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24 March 2014

To: Councillor Mark Howell, Portfolio Holder

Mark Hersom
Bunty Waters

Opposition Spokesman
Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Dear Sir / Madam

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S MEETING**, which will be held in **MONKFIELD ROOM, FIRST FLOOR** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **TUESDAY, 1 APRIL 2014 at 5.30 p.m.**

Yours faithfully
JEAN HUNTER
Chief Executive

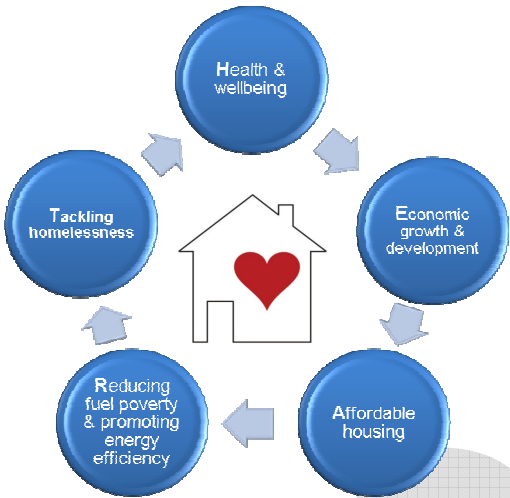
Requests for a large print agenda must be received at least 48 hours before the meeting.

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT

7. Service Plan 2014-15

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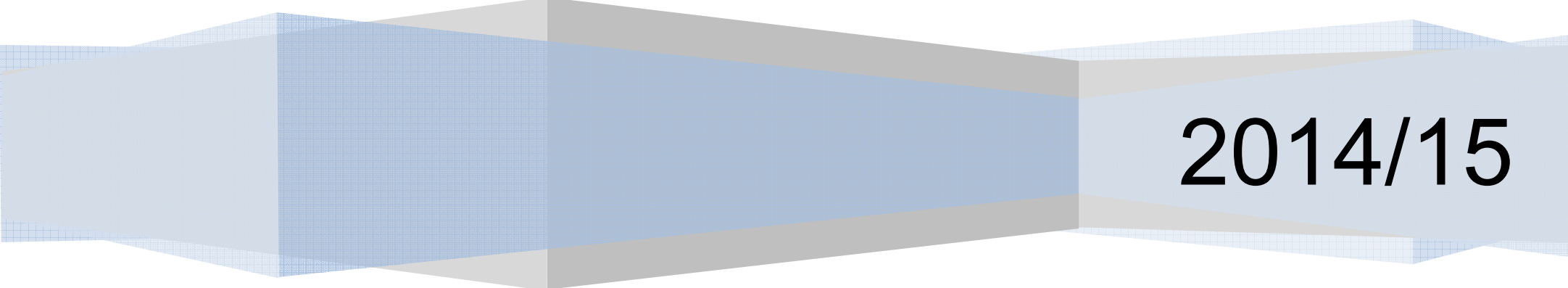
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Putting the HEART into
Housing

DRAFT

Affordable Homes Service Plan



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Corporate Long Term Vision and Aims

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live and work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

The Council will be recognised as consistently innovative and a high performer with a track record of delivering value for money by focusing on the priorities, needs and aspirations of our residents, parishes and businesses.

- **Engagement:** Engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money
- **Partnerships:** Work with partners to create opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world-leading innovation
- **Wellbeing:** Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents

Relevant Corporate objectives for the Housing Service

- (1) Develop the property company pilot scheme into a full business plan to deliver affordable housing and generate income
- (4) Work with tenants, parish councils and community groups to sustain successful, vibrant villages
- (5) Build new council houses to provide affordable homes to meet the needs of local communities
- (9) Work with GPs and partners to link health services and to improve the health of our communities
- (10) Ensure the impacts of welfare reform are managed smoothly and effectively
- (12) Increase the range and supply of temporary accommodation to help minimise the use of bed & breakfast accommodation for homeless households

Housing Vision and Aims

To be the best housing service by providing good quality housing across all tenures that is accessible to all – that enhances residents' quality of life, their health and wellbeing, that supports economic growth and social opportunities, alongside improved energy security and reduced carbon footprints.

