment in those wards to improve public spaces and the quality of life of local people. The focus will be on youth engagement/ provision, street lighting, parking issues resolution, open spaces and grounds maintenance and health and wellbeing.
- Engaging with ward Members, partners and communities on the next phase of planned investment in the wards of Bedwell and Longmeadow.
- Investing £230k in outdoor play sites in Bedwell and Longmeadow.
- Seeking Council agreement to a sustainable model for the provision and management of community centres.
- Award and alignment of the works contract for the Garage Improvement Programme with the delivery of the Major Refurbishment Contract works to achieve economies of scale including an enhanced social value offer.
- Supporting residents in becoming more active members of their community, who make a positive contribution to the town and local area.
- Designing a council-wide framework to support officers and Members in effective and meaningful community engagement.
- Creating a more streamlined approach to increase and enhance volunteering within the Council.

5. Connected to our Customers Programme

5.1. Programme Outcomes

- Use of self-service is encouraged, so more time can be spent with customers that need extra help.
- Increased customer satisfaction for residents interacting with key services.

- Online customer data will be protected, better used to provide useful insight, and the technology reliable.
- The Council uses technology to meet its ambitions and make its workforce more modern, efficient and responsive to customer needs.
- A simple and clearer website with more self-service choices.

5.2. Programme Overview

- 5.3. The 'Connected to our Customers' programme aims to improve the accessibility of Council services and the customer experience. It will enhance the way residents can access Council services through increasing the use of digital options, whilst ensuring that officers continue to spend time with those customers who require additional assistance.
- 5.4. The town-wide Resident Survey demonstrated support amongst residents for improved digital services: 39% of respondents put 'interacting more with residents and customers on-line' first on their list of ways the Council could save money, whilst 33% indicated that their preferred way to be kept informed was via the website and a further 29% viewed social media as the best channel of communication.
- 5.5. In February 2017 Members agreed to invest £2.1m over three financial years, of which a significant proportion was for the delivery of the Connected to our Customers Programme.
- 5.6. In 2017/18 it was recognised that IT improvements were needed to enable the delivery of the wider Connected to Our Customers programme. Therefore the majority of the programme was put on hold pending delivery of these improvements. In November 2017 an IT improvement plan was approved by the Executive. The overarching plan was informed by a range of activity to test the current position and set direction for the future. The improvement plan is based on four key areas of activity: improving resilience, strengthening security, adopting best practice management, and developing a longer-term forward strategy.
- 5.7. In partnership with East Herts District Council a series of IT infrastructure enhancements were delivered during 2017/18 including the installation of new storage capacity and the decommissioning of legacy business systems.
- 5.8. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:
- Improving the online offer by delivering a simple, clearer website and straightforward online self-service options for key routine transactions, helping customers to self-serve.

- Involving customers and staff in designing and testing new digital products and services before launching them.
- Launching a new customer strategy that sets out the Council’s ambitious plans to improve customer service and promises to deliver a consistent customer service standard across the Council.
- Supporting the overall customer service offer and efficiency by improving back office processes and technology within the Council, and making sure all personal data is secure.

Internal Facing Programmes

6. Financial Security Programme

6.1. Programme Outcomes

- As set out in Figure 1: Financial Security Work streams



Figure 1: Financial Security Work streams

6.2. Programme Overview

6.3. This programme aims to ensure that the Council has sufficient funds available to deliver quality services that residents want and need. The Council aims to break away from the cycle of dependency on Government grant through becoming more efficient in its processes and developing new and innovative funding streams to ensure it has the resources it needs to be a Council fit for the future and build a vibrant town that residents deserve.

6.4. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Identifying Financial Security options that meet the three-year Financial Security targets (£2.2Million General Fund and £1Million HRA).
- Managing budgetary efficiency through regular monitoring, analysis of trends and robust challenge of spend as part of the efficiency work stream.
- Setting targets and delivering savings against each individual Financial Security work stream including Fees and Charges.

7. Employer of Choice Programme

7.1. Programme Outcomes

- Improved employee engagement.
- Right person, right place, right time – recruiting/retaining staff to hard to fill posts.
- Improved managerial competency.
- Improved reputation as a place to work.
- Evidence of staff progressing to higher grades and new roles.

