

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT **Appendix A**
Statement to Scrutiny Places Panel by the Housing Infrastructure
and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Mrs. Ackerley)
October 2011/12

Achievements

(Bullet points on key service aims completed within the portfolio, no more than 6)

◆ **Development Control Performance April 2011 – September 2011**

Indicator	Target	Actual Performance
NI 157 i- Major	60%	86.7%
NI 157 ii Minor	65%	80.1%
NI 157 iii Other	80%	87.9%
LPI 107 Satisfaction	80%	92.9%
LPI 108 appeals	<30%	18.2%

The Council met all targets.

It is particularly pleasing to see the high “Satisfaction” rating.

The Local Planning Authority has a robust appeal performance. Comparison to PINS website is favourable. Its most recently available figures for 2009-10 show 34% of all appeals being allowed compared to HDC 18.2% for this year.

◆ **Housing Supply**

The Core Strategy examination has tested the Councils approach to housing supply and by extending the planning period to 2028 has found the approach of working with the RSS level housing targets of 350dw pa generally sound.

The Council continues to be unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land. At 30 September 2011 the provisional figure is expected to be below 4 years. It should be noted that the Planning Committee approved an application at Scraftoff for 150 dwellings in September 2011 and sites at Crowfoot Way Broughton Astley and Lathkill St Market Harborough earlier in the year, (all of which still require legal agreements to be completed before permissions are issued and then can be counted in the supply figures) . It is hoped that positive consideration of larger planning applications during the period to March 2012 may also help resolve the five year supply shortfall but this will also depend on **timely completion of the necessary legal agreements which is currently proving to be a delaying factor in being able to demonstrate housing supply.**

95 units were recorded as completed in the District between April and September 2011, a figure well down on the half year target of 175. There have been no units transferred as affordable to registered housing providers during the period.

The numbers of brownfield completions was 33 out of 95 – (30%) – this compares to an annual figure of 68% last year

Six units have been occupied and six other completed and await occupants at the MH/3 Farndon Road, Market Harborough. Building work continues on phase one of the site by Barrett Homes at a moderate rate. The land owners CJC, are responsible for delivery of planning obligations including affordable homes have not been able to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement to build and transfer the affordable housing units on phase one (70) and are discussing alternative options with the Council.

The GG/2 site at Stretton Road, Great Glen has commenced site works.

◆ **LDF Core Strategy**

Following approval by Council in February, the LDF Core Strategy was submitted to PINS for examination and a hearing arranged for July 2011.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT Appendix A
Statement to Scrutiny Places Panel by the Housing Infrastructure
and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Mrs. Ackerley)
October 2011/12

In summing up on the final afternoon of the Hearing, the Inspector Kevin Ward indicated that he considers the document

- sound in relation to its justification
- subject to changes being made to introduce additional clarity and flexibility, it can be made sound in relation to effectiveness
- subject to other changes, sound in relationship with national planning policy.

The Inspector remarked that the changes he considers necessary do not fundamentally change the nature of the Strategy itself. The Council has issued a schedule of specific wording changes for wider public consultation for six weeks from 22 August to 30 September. This is only to obtain comments on the Suggested Changes, not to take comments on the original submitted Plan.

Mr Ward stated that he expects to submit a Draft Report (for fact checking) to the Council during **w/b 31 October**. I expect the final report for publication will follow during November.

During July a new draft National Planning Policy Framework was published and a report with comments was approved by Executive in September

◆ **New Homes Bonus**

In April 2011 the Council received confirmation from government of the New Homes Bonus (NHB) to be awarded during 2011/12 for its increase in housing stock through new home completions and through its provision of affordable housing. The amount of the NHB reflected a particularly successful period of new homes completions within Harborough District (October 2009 to October 2010) and was therefore well received. The scheme allows for the NHB awarded in April will be paid over a 6 year period with future, additional, NHB announcements based on levels of new home completions etc in subsequent years to be announced each February/March for the next 5 years.

◆ **Harborough Home Search and Choice Based Letting**

A Choice-based letting scheme across Leicestershire continues to be developed. 6 out of the 7 participating Local Housing Authorities are now delivering CBL with Charnwood joining in a number of weeks

Re-registration of home seekers onto the new housing register has been completed – this has had the effect of reducing the size of the register.

Review of the temporary accommodation service for the homeless took place earlier in the year with a report to Executive. The service which is provided in partnership with Seven Locks is working well and there is no need to obtain additional accommodation. There is a need however to explore new solutions to accommodate single people and avoid expensive hotel and bed and breakfast costs. We are seeking to work with other authorities in South Leicestershire to obtain a solution.

◆ **Dealing with High Levels of Housing advice and homelessness prevention**

Housing option advice and homelessness prevention dealt with approximately 6,191 visitors in the last financial year with 800 client interviews per year

We advertised approximately 653 properties for rent and shared ownership last financial year. Figures for the first half of 2011/12 are being sought.