- **Affordable Housing Provision** – To deliver a range of homes that are affordable to all and where people want to live that will support economic growth and economic activity
- **Better Homes** – To improve the living conditions across all tenures, to help make homes more energy efficient and to reduce fuel poverty
- **Making Best Use of Existing Stock** – To promote safe and sustainable communities, ensuring people are living in the right homes at a time that is right for them
- **Securing Housing with Specialist Support** – To promote fully inclusive communities and to work with partners to provide support and assistance to enable independent living
- **Preventing and Tackling Homelessness** – To reduce homelessness through being proactive in preventative measures and ensuring there is sufficient suitable accommodation available to people who are, or who may become homeless
- **Improving housing options and extending choice** – To work in partnership to provide housing advice so that people understand their housing options, help them to sustain their current home or access alternative suitable accommodation
- **Monitoring and Performance** – To provide a housing service that is transparent and accountable, that is developed in consultation with our tenants, partner agencies and the wider public and demonstrates value for money

Housing Service

This service plan covers both strategic housing functions of the Council and also its landlord role. The service plan for Affordable Homes should be read in conjunction with the [Housing Strategy 2012/13 to 2016/17](#) and the [Housing Revenue Account \(HRA\) Business Plan](#).

Monitoring of the Service Plan is completed by our Housing Services Management Team and progress reported in our [Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders](#) published in Autumn, as well as up to date information contained in our twice yearly [Tenant and Leaseholder Newsletter](#).

Potential operational risks to the service are identified at an early stage through the HRA Business Plan Risk Register and Housing Risk Register, which are monitored quarterly by the Housing Services Management Team (HSMT) and Executive Management Team (EMT). High level risks identified will also be included in the Strategic Risk Register for monitoring by EMT and approval by the Corporate & Customer Services Portfolio Holder. Where service plan projects help to mitigate the risks identified in the Risk Registers, these are noted in the project tables below (page 6-11).

The Housing Service has three primary functions:

- Landlord service - providing housing management and property maintenance services to over 5,750 homes. This also includes housing related support and the management of gypsy & traveller sites.
- Housing strategy and development – providing a strategic lead on housing issues within the District including assessing housing needs, bringing empty homes back into use, performance management and the Council's new build programme. This also includes an enabling role working in partnership with other local authorities and housing associations to deliver new affordable homes within the District and in partnership on strategic sites close to Cambridge City.
- Housing advice and options – providing a homelessness prevention service and to provide accommodation for those in housing need (including those who are already homeless), through a choice based lettings scheme and other housing options. The provision of this service delivers several statutory requirements for the local authority.

Key Stats

Housing Stock as of January 2014

General Needs homes = 4248
 Supported homes = 1066
 Equity Share homes = 290
 Leasehold homes = 111 (sold flats)
Total homes managed = 5,711

This includes the completion of our first four new council homes in December 2013

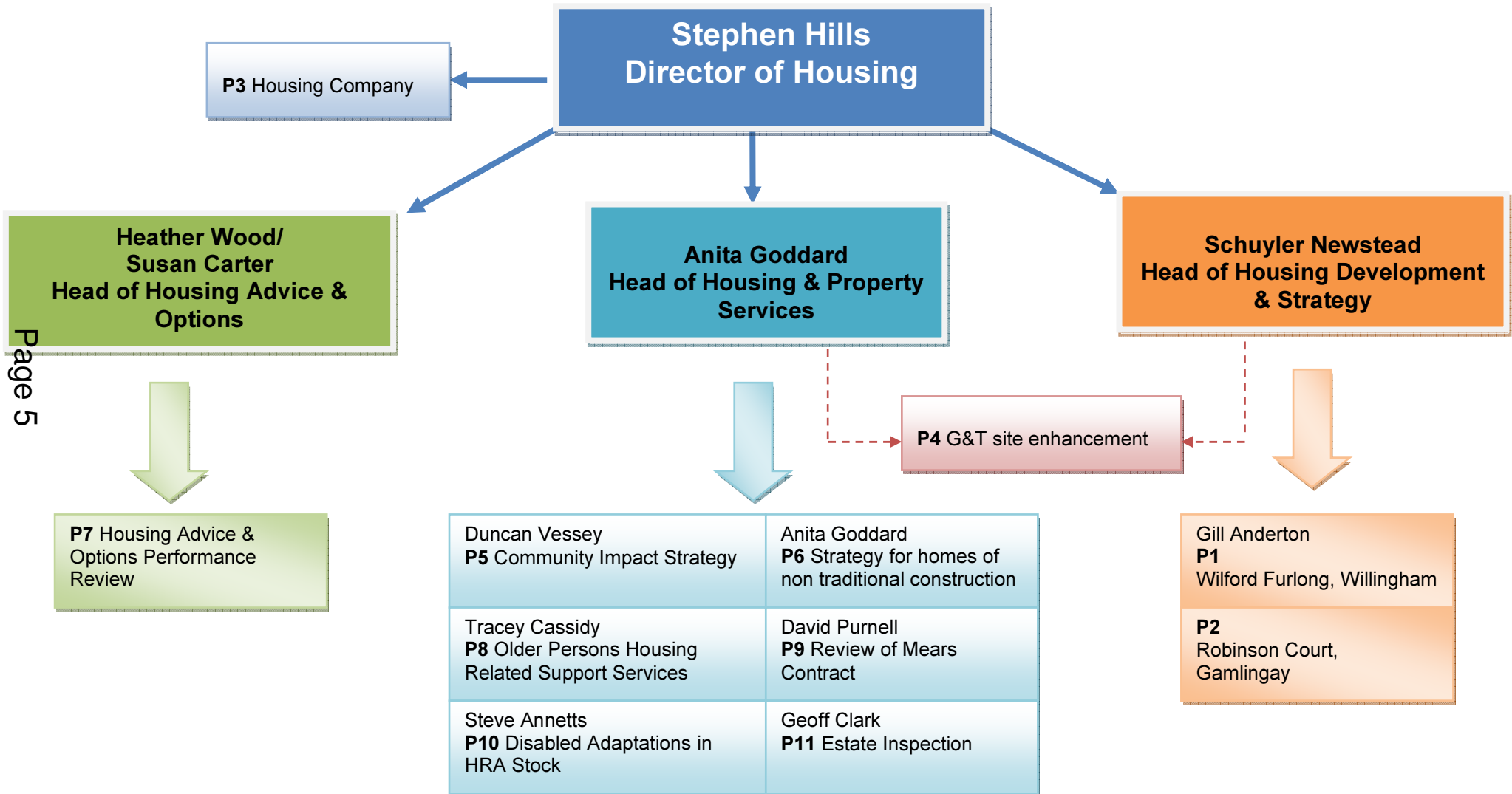
There are also 24 First Time Buyer homes and 30 shared ownership properties

