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To: Councillor Cooney, Convener; Jean Morrison MBE, Vice-Convener, and Councillors Delaney, Dickson, Jackie Dunbar, Lesley Dunbar, Finlayson, Lawrence, McCaig, Milne, Nathan Morrison, Noble, Samarai, Jennifer Stewart and Thomson.

Town House,
ABERDEEN 3 March 2014

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The Members of the **HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in Council Chamber - Town House on **TUESDAY, 11 MARCH 2014 at 2.00 pm.**

JANE G. MACEACHRAN
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

B U S I N E S S

REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATION

- 1.1 None received at this time

MINUTE, COMMITTEE BUSINESS AND ANNUAL REPORTS LIST

- 2.1 Minute of Previous Meeting of 14 January 2014 (Pages 1 - 14)
- 2.2 Committee Business Statement (Pages 15 - 20)
- 2.3 Annual Reports List (Pages 21 - 22)

REPORTS FROM THE HAZLEHEAD GROVE NURSERY WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 Vision Statement for the Hazlehead Grove Nursery Working Group - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 23 - 24)

3.2 Community Engagement Plan - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 25 - 30)

The Committee are asked to approve the Community Engagement Plan for the Hazlehead Grove Nursery Project.

3.3 Proposals for Site Division - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 31 - 34)

The Committee are asked to approve the proposals for dividing the current site at Hazlehead Grove Nursery. Please note that a map showing the areas will be available at the meeting.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE ISSUES

4.1 Housing and Environment Business Plan Performance and Actions - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 35 - 60)

FINANCE

5.1 2013-14 Housing Capital Programme - Joint Report by the Director of Housing and Environment and the Head of Finance (Pages 61 - 70)

5.2 2013-14 Revenue Budget Monitoring - Joint Report by the Director of Housing and Environment and the Head of Finance (Pages 71 - 80)

5.3 Capital Monitoring - Housing and Environment Projects - Report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure (Pages 81 - 84)

HOUSING

6.1 Affordable Housing - Grant Assistance - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 85 - 90)

6.2 Rent Arrears Update - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 91 - 106)

6.3 Proposed HMO Licence Fees for 2014/15 - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 107 - 110)

6.4 Review of Repair Priorities - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 111 - 124)

6.5 Replacement of Handheld Devices (Trades Operatives) - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 125 - 128)

ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 Environmental Health Food Service Plan 2014-15 - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 129 - 160)
- 7.2 Occupational Health and Safety Intervention Plan 2014-15 - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 161 - 180)
- 7.3 Revision of the Aberdeen City Waste Strategy - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 181 - 220)
- 7.4 Recycling Service Changes and Implications for Mixed Messaging - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 221 - 224)
- 7.5 Installation of Food Waste and Recycling Facilities on Private Land - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 225 - 230)
- 7.6 City Play Areas - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 231 - 238)
- 7.7 Aberdeen in Bloom 2014 - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment (Pages 239 - 244)

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Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Karen Riddoch, tel. 522723 or email kariddoch@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 14 January 2014. Minute of meeting of the HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE. Present: Councillor Cooney, Convener; Councillor Jean Morrison MBE, Vice Convener; and Councillors Delaney, Dickson, Jackie Dunbar, Lesley Dunbar, Finlayson, Forsyth (as substitute for Councillor Nathan Morrison until article 3 of this minute) McCaig, Milne, Nathan Morrison (from article 3 of this minute), Samarai, Jennifer Stewart, Townson (as substitute for Councillor Noble), Thomson and Young (as substitute for Councillor Lawrence).

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

1. The Convener proposed that the Committee consider the reports identified on the agenda as being for determination in private, with the press and public excluded.

The Committee resolved:-

that in terms of Section 50 (A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting for items 9.1 (Request for Approval of Expenditure for Numerous Key Supplies, Services and Works for Regeneration and Housing Investment Programme (Building Services) (article 20 refers), 9.2 (Standing Orders Exemption – Digital Radio System, Waste and Recycling Services) (article 21 refers), item 9.3 (Environment Service – Social Enterprise Partnership Working 2014) (article 22 refers) and item 9.4 (Installation of Combined Heat and Power and Proposals for Major Repairs to Multi Storeys in the Cornhill Area) (article 23 refers) on the agenda so as to avoid disclosure of information of the class described in the following paragraphs of Schedule 7 A to the Act:- articles 20 and 22 (paragraph 8), article 23 (paragraph 6) and article 24 (paragraphs 6 and 8).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 29 OCTOBER 2013

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 29 October 2013.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS STATEMENT

3. The Committee had before it a statement of business prepared by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to remove item 8 (Haudagain Upgrade – A Way Forward- Middlefield);
- (ii) subject to the decisions taken on the following items on the agenda, to remove items 6 (Proposed Improvements in Service and Changes in the Charging Regime for Fish Health Export Certificates issued by the Environmental Health

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- Service) (article 18 refers), 11 (HMO and Landlord Registration (within Performance Report) (article 16 refers), 16 (Rent Management (within Performance Report) (article 12 refers) and 17 (Void Management (within Performance Report) (article 14 refers); and
- (iii) to otherwise note the business statement.

ANNUAL REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

4. The Committee had before it a list of annual reports prepared by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the list of annual reports.

MOTIONS LIST

5. The Committee had before it a list of motions prepared by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to remove item 1 (Motion by Councillors MacGregor and Samarai – Working Proposals for a Community Garden in Bucksburn) and item 2 (Urgent Motion by Councillor Finlayson – Recycling Collection Facility for Community Centres and all other Council Premises not currently in receipt of the service) ; and
- (ii) in relation to item 2 (Urgent Motion by Councillor Finlayson – Recycling Collection Facility for Community Centres and all other Council Premises not currently in receipt of the service), officers were requested to report to the appropriate Committee on how the Service was operating.

REVIEW OF PARKING CHARGES - REMIT FROM ENTERPRISE, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

6. The Committee had before it by way of referral, the minute extract and a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which had been considered by the Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee at its meeting of 12 November 2013.

The report responded to the Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee's request for (1) a reappraisal of the parking charges in the city taking into consideration our Smarter City objectives; (2) a review of parking charges and entitlement set by other council services; and (3) a report on the possibility of establishing a city wide emissions-based permit system on the proviso that such a proposal would be revenue neutral.

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The Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee agreed (i) to refer the report to the Housing and Environment Committee with a recommendation that proposed charges for private off street parking spaces operated by this Council is adopted to support the aims of the Regional Transport Strategy and objectives for a Smarter City.

The Housing and Environment Committee discussed the issue of car parking and agreed that there should be one body responsible for all parking across the City.

The Committee resolved:-

to recommend to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Service that they manage all parking across the City and if agreed, to request that a report be submitted to this Committee in twelve months providing an update on how the service was operating.

INTERNAL WASTE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - REMIT FROM ENTERPRISE, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

7. Reference was made to article 21 of the minute of meeting of the Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 12 November 2013 at which time members approved the Internal Waste Minimisation Plan and referred this Plan to all Service Committees for endorsement. The Committee had before it, the report as presented to the Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee and the Internal Waste Minimisation Plan, as appended to the report.

The Committee resolved:-

to endorse the Internal Waste Minimisation Plan.

HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT BUSINESS PLAN PERFORMANCE AND ACTIONS

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which presented the key performance measures and progress of key improvement work within the Housing and Environment Directorate.

In relation to the content of the performance information, Councillor Finlayson requested that a glossary of acronyms be provided for future reports and to ensure that a ? be added for the appropriate traffic icons in the report.

In relation to Rent Arrears, Councillor Delaney asked if the Service had identified those tenants with technical arrears against actual arrears, whereupon the Head of Service advised that this was currently on going.

In relation to Homelessness Temporary Accommodation, Councillor Delaney asked how the Service were managing under occupancy charges for people placed in larger

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properties than their needs, whereupon the Head of Service advised that the service were currently undertaking a review of all properties currently used for homeless accommodation to identify properties that could be released as general housing stock and that there was a shortage of one bedroom properties within the City.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the request from Councillor Finlayson to have a glossary of acronyms for future reports and to ensure that a ? was included in the appropriate traffic light icons in the report;
- (ii) in relation to a question from Councillor Delaney relating to Technical Rent Arrears, the Committee noted that the Service were currently identifying those in this category and looking at how to record these separately;
- (iii) in relation to a question from Councillor Delaney relating to the Housing Options Service, the Committee noted that the Service would be operational from the start of the financial year;
- (iv) in relation to a question from Councillor Delaney relating to Under Occupancy Charges and how the Service were managing this for people placed in larger properties than their needs, the Committee noted that the service were currently undertaking a review of all properties currently used for homeless accommodation to identify properties that could be released as general housing stock and that there was a shortage of one bedroom properties within the City; and
- (v) to otherwise note the content of the report.

2013-14 HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME

9. With reference to article 7 of the minute of its meeting of 29 October 2013, the Committee had before it a joint report by the Director of Housing and Environment and the Head of Finance which provided a status report for the 2013/14 Housing Capital Programme as at 31 October 2013 and summarised both income and expenditure in this regard.

The report recommended:

that the Committee -

- (a) note the financial information contained within the report;
- (b) instruct the Head of Finance to continue to update the Committee in consultation with the Director for Housing and Environment on the actual outturn position for 2013/14 following completion of the year end statutory accounts; and
- (c) approve the virements outlined in appendix 2.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

2013-14 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

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10. With reference to article 8 of the minute of its meeting of 29 October 2013, the Committee had before it a joint report by the Director of Housing and Environment and the Head of Finance which advised on the current year revenue budget performance to date for the services which relate to this Committee and any areas of risk and management action.

The report recommended:

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the report and the information on management action and risks contained therein; and
- (b) instruct that officers report the year end position to the appropriate Committee.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations as contained in the report.

CAPITAL MONITORING - HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS

11. With reference to article 9 of the minute of its meeting of 29 October 2013, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which advised on the capital spend to date for the Housing and Environment projects included in the Non-Housing Capital Programme.

The report recommended:

that the Committee note the current position.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

RENT ARREARS - BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CURRENT ACTIONS

12. With reference to article 6 of the minute of its meeting on 29 October 2013, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which provided (1) an update on the current level of rent arrears and actions being taken to overcome difficulties with rent management; (2) background information on the legislative changes that would impact on the management of rent arrears which included welfare reform; and (3) details of the work being undertaken by officers to minimise the level of overall debt to ensure tenants continued to sustain their tenancy.

The Convener sought agreement from the Committee that a Special Edition of the tenant's newsletter, Newsbite, be issued in March to outline Rent Arrears and the importance for early engagement with staff.

Councillor Delaney sought additional information relating to the net value of current tenants arrears versus former tenant arrears whereupon the Head of Service advised that this information would be provided.

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Councillor Jackie Dunbar sought information on the success of the letters issued prior to the Christmas Break regarding small payments whereupon the Head of Service advised that the information would be provided.

Councillor Young requested that officers explain how the service were going to implement targets for the management of rent arrears in particular those tenants with 13 weeks or more of rent arrears.

