

Strategic Housing Action Plan

RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	Consultancy Comments 01/09	Who	By When	Update- Implemented?	Evidence	
R.1 IMPROVE THE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO HOUSING (6 MONTHS)							
1. Develop borough-specific plans to implement sub-regional strategies and meet local need	a. Review Housing Strategy and produce updated Action plan. Produce CBC-specific comprehensive action plan to implement Cumbria housing Strategy, 2009/11 in the borough	<input type="checkbox"/> Key: CBC still does not have a plan setting out how it will implement the Cumbrian Housing Strategy locally . There has been no consultation on the Cumbrian Housing Strategy at Copeland (23) Housing needs surveys for parishes yet to feed into plans since plans still to be agreed (in response to Cumbria Housing Strategy) (24)	Laurie Priebe	End of September - draft plan End of October completed and signed off.		To be completed and reported to Sept 09 meeting of strategic housing panel. Went to consultation on 30/9/09.	Draft Strategy
	b. Carry out new Homelessness Review and Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Action plan for delivery of homelessness strategy is not being monitored beyond immediate manager (29)	Alan Davis	COMPLETED	Completed by officers in August 2008 and approved by Council in September 2008. The plan is being monitored at monthly meetings and at the Strategic Housing Panel.		Homeless Delivery Action Plan, Minutes of meetings and dates
	c. Develop new Private Sector Housing Strategy		Debbie Cochrane	End August 2009	Draft complete and will go to consultation in week ending 2/10/09		<i>Draft Strategy</i> Strategy
	d. Develop Older Persons Housing Strategy		Laurie Priebe	End of August - amended to End October 2009	Substantial progress made but further consultation necessary with partner agencies in the public & voluntary sector. To be completed & reported to Strategic Housing Panel by end October 2009. LP to produce a project plan by the end of August.		Strategy
	e. Review Allocations Scheme & Housing Register		Alan Davis	COMPLETED	Reported to Strategic Housing Panel in April 2009. recommended to Executive in July 2009. Allocations scheme now adopted and is policy for the Council from August 2009		<i>Allocations scheme report</i>
2. Improve relationships with partner organisations to help achieve strategic housing objectives, including new provision.	a. Establish Copeland Housing Association Task Group to; Negotiate formal nomination arrangements. Explore Affordable Housing Opportunities Develop Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Develop Joint Action Plan	Gap for leading on affordable housing (14)	Laurie Priebe/Alan Davis	COMPLETED	Formal nominations agreement signed by June 2009. CBC and Home Housing Group (inc Copeland Homes) are members of the Cumbria Choice Based Lettings project team with a projected "go live" date of October 2010. Liaison with Home Group and other RSLs in the Borough is well established (Copeland RSL Forum) and schemes have been completed, are under construction or planned. Affordable Housing Options will be dealt with in the Cumbrian Housing Strategy. Gantt chart to be produced for Choice Based Lettings.		
	b. Participate fully in West Cumbria and Cumbria wide housing forums			COMPLETED	Cumbrian Housing Executive is attended by LP & Cllr G Clements. DC attend WCSP housing meeting. Regular attendance at PLATH. LP & Cllr C attend the Supporting People Cumbrian group <i>throughout 2008/09.</i>		
	c. Develop Private Landlord's Forum	<input type="checkbox"/> Landlords' forum still not underway (32)(first meeting next month)	Debbie Cochrane	COMPLETED	Complete. 1st meeting was held in 6th March 2009. 2nd meeting on 15 October 2009		<i>Minutes & Agenda of Landlords forum</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/> No landlord accreditation scheme (30)	Debbie Cochrane & Alan Davis	ONGOING	Landlords attending the forum in March 2009 showed no willingness to join an accreditation scheme: to be raised again at next forum in October 09. AD & DC working on schemes to help landlords, Work within the Homelessness strategy surrounding the Accreditation scheme	Minutes	
	d. Improve liaison with Supporting People Team and Primary Care Trust		Alan Davis	ONGOING	Throughout 2008/09 CBC has been fully represented on all Supporting People bodies. The PCT is a member of the commissioning body – CBC is represented by the Housing Manager & Portfolio Holder. Liaison with Supporting People has improved. Further work needs to take place with the PCT however plans in place to meet with representatives of the PCT		
3.Implement systems and structures to ensure the Council is carrying out its statutory duties in the private sector under the 2004 Housing Act.	a. Develop new Private Sector Strategy /Policy				Duplicate of 1C.	Policy & Implementation	
	b. Establish new staffing structure and train staff in HHSRS. Take consistent enforcement action on properties in poor condition. This is several actions not one.			ONGOING	New staff in post by end October 2008. Training completed over following 6 months. Complete. Currently taking action on unfit properties.	Evidence File.	