In 2012/13

Total council homes let = 257
 Total housing association homes let = 177
Total homes let through Home-link = 434

Homelessness acceptances = 102
 Homes receiving capital works = 1,333
 Affordable homes built = 101
 Homes fitted with solar panels = 1000

Service Improvement Project Overview



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Project Programme

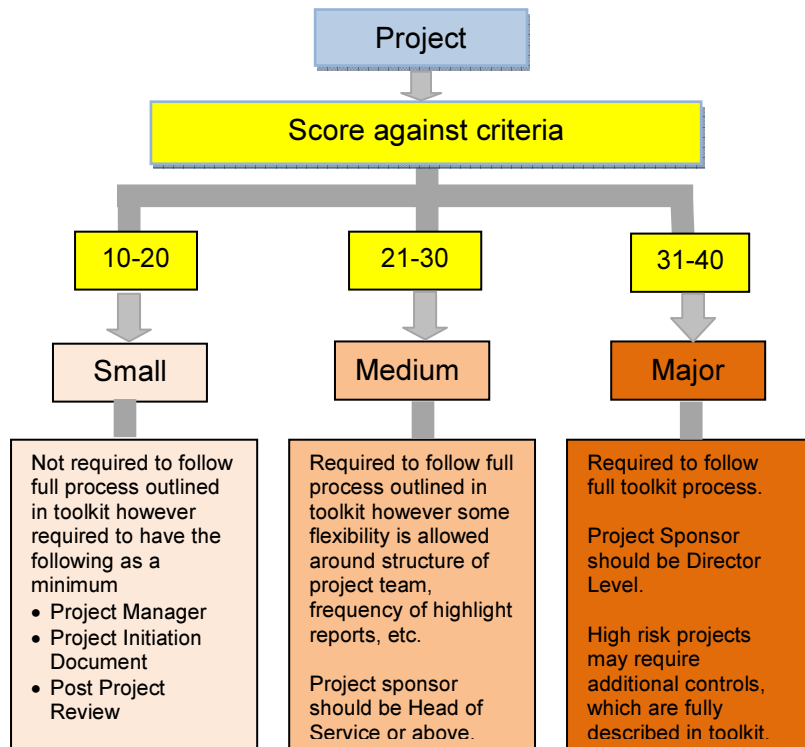
The following pages set out the project programme for each project identified. The prime objective for each project and the expected outputs to be completed during the life of the service plan are detailed, alongside agreed timescales. Each project is scored using the corporate project scoring matrix, aligned to the corporate aims and assessed against the social value relating to Value for Money. Projects are also assessed as to how they help mitigate identified risk from the Risk Registers and if any additional resources are required.