In respect of local performance targets;

- % of cases where positive action was taken to prevent or relieve homelessness at the end of Quarter 1 of 2011/12 was 13%. This is slightly below the target (15%) - i.e., of 179 households presenting, 23 were resolved through casework.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT Appendix A
Statement to Scrutiny Places Panel by the Housing Infrastructure
and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Mrs. Ackerley)
October 2011/12

Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy

Private sector policy has been developed and published. A full range of housing assistance is now available and has introduced an element of repayment of any grant/loan monies to ensure that this type of assistance is sustainable. As anticipated the take up of these schemes has been slow however the Home Improvement Agency is working closely with 3 households and it is expected that applications for Property Appreciation Loans for these properties will be submitted shortly. Grant officers are currently working with staff at the Home Improvement Agency with a view to re-launching the scheme to encourage a greater take up of the assistance that is available to enable vulnerable households to carryout essential repairs.

There was no additional decent homes funding for 2011-12 however there was a carryover of commitment from the previous years budget. The half year position with regards to this assistance is 20 properties improved and work currently underway on a further 4 homes to bring them up to the decent homes standard.

Landlord's accreditation service

The Accreditation scheme was launched in 2010 and information is available on the Council's website advising landlords how to apply for the scheme. To date 4 landlords have been accredited covering 22 properties across the district and 5 further landlords are in the process of achieving this status. The scheme ensures that the accommodation provided is a high standard and landlords can only access the Landlord Property Improvement Grants and the Empty Property Grants if they are members of the scheme. One accredited landlord has obtained a Landlord Property Improvement Grant for two of his/her properties.

Memorandum of Understanding with Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service.

Work has been carried out with Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service to develop a memorandum of understanding setting out which authority takes the lead when dealing with houses in multiple occupation and how information can be shared between all parties to ensure effective enforcement in this high risk area. The MOU is currently being signed by each local authority.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT **Appendix A**
Statement to Scrutiny Places Panel by the Housing Infrastructure
and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Mrs. Ackerley)
October 2011/12

Current work in progress.

(Bullet points on the key areas of activity within the portfolio, no more than 6)

Development Control

Managing Excellence In Planning Services (MEPS). Partnership project across 200+ English LPA's to look at time spent on various stages of planning work to benchmark and identify further efficiencies was undertaken during Summer 2011. The outcomes are expected Autumn 2011 and should form a basis for locally set planning application fees if government confirms its December 2010 preferred option of decentralisation.

Following implementation from April 2011 a interim report on charging for planning advice is to be considered by 7th November Executive.

Planning Appeals and Major Applications – Bill Crane Way, Lutterworth, Pulford Drive, south A47 housing schemes for Autumn 2011 decision. Further major residential proposals anticipated edge of Leicester, Market Harborough and Lutterworth. An application proposing major industrial development at BPG was received October 2011. An appeal is pending for residential development of 100 houses of Station Lane, Scraptoft. Other appeals are possible from housing sites edge of Leicester and wind turbine proposal at Ingarsby.

Planning Performance Agreement entered into for the processing of Airfield Farm planning application for mixed and residential use (received January 2011). . .

LDF

Awaiting receipt of the Inspectors Report into the Core Strategy and anticipating adoption of the document in December.

Commissioning new landscape assessment for Lutterworth and Broughton Astley.

Completing paper on the approach to site allocations for wider consultation

Discussing the approach to Neighbourhood Plans with Parish Councils

Home Improvement Agency

The Executive agreed on 14th March 2011 to a further year contract with Mears Ltd to provide the Home Improvement Agency service. During this year a sustainable solution will be developed to ensure that the disabled facility grants can continue to be delivered through the Agency.

Housing Need

Managing the advertising and matching of available properties with bids made by homeseekers.

Liaising with ward councillors in the Kibworth area and other parties concerning perceived social cohesion issues emerging from the development of affordable housing in Kibworth.

Dealing on a case by case basis with families and individuals who present as homeless and working to develop future housing options with them.

Monitoring Seven Locks transfer promises and the outstanding issue of the transfer of Brooklands Gardens into the ownership of a Housing Provider. Reviewing the potential cost and funding sources for this to occur.

Community Infrastructure

Start of the project to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy

Developing information on the total infrastructure bill and the need for CIL.

Working with other authorities to commission joint assessments of viability and a potential CIL charge

Participate in a Countywide Group to improve the consistency and response time for Disabled Facilities Grant applications

1. The project has been divided into three areas;
 - Strategic Needs Assessment; Countywide Policy; VFM and Performance Management

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT Appendix A
Statement to Scrutiny Places Panel by the Housing Infrastructure
and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Mrs. Ackerley)
October 2011/12

- Service Delivery Options and Quick Wins

The Final Stakeholder report for this project was published in April 2011 and identified several key outcomes –

Service standards and prioritisation – service standards were developed for the installation of level access showers, lifts and ramps. The service standards are aspirational and will be challenging for all agencies involved in the process. The service standards were endorsed by the Chief Executives of the district councils and representatives of the County Council and a reporting mechanism has been developed through the CIEH Housing Best Practice Group and the benchmarking data will be fed back to the Chief Executives via this group.