	c. Develop effective HMO licensing scheme		Debbie Cochrane	COMPLETED	Licensing scheme established and 2 HMO's licensed.	<i>Scheme</i>	
4.Update grant policies and procedures to strategically target the use of housing grants to meet housing and wider regeneration objectives.	a.Assess and update as part of Private Sector Strategy review The actions do not cover 'target' part of the recommendation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Key: No publicity on DFGs to raise awareness amongst residents of service. Latest situation - DFGs have been publicised and take up is increasing	Debbie Cochrane	COMPLETED APART FROM DFG LEAFLET	New financial assistance policy agreed by Council in December 2008 targeting vulnerable, elderly, families and implemented in April 2009. Takes account of private sector stock condition survey of 2007. Information on DFGS in Copeland Matters, Web Site and have discussed at Copeland Disability Forum. Leaflets need to be completed.	Copeland Matters. Website. Copeland Disability Forum Minutes. <i>Leaflets- DFG is county wide and being updated</i>	

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5. Take a client role in the delivery of housing advice provision in the Borough	a. Review provision as part of Homeless Strategy Review.		Alan Davis	COMPLETE	Complete July/ August 2008. Homeless Strategy group and relaunch of the Homeless Strategy Steering Group.	File detailing housing advice and SLA	
	b. Negotiate Service Level Agreements with funded bodies		Alan Davis	COMPLETE	Completed by April 2009. Department SLAs with CAB etc completed by July/August 2009	Corporate SLAs with CAB & CLC - Executive report, another agreement with CAB-people with debt problems	
	c. Review ability of other CBC services to contribute to improved advice co-ordination		Alan Davis	ALMOST COMPLETE	Review completed with Benefits in winter 2009 and agreement signed off in June 2009. Worked with the Benefits team - produced a SLA. Organised training session with Customer Services staff re: Domestic Violence. Ongoing working relationship with Environmental Health including range of meetings and informal partnerships.	SLA with Benefits	
	d. Improve advice leaflets, website and other information sources			COMPLETED	Suite of housing advice leaflets published in January 2009. New housing element on website completed before April 2009. Work being done to ensure information is displayed in libraries, doctors across the borough and ways to access information	http://www.copeland.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=5	
6. Develop systems and structures to move towards a proactive homelessness prevention approach: reduce the use of temporary accommodation to achieve the gov't target of 50% by 2010 from the baseline number at 31/12/2004 and to minimize the use of temporary accommodation. There needs to be more here about what prevention initiatives have been introduced and whether they are successful, has everything been delivered that can be, or is there scope for more. There should be an <u>action</u> point on temporary accommodation - missed out.	a. Review approach in the light of Strategy Review recommendations and Homeless Strategy Action plan 2008/13		Alan Davis	ONGOING	Copeland was the first LA in Cumbria to achieve the 50% reduction in the use of temporary accommodation (by end 2008). In the 6 months ending April 2009 housing advice interventions have prevented 87 cases of homelessness and helped 85 others to find alternative housing. Previous approach has improved	IN KLOE evidence file	
	b. Introduce Homeless prevention and options toolkit adapted to local circumstances. To include Homeless Prevention Fund		Alan Davis	COMPLETED	A homelessness prevention toolkit was introduced in 2008 and DCLG funding has contributed towards prevention initiatives. Discretionary Housing Payments have also been used to prevent or mitigate homelessness. Complete	Toolkit, Strategic Housing Panel minutes	
	c. Develop `early warning` systems with RSL's and key partners		Alan Davis	COMPLETE	Is operational with effect from 1/9/09. Report to SHP on 9/9/09		