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Scoring Projects and Resources

Project scores are based on the level of management that needs to be put in place. The projects are scored against criteria set out in the project management toolkit to give a total score which will indicate whether the project is small, medium or major.

The resource implications for each project within the service plan are identified in the project tables below (see pages 6-11).



The service plan for Affordable Homes includes 5 small projects; 5 medium projects and 1 major project..

Value for Money (VFM)

We will achieve our aims in the most efficient manner at the best possible price and be able to demonstrate it.

This will include:

- Doing the right things to meet the aims of Affordable Homes (effectiveness)
- Using our assets in the best way to deliver these aims
- Having the right assets to deliver (asset management)
- Having the right processes in place to deliver (efficiency)
- Achieving the right outcomes – meeting standards (quality) aimed for

To ensure we are a high performing housing service and to help identify areas for improvement, we compare ourselves with other housing organisations using Housemark – see our Annual Core Benchmarking Reports. As part of the Annual Report for 2014, a Value for Money Statement will be included and sent to all tenants in Autumn 2014. See also the Affordable Homes Value for Money Strategy.

For the service plan, each project is measured against the social value element relating to VFM, this is broken down into four components:

Social and economic benefits

- To individuals and communities

Service Quality

- Consumer benefits to paying customers

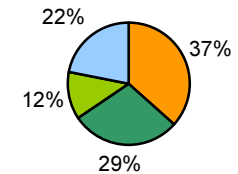
Environmental Benefits

- Quality of neighbourhood, bio-diversity, energy efficiency, etc.

Financial Benefits



- A return (surplus) for reinvestment
- Knock-on benefits to other local services and

Overview of social value for all projects



P1 Wilford Furlong, Willingham						
Prime Objective:	Identify preferred options to help improve the overall environment of Wilford Furlong in consultation with residents, parish council and local members of Willingham.					
Outputs:	Phase 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish internal project team Complete resident/property profiling Survey residents Analysis of Results 			Phase 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake resident consultation Establish residents panel Agree shape of project with tenants Report to Housing Portfolio Holder setting out plans for Phase 3 		
Timescales:	Start Date: January 2014	End Date: March 2015	Project Duration: 15 months	Review Date: March 2014	Project Score: 25 (medium)	Corporate Aim(s): 5
VFM – Social Value: Social and Economic Benefits		30%	Potential for increased housing. Improving the community through involvement, enhancing the community and higher satisfaction levels for existing tenants			
Service Quality		25%	Improved quality of housing for tenants			
Environmental Benefits		25%	Energy efficient homes			
Financial Benefits		20%	Potential for increased rental income from additional homes and reduced expenditure on day-to-day repairs due to current condition of homes			
Mitigating Risk:	Risk HS25 – New Build Strategy					
Additional Resources:	Part time tenant liaison officer; Survey & Consultation ; Appraisal software (ProVal already in place)					

P2 Robinson Court, Gamlingay						
Prime Objective:	Demolition of bedsit scheme and re-provision of better quality accommodation					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decanting of residents Obtain planning permission 					
Timescales:	Start Date: May 2013	End Date: June 2014	Project Duration: 13 months	Review Date: June 2014	Project Score: 23 (medium)	Corporate Aim(s): 5
VFM – Social Value: Social and Economic Benefits		45%	Current properties are bedsits and no longer fit for purpose. Redevelopment will provide family homes which will contribute to a more balanced community.			
Service Quality		25%	Improved quality of housing for tenants			
Environmental Benefits		20%	Energy efficient homes			
Financial Benefits		10%	Current properties require high management resource due to the type and nature of the properties.			
Mitigating Risk:	Risk HS25 – New Build Strategy					
Additional Resources:	Existing resources					