The report recommended:

that the Committee –

- (a) note the report;
- (b) note the changes in legislation that have taken place regarding legal action for recovery of properties;
- (c) note the changes and evolving picture around welfare reform;
- (d) agree to continue to support the principle of helping tenants to sustain their tenancies;
- (e) acknowledge the need however to ensure that tenants pay their due rent;
- (f) agree the action plan emerging to control rent arrears with a focus on earlier intervention and those tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent;
- (g) note that the Current SPI target for Rent Arrears is 10% of the net amount due
- (h) note the current and future actions being taken to address and minimise rent arrears;
- (i) continue to receive reports on rent management at each cycle as part of the performance report; and
- (j) receive a further report on progress with this issue in 6 months.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the report;
- (ii) to note the changes in legislation that have taken place regarding legal action for recovery of properties;
- (iii) to note the changes and evolving picture around welfare reform;
- (iv) to agree to continue to support the principle of helping tenants to sustain their tenancies;
- (v) to acknowledge the need to ensure that tenants pay their due rent;
- (vi) to agree the action plan emerging to control rent arrears with a focus on earlier intervention and those tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent;
- (vii) to note that the current SPI target for rent arrears is 10% of the net amount due;
- (viii) to note the current and future actions being taken to address and minimise rent arrears;
- (ix) to continue to receive reports on rent management at each cycle as part of the performance report;
- (x) to receive a further report on progress with this issue in 6 months;
- (xi) to approve the issue of a Special Edition of Newsbite to tenants in March to outline Rent Arrears and the importance of early engagement;
- (xii) to request officers to implement an ongoing review of the arrears policy;

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- (xiii) to request officers to submit a report outlining how the service were going to implement targets for the management of rent arrears in particular those tenants with 13 weeks or more of rent arrears;
- (xiv) in response to a request from Councillor Delaney to receive the net value of current tenants arrears versus former tenant arrears, to note that the Head of Housing and Community Safety would provide a response directly to him;
- (xv) in response to a question from Councillor Jackie Dunbar relating to the success of the letters issued prior to the Christmas Break regarding small payments, to note that the Head of Housing and Community Safety would provide a response directly to her;
- (xvi) to request officers to include information in future reports relating to tenants who claim partial housing benefit and how they were managing to pay the remaining rent; and
- (xvii) to commend the officer for the comprehensive report.

Declaration of Interest

Councillor Delaney declared an interest in the subject matter of the following article by virtue of his position as Chairperson of Grampian Housing Association and chose to withdraw from the meeting during this item of business.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING – GRANT ASSISTANCE

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which sought agreement to provide grant assistance to Grampian Housing Association to help deliver a housing development at Froghall Terrace.

The report recommended:

that the Committee –

- (a) agree a grant of up to £121,360 to enable the provision of 20 social rent units; and
- (b) agree that the grant be paid from developer contributions received from Section 75 obligations.

The Committee resolved:-

To approve the recommendations contained in the report.

VOIDS – REVIEW OF PROCESSES

14. With reference to article 6, resolution (ii) of the minute of its meeting on 29 October 2013, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and

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14 January 2014

Environment which advised on the revised practices for the management of void properties.

The report recommended:

that the Committee note the content of the report and the changes to the void processes.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

ETHNIC MINORITY HOUSING OUTREACH WORKER FUNDING 2014-17

15. With reference to article 33 of the minute of its meeting of 26 October 2010, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which provided an update on the project and advised that the Council had been invited to re-join the project. The report contained detailed appendices on the project, the role of the Ethnic Minority Outreach Worker including the budget required for the next three years.

The report recommended:

that the Committee agree a HRA contribution of £12,397 towards the funding of this project/post for 2014/15, £12,812 for 2015/16 and £13,117 for 2016/17.

The Convener moved, seconded by the Vice Convener:-

“to approve the recommendation as contained in the report”

Councillor Delaney moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Jennifer Stewart:-

“to request officers to provide a report to the next meeting of the Committee providing an outline of the costs and possibility of employing an Ethnic Minority Outreach Officer on a part time basis to work solely for Aberdeen City Council”

On a division there voted:- for the motion: (13) – the Convener, the Vice Convener and Councillors Dickson, Jackie Dunbar, Lesley Dunbar, Finlayson, McCaig, Milne, Nathan Morrison, Samarai, Thomson, Townson and Young. For the amendment: (2) - Councillors Delaney and Jennifer Stewart.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the successful motion.

ENFORCEMENT OF LANDLORD REGISTRATION AND HMO LICENSING

16. With reference to article 6, resolution (ii), of the minute of its meeting of 27 August 2013, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which provided information relating to the number of unregistered landlords and unlicensed HMOs which had been referred to the Procurator Fiscal

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during the previous 12 months and provided an overview of enforcement of both activities.

The report recommended:

that the Committee note the content of the report.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

COUNTRYSIDE RANGER SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2013

17. The Committee had before it an annual report by the Director of Housing and Environment which advised on the achievements of the Aberdeen City Council Countryside Ranger Service during 2013.

The report recommended:

that the Committee -

- (a) note and approve the report;
- (b) recognise the achievement of the Countryside Ranger Service;
- (c) instruct officers to continue the development of the service for 2014/15; and
- (d) request a Countryside Ranger Service Annual Report to the January 2015 Housing and Environment Committee.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN SERVICE AND CHANGES IN THE CHARGING REGIME FOR FISH HEALTH EXPORT CERTIFICATES ISSUED BY THE ENVIRONMENT HEALTH SERVICE

18. With reference to article 20 of the minute of its meeting of 12 March 2013, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which presented the revised charges and extension to the availability of the fish export certificate service provided by the Environmental Health Service.

The report recommended:

that the Committee approve the improvements in service provision and the revised charging regime as detailed in appendix 1 following consultation with businesses utilising the service with effect from 1 April 2014 and that the charges be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

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PROVISION OF PADDLE BOAT, CANOE & BIKE HIRE FOR DUTHIE PARK

19. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which advised on the requirement for paddle boat hire to be available at Duthie Park and sought authority to tender for the provision of paddle boat, canoe and bike hire at Duthie Park for a period of up to five years.

The report recommended:

that the Committee approve the request to undertake a tender exercise for the provision of paddle boat, canoe and bike hire at Duthie Park in accordance with SO1(3) of the Council's Standing Orders relating to Contracts and Procurement (as approved 30 June, 2010).

The Convener and Councillor Jennifer Stewart raised concerns over the cost for a family to hire such equipment and requested that the period of hire be reduced and that no charge was implemented for under 5's.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) in relation to a request from the Convener to introduce shorter hire periods and a request from Councillor Stewart to have no charge in place for under 5's, the Committee noted that the company with the franchise controlled the costs and hire periods with some influence from the Council but these two areas would be raised with the company; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendation contained in the report.

In accordance with the decision recorded under article 1 of this minute, the following items of business were considered with the press and public excluded.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE FOR NUMEROUS KEY SUPPLIES, SERVICES AND WORKS FOR REGENERATION AND HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (BUILDING SERVICES)

20. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which advised that the service intended to go to tender for the provision of supplies, services and works for the Regeneration and Housing Investment Programme and sought approval in this regard.

The report recommended:

that the Committee -

- (a) approve the estimated expenditure over a 4 year period from April 2014 for key supplies, services and works for Regeneration and Housing Investment and the carrying out of appropriate tendering exercises to this end in accordance with SO1(3) of the Council's Standing Orders relating to Contracts and Procurement; and

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- (b) delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Environment, in conjunction with the Head of Procurement, to conclude framework agreements and other contracts pursuant to the above tendering exercises and to award contracts based on such framework agreements.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

STANDING ORDERS EXEMPTION – DIGITAL RADIO SYSTEM, WASTE & RECYCLING SERVICES

21. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which informed of the decision to exempt a hire agreement from the requirement of the Council's Standing Orders to go out to tender. The hire agreement was for the supply of a digital radio system to replace the analogue system currently being used by the Council's Waste and Recycling Collection Service.

The report recommended:

that the Committee note the decision of the Chief Executive, the Head of Finance, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Procurement to exempt a contract for hire of a digital radio system from relevant requirements of the Council's Standing Orders relating to Contracts and Procurement including;

- those requiring tendering or competitive quotes procedures to be undertaken, such as SO 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- SO 1(3) – “No tender shall be invited or contract entered into unless the total estimated expenditure has been previously approved by the Council. This requires specific Committee approval or the use of appropriate delegated powers. The allocation of a budget as part of the Council's budget setting process is insufficient” and
- SO 11, 13 and 26 – “Corrupt or Illegal Practices”, “Insurances” and “Freedom of Information” clauses to be included in contracts.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

ENVIRONMENT SERVICES - SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WORKING 2014

22. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which requested under Standing Order 1(6)(b) for an exemption from the Council's Standing Orders on contracts and procurement to allow for partnership working between Environment Services and social enterprise groups to continue while the Procurement Team finalise a formal framework/procurement process.

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The report recommended:

that the Committee -

- (a) approve further partnership working between Environmental Services and social enterprise groups throughout 2014; and
- (b) agree to the submission of a business case for the request under Standing Order 1(6)(b) for an exemption from the Council's Standing Orders on contracts and procurement.

The Committee resolved:-

To approve the recommendations contained in the report.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

In terms of Section 5.18(d)(i) of the Councillor Code of Conduct, Councillors Milne and Jean Morrison MBE declared interests in the subject matter of the following article by virtue of their appointments as Council representatives on the Board of Aberdeen Heat and Power. As allowed for in the Code, neither Councillor deemed it necessary to withdraw from the meeting.

INSTALLATION OF COMBINED HEAT AND POWER AND PROPOSALS FOR MAJOR REPAIRS TO MULTI STOREYS IN THE CORNHILL AREA

23. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Housing and Environment which sought approval for the project to proceed in the Cornhill area of the City.

The report recommended:

that the Committee -

- (a) instruct the Director of Housing and Environment to accept the most economically advantageous tender for the over-cladding and window replacement works that has been identified through an Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement process;
- (b) approve the revised expenditure and funding profile in relation to the over-cladding and window replacement works;
- (c) approve limiting the cost to the private owners within the housing blocks who subscribe to complete over-cladding and window replacement works;
- (d) approve the cancellation of the order for the provision of district heating to Cornhill Court, on the understanding that this order will be re-instated if the objection is removed before the completion of the current installation contract;
- (e) approve the recommendation that the installation of the communal district heating pipes to Cairncry, Rosehill and Stockethill Courts is allowed to continue;
- (f) instruct the Director of Housing and Environment to make representations to Scottish Ministers that they exercise their powers under the Tenement (Scotland)

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- Act 2004 to prescribe, by Regulation, that an owner is entitled to install district heating pipes; and
- (g) instruct officers to make further best efforts to speak to each of the private owners, who have not consented to the over-cladding works, as to their concerns and, where practical, again seek their consent to the works, through negotiation.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to instruct the Director of Housing and Environment to accept the most economically advantageous tender for the over-cladding and window replacement works that has been identified through an Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement process;
- (ii) to approve the revised expenditure and funding profile in relation to the over-cladding and window replacement works;
- (iii) to approve limiting the cost to the private owners within the housing blocks who subscribe to complete over-cladding and window replacement works;
- (iv) to approve the cancellation of the order for the provision of district heating to Cornhill Court, on the understanding that this order will be re-instated if the objection is removed before the completion of the current installation contract;
- (v) to approve the recommendation that the installation of the communal district heating pipes to Cairncry, Rosehill and Stockethill Courts is allowed to continue;
- (vi) to instruct the Director of Housing and Environment to make representations to Scottish Ministers that they exercise their powers under the Tenement (Scotland) Act 2004 to prescribe, by Regulation, that an owner is entitled to install district heating pipes;
- (vii) to instruct officers to make further best efforts to speak to each of the private owners, who have not consented to the over-cladding works, as to their concerns and, where practical, again seek their consent to the works, through negotiation;
- (viii) to request officers to write to Scottish Ministers seeking legislation to be taken forward to assist in these cases for the future; and
- (viii) to request officers to submit a report to this Committee providing the outcome of discussions with Ministers and the outcome of sharing the risk with potential contractors.