	d. Provide better information and advice on rehousing prospects		Alan Davis	COMPLETED	Complete. Fortnightly housing advice surgeries began in Millom	Minutes of meetings with Home Group & Two Castles	
R2. REVIEW HOW THE HOUSING SERVICE OPERATES IN THE CONTEXT OF CORPORATE SYSTEMS AND PRIORITIES. (3 MONTHS)							
1. Ensure corporate systems for dealing with key management issues, such as budget setting and financial management, service planning and appraisals are adhered to in each service area and that robust monitoring and management takes place at the corporate centre to prevent non-compliance. The actions (a-c) do not cover monitoring and management to ensure compliance.	a. New staffing structure will provide better resources and clearer lines of management responsibility.		Julie Betteridge/Laurie Priebe	Corporate deadline 14.08.09	Housing services to adhere to annual budget building process and monthly budget monitoring and management. With the introduction of the capital monitoring group from July 2009 Housing will be represented at revenue budget and capital programme monitoring. Housing also participated in the budget building round held in 2008/09 for 2009/10 and will participate in the next and subsequent rounds. This cell does not refer to other services. Involved in the budget build process. Effective system in place for monitoring Capital budgets. Meeting has been set up to improve Revenue monitoring. Staff Appraisals completed for 2009/10.	CIP. Service Plan. Budget Papers.	
	b. Service plan will be implemented for Housing Services including SMART action plans		Julie Betteridge	COMPLETED	Service Plan signed off, completed by 2/07/09.	Service Plan	
	c. Improved budget monitoring to be introduced with clear devolution of responsibility to service managers.		Julie Betteridge	COMPLETED	Improve Revenue budget monitoring, regular meetings with finance have been set up. Housing capital programme monitoring group now set up with first meeting in Sept 09	Minutes of meetings	
2. Review the housing team's structure and resources and develop a permanent establishment capable of meeting the Council's statutory requirements, developing and implementing housing strategies to meet local requirements and delivering services to an acceptable standard.	a. New staffing structure approved including new Housing Services Manager post, Strategy and Private Sector Team managers and increased technical and homelessness/housing advice staffing.			COMPLETED	Complete recruitment and arrival in post of all new staff achieved at end October 2008.	Structure	

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	b. New structure to be reviewed after implementation to ensure operational effectiveness		Laurie Priebe	Structure being taken to Corporate team on date to be arranged	Job titles have been amended. Inspection by CLG (Alan Davies to issue to KP, JB & CP) Staffing is adequate for service. Intend to ring fence CLG for specific services	CLG report. Workforce Strategy. Business Planning Process	
	c. Strategy (which? all) development as per R1				See R1		
3. Improve relationships between departments to exploit opportunities for joined up working and make best use of expertise outside the housing team to deliver housing objectives.	a. Establish corporate working group to support the implementation of this plan. Include housing priorities in service plans of relevant internal services, develop SLA's with internal services.		Julie Betteridge	COMPLETE	Corporate team are supporting the implementation of the plan including identifying corporate improvements and directing joint working as part of ongoing improvement agenda and specifically as requested. Strategic Housing Panel of Councillors has been set up in Spring 2008. Housing priorities included Development Strategy Service Plan.	Evidence of working with other departments - SLAs. Corporate Team minutes. SHP minutes.	
	b. Publicise review findings and action plan requirements internally.				CAN HOUSING EVIDENCE THIS PLEASE?		