P3 Housing Company						
Prime Objective:	Deliver the pilot scheme to establish a housing company (South Cambs Ltd)					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish team Marketing profile/market research Set up back office policy & procedures Acquire portfolio of 20 properties Report to Council on performance 					
Timescales	Start Date: January 2014	End Date: October 2015	Project Duration: 22 months	Review Date: June 2014	Project Score: 32 (major)	Corporate Aim(s): 1
VFM – Social Value Social and Economic Benefits		25%	There is generally a lack of private rented accommodation in the District and it is likely that there will be increased competition for this tenure type with 'lower' income families being squeezed out of the area. The Housing Company will have the potential to meet a wide range of housing need.			
Service Quality		20%	Providing good quality, well managed private rented accommodation			
Environmental Benefits		5%	Where possible we will look to provide well insulated, energy efficient homes			
Financial Benefits		50%	The Housing Company will generate a significant revenue stream for the Council in future years. The limited nature of the pilot will enable the Council to test the concept and limit the financial risks before committing to a larger scale investment.			
Mitigating Risk:	Risk STR08 – Medium Term Financial Strategy					
Additional Resources:	£7m borrowing capacity £100,000 revenue support					
P4 Gypsy & Traveller Site Enhancement						
Prime Objective:	To increase and enhance Gypsy & Traveller provision in the District					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase of two county sites at Milton and Whaddon Improvements to site at Whaddon and the provision of two additional pitches Seek to purchase additional site within the District 					
Timescales	Start Date: Sept 2013	End Date: March 2015	Project Duration: 18 months	Review Date: Sept 2014	Project Score: 27 (medium)	Corporate Aim(s): 5
VFM – Social Value Social and Economic Benefits		50%	The Gypsy and Traveller Community are a significant ethnic minority within the District. By securing these sites and ensuring they are well maintained, this will help to meet the needs of the Gypsy & Traveller community into the future. This will in turn act as a springboard for addressing health and educational inequalities.			
Service Quality		20%	Providing good quality, well maintained pitches with appropriate infrastructure and facilities			
Environmental Benefits		25%	The redevelopment and improvement of existing sites will enhance the environment. The planned refurbishment to the site at Whaddon will significantly reduce the CO2 emissions from this site			
Financial Benefits		5%	Additional provision will help to reduce unauthorised sites which lead to costs associated with enforcement action			
Mitigating Risk:	Risk STR03 – Illegal Traveller Encampments or developments & HS26 – Gypsy & Traveller Provision					
Additional Resources:	Capital: £900,000					


P5 Community Impact Strategy						
Prime Objective:	To assess the wider impact of housing services in the community, including digital and financial inclusion through the publication of the community impact strategy					
Outputs:	Recruitment to new role of Business Manager on a 2 year fixed contract and Publish a Community Impact Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Digital Inclusion – to explore the potential take up of internet based services and to identify the barriers to tenant technology ➢ Financial Inclusion – to explore the potential use of Credit Unions and other measures to assist those tenants that may not have access to bank accounts. Linked to welfare reform mitigation work 					
Timescales	Start Date: March 2014	End Date: March 2015	Project Duration: 12 months	Review Date: Oct 2014	Project Score: 17 (small)	Corporate Aim(s): 9
VFM – Social Value Social and Economic Benefits		60%	Providing social and economic benefits to residents through digital and financial inclusion – addressing issues that affect the vulnerable in the district, such as isolation, worklessness, financial capability, changes to welfare reform, etc.			
Service Quality		25%	Identifying areas for enhanced service delivery in relation to digital and financial inclusion			
Environmental Benefits		0%	N/A			
Financial Benefits		15%	Help address potential increases in rent arrears through welfare reform			
Mitigating Risk:	STR15 – Welfare Reform & HS23 – Welfare Benefit Reforms & STR21 – Keeping up with Technology Development BP1 – Rent Collection					
Additional Resources:	Recruitment to Housing New Initiatives Manager					


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P6 Strategy for homes of non traditional construction						
Prime Objective:	To put in place a coherent and timed strategy to deliver those elements needed to address the non traditional properties as well as those properties identified for demolition in the HRA business plan.					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appraise non traditional type properties and identify solutions for each in line with the Asset Sustainability Policy • Agree method of procurement for proposed works • Publish Strategy for homes of non traditional construction 					
Timescales	Start Date: Jan 2014	End Date: June 2014	Project Duration: 6 months	Review Date: June 2014	Project Score: 19 (small)	Corporate Aim(s): 5
VFM – Social Value Social and Economic Benefits		20%	Improving the community through involvement, enhancing the quality of life for existing tenants and residents leading to higher satisfaction levels.			
Service Quality		25%	Improved quality of housing for tenants			
Environmental Benefits		25%	Refurbishment to include energy efficient measures			
Financial Benefits		30%	Making best use of existing stock to ensure it is fit for purpose and provides value for money to our tenants in line with the HRA Asset Sustainability Policy. Properties identified currently require high management/maintenance costs.			
Mitigating Risk:	BP5 –Capital project management					
Additional Resources:	3 Million over 3 years to take the strategy forward					

