


Housing Futures Progress Report: 14 September 2007

Project Manager: Denise Lewis
<p>Overall comments/issues: Some further slippage in timetable due to election of resident representatives for the HFWG. Revised project completion timeline now assumes report to Cabinet in January 2008 and not December 2007.</p> <p>Risks have been revised and updated to reflect recent national policy announcements in relation to housing and responses to resident, staff and elected Member involvement questionnaires and election of tenant representatives on the HFWG.</p> <p>Note: bold text indicates that milestone finish date has been updated.</p>

Overall Status: 

Project Plan

	Actions (SMART)	Start	Finish	Progress	Comments/Actions to address delays
1	Appointment of Project Manager		April 2007	✓	Denise Lewis formerly Head of Housing Strategic Services.
2	Appointments to project team	May 2007	June 2007	✓	Recruitment through an Agency for post of Resident Involvement Officer, Sally Harbey and internal secondment for post of Project Officer, Kirsty Human.
3	Appointment of Housing PFH	May 2007	May 2007	✓	Councillor Simon Edwards appointed as Housing Futures Portfolio Holder.
4	Establish Communications Sub-group to meet on fortnightly basis	June 2007	November 2007	✓	First meeting held on 31 st July with monthly meetings agreed thereafter – reps attending from relevant teams across the Council. Reps from the Tenant Participation Group have been asked to form a small group to comment on draft publications for residents.
5	Stock Condition Survey		Early 2007	✓	Survey work completed November 2007 with results available to commence financial modelling from March 2007.
6	Financial modelling of investment needs of the housing stock	April 2007	September 2007	☺	Progress delayed further whilst stock numbers and types were reconciled between various databases. Briefings for project team members held with Tribal on 11 th June and 5 th

					July to consider preliminary outputs from the financial modelling work. A presentation of the outputs was held on 11 September with relevant Officers/Members ahead of results being presented to the Housing Futures Working Group and more widely to staff, members and the Tenant Participation Group (TPG) last week in September.
7	Set up Housing Futures (Member/Tenant) Working Group (HFWG)	June 2007	December 2007	✓	Election process completed and results available 7 August. Due to resignations there have been two changes to tenant membership since the election with Helen Kember and Janice Curtis replacing Gordon Teversham and Roy Wescombe. Member nominations confirmed from the political groups in July, although Cllr Harangozo replaced Cllr Heazell on 10 September. First meeting of HFWG held on 11 th September. Future meetings will be monthly through period September to January 2008. However, additional sessions will be required outside formal meetings, particularly with the tenant reps in order to provide training and capacity building as part of the Tenant Empowerment Strategy.
8	Set up Corporate Project Team to meet fortnightly	June 2007	January 2008	✓	Five meetings of project team held since June and future meetings are scheduled in diaries at fortnightly intervals over coming months.
9	Assessment of strategic context: - housing needs - national and local housing strategy - sustainable community strategy (SCS)	July 2007	October 2007	☺	Delays with Sub-regional Housing Market Assessment outside SCDC control but preliminary results should be available in September and should not hold up progress with this action. Housing Strategy signed off by Full Council in July 2007. A briefing paper and a response on the Housing Green Paper: homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable drafted for relevant PFH and Cabinet will consider in October.
10	Appointment of an ITA	June 2007	September 2007	✓	Expressions of interest received and five of the six short-listed organisations have submitted a tender. Tenants on the HFWG interviewed four ITAs on 3 September and PS Consultants were appointed.