	c. Include housing priorities in service plans of relevant services Very broad. Need to discuss how these priorities identified for inclusion.		Julie Betteridge	COMPLETE	Finalise the Service Plan	Service Plan	
	d. Develop service level protocols with relevant services; Housing Benefits (including fast-tracking of homeless cases) Environmental Health Legal Services		Alan Davis	End of September	Benefits SLA signed off June 2009 but in practice was completed 6 months earlier. SLAs to be completed with environmental health and legal services by mid October 2009 There are partnership agreements in place with legal services and environmental health.	Partnership agreement	
4. Report regularly to the Executive and corporate team on performance against the service/improvement plan and against a full set of performance and cost indicators in housing until the service is reinspected.	a. Progress against this plan will be reported to both the Executive and the Corporate management team on a monthly basis. It will also include spend against budgets and key performance indicators.	Poor reporting to portfolio holders (13)	Julie Betteridge	End August 2009 complete	Reports have been made to Strategic Housing Panel for the last twelve months, reports to Executive and full council are reported on as required. including Quarterly Financial Monitoring. Regular reports to Full Council. Strategic Housing Panel meetings - minutes are available for Corporate Team and Executive. Spend against indicators reporting will be strengthened by ongoing work with the housing improvement programme. Development Strategy service plan indicators, including strategic housing, are monitored quarterly on Covalent while monthly financial management monitoring is undertaken with the cost accountant for the service.	JULIE B TO AMEND Portfolio Reports. SHP minutes.	
R3. ENSURE THE NEW CORPORATE ACCESS STRATEGY IS ROBUST ENOUGH TO MANAGE ACCESS TO HOUSING SERVICES AND TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC, CORPORATE APPROACH TO CUSTOMER CARE BY ADDRESSING KEY ISSUES. (6 MONTHS)			Jane Salt	Completed & out	The draft Access Strategy is out for consultation. Consultation period has now ended. Strategy to be reviewed in light of the comments. Access Strategy was presented at Corporate Team and is due to be represented after comments at the Corporate team on 7th Sept. Draft access strategy signed off by corporate team August 09	JULIE B TO UPDATE Access Strategy	
1. Develop a fully interactive corporate website	a. Housing sections on the website will be reviewed and will include all new information leaflets, all new strategies and access details for housing services. Interactive forms will be developed later.		Debbie Cochrane	COMPLETE	Housing Pages almost up to date and will be completed by End July 2009. Corporate Interactive website yet to be introduced. Huge improvement since last year. Fact sheets and Financial Policy have been updated on website and leaflets	http://www.copeland.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=1536	
2. Develop a clear, corporate approach to translation which meets local needs	a. CBC approach to translation to be reviewed alongside current action to tackle diversity issues. Ensure that Language Line translation service is available at reception and to customer - serving staff in all departments.	Unclear language line is in place (18)	Jane Salt	Mid July End October 2009.	CBC brought fully into the Language line service in July 2009. We have an account and able to go live on its use. Jane to produce procedure note. Update - Stephen Fawcett has issued instructions and presentation to be given at Managers meeting.	Procedure note	
	b. Use of telephone interpretation offered in all leaflets & housing decision letters			Mid Oct 09	Complete. To be introduced by Mid-Oct 09.	Leaflets	
3. Develop a consistent corporate approach to the management of complaints, including reporting to Councillors about learning from them.	a. CBC approach to complaints to be reviewed. Better recording systems for both formal complaints and informal views of dissatisfaction with services to be introduced.	Unclear whether systems complaints have been established (10 +16)		End of August	CBC approach to complaints has been reviewed and changes introduced with effect from April 2009. Strategic Housing Panel began to receive reports of complaints January 2009 (when their outcome is known) Covalent Complaint now up and running. Corporate Complaints leaflet not available in other languages - CP to check with AW/MJ. NO COMPLAINTS FOR HOUSING ON COVALENT?	Covalent report of housing complaints. Ombudsman report.	