7.2. Programme Overview

7.3. The Council aims to create a flexible, collaborative, creative and modern workforce to ensure it can deliver the priorities set out in the FTFC programme and give residents the standard of services they expect. This programme aims to transform the way the Council works, ensuring that staff have the skills, abilities and experience to deliver excellence. The Council must become an employer of choice so that it can compete in today's market place and attract and retain the best staff to build for the future.

7.4. During 2016/17 the Senior Management Review was completed and a new leadership team is now in place. Through Future Council Business Reviews, work began during 2017/18 on shaping the next stage of the transformation programme to ensure the Council has the right structures, teams and people in place.

7.5. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Establishing a compelling employer brand with a competitive pay and benefit offer.
- Developing and implementing a competency framework for staff from Grade 1- 9 of the Council's pay structure.
- Managing Organisational Change effectively with a new appraisal process and valuing staff's health and wellbeing.
- Enabling new ways of working to equip staff for the future including policies, practices and culture.
- Developing digital skills and tools to enable staff self-service.
- Creating a new Learning and Development Strategy.

8. Performing at our Peak Programme

8.1. Programme Outcomes

- The provision of high quality performance management software tools.
- Streamlined governance structures that ensure effective and timely decision making.
- A strong performance culture is embedded across the organisation.

8.2. Programme Overview

8.3. The Council aims to become an insightful Council with improved service performance and slimmed down decision-making processes. The programme will improve the organisation's insight, analysis and intelligence to help us to make better informed business decisions. This is being achieved through more timely coordination of data and the adoption of tools to support ongoing strategic and operational analysis.

8.4. During 2018/19 the programme will primarily focus on:

- Enhancing business insight through data connectivity and ensuring service managers have the right skills to use the performance management tool robustly to analyse information and make informed decisions that result in improved services for customers.
- Embedding the performance culture through the effective use of new tools and procedures, to enable lasting performance improvement.
- Completing a review of arrangements for decision making (scheme of delegation) to ensure continued robust and efficient decision-making by council officers at the appropriate level of seniority.

Meeting EXECUTIVE
Portfolio Area NEIGHBOURHOODS & CO-OPERATIVE COUNCIL
Date 14 March 2019



CO-OPERATIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME DELIVERY 2018-19

NON-KEY DECISION

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1 PURPOSE

1.1 This report summarises the delivery of the Co-operative Neighbourhood Management (CNM) Programme to date and outlines plans for 2019-20 delivery moving forwards.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Executive note the delivery of activity undertaken through the programme to date.
- 2.2 That the Executive note the proposed forward plan for the CNM programme over the coming year.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 As a provider of public services, it is important that continuing efforts are made to maintain and improve the appearance of the Borough's neighbourhoods. One of the aims of co-operative working is to work for and with our communities, supporting them to take ownership of, and realise the improvements they want in their local area. Ward walkabouts took place in all 13 wards between June and September 2015 and were led by Members and Community Development Officers. The Chief Executive and Senior Managers accompanied them. Resulting from the walkabouts was greater understanding of some of the unique strengths of each ward, such as:

- A real connection between Members and residents
- A higher than expected level of community engagement and involvement
- A real sense of belonging amongst residents
- Excellent neighbourhood and community facilities
- Generally well looked after and public and privately owned areas

However, a number of challenges were also identified, with some public areas looking tired due to the ageing appearance of much of the public realm, some pockets of fly tipping and poor landscaping. A number of garage blocks looked poorly maintained and uninviting. As a Co-operative Council it was also clear that there was a real opportunity to work with local residents to resolve these issues with longer term solutions.

3.2 The 2015 Residents Survey suggested that some residents felt less able to influence local decisions in their local areas. A neighbourhood focussed programme therefore created a real opportunity to address this.

3.3 'Co-operative Neighbourhoods' was subsequently identified and approved in October 2015 as one of SBC's nine priorities for the following five years under the 'Future Town, Future Council' Programme – Co-operative Neighbourhood Management. This included a commitment of £1.8m targeted investment over the years of the programme. The programme schedule focussed on 2 wards per year from 2016 – 2020. The order corresponding with resident satisfaction levels based on the resident's survey findings.