11	Development of a Communications Strategy	June 2007	September 2007	☺	<p>Draft developed during June 2007 and considered by project team on 3rd July and 9th August having been reviewed with input from the Comms Advisor. The ITA and the GOEE have made comments along with the HFWG throughout September.</p> <p>It will be approved by the Housing Futures PFH at the next formal PFH meeting on 17th September and reported as a decision.</p> <p>The original timetable has slipped only because of the delay in setting up the HFWG and appointment of the ITA due to the election for the tenant reps.</p>
12	Development of a Resident Empowerment Strategy	June 2007	September 2007	☺	<p>Draft developed for consideration by project team on 17th July by the Resident Involvement Officer and was presented to the first meeting of the HFWG for review and comment in September. Advice was also sought from the ITA and the GOEE.</p> <p>This will now be approved by the Housing Futures PFH at the next formal PFH meeting on 17th September and reported as a decision.</p> <p>The original timetable has slipped only because of the delay in setting up the HFWG and appointment of the ITA due to the election for the tenant reps.</p>
13	Development and implementation of a new Tenant Compact	June 2007	January 2008	☹	<p>New Tenant Compact signed off by Housing & Environmental Services PFH 7th June and TPG signed off on 18th June. Resident Involvement Officer and ITA to lead on this area of work with support from Housing Services staff through development and implementation of an action plan. There will be consultation with members and the TPG during September on the draft action plan ahead of its sign-off by the Housing & Environmental Services PFH in early October.</p>
14	Produce an updated HRA Business Plan	June 2007	December 2007	☹	<p>Work on this delayed whilst awaiting outputs from financial modelling and also lack of capacity until project team appointments made.</p> <p>It is expected that a new HRA Business Plan will be developed through to December with a view to presenting this</p>

					to Cabinet/Full Council alongside the outcome of the Housing Futures process in January 2008.
15	Market Research	September 2007	November 2007	☺	Draft brief will need to be developed during September/October and we can take advantage of the new County-wide consultation framework contract with MRUK to procure the work.
16	Communication Programme	July 2007	November 2007	☺	Dates reviewed to reflect delays with set up of HFWG. This is being developed in consultation with staff and the Comms Advisor and a diary and events calendar will be available to go out with the first HF newsletter by the end of September.
17	Production of bi-monthly newsletters	September November January		☺	Not on target due to delays with set up of HFWG so planned number of Housing Futures newsletters reduced from four to three. Communications Advisor appointed on 10 th July - The Seymour Cotton Partnership who will provide support and advice in production of newsletters.
18	Review of South Cambridgeshire Standard	September 2007	October 2007	☺	This area of work will be led by the ITA but will be informed by the work done on the South Cambs Standard as part of the OA in 2005.
19	Site visits to other local authorities and LSVT landlords	September 2007	November 2007	☺	<i>New Milestone</i> – options for site visits explored in consultation with the HFWG, staff, and Members at meetings during September to be finalised in October and take place in November.
20	Evaluation of options by the Member/tenant Working Group	November 2007	December 2007	☹	Timeline amended to reflect delays with project to date.
21	Report to Cabinet and Full Council	January 2008		☹	Timeline amended to reflect delays with project to date.
22	Post project review	January 2008		☹	
23	Implementation of preferred option – new project initiation	January 2008		☺	

Resources:

Budget/resource status:	Budget of £137k	If not OK, action to be taken:	<p>A virement within the Housing Revenue Account has been approved to accommodate anticipated expenditure on this project.</p> <p>Revised Estimates 2007/08 will need to reflect the full costs of the project.</p>
	<p>Note: this is net of the cost of the land appraisal which is recoverable from RSL partners if a housing transfer is not the preferred option.</p> <p>£117k committed to date.</p>		

Risk Log

Risk No	Risk Description	Probability H/M/L	Impact H/M/L	Owner	Countermeasures	Action Date	Status (Open/Closed)
01	Project management arrangements are inadequate	LOW	HIGH	SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify project leader from outset provide adequate funding for the project and supporting project team ensure appropriate level of seniority for the post-holder and clear reporting lines 	<p>April 2007</p> <p>May 2007</p> <p>April 2007</p>	<p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p>
02	Lack of resources:	LOW	HIGH	SMT/DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> core project team of 3 	May 2007	Closed

