Service Plan 2014-2015

Customer and Community Services
HOUSING SERVICES

VERSION:

Contents

Equalities

We are committed to meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). The Public Sector Equality Duty states that a public authority must - in the exercise of its functions - have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and person who do not share it.

As a service we will proactively work to embed equalities considerations within our daily work. Promoting equalities will be reflected in the way we design and deliver services; and in the policy decisions we make. Our work will reflect the commitments set out by the Council in its Single Equalities Scheme.
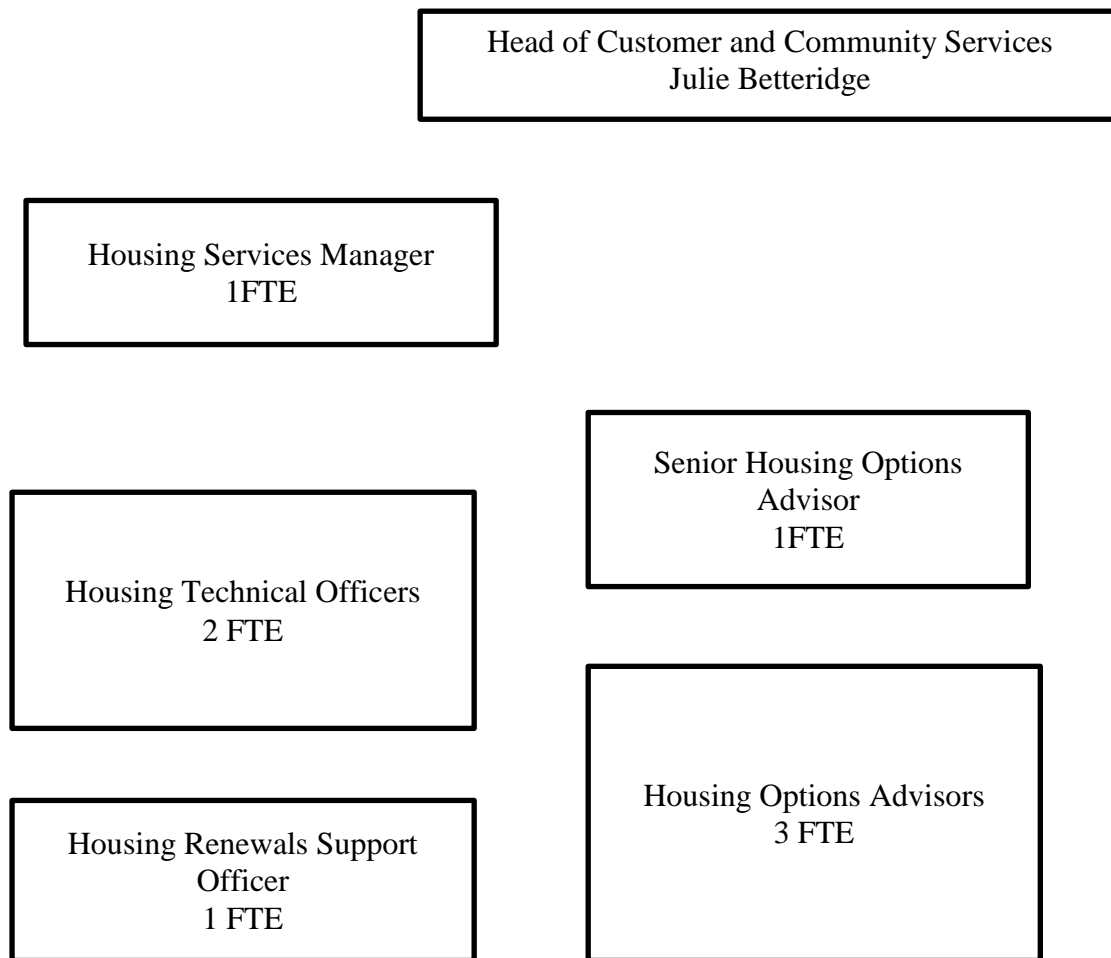
1. Purpose of the service and resource profile

There are five key elements which comprise the strategic housing role:

- Assess and plan for the current and future housing needs of the local population across all tenures.
- Make the best use of existing housing stock
- Plan and facilitate new supply
- Plan and commission housing support services which link homes and housing support
- Work in partnership to secure effective housing and neighbourhood management on an on-going basis.

The service operates within a partnership framework at district and county level to deliver strategic housing services and works in a corporate capacity in areas such as domestic violence, child poverty, welfare reform and community safety.   The service has a Service Level Agreement with Cumbria Rural Housing Trust to enable focused delivery activity.