- NEIL COONEY, CONVENER.

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**HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

11 March 2014

Please note that this statement contains a note of every report which has been instructed for submission to this Committee. All other actions which have been instructed by the Committee are not included, as they are deemed to be operational matters after the point of committee decision.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>	<u>Report Expected (if known)</u>
1.	Housing and Environment Committee 26 Aug 09 article 16	<u>Modernising Public Space CCTV</u> The Committee resolved:- to instruct officers to submit a further all encompassing report, detailing the merits and costs of the existing and proposed new CCTV system, in particular the impact CCTV has had on assisting convictions; and investigating other systems and new technologies that could be adopted, to a future meeting of the Committee.	We have assigned a project manager to take forward the in-house option. An initial meeting has been had with the Police and we await further information from them.	Director of Housing and Environment	11 Mar 14	20 May
	Housing and Environment Committee 29 Oct 13 Article 17	<u>The Committee resolved:-</u> (a) to note the progress made in terms of the in-house delivery model; and (c) to approve the further development of the in-house model by producing a detailed business case that outlines long term funding and staffing requirements.				
2.	Housing and Environment Committee 06 Aug 09 article 19	<u>Duthie Park Restoration – Heritage Lottery Funding Bid</u> The Committee resolved:- to instruct the Director of Housing and Environment to provide further	Update to be provided at next committee	Head of Environment Services	20 May 14	20 May 14

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>	<u>Report Expected (if known)</u>
		progress reports including details on the outcome of the tendering process in the Housing and Environment information bulletin.				
3.	Housing and Environment Committee 13 Sept 11 article 2	<u>Major Repairs to Multi Storey Blocks</u> The Committee resolved:- (vi) to instruct that a risk register be presented to Committee at each meeting until the project is delivered.	Update is provided in the bulletin.	Head of Regeneration and Housing Investment	When appropriate	
4.	Housing and Environment 30 Oct 12 Article 15	<u>Progression of Transfer of Regeneration and Housing Investment Service to an Arms Length Company</u> The Committee resolved:- To instruct officers to review all options for the delivery of the Regeneration and Housing Investment Service including Local Authority Trading Company and report back in six months time.	After consultation it is apparent that before reporting back to committee further analysis is required on the impact that current and future capital and revenue programmes will have on how the Service will operate as a business going forward. We are continuing to work closely with the staff and unions reviewing all options for the future delivery of the service. A report will be provided to this committee once all the options can be fully examined.	Head of Regeneration and Housing Investment		
5.	Housing and Environment 15 Jan 13 Article 14	<u>Welfare Reform</u> The Committee resolved:- To include Welfare Reform on future Committee Business Statements.	We continue to manage the impact of welfare reform. Further updates will be provided as and when appropriate.	Head of Housing and Community Safety		
6.	Housing and Environment 14 May 13 Article 13	<u>Development of an Asset Management Plan for the Council's Housing Stock</u> The Committee resolved:- to instruct the Director of Housing and	Work on the multi storey asset management model is drawing to an end and officers are currently being asked to provide scenarios which can be used to test the	Head of Regeneration and Housing Investment		

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>	<u>Report Expected (if known)</u>
		Environment to report back to committee on the outcomes of the asset management plan for al housing stock at the earliest opportunity.	model. A demonstration of this model has been presented to the Housing and Environment Senior Management Team and dates are being arranged for presentations to elected members.			
7.	Housing and Environment 14 May 13 Article 15 and Council 26 June 13 Article 19	<u>Tillydrone Update – A Way Forward</u> The Committee resolved:- To instruct officers to report back to a future meeting of the Committee with clear recommendations on land use to support regeneration based upon the desktop reports, title reports and financial liabilities for each site.	An update is provided in the bulletin.	Head of Regeneration & Housing Investment	11 Mar 14	11 Mar 14
8.	Housing and Environment 30 Aug 13 Article 6	<u>Amenity Housing Assessments (within Performance Report)</u> (i) in relation to a question from Councillor Delaney regarding amenity housing assessments and the lack of understanding from tenants on how they apply for an assessment, to note that the Director of Housing and Environment would liaise with colleagues in Social Care and Wellbeing and report back to Committee with an update on the number of assessments that had been completed and that the Housing Manager would discuss particular cases with Councillor Delaney outwith the meeting;	An update is provided in the bulletin.	Director of Housing and Environment	11 Mar 14	11 Mar 14

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>	<u>Report Expected (if known)</u>
9.	Housing and Environment 30 Aug 13 Article 12	<u>Amendments To the Allocation Policy – Applicants with Housing Debt</u> The Committee resolved:- to request officers to submit a report to this Committee in six months providing an update on whether the discretion officers have been granted to move tenants with rent arrears as a direct result of welfare reform was still operating well.	An update is provided in the bulletin.	Head of Housing and Community Safety	11 Mar 14	11 Mar 14
10.	Housing and Environment 30 Aug 13 Article 14	<u>Houses in Multiple Occupation – New Powers in Relation to Overprovision</u> The Committee resolved:- (vi) to request officers to monitor the HMO provision in Old Aberdeen and report back in 12 months; and (vii) to request officers to determine the scale of un-registered houses available to let across the City and report back in twelve months.		Head of Housing and Community Safety	26 Aug 14	26 Aug 14
11.	Housing and Environment 30 Aug 13 Article 16	<u>Update on Informal and Formal Joint Working and Shared Services Arrangements with Aberdeenshire Trading Standards and the wider Scottish Trading Standards Community - Report by the Director of Housing and Environment</u> (ii) to request officers to report back to Committee following the outcome of CoSLA's TS Summit of June 2013 with regard to partnership working, shared services and shared capacity in Trading Standards in Scotland.	We still await the outcomes from the COSLA TS Summit. A report will be presented once the outcomes have been received. Recommend for removal	Head of Environment Services		

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>	<u>Report Expected (if known)</u>
12.	Housing and Environment 30 Aug 13 Article 18	<u>Park Management Rules - Report by Director of Housing and Environment</u> (iii) to note that the report detailing the outcome of this public notification will be presented to Committee later in 2013	An update is provided in the bulletin.	Head of Environment Services	14 Jan 14	11 March 14
13.	Council 18 Dec 13 Article _	<u>Sistema Scotland and Aberdeen</u> (vi) that a subsequent report be brought to Council, which would include the business plan, financial costings, asset and other implications; and thereafter reports be submitted to the Education, Culture and Sport, Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure, Housing and Environment and Social Care, Wellbeing and Safety Committees, to ensure that the introduction of a "Big Noise" Centre in the city, its principles and experience could be integrated in other aspects of the Council's work;	Report going to Council on 14 May. Thereafter, may be update to ECS in June. Recommend for removal on the basis that any future report on Sistema Scotland would be presented to the Committee.			
14.	Housing & Environment 14 Jan 14 Article 6	<u>Review of Parking Charges</u> To recommend to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Service that they manage all parking across the City and if agreed to request that a report be submitted to this Committee in 12 months providing an update on how the service was operating.		Head of Asset Management and Operations	Jan 15	Jan 15
15.	Housing & Environment 14 Jan 14	<u>Rent Arrears</u> (x) to receive a further report on progress with this issue in 6	Report is on the agenda.	Head of Housing and Community Safety	26 Aug 14	26 Aug 14

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>	<u>Report Expected (if known)</u>
	Article 12	<p>xiii) months; to request officers to submit a report outlining how the service were going to implement targets for the management of rent arrears in particular those tenants with 13 weeks or more of rent arrears; and</p> <p>(xvi) to request officers to include information in future reports relating to tenants who claim partial housing benefit and how they were managing to pay the remaining rent.</p>			11 Mar 14	11 Mar 14
16.	Housing & Environment 14 Jan 14 Article 23	<p><u>Installation of Combined Heat and Power and Proposals for Major Repairs to Multi Storeys in the Cornhill Area</u></p> <p>to request officers to submit a report to this Committee providing the outcome of discussions with Ministers and the outcome of sharing the risk with potential contractors.</p>	<p>The Service is preparing information and evidence gathered from QC advice on the matter to have more formal discussions with Ministers. Informal discussions have proven positive and indicated that it is an area of legal challenge that should be explored.</p>	Head of Regeneration and Housing Investment		

ANNUAL REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

<u>No.</u>	<u>Minute Reference</u>	<u>Committee Decision</u>	<u>Update</u>	<u>Lead Officer(s)</u>	<u>Report Due</u>	<u>Report Expected (if known)</u>
1.	Housing and Environment	<u>Aberdeen in Bloom</u> To report each year on the Aberdeen In Bloom Campaign		Head of Environment Services	28 Oct 14	28 Oct 14
2.	Housing and Environment 01 Mar 11 article 34	<u>Air Quality Action Plan</u> The Committee resolved:- to instruct the Director of Housing and Environment to report annually on progress.		Head of Environment Services	28 Oct 14	28 Oct 14
3.	Housing and Environment Committee 14 Jan 14 article	<u>Countryside Ranger Service Five Year Plan</u> The Committee resolved:- To request a Countryside Ranger Service Annual Report to the January 2015 meeting.		Head of Environment Services	Jan 15	Jan 15
4.	Housing and Environment Committee 19 Nov 09 article 27	<u>Responsible Dog Ownership</u> The Committee resolved:- to instruct the Director of Housing and Environment to provide an annual update report on responsible dog ownership to the Housing and Environment Committee.		Head of Environment Services	Jan 15	Jan 15
5.	Housing and Environment Committee 24 Aug 10 article 17	<u>2013/14 Housing Capital Programme</u> The Committee resolved:- to instruct that a report be brought to this Committee at the start of each financial year , outlining the work that requires to be carried out as part of the Housing Capital Programme.		Director of Housing and Environment/ Head of Finance	20 May 14	20 May 14
6.	Housing and Environment 29 Oct 13 Article 10	<u>Private Sector Housing – Enforcement Funding</u> (ii) to request that the Director of Housing and Environment brings further annual reports to committee, on future developments, (or earlier as required)		Head of Housing and Community Safety	28 Oct 14	28 Oct 14

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment Committee
DATE	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Peter Leonard
AUTHOR	Claire Hunter, Change Manager
TITLE OF REPORT	Vision statement for the Hazlehead Grove Nursery Project
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/031

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents a vision statement for the Hazlehead Grove Nursery Project as developed by the Hazlehead Grove Nursery Working Group. This vision statement will be used in various campaigns, promotions and media statements as the project progresses.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Housing and Environment Committee approve the vision statement for the project.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications for this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) will have oversight of this project via project briefings.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

On 21 November 2013, the Working Group outlined their aspirations for the future use of the Hazlehead Grove Nursery. The purpose of this was to ensure unilateral understanding about the project and to ensure any specific requirements of Elected Members were outlined and agreed.