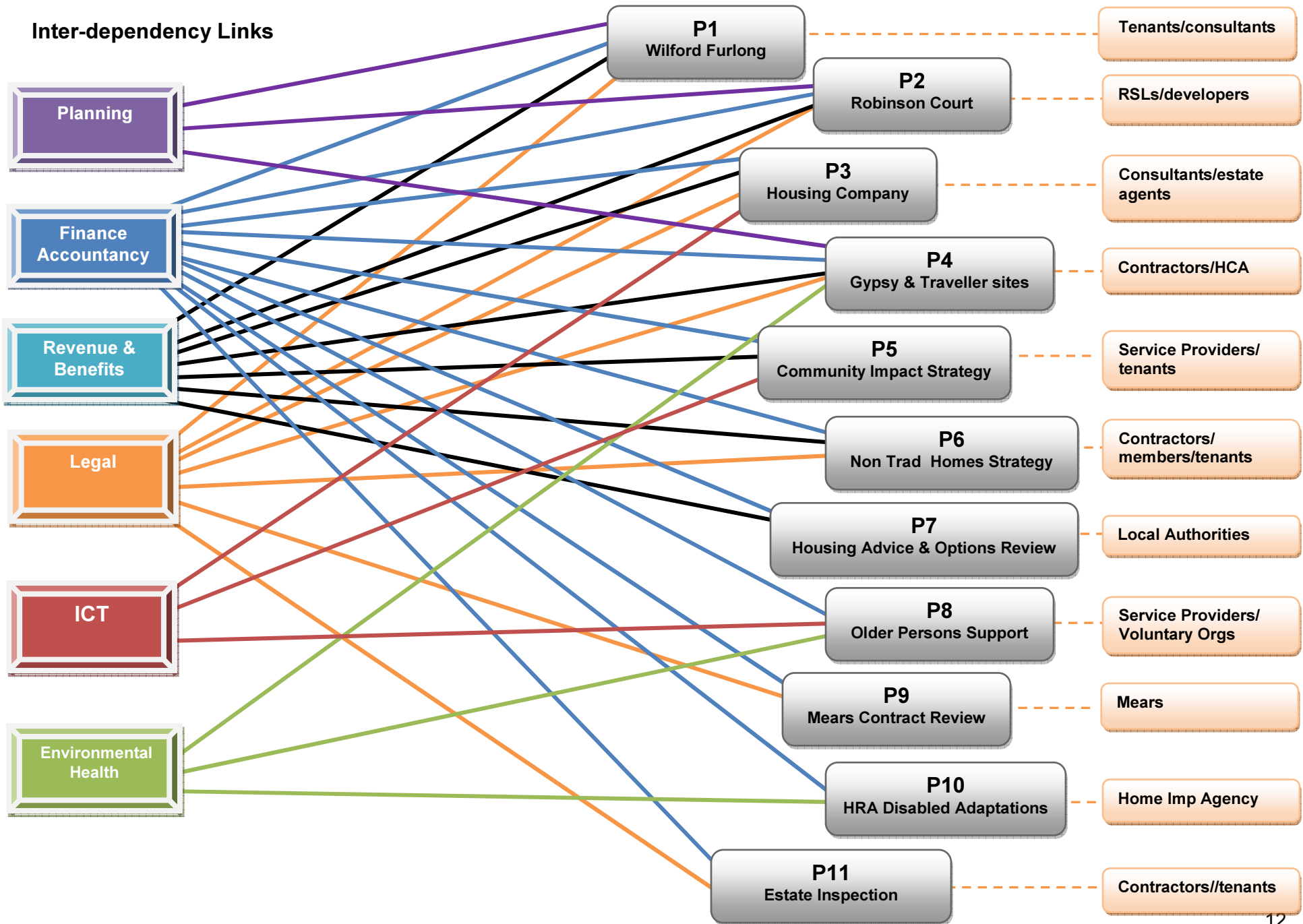
P7 Housing Advice & Options Performance Review						
Prime Objective:	Undertake a self assessment of the service and make recommendations for improvement					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review best practice, benchmarking of current performance and review operational efficiency as part of self assessment Following self assessment determine whether to go ahead with peer review Consider benefits for achieving the Homelessness Gold Standard Award Report to Housing Portfolio Holder of findings/recommendations for improvement 					
Timescales	Start Date: April 2014	End Date: March 2015	Project Duration: 11 months	Review Date: Feb 2015	Project Score: 16 (small)	Corporate Aim(s): 12
VFM – Social Value		45%	Higher satisfaction levels with service. Potential for improved service provision for those facing homelessness. Increased options and preventative measures.			
Social and Economic Benefits						
Service Quality		45%	Ensuring service provision is of the highest standard			
Environmental Benefits		0%	N/A			
Financial Benefits		10%	Potential for increased efficiency improvements to free up staff. Through the potential for increased housing options and preventative measures should help to reduce the numbers approaching as homeless and the need to use temporary accommodation.			
Mitigating Risk:	STR15 – Welfare Reform & ST25 & HS11 – Increase in numbers in B&B accommodation HS27 – MAPPA & MARAC					
Additional Resources:	None identified – within existing resources					
P8 Development of new older persons housing related support services						
Prime Objective:	Implement new visiting support contract for older people and explore potential for enhanced services for older people					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To offer housing related support across tenures Explore options for a handyperson scheme re own stock, plus a wider opportunity for tenure neutral Pilot 1 year Lifeline Plus scheme Explore potential for joint working with Health Report findings to Housing Portfolio Holder 					
Timescales	Start Date: Jan 2014	End Date: October 2014	Project Duration: 10 months	Review Date: Sept 2014	Project Score: 30 (medium)	Corporate Aim(s): 9
VFM – Social Value		45%	Providing housing related support cross-tenure with enhancement to service that will be available for those that need it.			
Social and Economic Benefits						
Service Quality		25%	Enhanced service provision – providing greater support to all residents			
Environmental Benefits		10%	Potential to link in with those affected by fuel poverty and signposting as appropriate for support.			
Financial Benefits		20%	May be some financial benefits to residents through signposting for budgetary/money advice.			
Mitigating Risk:	STR20 – Partnership working with Cambridgeshire County Council STR19 – Demands on services with an ageing population STR12 – Supported Housing					
Additional Resources:	Recruitment of officer for Lifeline Plus (starts April) £8500 existing funds, service will be chargeable and looking to enrol/involve local business; Recruitment of Visiting support officer as part of Supporting People contract (£302k p.a. for 3 years +1); Recruitment of Handyman officer , part funded by HRA with potential funds from the General Fund					