	Staffing Financial				<p>staff to be established using secondment opportunities where available/appropriate and/or creation of new posts eg Resident Involvement Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify membership of corporate project team • prioritise project at senior management level • project manager to be the nominated budget holder • review capacity within corporate project team • identify any additional resource requirements and engage consultants/temp staff early on in project 	<p>May 2007</p> <p>May 2007</p> <p>May 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p>	<p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p>
03	Lack of effective tenant engagement	MED	HIGH	DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review previous stock options appraisal process for areas to focus on for improvement • seek examples of best practice from elsewhere • involve TPG in identification of new ways of engaging tenants more effectively through development and implementation of the Tenant Compact 	<p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p>	<p>Open</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> involve staff more widely in consultation as part of their day to day work focus on more than just Decent Homes to find out what tenants really want from a housing service understand tenant profile from recent surveys and target consultation methods to hard to reach groups eg older people 	June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
04	Lack of effective Member engagement	MED	HIGH	SMT/DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> set up a Member/tenant Working Group to oversee the Housing Futures project seek responses to a Member involvement questionnaire organise member briefings/workshops individual meetings with Members to discuss issues upon request regular briefings/info provided through Weekly Bulletin proactively manage press coverage strong leadership from Leader of Council and Housing Futures PFH and SMT project to be given high 	June 2007	Closed
						July 2007	Closed
						Aug 2007	Open
						Aug 2007	Open
						Aug2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> corporate profile reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny arrange site visits to other LSVT and stock retention authorities/ RSLs 	<p>June 2007</p> <p>Aug 2007</p>	<p>Open</p> <p>Open</p>
05	Negative attitude from/and lack of engagement from staff	LOW	HIGH	DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> invest time with staff to gain their understanding of the issues and potential benefits of the Housing Futures project at service, professional and personal levels seek responses to a staff involvement questionnaire discuss with individuals their concerns and aspirations and take these into account and/or address these as far as possible provide advice and support to staff outside housing whose roles may be 'at risk' if preferred option is a housing transfer involve staff in the evaluation of the housing futures and possible housing transfer options eg existing, new, Group 	<p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p>	<p>Open</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p>

					<p>RSL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> appraisals, 121's and team briefings to include Housing Futures as a standing item in order to provide an opportunity to discuss the project set up staff forum/staff briefings monthly staff newsletter Chief Execs briefings to include regular updates/key messages for staff on this issue work with management of contracting organisations and their staff to ensure a consistent message to tenants eg City Services arrange site visits to other LSVT and stock retention authorities/ RSLs 	<p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007 June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>August 2007</p>	<p>Open</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open Open</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p>
06	Lack of other stakeholder engagement and/or support for proposal	LOW	MED	DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seek support of the LSP and potentially also the LAA Board for the Housing Futures Project through reporting on issues and reasons for the process and implications for the SCS and LAA provide regular updates 	<p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p>	<p>Open</p> <p>Open</p>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for the Board(s) produce bulletins/FAQs that can be disseminated to staff within partner organisations briefings for staff within partner organisations (particularly those in contact with tenants) consult with Parish Councils both through written material and attendance at meetings with PC representatives eg CALC hold a stakeholder forum to discuss issues with wider stakeholders including voluntary sector 	June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
07	<p>Lack of co-ordination with other work streams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Housing Strategy HMA Tenant Compact 	LOW	MED	DL/MK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCS currently being updated and will include housing priorities – should be agreed October/November 2007 Housing Strategy approved by Full Council in July 2007 work on the implementation of a new Tenant Compact is in progress and should be completed by the end of the year a sub-regional HMA is in 	June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Closed
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open

					progress with an anticipated completion date revised to September 2007 – this will provide up to date information on the local housing Market including likely current and future demand for the housing stock		
08	Lack of robust and up to date information on the investment needs of the housing stock	LOW	HIGH	BO'H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an up to date stock condition survey completed early 2007 based on appropriate guidance • financial modelling being carried out by independent suitably qualified consultant • CLG financial model used with assumptions informed independent advice and local circumstances 	Early 2007	Closed
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
09	Negative media coverage	MED	MED	SMT/DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular press briefings/statements • proactively manage media relationships • develop, monitor and review a Communications Strategy • ensure adequate 	April 2007	Open
						April 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Closed