Year	Wards
2017-18	Pin Green, Shephall
2018-19	St Nicholas, Martins Wood
2019-20	Bedwell, Longmeadow
2020-21	Old Town, Roebuck
2021-22	Symonds Green, Manor
2022-23	Woodfield, Bandle Hill, Chells

Central to the programme was a more co-operative way of working with local communities, designing solutions based on local priorities. To do this Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) needed to gain a better understanding of its unique communities, what their issues were and how the council could facilitate the required changes. SBC also needed to ensure that its staff were experienced, trained and empowered to be conduits for neighbourhood development. A commitment was made to work with communities to design and deliver a targeted investment programme that would achieve real improvements, as well as improve their sense of belonging, increase opportunities for community engagement and ownership. A Co-operative Neighbourhood Management (CNM) Board was structured in 2016 to bring together workstreams and project managers together to drive these ambitions forward and fulfil the outcomes of the programme.

4.0 CNM VISION AND OUTCOMES

4.1 Vision – what SBC wants to achieve:

‘To work with and for our communities to improve our neighbourhoods’

Outcomes – what will happen when this is achieved:

- Public spaces are more attractive, better cared for by the council and residents, and help to give people pride in the place they live
- Residents feel that they can work with the council and other organisations to help meet the needs of the local area
- Community Centres are efficiently run, well managed and most importantly, meet local needs
- Staff better understand the towns communities and through doing so are more able to deliver the change that is required

4.2 EARLY FOCUS

Initially the CNM programme focused on a programme of environmental improvements envisaged to address some of the issues identified in the ward walkabouts:

- Litter bin renewal
- Play area renewal
- Shrub bed improvements
- Improving hard standings

4.2.1 RE-PROVISIONING LITTER BINS

During 2017/18, all litter bins were replaced in Pin Green and Shephall. A further £34k was spent during 2018/19 on replacing litter bins in St Nicholas and Martins Wood.

4.2.3 PLAY INVESTMENT

During 2016 officers completed a review of all play areas in Stevenage, and a report was subsequently presented to the Executive Committee in February 2017 making recommendations for the future delivery of exciting, high quality play spaces. Members approved an investment (£1.5 million) to upgrade and provide 21 primary sites in the main parks and larger open spaces, along with 24 secondary site and 10 playscapes, all of which would ensure an excellent level of sustainable provision across the town. This investment has been delivered as a module of the Council's Co-operative Neighbourhood Management programme. The content and design of play spaces has been determined by local children, young people and residents. The scheme has led to the following achievements:

- Consultation with over 500 children and young people, took place during the last two years, which has informed the improvements to the play areas.
- During 2018 play area improvements have been delivered to Balmoral Close, Blenheim Way, Holly Leys and Fairlands Valley Park.
- Revised and improved signage has been installed to all play areas within each ward.

4.2.4 SHRUB BED IMPROVEMENTS:

In 2016/17 Shrub beds in Shephall and Pin Green of 6,500m² and 4,500m² were either cultivated or removed to improve the aesthetic of verges. However, work has been taking place to simplify the licence to occupy process to encourage community groups and individuals to take ownership and maintain shrub beds/planters of importance to them. To date, this has resulted in successful projects in Roebuck, with planters opposite the parade of shops, which are now being maintained by Roebuck Residents Group and more recently a project to improve planters adjacent to Peartree shops has been taken on by Shephall Residents Group.

4.2.5 HARD STANDINGS IMPROVEMENTS (ref 5.1)

In 2017 work began to improve council-owned paved areas and street furniture in Pin Green. The Engineering Team carried out inspections and picked up and repaired or reported defects in 213 public realm areas across the ward. The programme built on strong member-led community work, which saw new and innovative engagement methods involve residents in setting local priorities and driving projects.

A number of defects across 197 sites were found in Shephall defects were nevertheless found alongside two larger projects as detailed in 5.1.

In St Nicholas during 2018, the focus was once again on hardstand works although additional defects were repaired and reported as detailed in 5.1

During 2018 the CNM board reset the aims for this work stream to ensure public realm improvements progressed were more in line with wider community aspirations, than based purely on officer assessments. In Martins Wood this has led to requests to build a new path to the Community Garden at the Oval and to install a new “Welcome to the Oval” sign both of which will be completed in 2019. Further requests for street lighting at Hampson Park (Pin Green) and Truro Court (St Nicholas) have resulted in new columns being installed, particularly to address community safety concerns in the evening.