P9 Review of Mears Contract						
Prime Objective:	Undertake a mid-term review of the Mears Contract to establish whether to extend the contract					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up first phase of project review by June 2014 identifying key officers and tenant group to be involved Report to EMT as to whether to extend the contract to Mears or undertake a fresh procurement exercise 					
Timescales	Start Date: Jan 2014	End Date: March 2015	Project Duration: 14 months	Review Date: June 2014	Project Score: 22 (medium)	Corporate Aim(s): N/A
VFM – Social Value Social and Economic Benefits		10%	Undertake staff and tenant consultation and feedback to ensure the service is aligned with their priorities			
Service Quality		40%	To ensure we are able to provide a high quality service to tenants in undertaking repairs in a timely and satisfactory manner			
Environmental Benefits		5%	Energy efficiency and other 'green' initiatives as part of contract			
Financial Benefits		45%	To ensure the contract provides value for money. Housemark benchmarking, internal performance indicators and customer satisfaction to be assessed as part of the review			
Risk:	HS14 – Responsive Repairs					
Additional Resources:	None identified – within existing resources					

P10 Disabled adaptations in HRA Stock						
Prime Objective:	To review the service provided in relation to disabled adaptations in HRA stock					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up project working group Undertake desktop review of the current 'draft' policy Undertake research into identified needs and future forecasts Look at historical spend and forecast for future expenditure Review contractor's performance and Occupational Therapist performance Explore links with Home Improvement Agency, DFG process and other related support services Report findings and recommendations for improvement to Housing Portfolio Holder October 2014 					
Timescales	Start Date: Feb 2014	End Date: October 2014	Project Duration: 9 months	Review Date: Oct 2014	Project Score: 17 (small)	Corporate Aim(s): 9
VFM – Social Value Social and Economic Benefits		30%	To ensure we have the right processes in place to enable us to provide a targeted service that will support our tenants to live independently in their homes through the provision of disabled adaptations. Looking at ways to work smarter and more efficiently and to improve customer satisfaction.			
Service Quality		40%	To ensure we are able to provide a high quality service to tenants in a timely and satisfactory manner			
Environmental Benefits		0%	N/A			
Financial Benefits		30%	To ensure we are receiving value for money through the contractors currently carrying out the service. To ensure we are targeting expenditure to those most in need.			
Mitigating Risk:	STR19 – Demands on services from an ageing population					
Additional Resources:	None identified – within existing resources					