On 12 February 2014, the Working Group further developed their aspirations into the following vision statement for the project:

Hazlehead Grove Nursery – a smart, green place to grow people and communities.

Pending approval of this vision statement by the Housing & Environment Committee on 11 March 2014, the Project Team will commence official communication with the press about the Project. This will include the launch of a competition in primary schools across the City, inviting pupils to submit their ideas for a logo to accompany the vision statement.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Project Vision and Expectations - a report to the Hazlehead Grove Nursery Working Group on Wednesday 12 February 2014.

7 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Claire Hunter, Change Manager, Housing & Environment
Ext: 3424
E-mail: clhunter@aberdeencity.gov.uk

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Hazlehead Grove Nursery Working Group
DATE	12 February 2014
DIRECTOR	Peter Leonard
AUTHOR	Claire Hunter, Change Manager
TITLE OF REPORT	Community Engagement Plan
REPORT NUMBER:	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This Report details a plan for the delivery of a City-wide campaign aimed at generating the interest of community groups and encouraging them to get involved in the development/use of the Hazlehead Grove Nursery.

Engagement with Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council in relation to their involvement in the development/use of the Nursery will be managed outside the scope of this Plan.

The Project team seek approval from the Working Group to implement this Plan within agreed timescales.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Working Group recommends approval of the report to the next meeting of the Housing and Environment Committee.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications for this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) will have oversight of this project through the Programme Management Office (PMO).

5. BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN

5.1 The vision for the Hazlehead Nursery as defined by the Working Group is as follows:

Hazlehead Grove Nursery – a smart, green place to grow people and communities.

5.2 In developing this Plan, the Project Team considered a range of options for engaging and communicating with community groups and organisations regarding the potential opportunities at the Hazlehead Grove Nursery.

5.3 The Project Team considered factors such as:

- Generating interest – positioning the opportunity to community groups to generate interest and to stimulate imagination and ideas.
- Inclusivity and fairness – ensuring the opportunity reaches as many community groups as possible through communication and fairness in approach.
- Practicalities – methods for communication, the practicalities and available resources.
- Costs – the costs associated with community engagement.
- Time – agreeing the right time to start talking to community groups about the opportunities that may be available and the impact on other workstreams of the Project Plan.

5.4 The Plan detailed below provides a suitable option for addressing these factors.

6. THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

6.1 What is the purpose and scope of the engagement process?

The purpose of the engagement process is to generate the interest of community groups and organisations and to encourage them to get involved in the future development/use of the Hazlehead Grove Nursery. This will be achieved via the delivery of a City-wide campaign whereby community groups and organisations will be invited to respond to a campaign brief and “pitch” their plans for how they will take ownership / make use of a plot of land at the Hazlehead Grove Nursery for a specific purpose of benefit to them.

6.2 Who is this plan for?

The target audience of this Plan is any recognised community group of organisation operating within Aberdeen City.

6.3 How will audiences be informed? How will we promote the opportunity?

The following channels for communicating the campaign brief will be explored by the Project Team:

- A campaign launch event
Community groups and organisations invited to a launch event at the City Council with the purpose of providing more information about the brief and an opportunity for questions and feedback.

- Community Councils
Tabling the campaign brief at Community Council meetings across the City.
- Web-based engagement
Promoting the brief via the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts and the Council's website.
- Press Engagement
Positioning of the brief as a good news story with the local press.
- Press Advertising
Placement of advertisements in the local press.

6.4 What will audiences be told?

The key messages to be included in the brief and to be developed by the Project Team will include:

- The uniqueness of the opportunity on offer
- The blank canvas provided for proposals
- The size and number of plots available
- The facts around funding and how this would need to be sourced by community groups and organisations themselves
- The length of time successful groups/organisations would be able to make use of a plot
- Expectations in terms of involvement and responsibilities

6.5 How will audiences engage?

Community groups and organisations interested in pitching their proposals will be required to complete an online application. The application will be available via the Council's website and will contain questions such as:

- What are the main activities of your group/organisation?
- What is your proposal?
- Tell us how you will deliver your proposal and who you will work with
- When would you plan to start and finish?
- How much will your proposal cost and how will you fund it?

6.6 What will the process be for submitting and assessing applications?

Applications will be submitted online, via the Council's website and to a specific closing date. The Working Group will agree criteria for assessing the applications received. Short-listed applications will be required to present their proposal to the Working Group before any final decision is made.

7. THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

NO.	ACTION	PURPOSE	PROVISIONAL TIMESCALES
1.	Campaign brief prepared in conjunction with Marketing Officer and incorporating the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details about opportunity and audience • The process for submitting applications including deadline dates 	To attract community groups and organisations into submitting applications for a plot of land at the Nursery	Brief to be prepared by end of April (subject to availability)
2.	Development of an online application in conjunction with e-Gov Team.	To provide an easy, cost effective method for submitting applications.	To be agreed
3.	Criteria and process for assessing applications developed and agreed by Working Group.	To provide a clear and fair process for the assessing of applications.	To be agreed
4.	Launch and promotion of campaign via agreed channels.	To raise awareness of campaign across the City.	To be agreed
5.	Closing date for applications		To be agreed
6.	Shortlisting of applications to agreed criteria.	To consider all applications received to specified criteria.	To be agreed
7.	Presentations/pitches by shortlisted applicants.	To provide opportunity to ask questions of applicants and understand more information/detail about their proposals.	To be agreed
8.	Successful applicants notified		To be agreed
9.	Evaluation of campaign	To assess success of engagement process and to provide valuable feedback to Project team.	To be agreed
10.	Applicants commence ownership/use of Nursery plot.		To be agreed

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Proposal for Community Engagement – 21 November 2013

9 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Claire Hunter, Change Manager, Housing & Environment
Ext: 3424
E-mail: clhunter@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Hazlehead Grove Nursery Working Group
DATE	12 February 2014
DIRECTOR	Peter Leonard
AUTHOR	Steven Shaw, Environment Manager
TITLE OF REPORT	Proposals for site division
REPORT NUMBER:	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Working Group with information about the Hazlehead Grove Nursery and to outline proposals for site division.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Working Group recommends approval of the report to the next meeting of the Housing and Environment Committee.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications for this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) will have oversight of this project through the Programme Management Office (PMO).

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The Hazlehead Grove Nursery site spans in total approximately 7.3 hectares.

Following discussion with Environmental Services staff it has been suggested that approximately 1.2 hectares should be set aside and used as operational and social enterprise space. This will include:

- working nursery
- greenhouses and polytunnels
- frame yard
- potting shed
- staff facilities

- staff car parking
- depot / both for Hazlehead staff
- spoil heap

This nursery space will accommodate the business venture with social enterprise but will also be used as an educational space for schools and community groups.

The remainder of the site is to be divided in to useable plots i.e. school garden, community garden, wildlife area, picnic area etc. No decision has been made to date on what the plots will be used for or the size of each plot to be made available.

Pathways and set boundaries are all now mostly lost or overgrown so the shape of plots can be changed to suit what is required of them. Natural boundaries do exist in the form of tree belts and hedges and these do give the site evenly split and dividable plots. These boundaries give the site a very natural and countryside feel.

To allow work to progress the site has been split into plot sizes that the Working Group can envisage.

The main part of the site has been split into 8 plots of approximately 5000M2 or roughly the size of a football pitch. There is obviously scope for these plots to be further split depending on what they may be used for.

The North / East corner of the site is seen as the most suitable for an education space / school garden. This area covers approximately 1.3 hectares. This is a very large area of ground and may be too big for the schools alone. This area was chosen for its proximity to the nursery and also is an area that is almost at a stage were works can begin.

The current green waste area of around 0.5 hectares remains. The long term plan for the service's green waste is currently under review.

It should be noted that the site in general has not been worked for 20 plus years and because of this much of the area is very wet and the trees planted 20 years ago for use elsewhere in the city have been left to grow and are now mature.

Staff suggest to help with the drainage issue that a pond / wildlife area be created. This could be used as a natural drainage and water retention area and also be a popular visitors site.

Parts of the site are also full of spoil that would require to be removed to allow for the plots to be worked properly.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Steven Shaw, Environmental Manager, Housing & Environment

Ext: 89273

E-mail: stevens@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Housing and Environment Business Plan Performance and Actions
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/030

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present committee with key performance measures and progress of key improvement work within the Housing and Environment Directorate.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Provide comments and observations on the performance information contained in the report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct implications arising out of this report, although a number of comments are made on the use of resources.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other direct implications arising out of this report regarding legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, sustainability and environmental, health and safety; although a number of comments are made on the use of resources.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

This report presents members with key performance measures and progress of key improvement work within the Housing and Environment Directorate.





This report also comprises of a progress report from the Director.

Performance information and Actions progress are input and updated through Covalent, the corporate performance reporting system, by the relevant lead officers. The data is reviewed and managed within the Directorate by the Director and Senior Management Team.

Within the report the following symbols are used:

Performance Measures

Traffic Light Icon

-  On target or within 5% of target
-  Within 5% and 20 % of target and being monitored
-  Below 20% of target and being actively pursued
-  Data only PI as there is no target set

6. IMPACT

The performance reporting framework is integrated with the Council's ambition of being a top performing Council which delivers on the Community Plan and the Administration's Policy Statement.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

N/A

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

David Leslie
Business Manager
01224 522772
dleslie@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Director's Progress Report
Housing and Environment
14/01/14 – 10/03/14

Recycling - Throughout January, Recycling Officers ran a series of food waste road-shows at the Council's Learning Centres. This provided the opportunity to speak to residents and community groups about the food waste recycling services on offer and to promote the increasing number of places where people can collect bioliners in the city and to highlight why it is important to recycle food waste rather than let it go to landfill. The list of bioliner collection points has been growing; people can now collect more liners free from most of the Learning Centres as well as local libraries, Customer Access points and Kingswells Community Centre.

Clean Up Aberdeen - The Clean Up Aberdeen campaign began at the start of February with Environmental Services staff, Councillors and Senior managers teaming up to litter pick the Old Deeside Railway Line at Garthdee. The team cleared from Duthie Park to Pitfodels Station and everyone was proud of the 34 bags they collected. Clean Up Aberdeen is part of Keep Scotland Beautiful's national mass-engagement campaign Clean Up Scotland which aims to involve one million people in action against litter and mess.

APSE Award - Aberdeen City Council's ground maintenance team has been named the most improved performer in the UK for parks, open spaces and horticultural services at the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) awards. APSE award nominees are recognised through a benchmarking exercise that all UK local authorities take part in so for our ground maintenance team to win is rightly-deserved recognition for their consistent and continued hard work.

Allotment Market Stall - Further to the success of the partnership with Environment Services and the 2013 Allotment Market Stall, (a Change Fund Project linked with Aberdeen City Befriending Partnership, Aberdeen Forward and CFINE), Officers have been in discussion with the Charity on how the project can be developed in 2014. The Idea, the first in Scotland, is to canvass plot holders within ACC's allotment sites to donate excess produce to the Charity who then sell the produce for no profit at a stall in the Castlegate. Money from the sale of produce is then returned to the allotment for purchasing next years seeds etc. Last year the Charity operated the scheme from July to October.