	b. Housing staff to be trained on using complaints as a learning opportunity.			End Sept 2009	Training has been undertaken and more has been planned. Training proposal has been received. To be delivered by end 2009		
4. Develop and display a comprehensive range of housing leaflets.	a. Suite of housing leaflets to be produced to include; Access to social housing Housing Advice directory Homeless prevention and rights Private Sector services & grants	• New leaflets for homelessness and housing advice service but not consulted on with service users (28)• Key: Renovation grant publicity limited to website (33)		COMPLETED	Complete	Leaflets and website	

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5. Develop clear service standards in housing, which are well publicised and against which performance is monitored.	a.Housing service standards to be developed which will explain the service provided, how to access the service, the standards pertaining and how they will be monitored and complaints dealt with.Performance against these standards to be publicised.	Service standards still underdeveloped and no plans to consult customers (15)		COMPLETED	Following Consultation, including with customers, service standards were determined and agreed by Strategic Housing Panel in March 2009. Subsequently published in leaflet form and now appearing on website. Complete and consulted upon.	http://www.copeland.gov.uk/PDF/Housing_Services.pdf	
6. Develop transactional customer satisfaction surveys following key housing processes and report to Councillors about learning from them.	a. Customer satisfaction surveys to be developed for private sector housing renewal and homelessness/ housing options functions.	<input type="checkbox"/> No customer satisfaction results for DFG and renovation grants service yet (35)	Alan Davis/ Debbie Cochrane	COMPLETE	Private sector housing surveys introduced & be reported to Aug 09 meeting of Strategic Housing Panel. Homelessness. Housing Options surveys to be introduced August 2009. Completed for the Private Sector. Report to Strategic Housing Panel. Housing Options have begun to send out Satisfaction Surveys and first report to go to 7 October meeting of the Strategic Housing panel	Surveys. Anchor example of improvement.	
R4. FURTHER DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT EXISTING EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICIES; (6 MONTHS)	Actions for all 3 recommendations.						
1. Develop and maintain a thorough corporate understanding of the profile and needs of local people through liaison with representative community organisations and robust research. Profiling does not only relate to older people. Actions are not sufficient to cover this recommendation.	a.Develop Older Persons Housing Strategy and action plan including fuel poverty issues.(See R1)	Nothing done to understand the needs of migrant workers (19)	Laurie Priebe	End Sept 2009	The current work done on the draft older persons strategy and anti-fuel poverty strategy is not enough to meet the requirements of this recommendation. Local needs Survey. Group Parish Councils. Need to liaise with Community groups. Research RE. Migrant Workers has been done in the County, which will be obtained end of August	MOSAIC. Place Survey. Local Needs Survey.	
	b.Develop further equality impact assessments and implement findings	No EIA's and staff not trained (17)	Debbie Cochrane/Alan Davis	End Sept 09	Initial equality impact assessments done for private sector renewal & homelessness/ housing options. Actions with plan to be completed end sept 09. EIA training complete. By AWAZ, MJ to sign off EIA's AD has re-consulted on EIA's to report back in a team meet-to complete	Draft EIAs	
2. Carry out and act on the findings of equality impact assessments in housing.	c. Review existing research data to profile differing housing needs across borough. Examine needs of specific groups such as gypsies and travellers where Cumbria research is underway.		Julie Betteridge	End Sept 09	Actions with plan to be completed by end of Sept 09. Julie to check with John Hughes, Enforcement, Tony Pomfret, Kate Skillicorn. GAP - Gypsy & Travellers	?	