5.0 DELIVERY TO DATE

5.1 Ward	Year	Delivery highlights
Pin Green	<p>2016- 2017</p> <p>In 2016 work began in Pin Green with the programme building upon the strong Member-led community work. This saw new and innovative engagement methods involving residents at the centre of setting local priorities to drive forward their chosen projects. Over the course of the year, this resulted with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Community Centre opening at Hampson Park • Young people designing a new skate park • Residents creating a ‘Friends of’ group to support maintenance of Hampson Park • New play equipment being installed in Hampson Park and Archer Road • Installation of signage to woodlands at Almonds Spring and Sishes Wood. • 100 bins being replaced • 200 shrub beds being renewed • Over 200 public realm defects repaired or renewed
Shephall	<p>2017- 2018</p> <p>Although community activity was slower to emerge in Shephall, a range of improvements were achieved:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New play equipment at Peartree Park and Leaves Spring have been installed • Installation of signage to woodlands at Shackleton Springs, Loves Wood and Ridlins Wood. • Restoration of a raised paved area, walls and railings in Cannix Close. • 23 road and street signs have been replaced • 126 shrub beds have been renewed • 133 new bins have been installed • 34 fences or bollards have been renewed • 197 public realm improvements

St Nicholas	2018-2019 During 2018, a neighbourhood action plan was developed after extensive consultations with local residents and partners in St Nicholas and Martins Wood that led to the following improvements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New play equipment at Canterbury Way and St Nicholas Park • Over 360 public realm improvements • 63 bins replaced • Parking and paving at St Nicholas Community Centre renewed • Truro Court lighting improved • Community evening walks to address perceptions of anti-social behaviour, crime and night time safety
Martins Wood	2018-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play improvements to Chepstow Close, Martins Wood and The Oval • 87 bins replaced • Oval community garden restored and a new path installed • CCTV improvements

6.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

6.1 In 2017 three Neighbourhood Warden posts were created and funded by New Homes Bonus, initially on a fixed term basis of two years. They were to be the eyes and ears of the community and to continue to drive forward the investment programme. They focussed on two priority wards each as follows:

- Pin Green and Bedwell
- St Nicholas and Martins Wood
- Shephall and Bandle Hill

Neighbourhood Wardens have since driven a number of activities to resolve neighbourhood issues in local areas. These have included:

- Community 'clean-up' days – working with volunteers, councillors and organisations to tackle fly tipping/littering
- Issuing over 30 fixed penalty notices for fly tipping offences
- Dealing with over 600 complaints reported through Fix my Street.
- Regular attendance at resident group meetings to help problem solve and refer issues to the appropriate departments/organisations.

In addition to this, and more recently, the Neighbourhood Wardens led on a project in partnership with Peartree Springs School in Shephall to improve an alleyway that is a popular route for families attending the

school. After the initial clean-up, further works carried out by SBC included; widening the path to create passing points, improving access by widening the existing steps, and repairing a fence. The bus company, Arriva also agreed to sponsor an additional litter bin and volunteered their staff to plant shrubs/bulbs.

7.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD INVESTMENTS TO DATE:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Play area improvement	£360000	£332500	£252700
Litter bins replacement	£16000	377500	£54000
Hard standings	£9957	£65182	£71103
Green space signage	£17000	0	0
Public realm (approx.) inc priorities determined by community engagement/consultation activities and using participatory budgeting (2019 onwards)	£57000	£40000	£143300
Neighbourhood Wardens*	£13210	£89230	£125000

*Wardens will be mainstreamed for 2019-20 onwards through Communities and Neighbourhoods Business Unit Review.

7.1 Additional value has been secured through the involvement of elected members through their use of Local Community Budgets (LCB) that are being used to deliver identified neighbourhood priorities. Some examples are outlined below:

2016: Pin Green Residents Association, Friends of Hampson Park and Ward councillors joined forces to produce a community plan and Neighbourhood Agreements following the relocation and redevelopment of the community centre from Archer Road to Hampson Park. Total investment: £1600.

2017: Pin Green Community Association received funding for the installation of two CCTV cameras. Total investment: £448. During this year the association received a further £500 to install a fenced area at the back of the new community centre to provide a secure space for events, play opportunities and an outside environment specifically for centre users.