Study Tour to Finland - Countryside officer Ian Talboys has been offered one of just six places on a European funded study tour to Finland in May. This visit is entirely funded through the "Leonardo da Vinci Archnetwork" project so will be at no cost to the authority. This project aims to promote learning and development in natural and cultural heritage between Scotland and other European countries and includes visits to state run "Nature School's" where learning is taken outdoors on a regular basis, visits to wetland restoration projects and visits to look at urban forestry with management for nationally important species.

Estates Excellence - Officers from Environmental Health and Trading Standards took the lead role in Estates Excellence, a national campaign aimed at assisting small to medium sized businesses improve their ability to manage their health and safety regime. Visits were made to businesses across the city to identify any shortfalls in their approach to health, safety and fire prevention. A number of free training workshops were then held locally covering fire safety, asbestos, work at height, risk assessment, machinery safety, manual handling, control of hazardous substances, and noise.

Tobacco Ban – An Aberdeen newsagent has become the first in Scotland to be banned from selling tobacco products following an investigation by Trading Standards officers. The City Council applied for a tobacco retail banning order against Shriraj Gindha, trading as Tony's Newsagent, after he was caught selling tobacco products to under age customers on numerous occasions. Despite repeated warnings and advisory visits from the Trading Standards team, Mr Gindha continued to sell tobacco products to under age customers. Officers are monitoring these premises to make sure no tobacco is sold from the premises while it is owned by Mr Gindha.

IMA Qualification - Craig Rothnie, Debt Adviser successfully completed the Institute of Money Advisers (IMA) Certificate of Money Advice Practice, the first person in Aberdeen to do so. This qualification is an independent and external validation of competence which can be used to show a benchmark for service and individual standards. The IMA accreditation qualification provides independent and external evidence of an individual's key skills, allowing them to take a pro-active role in their own professional development.








Communal Cleaning - The communal cleaning contract with ISS Facilities LTD for the cleaning of 39 multi storey and 3 low rise blocks city wide has been extended for a further year until July 2015. There have been a number of improvements made to the cleaning specification including the addition of perimeter sweeps around the multis. The extension will also see static cleaners being placed in every multi, at the moment there are a small number of buildings still covered by a mobile team. A full tender exercise will commence in time for the implementation of a new contract in 2015.

Local Housing Strategy Annual Update Report - As part of the Council's approval of the Local Housing Strategy 2012-17 (LHS) it was agreed an annual update report would be provided to elected members to keep them informed on progress of the implementation of the LHS. This report was submitted to the Elected Members Bulletin for the Housing and Environment Committee of 14th January 2014 and contained two sections; a general update and an updated outcomes report, which are available on the Council's website under local housing strategy.

Clashieknowe Intermediate Care Project - Clashieknowe, a former sheltered housing development at Bridge of Don was decommissioned as part of the review of Aberdeen City's sheltered housing stock. The site was identified as the ideal setting for the Intermediate Care Project previously located in Smithfield Court. Work to remodel the accommodation is complete

and the joint service is now operational. The Lord Provost will perform the opening ceremony on Wednesday, 26th February 2014.

H&E Business Plan Performance Report

Rent Management			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
The overall monetary value of former tenants arrears, as at the end of each rent period	£1,300,000	£1,471,822	
The overall monetary value of payments received for former tenants arrears for the year to date.	165,000	113,371	
The number of current residential tenants with rent arrears at the end of each rent period		8,288	
The monetary value of current residential tenants arrears at the end of each rent period		£3,905,996	
The percentage of current tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent (excluding those owing less than £250) at the end of each rent period.	8.6%	9.5%	
The proportion of tenants giving up their tenancy during the year with arrears of more than 1 week. This is expressed as a year to date average % of all terminations in the year.	29%	32.2%	
The average number of weeks debt owed by tenants leaving with arrears of greater than 1 week, as a year to date average.	11.5	12.7	
Analysis			Date Updated
<p>Analysis: As at the end of the January rent period, the amount of residential rent arrears outstanding for our current tenants stands at £3,905,995.56 (net debit: 10.5%). This is a 3% reduction from the £4,026,671.82 last reported to committee.</p> <p>Since the last committee report, the number of tenants with more than 1 week of rent arrears has decreased from 9135 tenants to 8288 tenants; this is an improvement of 9.3%.</p> <p>The level of arrears cases can be broken down as follows:</p> <p>1194 (14.4%) tenants owing less than £50 2820 (34%) tenants owing between £50.01 & £250 3139 (37.9%) tenants owing between £250.01 & £1000 1076 (13%) tenants owing between £1000.01 & £3000 59 (0.7%) tenants owing more than £3000.01</p> <p>9.5% of our tenants currently owe more than 13 weeks rent (excluding £250); a 0.1% improvement from the 9.6% figure last reported to committee.</p>			20-Feb-2014

Since year end, Aberdeen City Council has issued 7204 first and second warning letters; this is a 19.4% reduction from the 8937 warning letters issued by this point in 2012-13. However, the Council has also issued 2155 Notices of Proceedings; a 58.8% increase on the 1357 notices issued at the same stage in 2012-13. So far this year, there have been 10 evictions for rent arrears; this is up from 5 evictions at the same stage last year.

Since year end, 32.2% of tenants terminated their tenancy with more than 1 week of rent arrears; this is above the Council's annualised target of 29% and slightly higher than the 31.8% figure last reported to committee. The average debt owed by tenants leaving in arrears amounts to 12.7 weeks; this figure has remained the same since the last committee and is still above the Council's 11.5 week target.

The total cumulative value of former tenant arrears is £1,471,822.26 which is an improvement from the £1,530,647.99 recorded in November; but above our current target of £1,300,000. In the financial year to date, the Council has collected £113,371.35 of payments from former tenants; this is a 16.5% reduction from the £135,699.10 collected by this stage in 2012-13. The amount of debt written off however has seen a reduction of 28.6% in comparison to the same time last year; when the Council had written off £266,807.84 of former tenant arrears compared to £190,606.04 so far this year.

Action:






As has been detailed within the Rent Arrears Update Report, work is continuing to review the current procedures on Rent Management and staff are undergoing further training on how to be more effective when making contact with their tenants.



Housing staff have tried as far as possible to make contact with tenants who have been affected by the reduction in spare room subsidy to assist with claims for Discretionary Housing Payments.







At the end of January 2014 of the 1628 tenants who were under occupying their tenancies, 483 of those tenants had received assistance through the Discretionary Housing Payment Fund.

Of the £750k allocation for Discretionary Housing Payments only £39k of this fund was left at the end of January 2014. It should be noted that the allocation is for all tenants under occupying their tenancies, and not just Council house tenants.

Tenancy Management

	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
The quarterly percentage of customer satisfaction with the Estates Service (including Estate Management, Selections and Right to Buy) as expressed by service users in questionnaires and covering satisfaction with staff and the overall service received. As of April 2012 this is now measured using the Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool (CSMT).	90%	80%	
% of Tenancy Management actions (specifically Abandonment, Assignment, Joint Tenancy, Lodger, Single Abandonment, Single Termination, Sublet, Succession) which saw a decision/outcome made within the month and within our statutory target	100%	87.8%	
% of New Tenant Visits (Routine Visits) in the month with an outcome completed within statutory timescales	100%	46.7%	
The total number of instances of mobile device usage by Housing Officers citywide in the quarter		24,001	
Of the total number of instances of mobile device usage by Housing Officers citywide in the quarter, the % that related to Rent and Arrears Management		58.6%	

The year to date number of legal repossessions following decree.		98	
Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year	94%	91.7%	
Analysis			Date Updated
<p>A review has been undertaken on the collation of our customer satisfaction data and in particular the look and layout of our 3 questionnaires used to calculate the % satisfaction with the Estate Management service. These questionnaires; 'New Tenancy', 'We're Sorry You're Leaving' and 'Right to Buy' have been revamped after discussion with the Housing Manager and approved by the Tenants and Residents Forum on the 21st January 2014. By streamlining the new questionnaires and making them more relevant to the subject area, we are very hopeful that return rates will increase substantially from the 1st April when the new questionnaires are due to begin circulation.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction with the estates service for quarter 3 (using the CSMT model) saw satisfaction of 80% based on 18 returned questionnaires over two mediums; manual and electronic. This return rate for the quarter is obviously extremely disappointing and replicates poor return rates from the first 2 quarters of the 2013/14.</p> <p>Following the review of the recording of our Statutory Customer Service Actions (Abandonment, Assignment, Joint Tenancy, Lodger, Single Abandonment, Single Termination, Sublet and Succession) we are now confident that the mechanism in place for reporting is far more robust than was previously the case. January saw 87.8% of Statutory Customer Actions reaching a decision/outcome within the allotted timescale which leaves us with a year to date figure of 88.6% completed within timescale. Despite this still being short of our 100% internal target, it's important to point out that the YTD figure has improved significantly on the 71.8% YTD figure for the same time in 2012/13.</p> <p>The completion of new tenant visits within 28 days dipped significantly in January with a figure of 46.7% which sees our YTD figure drop to 70.1%, almost 5% less than the figure for last year. A new step was added in to the action path - 'Tenancy start date' which the 28 days to complete a visit will be measured from. Early teething problems seem apparent and dialogue has continued with staff to remind them of the importance of robust recording of data and proper use of targets in order to drive performance up. Exception reports continue to be distributed to aid any issues in recording.</p> <p>Tenancy sustainment across the city continues to perform consistently with a year to date figure of 91.7%. This is still short of our internal expectations of 94% of tenancies sustaining but does not show too much cause for alarm. The Marischal Housing Area of the city continues to have the highest rate of sustainment with 92.9% of tenancies sustained for more than a year, while the Mastrick Housing area has been the poorest performer with 90.6% of tenancies sustained.</p> <p>Legal Repossessions following decree YTD currently stands at 98 which is a significant increase in the figure of 67 from the same time last year. This would seem indicative of a tougher enforcement of the escalation and rent arrears process.</p> <p>As a Council, we have encouraged estate management staff to use mobile devices when out and about in their patches to view and record live data in the iWorld housing system, instead of having to wait until they get back to their desktop PCs in the office. This allows staff to interact with tenants on various estate management issues face to face and modernises the way in which we, as a Council, provide our services. In Quarter 3 we saw 24,001 instances of mobile device usage, an increase on the 22,590 hits reported in quarter 2. Of these 24,001 hits, 58.6% related to rent management. The high level of use of mobile devices to access information on tenancy debt is not surprising given the impact of welfare reform and the financial difficulties facing many of our tenants and reflects the amount of time and resource we are placing in dealing with this issue.</p> <p>Action Changes to systems and practices are relatively new and are continually being reviewed to improve performance further.</p>			24-Feb-2014