					<p>resources/skills/capacity to respond to media coverage/issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key Members to have a high profile with local media and be accessible in order to help manage communications generally • collective ownership of project by Cabinet • corporate commitment to project including regular articles/features in South Cambs News • pre/post Housing Futures Working Group briefings for the Cambridge News 	<p>April 2007</p> <p>April 2007</p> <p>April 2007</p> <p>July 2007</p>	<p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p>
10	Lack of effective, open and transparent tenant participation arrangements	HIGH	MED	DL/PG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek nominations from TPG based on why they wish to be involved and how they will ensure they represent the interests of tenants in their area • letter to all tenants inviting them to get involved – including member of Working Group • conduct an election if more noms than places available • implement a new Tenant Compact alongside the 	<p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p>	<p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Open</p>

					<p>Housing Futures process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appoint an ITA and Resident Involvement Officer in order to reach more tenants • at the outset invite all tenants to identify their preferred means of being involved in the stock options appraisal and use feedback to develop the communications plan in consultation with the ITA • Develop, implement and review a resident empowerment strategy 	<p>June/July 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>July 2007</p>	<p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Open</p>
11	Lack of dedicated financial expertise and ICT issues	MED	MED	SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify system development needs to provide routine and bespoke reports/information within Open Accounts, Revenues (Rents) and Land Terrier • identify and make available necessary resources to deliver information requirements of the project • ensure that priority is afforded to the project by the Accountancy, ICT 	<p>May 2007</p> <p>May 2007</p> <p>May 2007</p>	<p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p> <p>Closed</p>

					and related teams eg Rents		
12	No suitable internal applicants for the posts required to support the project	LOW	MED	DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and encourage suitable internal candidates to apply for the opportunities created • emphasise the challenge and opportunity presented • advertise as career development opportunity • promote status of project 	May 2007	Closed
						May 2007	Closed
						May 2007	Closed
						May 2007	Open
13	Change in Government policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no further stock transfer programmes - a 'fourth option' agreed for direct investment in Council housing - new criteria for inclusion on stock transfer programmes 	LOW	HIGH	DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep abreast of latest developments in govt policy • liaise with GO-east on a regular basis • ensure options will deliver in current and likely policy/legislative framework • ensure that the preferred option will link to and contribute to delivery of key central govt agendas eg sustainable communities, LAAs • seek written clarification from the Housing Minister on proposals for the future role of local authorities in direct 	May 2007	Open
		MED	HIGH			April 2007	Open
		LOW	LOW			April 2007	Open
						April 2007	Open
						July 2007	Open

					provision of housing		
14	Organised opposition to a housing transfer option	MED	HIGH	DL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure project is well resourced from the outset with appropriate contingency budget to respond to this sort of issue review means of tenant engagement to ensure that the Council's balanced message is getting across respond in a timely and appropriate fashion to material produced by anti-transfer campaigners ie in press or sent to tenants learn from others who have experienced anti-transfer campaigns and their responses/experiences key Members to be accessible by tenants, staff and others with questions and queries about anti-campaign material use local intelligence to understand the tactics being used by anti-transfer campaigners 	May 2007	Closed
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open
						June 2007	Open

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regular and ad hoc briefings with staff to advise on agreed response to anti-transfer campaigners 	June 2007	Open
15	Loss of key staff and/or increased staff turnover	LOW	MED	HSMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote project as an opportunity improve staff morale through valuing work and achievements regular and effective communications with staff encourage staff to discuss issues both individually and as teams provide opportunities for as many people as possible to get involved with the project encourage ideas and contributions from all staff provide feedback on contributions and suggestions 	<p>June 2007</p> <p>April 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p> <p>June 2007</p>	<p>Closed</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p> <p>Open</p>