P11 Estate Inspection						
Prime Objective:	To implement a programme of estate inspection, including reviewing the need for a welfare garden scheme					
Outputs:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a project working group including tenant representatives • Tenant Scrutiny Review of grounds maintenance • Identify a programme for formal estate walkabouts • Review the welfare garden scheme • Identify links to anti-social behaviour • Procurement of grounds maintenance contract • Report outcome to Housing Portfolio Holder March 2015 					
Timescales	Start Date: Jan 2014	End Date: March 2015	Project Duration: 15 months	Review Date: March 2015	Project Score: 15 (small)	Corporate Aim(s): 4
VFM – Social Value Social and Economic Benefits		40%	Involving tenants to enhance the community, in which they live through improved grounds maintenance of communal areas, ensuring gardens are kept tidy and review the need for support in providing a welfare garden scheme.			
Service Quality		35%	Improved service quality through Tenant Scrutiny Review			
Environmental Benefits		20%	Improved quality of neighbourhood			
Financial Benefits		5%	May be potential for savings through procurement exercise. Improved service quality will reduce staff resource for dealing with complaints			
Mitigating Risk:	HS7 – Tenant Participation					
Additional Resources:	Within existing resources					

Inter-dependency Links



Project Plan – Milestones

	Project Type	April 2014	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	Aug 2014	Sept 2014	Oct 2014	Nov 2014	Dec 2014	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	March 2015	Carried Fwd
P1	Wilford Furlong, Willingham	Informal report to EMT	Establish Project team & survey tenants		Analysis of Results following profiling exercise (25% project complete)		Complete Consultation Events	Establish tenant panel (50% project complete)	Report to HSMT	Working towards shape of scheme (75% of project complete)		Informal report to EMT	Report to PFH (100% project complete)	Phase 3 complete works (note end date unknown until completion of phases 1 & 2)
P2	Robinson Court, Gamlingay			Report to PFH – approval to dispose (25% project complete)		Obtain Planning Permission (50% project complete)	Report to HSMT	Properties all decanted Dispose of site (100% project complete)		Start on site (Phase 2)				Phase 2 scheme complete by Nov 2015
P3	Housing Company	Establish Team (25% project complete)				Set up back office policy & procedures & Establish market research & branding (50% project complete)		First properties let (75% project complete) Report to HSMT					Target to purchase at least 20 properties (100% project complete)	Report to Cabinet/ Council Nov 2015
P4	Gypsy & Traveller Site Enhancement	Purchase of 2 county sites (25% project complete)				Report to HSMT	Informal report to EMT	Report to PFH on progress (50% project complete)		Complete refurb & additional pitches at Whaddon (75% project complete)			Complete purchase of additional site (100% project complete)	
P5	Community Impact Strategy	Establish project team for different strands of Strategy (25% project complete)			Research good practice and explore options (50% project complete)		Project Group to agree actions to be included in Strategy (75% project complete) Report to HSMT	Approval of Strategy by PFH (100% project complete)						Report to EMT Nov 2015 & PFH June 2015 on implementation of Strategy
P6	Strategy for homes of non traditional construction	Appraisal of properties identified and appointment of Project Manager (50% project completed)	Agree method of procurement for proposed works (75% project completed)	Approval of Strategy by PFH (100% project complete)	Report to HSMT									
P7	Housing Advice & Options Performance Review	Set up project working group		Project Group meeting to look at Good Practice & Benchmarking (25% project complete)		Project Group meeting to collate Good Practice & Benchmarking (50% project complete)		Self Assessment completed Actions Agreed to take forward (75% project complete)		Report to HSMT			Report to PFH on outcome of review (100% project complete)	
P8	Development of new older persons housing related support services	Pilot Lifeline plus	Go tenure neutral for housing support (50% project completed)		Report to HSMT	Pilot Handyperson service (80% project completed)	Formal report to EMT	Report to PFH on progress made relating to new service (100% project complete)						
P9	Review of Mears Contract			Project plan in place – early activities completed (35% project completed)				Report to HSMT	Formal report to EMT (70% project completed)				Report to PFH on outcome of review (100% project completed)	
P10	Disabled adaptations in HRA stock	Establish project working group and agree actions (25% completed)		Complete desktop review of current policy and expenditure (50% complete)	Complete review contractors/ OT performance and explore links to HIA, etc (75% complete)	Report to HSMT	Informal report to EMT	Report to PFH on recommendations (100% project complete)						
P11	Estate Inspection	Establish project working group and agree actions		Tenant Scrutiny report to PFH (25% project complete)				Complete review of welfare garden scheme and estate walkabout programme (50% project completed)	Report to HSMT	Procurement of grounds maintenance contract (75% complete)			Report to PFH (100% project completed)	