Void Management			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
Rent loss due to voids as a percentage of gross rent due - year to date average - Charter Indicator	1.2%	1.6%	
The year to date average number of days taken to re-let all properties - Charter Indicator	37	69.1	
The percentage of offers of accommodation accepted year to date average	65%	58.5%	
The overall percentage of void properties as a percentage of stock as at the end of each month	1.2%	2.2%	
The overall number of offers of accommodation refused monthly		65	
The percentage of Void properties relet within 4 weeks	56.6%	21.7%	
Analysis			Date Updated
<p>Performance in void management revealed a marked downward turn in the month of January, especially in respect of the average time taken to relet our void properties.</p> <p>The average time taken to relet all properties in January hit a high of 98.4 days based on 73 relets in the month. Currently this leaves us with a YTD figure of 69.1 days for the financial year thus far, comparing unfavourably with the figure of 49.2 days from the same time last year. Non-low demand performance saw an average of 91.9days taken to relet properties which was as poor as performance has been since 2006/07 in respect of this indicator.</p> <p>There are previously mentioned mitigating factors for the performance we have seen in the financial year thus far which must be considered. As reported to last committee, the Housing for Varying (HFVN)Needs review has adversely affected relet times in the short term – as exhibited by two properties at Seaview House, which following the transition from hard to let sheltered properties to amenity housing saw these properties relet at an average time of 329 days. Indeed if we take all 5 properties relet this month which come under the HFVN bracket, the average relet time of these properties would be 166 days and taking these out of our overall relet time would reduce the overall average time by 5 days. Properties currently undergoing this transition will continue to appear throughout the months to come and must be taken in to consideration when talking about an overall average relet time.</p> <p>3 of the highest relet times of the period are detailed below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 109B Gerrard Street – Flat which took 154 days to let - Multiple refusals on the property · 96 Jasmine Terrace – Flat which took 203 days to let - Major works were undertaken on this property (This would be under the Major works void path in new voids process) · 19 Constitution Court – Sheltered flat which was void for 259 days - Traditionally hard to let type. Multiple refusals on the property. <p>As has been reported to Committee previously, the HFVN review has impacted negatively but this should not deflect from other issues that are apparent within the voids process as shown in the examples above. However many of these properties will be on a revised void path going forward (example being 96 Jasmine Terrace) which will help identify the problem properties in a clearer manner.</p>			25-Feb-2014

Void rent loss continues to show definite room for improvement. In January we lost £123,026.47 on empty properties, which when expressed as a percentage is 1.96% of our rent lost due to voids. The current YTD figure sits at **1.6%** which is somewhat off our target of 1.2%. If we look at the rent lost from an area standpoint, the Tillydrone Housing area alone lost £68,591.51 which is more than the citywide figure for most months in 2012/13.

The gross voids % also hit a YTD high of **2.2%** in January, due to having 489 voids within the city – 75 of which are off charge Unable to be relet (UTBR) / Not to be relet (NTBR). The actual number of voids available to be relet therefore is 414 which; our highest amount in the year thus far. This number is skewed by some of the aforementioned properties undergoing transition in keeping with the Housing for Varying Needs review but it is also clear that even allowing for the review, we should still have less voids when taking in to account demand for housing within the city.

Our offer success rate in January dipped below 50% for the first time in 2013/14 with an acceptance rate of 49%. The year to date acceptance % currently stands at **58.5%** against an internal target of 65%. The drop in performance can be used to explain our low amount of relets in January but is also disappointing given the apparent benefits seen in previous months of the 'one offer' policy which, since it's inception, had seen acceptance rates increase. There were **65** refusals in the month which still continues to compare favourably with the amount of refusals seen monthly in 2012/13. In 2013/14 thus far we have seen on average 77 refusals per month compared with an average of 121 per month in the previous year however we must temper that with the fact that offers made in 2013/14 have decreased by over 40 a month when compared with last year. The most common reasons for a refusal of an offer continues to be either 'area' or 'property' with 57.4% of offers refused this year due to one or both of these reasons.

One of the most surprising aspects of January's relet performance and perhaps one of the biggest factors in our low number of relets and drop in offer acceptance rates, was the number of offer withdrawals in the month. There were 107 offer withdrawals in the month, almost 30% higher than in any other month of the year. Of these 107 offers, 22 were due to Occupational Therapist (OT) and SOLO suitability, 20 due to sensitive let and 20 due to change in circumstances.









Action

Action: New paths have been introduced from the start of February and the intention is to break down performance into each of the paths approved by committee. A partial breakdown has been undertaken for January's performance in regards to the Housing for Varying Needs review. Although, only 5 properties were relet in January that were involved in the Housing for Varying Needs Review this increased the overall turnover by 5 days. All new voids are being placed on the appropriate path although it will take some time to remove voids prior to the introduction of the new paths.

The acceptance rate is causing some concern as is the increase of withdrawals in the month. The revised letting standards were also introduced at the start of February and this is being closely monitored. There are 3 main issues regarding the withdrawals. Withdrawals subject to OT/SOLO assessment. These withdrawals whilst justified are time consuming delays to the process. We are currently in discussions with the OT service regarding potential improvements. This has been focussing on speeding up the process for OT assessments and subsequent authorisation for works to proceed. A new path has been set up to collate this information. However, a further improvement was identified in developing the information held in various systems to identify properties unsuitable for adaptation and therefore remove the need for an OT assessment and ensuring all properties with adaptations are recorded to ensure any time at OT is reduced or indeed replaced through the housing needs assessment.

Sensitive Lettings is to be reviewed to ensure that applicants are not being unlawfully bypassed and delays in selecting suitable applicants is reduced.

Finally, the most disappointing was the number of offers that were unsuccessful due to applicants not wanting areas/streets or change in circumstances that had not been advised to the council. All applicants had been notified of the changes to the scheme and given every opportunity to ensure their application requirements were correct to avoid being deferred for 12 months. The introduction of the Housing Options approach will go some way to resolving that for new applications. Consideration is being given to how best to get the message across to existing applicants.

Housing Allocations			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
The current number of applicants' shortlisted on the housing waiting list as at the last day of the month		3,995	
The current number of applicants' shortlisted on the housing urgent list as at the last day of the month		273	
The current number of applicants' shortlisted on the housing support list as at the last day of the month		785	
The current number of applicants' shortlisted on the housing transfer list as at the last day of the month		1,583	
The current number of applicants' shortlisted on the housing discretionary list as at the last day of the month		52	
The number of housing applications processed within 28 days of receipt, within each month		237	
The percentage of housing applications processed within 28 days of receipt, year to date average	84%	59.1%	
The % of customers' in the quarter who completed a service questionnaire and were satisfied with the overall level of service received from the Housing Accommodation and Advice Service		50%	
Analysis			Date Updated
<p>Analysis During 2013/14 there has been an 8% reduction in the number of applicants on the register awaiting housing, from 6958 at 1st April 2013 to 6383 on the 1st February 2014. As applicants' can be on more than one list this has resulted in an overall reduction in the number of applications across the lists, with small month on month falls being reported across all lists. Of the 6688 applications across the lists;</p> <p>273 are on the Urgent List 52 are on the Discretionary List 785 are on the Support List 3995 are on the Waiting List 1583 are on the Transfer List</p> <p>Despite the continuous reduction in applications, the demand for accommodation still greatly exceeds supply. Given that on average this year, there has been 336 properties available to re-let each month, the Council has the capacity/supply to accommodate approximately 5% of the applicants' on the list each month.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the year (1st April) there has been a total of 1240 applicants' housed off the lists, a breakdown of which is provided below;</p> <p>460 have been housed off the Urgent list 90 have been housed off the Discretionary List 226 have been housed off the Support List 251 have been housed off the Waiting List 213 have been housed off the Transfer List</p>			25-Feb-2014

The year to date quota of allocations show that 55% of lets have been awarded to applicants on the urgent list, 5% short of the 60% target set. Since October 2013 the number of lets to the urgent list has slowed down, with only 46% of allocations awarded to the urgent list during this time. In contrast, during the same period 29% of allocations awarded went to the waiting list and 25% to the transfer list, exceeding the 20% quota set for both. Further analysis of the allocations by source of tenant per list also reveals an additional 14.4% of allocations provided to transfer applicants' from other lists, over and above the 21.1% Transfer List allocation.




During the quarter there has only been 2 questionnaires returned which is insufficient to provide a representative analysis of customer satisfaction with the housing accommodation and advice service.

Due to current restructuring and moving towards a housing access service the performance management framework and customer satisfaction questionnaires are required to be reviewed as part of the wider programme.

Action









The Housing Options approach continues to be developed with an implementation date of April 2014. This will allow applicants to be advised of a range of realistic options to access accommodation across the full range of providers and not solely within the council. It will provide them with good quality information in order for them to make informed decisions regarding their accommodation options.

Tenant Participation

	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
The current number of Tenant Groups		47	
Percentage of Tenant Groups which are registered	35%	29.8%	
The number of tenants in the financial year to date who have attended or are attending training (Tenant Participation). Types of training could include Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), Tenant Improvement Service (TIS), Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) conferences, Registered Tenant Organisation's (RTO) training or more specialised such as computer skills.		144	
Analysis			Date Updated
There has been no change to our position on Tenant Participation since last Committee. Currently we have 47 Tenant Participation groups throughout the city. Of these 47 groups, 29.8% (14) are Registered Tenant Organisations (RTO's), which are independent groups with their own constitutions and committees. These groups have a statutory right to be kept abreast of all important decisions relating to the Housing service. Aberdeen City Council has set a target of 35% of its groups becoming RTO's and this information will be recorded on iWorld and monitored monthly.			20-Feb-2014
A review of the Tenant Participation framework is currently underway and new indicators are being developed which will provide a more meaningful overview of the performance of the service. The proposed indicators will include information on tenant spend and budget. A first consultation with tenants was held at the start of December with further discussion due to take place.			

Project	Progress To Date	Latest Note Date
Implementation of the Scottish Social Housing Charter	The Housing Performance pages on the Council's website have been updated to reflect the Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes and our performance for 2012/13. Performance for 2013/14 is being recorded and monitored to ensure that the Charter outcomes can be reported. A Tenant Satisfaction Survey has been commissioned to ensure the satisfaction requirements for the charter can be fully reported. The Council and tenants representatives are participating in the Scottish Housing Best Value Network (SHBVN) Charter Customer Reporting Project. The first Annual Report to tenants will be published by August 2014.	24-Feb-2014

Project	Progress To Date	Latest Note Date
Housing for Varying Needs Review	71 properties are now let as amenity which is 19.8% of the sock. Further details on progress are contained within the bulletin report 'Housing for Varying Needs Update'.	26-Feb-2014

Homelessness Case Management			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
The year to date percentage of statutory homeless applicants housed who have sustained their tenancies for more than 12 months	90%	91.3%	
The average length of homeless journey (from presentation to discharge of duty) for those applicants' whose journey was completed during the month.	100	120.9	
The number of prevention advice cases that require an assessment under homeless legislation		123	
The number of households assessed as homeless or potentially homeless within each month		42	
The year to date percentage of cases where contact was lost with homeless applicants either pre- or post- statutory decision	14%	12.5%	
The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 impose a duty on the Council to provide permanent accommodation to all applicants' that are found to be unintentionally homeless, stating that if this is not provided the applicant should continue to be assessed as homeless. This indicator measures the percentage of all cases closed in the month where the Council has offered or secured permanent accommodation to those applicants' it has a duty to re-house (those who have maintained contact and are assessed as unintentionally homeless).	100%	94.7%	
The % of users' in the quarter who completed the homeless questionnaire and were satisfied with the overall service provided by the homelessness service whether given prevention advice or a homeless interview.		100%	
The year to date % of all general need relets (all excluding sheltered, very sheltered and amenity housing) allocated to statutory homeless applicants.	50%	35.8%	