2017: Peartree Spring Primary School in Shephall received LCB funding and worked in partnership with SBC to improve an alley way near to the school (ref. 6.1). Total investment: £500

2018: Longmeadow and Bragbury End Gardening Club received LCB funding to further enhance community engagement within and outside Longmeadow through projects such as; a woodland walk and action day along Blenheim Way, supporting other garden projects around the town, purchasing new benches, plants and power tools and to continue maintaining community gardens at Lismore and Bragbury End.
Total investment: £2250

8.0 LEARNING

8.1 Reflecting on the CNM programme so far has raised many opportunities to learn and improve on what has already been delivered and achieved. This includes taking more time to build relationships and community capacity as this has been key to achieving a deep understanding of a community's priorities and aspirations. Gaining insight and knowledge about a given area will enable decision making to come from a neighbourhood level rather than being based on assumptions made by council officers which has happened in the past. Furthermore, the need to ensure elected members remain central to driving neighbourhood improvements as they will have extensive knowledge of their wards and the people that live, work or visit them. Therefore they need to be a part of the planning process from the onset and remain involved throughout.

Improvements the programme needs to focus on include; ensuring co-operative working is embedded into all project delivery and that the approach is 'doing with' rather than 'doing to' local communities. Furthermore, whilst the council has made great strides to improve environmental factors such as; public realm, open spaces, play areas, the collective impact of these improvements have not been clearly communicated to local neighbourhoods. There are real opportunities to improve on this with more targeted communications plans.

9.0 ENABLING SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT

In 2018 Stevenage was successful in bidding to be one of two pilot areas for the Enabling Social Action Partnership, sponsored by the Office for Civil Society through the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. This has resulted in a series of action learning workshops facilitated by the Universities of Hull and Sheffield to explore how Stevenage can unlock greater potential with social action and community involvement through the CNM programme.

The learning has enabled the programme to reflect on successes and challenges during the initial years of the CNM programme. This has included taking a longer term approach to neighbourhood management in order to fully engage with local people and gain a deeper understanding of our communities' priorities (ref 8.1).

10.0 REVISING SBC's APPROACH TO NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 It is proposed that the focus in each neighbourhood extends beyond the initial 12 months. This reflects the time necessary to build insight, relationships and community-led action. A proposed operating model will see community work start in each neighbourhood during the target years but with extended project delivery over the following 2 years. This will allow for opportunities to build more enduring and sustainable activities moving forwards. The process will begin with community led engagement, working with ward members and local stakeholders to get to know and be known within specific neighbourhoods enabling local community priorities to be determined. This will be supplemented by delivering some 'quick wins' achieved based on identified priorities that will build community confidence and support.
- 10.2 Delivery of projects identified through extensive engagement activities will be completed by project leads and co-ordinated by the Neighbourhood Manager. Engagement will be sustained with local stakeholders and ward members following completion to ensure the community continues to be supported to develop. Work is also currently underway to create an Area-Based Working model to ensure town-wide coverage from the team, working alongside teams in Stevenage Direct Services and Housing to ensure localised issues are addressed more effectively, in a joined-up way.

11.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL GOVERNANCE PROPOSAL

- 11.1 In order to address some of the learning it is proposed that the governance arrangements of the neighbourhood programme are embedded more at the neighbourhood level, starting with the engagement and involvement of local ward members and residents. The proposal for a neighbourhood forum/resident group will be decided by each neighbourhood and will be shaped according to their local requirements and needs. SBC will be facilitators if requested to be so and will ensure representation at meetings. A co-operative council officer board will continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis with a more encompassing co-operative remit, to drive new co-operative initiatives across the council. This may include furthering ambitions around wealth creation across the town and embedding a new area-focused operating model for council services.
- 11.2 It is also clear that a focus on emerging issues from neighbourhoods should be part of a continuous cycle of service planning and delivery. Emerging findings from the current ward walkabouts will help to drive further plans for improvements with area-based teams as they are established.
- Extending this area based working model to include SDS and Housing teams will provide better opportunities to align work and create more responsive service delivery working across neighbourhoods. This will result in creating greater impact in local areas and a more sustainable future operating model.