Structure Chart

Head of Customer and Community Services
Julie Betteridge

Housing Services Manager
1FTE

Senior Housing Options Advisor
1FTE

Housing Technical Officers
2 FTE

Housing Renewals Support Officer
1 FTE

Housing Options Advisors
3 FTE

2.   Customer Profile of the service

<u>Housing Options</u>

Service is open to all members of the public aged 16 or above, some of whom may have been referred by (or referred to) other bodies (i.e. Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Age UK, or CAB). This includes:

- Adults of any age
- Households with children or including a pregnant woman
- Young People, including care leavers
- People with disabilities
- Older people
- Carers
- Ex-armed forces personnel
- Ex-offenders
- People with learning difficulties
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- People with substance/drug/alcohol misuse problems
- People with mental health needs
- Gypsies & Travellers
- Private landlords
- Other local authorities, Health services, Probation etc
- Voluntary & third sector agencies such as Shelter (Cumbria), Community Law Centre
- Registered social housing providers

Note: some people are statutorily not eligible for assistance because of immigration or nationality status but will be given advice.

Housing Strategy

- Members of the public
- Elected Members of the Council
- Registered social housing providers
- Voluntary & Third Sector partner agencies
- Town, Parish and community groups
- House builders and Developers, including small businesses and individuals
- Private landlords, estate and lettings agents
- All organisations with an interest in housing data (i.e. Shelter, MPs)
- Other local authorities, including Lake District National Park as well as Districts & County Council
- Health Services
- Probation
- Other Copeland Borough Council departments

Private Sector Housing

Advice and assistance regarding private sector housing is available to all residents of the borough whether owner occupiers or private renters.

The Disabled Facilities Grant service is open to all people via a referral from Occupational Therapy (provided by Cumbria County Council) to ourselves. This service is open to people with disabilities of any age, including:

- Families
- Older people
- Ex-armed forces personnel
- People with learning difficulties
- People with mental health needs
- Borough residents who own or rent their homes (75%-80% of our customers are owner occupiers)
- Carers
- Palliative care patients and others leaving NHS care.

Copeland Disability Forum, Age UK and other bodies have a representative interest in this service and therefore a relationship with us.

3.   2013/14 Service Plan Performance Summary

Achievements 2013/14

- Provided information and training to Elected Members on issues including Welfare Reform and changes in legislation.
- Continued to facilitate the delivery of energy efficiency installations in the private housing sector.
- Prevented homelessness by providing financial assistance to tenants with small amounts of rent arrears threatened with eviction.
- Maintained an average 8 weeks waiting time from referral to approval of DFG's.
- Completed a count of rough sleepers.
- Developed a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol for rough sleepers
- Held open days for tenants of social housing providers in partnership with other agencies to provide advice and support on under occupation
- Continued to work with 'Streetlink' to support rough sleepers
- Supported the 'Evict Rogue Landlords' campaign
- Reduced the time spent in bed and breakfast by residents who may be homeless.
- Implemented 'No Second Night Out', to ensure when rough sleepers are identified they do not spend a second night out.
- Worked with private landlords to bring 38 'unfit' properties back up to a decent standard.
- Provided funding and support to residents with disabilities to adapt 113 properties.
- Inspected 40 properties in the private rented sector prior to funding rent deposits for residents who were homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Developed a repossession policy for owner occupiers who are threatened with homelessness
- Carried out a review of homelessness in Copeland
- Developed a homelessness strategy to take us to 2018
- Worked with partners to develop and implement a Young Person's Protocol
- Re-instigated the County homelessness forum
- Brought six empty properties back into use using 'cluster funding'.
- Attended training sessions to ensure all officers in the department are aware of children's safeguarding arrangements

4.   Service Objectives -   Key Activities – Activities delivered including routine tasks

No	Routine Tasks	Description of Performance Indicator and/or milestone to be used to demonstrate performance in this area	Responsible Officer	Link to Corporate Plan Priority (P1.P2 or P3)	Support required (if any) from corporate services.
1	Deliver the actions outlined in the year 4 strategic housing action plan.	Actions completed and reported to Strategic Housing Panel and Executive quarterly. Manage and Deliver direct projects and SLAs within the Action Plan and working with partners to support and scrutinise their active delivery.	D Cochrane	P1, deliver efficient and effective statutory services. P2, , be an effective public service partner so we can get the best deal for Copeland	Finance, legal, customer services, planning policy, enforcement, environmental health, building control, Committee section re SHP, IT and comms/website.
2	Enable and provide a strong partnership role and lead on strategy and delivery on housing developments targeted at addressing inequalities.	Lead Copeland Housing Partnership. Develop a five year development plan with partners in Copeland and Cumbria and the HCA under the Copeland Housing Strategy including extra care housing sites.	D Cochrane	P1, deliver efficient and effective statutory services.	Planning Policy,
3	Improve e-access and information management systems as part of the corporate transformation programme.	Improvement in data base system.	D Cochrane	P1, deliver efficient and effective statutory services.	IT, Comms and website, customer services and Change Board