Analysis	Date Updated
<p>Analysis Since the start of the year (1st April 2013) there have been 1138 formal homeless applications made. These are applicants' who have been through the prevention service and who are deemed to be in need of a homelessness assessment. This is down 3% on the 1177 who applied during the same period in 2012/13.</p> <p>While we have seen a small decrease in applications made throughout the year, the number of assessments' completed during the equivalent period has fallen by 30% to 841. Of the open cases at 31st January 2014 there are 277 applicants awaiting a formal decision which will have a knock on affect to the number of assessments completed in the year.</p> <p>Of the assessments completed this year, 633 (75%) have been given a statutory homeless decision, with 517 (82%) being assessed as unintentionally homeless and owe a duty to re-house. While the current figures indicate a 33% fall in the number of applicants being assessed as unintentionally homeless this year there has actually been a proportional increase in the percentage of applicants' assessed with a re-house duty, rising from 76% at 31st Jan 2013 to 82% at 31st Jan 2014.</p> <p>During 2013/14 there has been a shift in trend among those cases where no statutory decision has been reached, increasing from 16% at 31st January 2013 to 25% at 31st January 2014. The most noticeable changes among these are; 19% rise in applicants' withdrawing their application prior to decision from 72 at 31/01/2013 to 84 at 31/01/2014 46% rise in applicants' losing contact prior to decision from 46 at 31/01/2013 to 67 at 31/01/2014 200% rise in the number of applicants' ineligible for assistance from 2 at 31/01/2013 to 6 at 31/01/2014. 40% fall in the number of applicants found to be not homeless from 58 at 31/01/2013 to 35 at 31/01/2014.</p> <p>There have been a total of 885 cases closed so far this year, 371 (30%) fewer than the same period the previous year. Of the cases closed 47 (5.3%) have failed to maintain contact, a 1.7% increase upon the same period the previous year. This alongside a rise in the lost contacts prior to assessment decision puts the overall % of cases closed where contact has been lost at 12.8%.</p> <p>To meet their statutory re-housing duty to all applicants' assessed this year, the service requires 517 lets, a 33% fall when compared with the same period the previous year where 770 lets were required. The reduction in lets required however is consistent with the reduction in assessments completed, therefore should we see a rise in the number of assessments completed we would anticipate seeing a similar rise in the number of lets required.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the year (1st April 2013) there have been a total of 1007 general need properties relet, 4% fewer than at the same period the previous year where 1047 were made. Of the general need relets this year 361 (36%) have been let to homeless households. This is down 11% over the same period the previous year where 495 (47%) relets were allocated to homeless households.</p> <p>For all cases closed this year the average length of homeless journey stands at 122.2 days, 10.2 days less than at the same time the previous year and nearer the 100 day target set. More recently we have begun to see a change in the homeless journey trend. At 31st of January 2013 the decision to discharge stage has reduced by 10.3 days to 92.6 days, given the demands on accommodation this marks a good improvement despite still not meeting the 80 day target set. The interview to decision stage has also reduced by 4.4 days to 21.5 days, well within the 28 day statutory decision target but falling slightly short of the journey stage target of 17 days. The initial enquiry to interview stage however has increased from 3.6 days to 8.1 days and currently sits 4.5 days over target.</p> <p>For those applicant's re-housed by the homeless service the tenancy sustainment rate remains high. Figures reveal a 91.3% level of tenancy sustainment for homeless applicants' so far this year, a slight reduction upon the 92.1% achieved at the same time the previous year.</p> <p>During the third quarter we have again witnessed a decline in the number of questionnaires completed, 7 in total which is 21 less than the previous quarter.</p>	25-Feb-2014

Analysis of the 7 questionnaires reveals that 100% of respondents were satisfied with the service provided. Due to the low levels of response rate a review of the questionnaire is currently in progress.











Action

The service is preparing for the changes to be implemented within a new housing access service from April 2014, therefore from the beginning of February 2014 interim arrangements have been put in place to process the 277 applicants awaiting decisions, as a consequence of these arrangements it is anticipated that there will be an increased number of assessments completed prior to the end of financial year.

The wider implications of the introduction of the housing access service are expected to deliver more realistic housing outcomes for individuals, at the same time it is anticipated that there will be implications to activity levels for the service and it is predicted the average length of homeless journey will reduce.

There are various reasons for applications to be withdrawn or lost contact, and these can be due to a change of personal circumstances such as return to custody, an alternative housing outcome being achieved or relationship being re-established. The 6 clients who were ineligible for a service, this information invariably becomes apparent following investigation after the application has been received and is being processed through the stages of case management.

Homelessness Temporary Accommodation

	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
Percentage of households requiring emergency or temporary accommodation to whom an offer was made in the year		100%	
Number of households where the Council was required to make an offer of temporary or emergency accommodation during the reporting year (YTD)		1,158	
The number of offers of temporary or emergency accommodation made during the reporting year		1,158	
YTD % of temporary or emergency accommodation offers refused in the month for all accommodation types		9.2%	
YTD Number of temporary or emergency accommodation offers refused in the month for all types of accommodation		106	
The % of users' in the quarter who completed the homeless questionnaire and were satisfied with the overall quality of temporary accommodation provided.		100%	
The total number of homeless households staying in temporary accommodation of all types above the aggregate target period (6 months) within each month		69	
The month on month total of current tenancy arrears for temporary homeless flats excluding resettlement properties		322,415	
The month on month total of former tenancy arrears for temporary homeless flats excluding resettlement properties		1,259,413	
Homeless Flats current arrears as a percentage of GROSS potential rental and service charge income	10%	6.1%	

Analysis	Date Updated
<p>Analysis Provision</p> <p>At 1st February 2014 the homelessness service had a temporary stock profile of 483 units consisting of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 297 furnished ACC flats, 62% of the overall stock profile · 60 Hostel rooms, 12% of the overall stock profile · 25 B&B rooms, 5% of the overall stock profile · 101 Privately leased units (including those sublet from housing associations), 21% of the overall stock profile. <p>Reducing the use of B&B is a key initiative set out in the homelessness strategy and homelessness improvement plan. Over the last 3 years the homeless service has seen a dramatic reduction in B&B usage. Since the start of the year however the numbers have began to level out somewhat with an average of 24 B&B's being used at 1st February 2014.</p> <p>Another key plank of the homelessness/temporary accommodation strategy is expanding the growth of the PSL scheme with the aim of securing 300 units by June 2014. During 2012/13 there was a 93% increase in PSL stock from the 44 units held on 31st March 2012 to 84 units at 31st March 2013. So far this year there has been an additional 17 units secured, a 20% increase upon the total number of units held at the end of 2012/13.</p> <p>During 2013/14 recording of the new HL-3 commenced, which is now being used to supply data in respect of temporary accommodation to the Scottish Government and will also be used for reporting the charter indicators. Since 1st of April 2013 the available data shows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 1158 applicants have required temporary accommodation, all of whom have been offered accommodation. · Of those households offered temporary accommodation 9% have refused their offer, with refusal of hostel topping the rates at 14% · No breaches of the unsuitable accommodation order have been recorded. <p>At the 1st February 2014 there were 364 households accommodated in traditional forms of temporary accommodation (hostel/ACC Temp Flats/B&B) of these 69 have resided in temp over the target 6 month period. This is 15 (28%) more households staying over target than at the same time the previous year. Of the 69 households occupying temp over target, all but 1 were accommodated in temporary furnished flats and therefore have their own living space and access to vital support mechanisms where required.</p> <p>Alternatively, if we measure the average length of tenancy per type by actual end of tenancy we find that the average duration of placement is;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · B&B - 1.2 month · Hostel - 0.8 months · Temp ACC Flat - 4.2 months <p>During the 3rd quarter we have again witnessed a decline in the number of questionnaires received. There were only 7 questionnaires returned, of which only 5 respondents had used temporary accommodation and answered the qualifying question. Of the 5 responses recorded all (100%) were happy with the quality of temporary accommodation provided.</p> <p>Year to date satisfaction response rates are very low bearing in mind this is a charter indicator where all applicants' who use temporary accommodation are to be given the opportunity to provide feedback.</p> <p>Rents</p> <p>At the 1st February 2014 there were 195 households (69%) accommodated in temporary A.C.C flatted accommodation with arrears. The total value of arrears stands at £322,415 a 5% increase upon the £306,315 we reported to the last Committee. The current level of arrears is equivalent to 6.1% of the gross potential rental income and still well within the 10% target set. The average weekly rent (including service charge) for temp is £317, further analysis reveals that for those</p>	25-Feb-2014

<p>households with arrears the average amount owe is £1634, the equivalent of approximately 5 weeks rent and service charge for this type of accommodation.</p> <p>Welfare reform has contributed in part towards the current rise in arrears. A survey examining the impacts of welfare reform in Aberdeen published on 31st May 2013 found that 26% of households in temporary accommodation were under-occupying, resulting in a potential weekly shortfall of £3,250, equivalent to £169,000 over the course of a year. Going by these forecasts at 1st of February 2014 loss to date is estimated to be in the region of £140,833.</p> <p>Former tenancy arrears for households terminating ACC temporary flatted accommodation continue to rise and have reached their highest level at £1,199,060. During 2013/14 384 households have left with arrears worth a value of £340,969 (28% of the total value) an average of £888 per household and equivalent to approximately 3 weeks rent and service charge for this type of property.</p> <p>Action The Service continues to ensure suitable temporary accommodation remains available to all households entitled to it, at the same time with the new development on the Victoria House site due to be completed in Sept 2014, the service is currently reviewing the type of accommodation available to meet the demand, however the composition of households who may require accommodation at any time the cannot be predicted.</p> <p>The Service continues to expand the number of properties available through the Private Sector Leasing Scheme. Officers are undertaking to support applications to Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) with tenants to meet the shortfall from the under-occupancy and other implications of welfare reform.</p>	
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Homelessness Prevention Activities			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
No of applicants in the month that required housing advice and/or active assistance to help prevent homelessness		264	
Number of cases in the month that have been closed after a final outcome has been achieved.		47	
Percentage of outcomes in the month where prevention intervention has taken place and we can definitively deduce that the threat of homelessness has been resolved by means of the applicant being assisted to remain in their existing home or finding alternative accommodation.		91.3%	
Analysis			Date Updated
<p>Analysis During 2013/14 there have been 2232 approaches to the homeless service from people requiring advice or assistance with housing options and/or homelessness prevention. This is up 4% on the 2141 approaches recorded for the same period the previous year. Of the 2232 approaches recorded so far this year, 192 (9%) are repeat cases where the household has previously sought advice and assistance from the service. This is 113 more cases over the same period the previous year representing a 143% increase.</p> <p>So far this year there have been 1515 cases closed, this is 377 (18%) less closures than in the same period the previous year. Currently there is still a very high number of cases that remain open, 3193 at 1st February 2014. Many of these are historic cases that are deemed to be no longer active but no outcome has been recorded.</p> <p>Of the applicants presented this year, 941 cases have been resulted and closed 42% of all applications. Of the cases closed so far this year the outcomes recoded indicate that;</p>			25-Feb-2014

- Ø 41.1% have made a homelessness application
- Ø 38.7% were provided advice and information only
- Ø 1.2% have lost contact or failed to attend appointments
- Ø 31.6% provided casework assistance and where homelessness has successfully been prevented.