12.0 PARTICIPATORY BUDGETS

- 12.1 This approach will also introduce a participatory budgeting pilot scheme of £40000 by engaging residents in meaningful consultation in the wards that the CNM programme has prioritised to allow community input into decision making in those areas during 2018\19 and 2019\20. The monies are proposed to be used initially in Shephall, Martins Wood and St Nicholas, to fund stimulating and innovative delivery of neighbourhood improvements/projects that have been identified by local people. This process will also help to inform future mainstream funding as it will have been determined by the community's first hand involvement and decision making. It will also provide an opportunity to work with ward members to consider how LCB's might contribute towards identified community priorities in the future.
- 12.2 Extensive engagement activities have already taken place in Shephall and these have produced a range of priorities to be actioned. These will be culminate in a public vote on projects in early summer 2019.

13.0 A RENEWED VISION

- 13.1 The CMM programme has set out a renewed vision

'The neighbourhoods of Stevenage are places where residents are proud to live in and feel safe and well, and where people and organisations work together (co-operatively) to make things better'.

Over the course of 2018 the Business Unit Review for Communities and Neighbourhoods was undertaken to ensure there was sufficient capacity to deliver the CNM programme. A community development service was created to drive the programme forward.

Supporting this, the realignment of resources across the business unit ensured that the four Neighbourhood Warden posts were mainstreamed as part of a more sustainable offer, with one warden recruited specifically to address issues in high footfall areas, such as the Town Centre.

Furthermore the need for a framework setting out the dynamic ways in which the council can engage with the town's residents was identified alongside Cooperative Neighbourhood Management work. There are numerous examples of community engagement practice across the town, often led by elected members and supported by officers, but these are not always documented with learning shared across council teams.

The development of a new Community Engagement Framework, presented to the Executive in February, helps to illustrate the council's commitment to residents and the way the council responds to community needs and aspirations. The Co-operative Neighbourhood Management Programme represents a very clear corporate priority to work with local residents to improve local neighbourhoods. The framework enhances opportunities to further develop Co-operative Neighbourhood Management whilst also embracing a wide ranging response to communities needs and aspirations across the town.

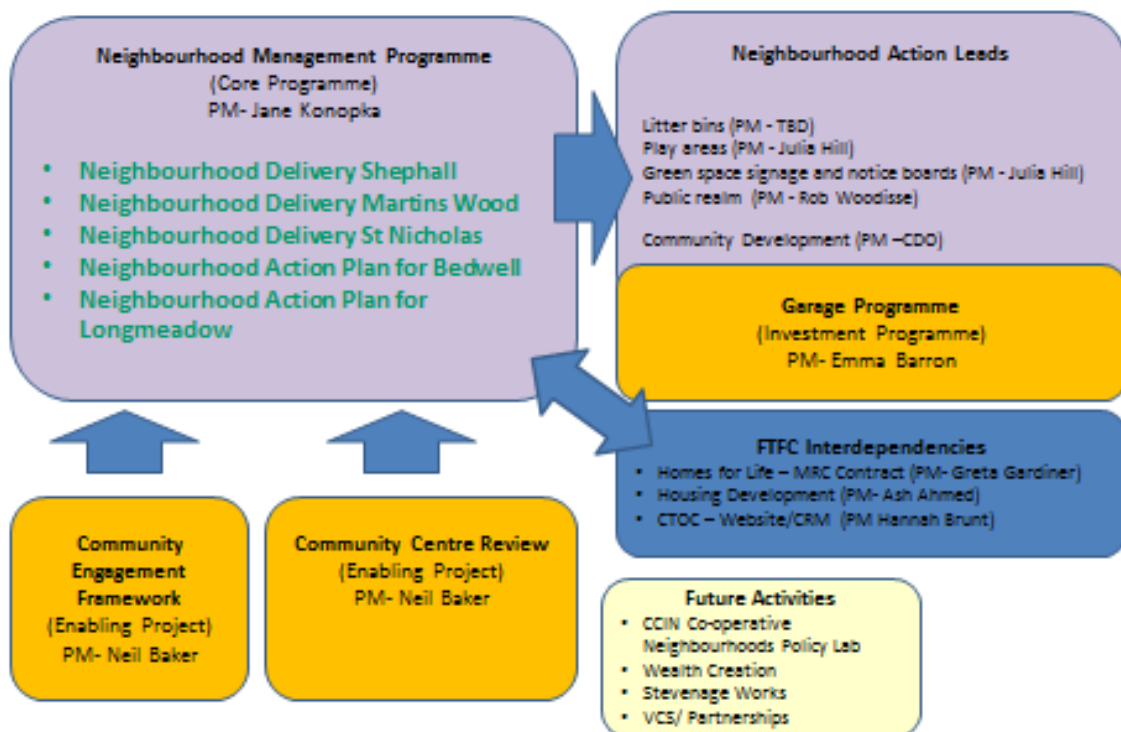
The framework was approved by Exec in February 2019 and will be published in March 2019.