4	Deliver the actions contained in the homelessness strategy action plan as a co-ordinated programme	Actions completed and reported to Strategic Housing Panel. Gold Standard applied for by end of Dec 2014.	J Hall	P1, deliver efficient and effective statutory services. P2,, be an effective public service partner so we can get the best deal for Copeland	Strategic Housing Panel, Copeland Direct, Revs and Bens, IT.
5	Conduct evidence based survey into needs for temporary accommodation for local business.	Survey completed and fed into SHMA	D Cochrane	P1,deliver efficient and effective statutory services	
6	Undertake a refresh of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	SHMA reported to strategic housing panel and executive by end October 2014	D Cochrane	P1,deliver efficient and effective statutory services	Planning Policy
7	Review protocols currently in place.	Protocols reviewed and followed by partners	D Cochrane	P1, deliver efficient and effective statutory services.	Legal
8	Input to support corporate role on housing related issues resulting from policy changes regarding vulnerable people	Briefing papers to CLT where necessary regarding children's safeguarding, MAPPA (multi agency public protection), (MALAP) Multi – agency looked after partnership, CHEG (Cumbria housing executive group), CHOG (Cumbria housing officers group), Supporting People, Health and Well Being, child poverty, troubled families, ageing well.	D Cochrane	P1, deliver efficient and effective statutory services. P2,, be an effective public service partner so we can get the best deal for Copeland	CLT, Legal, Cumbria County Council, Police

5. Performance Indicators

PI no	Description of Performance Indicator	Target 13/14	Basis for target	How often can the PI be reported?	Source
	Satisfaction with housing options service	90%		Quarterly	Surveys returned
	Satisfaction with DFG service	95%		Quarterly	Surveys returned
	Complete and return PIE statistics to DCLG	*4*	Quarterly report (mandatory)	Quarterly	PIE Return
	Average time to decide homelessness cases and notify customer	30 days	Good practice	Monthly	Database
	Number of rough sleepers	0	Annual return to DCLG	Annually	Database
	Number of households where homelessness prevented	60		Quarterly	Database/private sector records (unfits returned to decent standard)
	Number of repeat homeless cases	0	PIE Return	Monthly	PIE Return
	Number of homes empty for at least six months brought back into use as a direct result of CBC intervention	10		Quarterly	Private sector housing team records
	Number of weeks from referral to approval of DFG's	8	Previous stretch target	Monthly	Private sector housing team records.
	Number of new build affordable homes completed by Registered Providers	35	Affordable housing programme	Quarterly	CBC Building Control
	SLA delivered to agreed milestones		SLA reporting	Six monthly	CRHT
	Keep up to date with changes in legislation	100% attendance at training sessions		Six monthly	Appraisal

		organised for team.			

6. Operational Risks

In this section the service should identify any risks to service delivery. Where you are stopping certain services, activities, or projects, the risks associated with this should also be recorded here. This will directly feed into the communications plan for managing this process.

These risks should be reviewed monthly. Where risks are then escalated via the 'Top Three' process these are discussed at CLT and the corporate Strategic Risk Register is updated where required.

Id	Description	Impact score	Likelihood score	How will this risk managed? [Treat, tolerate, transfer or terminate]	Owner
1	Lack of project resources including reduced partners contribution to existing service areas eg DFG	3	4	Tolerate – in line with capacity to identify additional resources Treat – where possible work with partners to identify additional resources	Manager
2	Lack of schemes and therefore investment in affordable housing by HCA and providers	2	3	Tolerate – programme is in place Treat – encourage social landlords to have schemes ready to pick up any underspend opportunities	Manager
3	Increase in homelessness throughout the borough due to the introduction of Universal Credit	3	4	Treat – focus on prevention activities and working with partners, including social and private landlords, to ensure effective support to local households to keep them in their homes or able to be relocated appropriately.	Senior Housing Options Officer
4	Increased applications for DFG's due to aging population	3	3	Tolerate – working with partners to ensure effective package of support and available resources best used Treat – an increase by £100k in CBC resources will assist but if we maintain with our policy of no waiting list the treatment will be a further request to Executive for additional capital resources from the ear marked reserve to enable demand to be met within 2014/15	Manager
5	Existing IT arrangements and systems not enabling customer improvements and efficiencies	3	4	Tolerate – in knowledge that the service will be picked up in 2014/15 by transformation programme Treat – via Corporate transformation programme	CLT?
6	Partners not following protocols	2	4	Treat – meet with partners (this includes police and mental health team) to revise protocols and provide training where necessary	Manager
7	Public sector partner	3	4	Treat – work with partners in the public sector to ensure	Senior

	responses to assist homeless applications are delayed.			delays are kept to a minimum so applicants to whom we have a full duty are found accommodation.	Housing Options Officer

Scoring the Risk

	Impact			Likelihood
1	Negligible	1		Almost Impossible
2	Marginal	2		Very Low
3	Critical	3		Low
4	Catastrophic	4		Significant
		5		High
		6		Very High

7.   Version Control

Current Document Status			
Version	<Insert version number>	**Head of Service authorisation**	**Date of authorisation**
Date	<Date>	<Name of HoS>	<Insert date>
Responsible officer	**Insert name and job title**	**Review date**	**Insert date review must be completed**
Location	Insert file location or web address where document can be accessed		
VERSION HISTORY			
Date	**Version**	**Author/Editor**	**Comments**
<Insert date>	<i.e. 0.1 draft use this field to track the version number of the policy as it develops>	<Insert name>	<i.e. First draft for consultation>