	d. Reflect these diversity issues in procurement tenders and contracts		Pat Graham	end October 09	Equality is a core criteria in the tender process. Contract procedures are clear for staff and compliance is checked at tender stage		
3. Incorporate full consideration of equality and diversity issues in all procurement decision making and contract management.	e.Liaise and consult with representative community groups as part of wider partnership dialogue.		Pat Graham	end September		JULIE B TO UPDATE	
R5. IMPROVE VALUE FOR MONEY AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BY;(6 MONTHS)	<u>This area seems particularly weak. Suggest you complete what you are doing, rather than referencing to other actions, since is key.</u> Implement effective procurement of all commissioned services and products including a robust client role in contract management.				The trustee contract completed in February 2009 was subjected to client management throughout. Effective procurement of the Kells Environmental Improvement Scheme was achieved by February 2009 and there is a strong client role in ongoing management of that contract. This also applied to phase 1 of the Woodhouse Evolution project in 2008/09,		
1. Tracking, benchmarking and reporting to staff and Councillors on corporate and service costs, alongside a full set of housing PI's and use the data to review service delivery	a.See R3 for performance indicators.Service cost and value for money work will include qualitative as well as quantitative information.To be reported to staff & Members. Can not see anything on benchmarking?	The proposal in column 6 includes benchmarking	Laurie Priebe	To Oct 09 Strategic Housing Panel	Develop some key LPIs around Service costs and value for money. A proposal has been obtained from consultants to undertake this work. It will be compared to the option of doing it entirely in house including the timeline for completion. 20 day project to begin in August with APSE To complete end Oct 09.		
2. Implementing effective procurement of all commissioned services and products, including establishing a robust client role in ongoing contract management.	a. Review external grants to ensure VFM and negotiate Service Level Agreements.		Laurie Priebe	Mid October 09 to Review at SHP	DFG - set up a county wide procurement system for stair lifts etc. through the Northern Housing Consortium. Wider Cumbrian Procurement group - EPIC - check with Chris Lloyd. LP attends all project meetings to ensure VFM. SLA with CAB & Community Law Centre - reviewed by Executive. Detailed SLA with CAB re: Housing and is performance based.	Take a 6 month and 12 month review to Strategic Housing panel	
	b. Review existing partnership arrangements to improve value for money		Julie Betteridge	To complete in December 09	Partnership arrangements with RSL's and others have been reviewed to ensure they deliver service outcomes but value for money has not been specifically addressed. This work is currently on going. A corporate review of partnerships is currently in process.The Corporate Improvement Plan sets a date for Value for money		
	c. Develop effective procurement practices for private sector renewal & improvement works, including partnership work		Pat Graham/Laurie Priebe	End August To join end sept 09	CBC to join purchasing consortium in order to obtain discounts for DFG works and services, DC has joined Northern Housing Consortium.		
	A- Action Plan						

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		Managers meeting to discuss action plan (12)		COMPLETED	Meet every 6 months	Minutes	
		<input type="checkbox"/> CBC accepts it is still not monitoring the impact of housing advice yet even though identified as a weakness in the last inspection (also see strength) (25)		ONGOING	Prevention work has improved . <i>Monthly reporting.</i>	Case notes. Leaflets. Pis	
		<input type="checkbox"/> there is no sanctuary scheme for women subjected to domestic violence wishing to remain at home (in homelessness strategy action plan to consider), there is floating support available, but this seems generic rather than specifically for domestic violence (26)	Alan Davis	Oct-09	In the Homeless Action plan. Trying to address on a Cumbrian wide basis.	Minutes	
		<input type="checkbox"/> The main bed and breakfast used is not DDA compliant (27)		COMPLETED	Complete. Have access to other facilities that are DDA compliant		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Still nothing on equity release option	Debbie Cochrane	COMPLETED	This has been part of the Housing Assistance Policy. No interest shown.	Consultation results	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Key: No guidelines on affordable housing such as Local development framework and this is not in any other plans for the department (36) Key: No	Julie Betteridge	Working to Local Development Framework timetable	Commissioning a Supplementary Planning Guidance and S106 as part of the LDF byMarch 2010.	LDS Scheme	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Staff resources for leading in this area are less defined (38)		COMPLETED	Housing Service Managers responsibility	Job Description	

Issues

Not implemented action plan within agreed original timescales