14.0 FOCUS MOVING FORWARDS

14.1 To ensure that the focus remains on what communities really aspire to achieve in their local area, attention must be given to ensure:

- Ownership is at a neighbourhood level and led in partnership by ward members, communities and council officers. This includes the use of participatory budgeting and targeted LCB investment being directly used to achieve identified community priorities
- The social impact is captured as well as the physical i.e. community wellbeing, safety, skills
- Strong project and communications planning underpins all community engagement and projects
- Strong performance management is conducted and clear key performance indicators are monitored through to achievement.
- Governance is re-focussed at a neighbourhood level. Co-operative Board to drive council's co-operative agenda i.e. wealth creation, VCS partnership, enabling projects.

15.0 2019/20 DELIVERY



15.1 The programme is due to start undertaking further community engagement in Bedwell and Longmeadow in 2019 as the programme extends to these wards and builds on the successful delivery of the play improvement programme

completed during 2018 in these areas. The engagement work will explore a range of opportunities both in terms of physical improvements but will also explore health and wellbeing, skills and social improvements in relation to the Healthy Stevenage strategy and Stevenage Works initiative. The engagement activity will also look at opportunities to develop the “Living Streets” agenda as part of the council’s Transport Strategy.

In addition to this, the play improvement programme will continue to deliver improvements in the wards of Roebuck and the Old Town. Sites include:

Roebuck:

Shephalbury Park,
St Margarets
Spencer Way (subject to adopting the land from the developers)

Old Town:

Burymead (The Avenue)
Whitesmead Recreation Ground.

15.2 The CNM Programme is funded through the council’s allocation of New Homes Bonus. The projected funds available for 2019/20 (Bedwell and Longmeadow) are outlined below.

	2019/20
Play	£137000
Hard standings	£50000
Litter bins	£121000
Public realm (approx.) inc priorities determined by community engagement/consultation activities and using participatory budgeting (2019 onwards)	£142000

15.3 During the early part of 2019/20 a conference event will be held with other stakeholders to share the council’s achievements and learning to date and to lead a ‘Call to Action’ for other public bodies, including Hertfordshire County Council and funders to support the work to drive neighbourhood improvements. This will help to capture the benefits of working in partnership to improve the quality of life for local residents.

16.0 SUPPLEMENTARY PROJECTS DRIVEN THROUGH THE CNM PROGRAMME

16.1 The following strategic projects have also been delivered through the CNM programme:

16.2 THE COMMUNITY CENTRE REVIEW

- The review of community centres started in 2017, sponsored through the councils Co-operative Neighbourhood Management Programme.
- The initial review built upon previous reviews undertaken in 2003 and 2008. The review explored current operations across all sites and utilised Stevenage Community Association Network meetings to better understand some of the joint challenges and future opportunities.
- The review highlighted some of the current innovation and good practice with community centres and associations, while highlighting the need for further community consultation within the town on needs and aspirations for 21st century community buildings.
- Consultation work will now form the second stage of this review process, involving community associations and wider public views.