Whilst the service standards only take effect for referrals received after 1st April 2011, the general length of time for a grant to be completed has reduced from approximately 51 weeks in 2010-11 to an average of 42 weeks for 2011-12 to date.

Pilot Hub and Spoke Service Model – a service model was been developed to test out whether different ways of working within adult social services and with district councils could improve end-end time for the delivery of non-complex adaptations. Two district councils are taking part in this pilot project but there is currently insufficient data available to draw any conclusions and the project is still on-going.

Procurement - The County Council has established a procurement framework for stair-lifts and through floor lifts. The framework includes response times and these have been incorporated into the service standards. A benchmarking exercise was carried out with local builders to identify average costs of work across the county. Further work is required to take this work forward.

The Home Improvement Agency

In late 2010 Anchor Staying Put Agency transferred to Mears Home Improvement Ltd. The terms and conditions of the Agency did not change and the Agency continued to offer the same services to its customers. Mears has since won a Countywide contract to provide a Handyperson Scheme to carry out small scale repairs and improvements for vulnerable households.

Following the business planning process in 2010-11 the core funding from the Council to the Agency was removed and negotiations have been undertaken with the Agency as to how the service can be continued with this reduced funding. In addition in the summer of 2011 the County Council announced that it was to undertake a procurement process with a view providing a Countywide Home Improvement Agency. A task group has been set up to take this forward and to ensure the needs of the district council's are included in the tender process. It is anticipated that the Countywide Agency will come into effect from September 2012.

Develop an approach to dealing with empty properties to maximise the return from the New Homes Bonus funding.

Information from Council tax has been requested to identify the owners of the empty properties and this will provide access to the target group. Currently developing the approach to be taken in dealing with owners of property around providing information and encouragement to bring the empty property back into use and providing advice on the enforcement powers which are available to the Council.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT **Appendix A**
Statement to Scrutiny Places Panel by the Housing Infrastructure
and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Mrs. Ackerley)
October 2011/12

Future plans.

(Bullet points on the key service aims of the portfolio over the next 3-6 months, no more than 6)

- On completion of the MEPS project by Development Control it is anticipated a robust evidence base will be established to respond if necessary to decentralisation of planning application fees.
- Review and consider the scope of charging for planning advice after April 2012.
- Progress on LDF Allocations Development Plan Document
- Liaison with Parishes etc on Neighbourhood Plans
- Work on introducing Community Infrastructure Levy
- Council and Community engagement on Localism measures introduced through the Act.
- Working to develop the Leicestershire Choice Based Letting service

Areas of concern

Impact of Localism Bill and resourcing of obligations for planning

Meeting 5 year supply of deliverable housing coupled with developer pressures to release further land whilst we are seeking to manage delivery through the LDF process.

Increasing demand on homelessness service through impact of emergency budget measures including capping of housing benefits.

The slowing down in the flow of completed dwellings. A pragmatic approach to review of planning obligations (including affordable units) may aid build rates and maintain developer margins - but will harm delivery of community infrastructure and affordable housing

Completion of the necessary legal agreements for larger planning applications is currently proving to be a delaying factor in being able to demonstrate housing supply. It is many months after planning committee has approved applications, that legal agreements are signed and permissions issued.

Key Performance Indicators

(report on exceptions, i.e. over or under performing BV indicators)

Better than target

Worse than target

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT **Appendix A**
Statement to Scrutiny Places Panel by the Housing Infrastructure
and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Mrs. Ackerley)
October 2011/12

	<p>NI 157 – Time taken to determine major planning applications. LPI 107 – Customer Satisfaction. LP1 108 Appeals (see figures above under “Achievements”) NI 157 – Time taken to determine minor planning applications (see figures above under “Achievements”).</p> <p>LPI 605 Homes made decent for vulnerable groups</p>		<p>NI 155. Number of affordable homes delivered (gross).</p> <p>NI154 - Net additional homes provided.</p>
--	--	--	--

Corrective Actions

(Report on corrective actions being taken to address under performing indicators

NI 155 – slow down in development activity and lack of grant funding for schemes is resulting in lack of a development pipeline for affordable units. Officers are exploring ways to incentivise affordable housing development by accepting changes to the mix of affordable tenures which will be more attractive to providers and enable transfers to occur. It is more a problem with availability of finance than with planning or housing policy or practice.

NI154 Positive approach to development control decisions will aid the housing supply but the flow of completed dwellings available is the product of market decisions. Pragmatic approach to review of planning obligations (including affordable units) may aid build rates but will harm delivery of NI 155

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT Appendix A
Statement to Scrutiny Places Panel by the Housing Infrastructure
and Planning Portfolio Holder (Cllr. Mrs. Ackerley)
October 2011/12

Topical issues

(Key issues or areas of interest not reported elsewhere)

Localism Bill. A progress and information brief on this important area of new government thinking was published for Members interest in May 2011. Further work will be required to prepare the Council for the demands and opportunities that will be presented as the Bill becomes Law, expected some time in the Autumn.