Review work area	Start date	Completion date
Cooperative Compact Partnership	January 2019	March 2020
Community Consultation	January 2019	August 2019
Final Report	July 2019	September 2019

16.3 THE GARAGE PROGRAMME

In October 2018 Executive approved an extension to the flatblock refurbishment contract to include the improvement of council-owned garages. The team have been working with the contractors – Wates Living Space and Mulalley and Partners – to inspect the garages in the programme and design a schedule of priced works. Surveys will soon get underway for the garage blocks that are due for refurbishment in years two and three of the programme, so that a comprehensive and fully-costed schedule can be designed and all neighbourhood engagement proactively planned in advance. Works to two sites located on Albert Street and Gladstone Court will be completed between February and March 2019. The team will use these to evaluate the approach and processes they have in place to ensure the

intended outcomes of the garage programme are achieved. In conjunction with the works being completed, the refurbishment team are working with our Neighbourhood Wardens and local residents to resolve any known antisocial behaviour issues surrounding these blocks.

17.0 OTHER FUTUER TOWN, FUTURE COUNCIL INTERDEPENDENCIES

17.1 Homes for Life – Through the Major Refurbishment Contract(MRC) early conversations have developed to see how the MRC can support the wider aspirations of CNM programme. The Community Development team have met with contractors to secure an additional £5000 to support community-led projects over the course of the next year. This relationship can be further developed to build on apprenticeships, skills and training for local residents.

Housing Development: The successful regeneration of Archer Road, including the re-location of the community centre to Hampson Park is being used to inform the Kenilworth Road development.

Town centre Regeneration: Partnership working between the council's Housing Development team and Community Development will support future community engagement with Bedwell in 2020/21 as this ward also forms part of the town centre regeneration plans.

Employer of Choice: During 2018 the programme oversaw the development of a staff volunteering policy as part of the council's Corporate Social Responsibility agenda. The policy enables staff across the council to better connect and support some of the CNM activities, offering skills, time and expertise to community-led initiatives.

Connected To Our Customers: The planned development of the council's digital transformation offer will increase how it engages with its customers. There is a clear link between the council's digital ambitions and its relationship with communities that will be further developed as this programme develops.

18.0 FUTURE ACTIVITIES

18.1 In January 2019 the council was successful in its bid to drive a Co-operative Neighbourhood Policy Lab through the Co-operative Council Innovation Network. The Policy Lab will share the Stevenage learning at a national level and help to develop clear policy proposals as to why neighbourhood management delivers good and effective council services. Stevenage will lead this work in conjunction with other CCIN member councils. This will culminate in a report of findings in 2020.

18.2 The CNM programme will also further look at opportunities to support a Stevenage approach to wealth creation, looking at more opportunities to lock in the circulation of money and resources to support the Stevenage economy and local residents.

19.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

- 19.1 The review to date has highlighted the importance of engaging more fully with Stevenage communities to gain a deeper understanding of priorities and aspirations. This has led to the recommendation of increasing the length of time given to successfully deliver neighbourhood improvements.
- 19.2 The review has highlighted the need to work more co-operatively with Stevenage communities and partners. In particular we need to form stronger links with our partners at HCC in order to align and influence their planned future neighbourhood investment.
- 19.3 These recommendations have been highlighted by learning through the Enabling Social Action Programme and in partnership with ward members, existing stakeholders, resident groups and previous feedback from completed projects.

20.0 IMPLICATIONS

20.1 Financial Implications

The CNM programme relies on New Homes Bonus Funding each year. If this is removed or decreases, future planned improvements work may not be achievable.

20.2 Legal Implications

There are currently no legal implications

20.3 Risk Implications

At this stage, risk levels are low. This will be reviewed if and when changes occur to the CNM programme or how it is funded in the future.

20.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

Equality and diversity in relation to neighbourhood planning and development delivery formed a central platform of the initial review process. The council is committed to ensuring that the CNM programme enhances community cohesion and builds stronger communities across the town. Equality and diversity will therefore have a central role in how we engage with our Stevenage communities and ensure all voices/opinions are heard. We will also serve the following protected characteristic groupings, by being safe, equitable and providing welcoming environments.

- Age
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Race

- Maternity and Paternity
- Disability
- Religion and Belief

20.5 **Information Technology Implications**

In order for the community development team to be fully integrated and working at a neighbourhood level, IT needs to be fit for purpose and robust enough to facilitate remote working. To support this, the team will also be required to negotiate 'working hubs' within community buildings to base themselves in order to be accessible and visible.

20.6 **Safeguarding Children Implications**

Safeguarding implications will be fully assessed during consultation and all community development activities. The council will ensure consultation with children and young people follows national standards in ensuring safety and security for those involved.

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