The data above is taken from the housing advice module the ICT system used to record prevention advice and assistance. However these figures should be used with caution as there are only 387 recorded cases of households being assessed under homeless legislation, this is a big difference when compared with the 1140 households registering formal homeless applications on the HL-1 (System for recording homeless data) this year.

PREVENT 1 the mandatory specification used for gathering statistics on housing options and homeless prevention activity is set to commence 1st April 2014, this will provide a more reliable and accurate way of collecting data to determine how successful the measures taken to prevent homelessness have been.

Action

Since December there is a 14.8% increase in the number of clients being provided with case work assistance where homelessness has been successfully prevented, this gives an indication of the positive work being achieved by officers. The introduction of the Housing Access Service will develop the opportunities for officers to achieve a greater level of case work interventions, with the service being able to provide more realistic housing options to individuals applying for social housing. The statutory homelessness duties will remain an integral part of the housing access service.






The administrative process to close historic cases has been delayed due to service demands and staff shortages. The introduction of PREVENT 1 in 2014 will enable the service and other housing staff involved in delivering housing options to record more specific outcomes for client who require prevention activity interventions.

HMO and Landlord Registration

	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
HMO Licenses in force		997	
HMO License Applications Pending		190	
Number of Current Landlord Registrations Approved		16,348	
Number of Current Properties Approved		19,085	
Analysis			Date Updated
Landlord Registrations have a 3-year duration, following which time landlords must renew their registrations if they are continuing to operate. Expired registrations remain on the database and the Council must pursue them to determine whether or not the landlords are continuing to operate without being registered. Officers began an exercise in September 2012 to contact every one of the 4,093 landlords whose registrations had expired and not renewed, and as at 25/2/2014, a total of 83 expired registrations remain unrenewed. Registrations expire every day therefore the statistics will always show a certain amount of expired registrations, but the purpose of this exercise is to eliminate the 'historical' expired registrations, so as to leave a manageable amount. We will therefore concentrate on the 34			25-Feb-2014




registrations which expired prior to 1/1/2014 with a view to determining them by the end of the 2013/14 financial year, if necessary by serving Rent Penalty Notices, but we will also deal with the 49 registrations which have expired since 1/1/2014.	
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Repairs Management			
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	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in the last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.	80%	93.3%	
Percentage of Void Properties off charge	10%	6.1%	
The number of offers of accommodation refused monthly for property reasons		16	
The number of response repairs completed within the financial year	54,000	48,194	
The percentage of response repairs completed within the target times in the financial year to date	96%	92%	

Analysis			Date Updated
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<p>Analysis: From October 2013, customer satisfaction with the repairs service has been recorded and measured once again. At the end of December 2013, 93.3% of the tenants surveyed between October and December were satisfied with the repairs service provided by Aberdeen City Council. Of the 523 tenants contacted via telephone, 439 stated they were very satisfied, with 49 fairly satisfied. Performance in terms of satisfaction is above the 80% target achievement.</p> <p>Up to the end of December 2013, the City Council had completed 48,194 response repairs against an estimate of 54,000. This was just under 10,000 less repairs than at the same period last year. 92% of response repairs were completed on time compared to 88% at the same time in 2012/2013 and against a 96% target.</p> <p>6.1% of voids (27 properties) remained off charge at the end of January, against a target of 10%.</p> <p>During the month of January, 24.6% of all refusals were for property based reasons. This is in line with the refusal trend over the previous year.</p> <p>Action Given the high percentage of jobs classified as emergencies compared with other authorities current repairs targets and designations are under review. Since April 2014 40% of all response repairs orders raised have been classified as emergency to be attended to within 4 hours - a total of 19,045 jobs. Whilst there are jobs which require an immediate response there is also currently a high number of orders being raised that do not require a 4 hour response.</p>			25-Feb-2014
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Property Management			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
The percentage of Council properties with current gas safety certificates	100%	98%	
The percentage of Council properties where current gas safety check was carried out within 12 months of the previous check	100%	53%	
15vi) The number and proportion of the council's housing stock being brought up to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by criteria. Total dwellings meeting SHQS - Percentage	81.1%	89.12%	
Analysis			Date Updated
<p>Analysis: Performance in respect of gas safety continues to improve month on month.</p> <p>At the end of January 2014, 98% of council properties with gas appliances had current gas safety certificates.</p> <p>Of the 346 properties which did not have valid gas safety certificates, 328 are being progressed through the hard no access policy (down from 440 at the end of November), 8 do not have certificates due to system errors/ queries (down from 27 at the end of November) and 10 properties need to have certificates and do not.</p> <p>In terms of the frequency of renewal, 9067 gas safety checks have been carried out within 12months of the previous check, 2829 were carried out within 12-13 months, 3765 within 13-15 months and 1036 took 15 months or more.</p> <p>Action: Whilst the 98% of properties currently have a gas safety certificate the actual percentage completed within 12 months of the previous check, although increasing, still causes concern. The Council's contract Gas & Cyclical Maintenance team responsible for administering and monitoring the contract are in daily contact with the current Gas Servicing and Repairs Contractor. Additional resources are to be brought in by the Contractor to accelerate the process to meet the 12 month timescale by April 2014.</p>			25-Feb-2014
Project	Progress To Date		Latest Note Date
Delivery of new affordable housing	<p>Completions 2013/14 = 212 Cove - 16 - mid market rent - National Housing Trust (NHT) Farburn Terrace = 58 - shared ownership - Grampian HA Donside = 123 48 - LIFT - Tenants First Housing Co- operative, 40 - rent Tenants First Housing Co- operative 35 - rent - Langstane HA Eday Gardens = 6 - rent - Margaret Blackwood Housing Association Cove = 9 - mid market rent - NHT</p> <p>Expected Completions 2013/14 = 54</p>		24-Feb-2014

	Donside = 20 rent – Tenants First Housing Co-operative Stockethill Church = 32 = 18 rent & 14 Mid Market Rent (MMR) – Langstane HA March 14 Charleston, Cove = 2 Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) - Scotia	
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Street Scene			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
Street Cleansing - Dog Fouling	9.5%	8.9%	
Street Cleansing - LEAMS (Local Authority Environmental Audit Management System). Statutory performance indicator that measures street cleanliness.	72	66	
Street Cleansing - Graffiti (percentage of streets graded that are recorded with graffiti present)	5.5%	0%	
Street Cleansing - Flyposting (percentage of streets graded that are recorded with fly posting present)	1%	0%	
Street Cleansing - Flytipping (percentage of streets graded that are recorded with fly tipping present).	1%	5.4%	
Street Cleansing - Overflowing Litter Bins (percentage of streets graded that are recorded with overflowing bins present).	1%	0%	
Grounds Maintenance - LAMS (Land Audit Management System) - measures the cleanliness and maintenance quality of green spaces.	72	76	
Grounds Maintenance - Graffiti (percentage of green space graded that is recorded with graffiti present).	5.5%	0%	
Grounds Maintenance - Dog Fouling (percentage of green space graded that is recorded with dog fouling present).	9.5%	0%	
Street Cleansing - Vandalism (percentage of streets graded that are recorded with vandalism present).	1%	0%	
Graffiti Removal - Priority 1 (48 Hours) - percentage of Offensive Graffiti reports actioned within the target time of 48 hours.	90%	100%	
Graffiti Removal - Priority 2 (20 Days) - percentage of Non offensive Graffiti reports actioned within the target time of 20 days.	90%	100%	
Street Cleansing - Weed Growth (percentage of streets graded that are recorded with weed growth).	35%	1.8%	
Analysis			Date Updated
Environment KPIs are undertaken using the LEAMS (Local Environment Audit Management System) programme based on a random 2% sample of Aberdeen's streets. This equates to on average 65 surveys per monthly survey. The street surveys are randomly selected by Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) who manage and audit LEAMS across Scotland. A composite report detailing the average performance across the year is produced at the end of the year by KSB.			19-Feb-2014









<p>Performance within Street Scene achieved good levels across all PIs with only flytipping not meeting the challenging targets set. Although failing to meet the target set flytipping only recorded a small presence of flytipping (1 item) on 3 of the 56 streets surveyed.</p> <p>The overall LEAMS score recorded in December was low at 66. 7 of the 56 streets surveyed were deemed to be of unacceptable cleanliness.</p> <p>Overall for the year targets remain on track.</p> <p>On the whole the service is performing very well and improvement in performance is expected to continue through 2014</p>	
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Waste Collection and Disposal			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
Percentage of total waste recycled/composted (monthly figure)	27%	31.8%	
Refuse Complaints received per 1000 households (Annual figure for 2011/12)		28.49	
Analysis			Date Updated







Project	Progress To Date	Latest Note Date
Zero Waste Project	<p>Energy from Waste Business Case. The Zero Waste Management Sub-Committee (ZWMSC) agreed recommendations on 5 December 2013:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the sub-committee agrees that the development of an Energy from Waste facility in the city remains the long-term objective for the management of residual waste and that a site or sites should be nominated for inclusion in the next Local Development Plan for an Energy from Waste Facility. 2. That the sub-committee instructs officers to pursue the nomination of a site or sites owned or controlled by the Council in the next Local Development Plan for the management of residual waste. 3. That the sub-committee instructs officers to seek partners for the future development of an Energy from Waste facility in order to obtain better value for money for the Council. 4. That the sub-committee instructs officers to engage with colleagues in Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure to develop markets and delivery models for heat and power produced from an Energy from Waste facility and reports back to this sub-committee and Enterprise, Strategy, Planning and Infrastructure committee after the summer recess in 2014. 5. That the Sub-committee instructs officers to report back in March 2015 with a review of the Business Case. Waste Management Services Contract. Negotiations continue with the Contractor to deliver the new facilities and services previously established by the Council. It is anticipated that this process will be complete in time to submit a report to the May ZWMSC <p>Site for Waste Infrastructure. A site for the location of a materials recycling facility, refuse derived fuel</p>	26-Feb-2014

	preparation plant and a new council depot is currently being secured but is at present is a commercially confidential matter. A site is required for the proposed Energy from Waste facility and officers are working with colleagues in Planning to nominate a site or sites in the Proposed Local Development Plan. The SITA UK Phase 2 submission was received on the 23 rd of Feb and will be discussed at a full meeting of the project team on the 5 th of March. Following on from the meeting an agreed contract variation should be in place by the end of August this year. The project time line is on track.	
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Project	Progress To Date	Latest Note Date
Attain efficiency savings in the domestic waste collection services	Reconfigured Bulk bin routes are being adopted and wheeled bin services are also being reviewed to optimise route efficiency. A trial for the residual waste routes took place on the 12 th of Feb with feedback received from the crews. The food waste rollout continues with Phase 2 of 4 approaching completion. The work to identify Phase 3 & 4 properties has begun with classification of private courtyard developments. In general, there have been few contamination issues however high traffic areas such as Union Street have suffered contamination and steps are being taken to prevent his affecting the bulk of the collection. A report is on the agenda in relation to the purchase of a combined radio and locating system. A preferred supplier has been identified and contract terms are close to being agreed. A legal issue with the location of one of the transmitters needs resolved before the new radio system can be ordered. Improvements in team working structure will be brought forward once the radio system is in operation.	26-Feb-2014

Trading Standards and Environmental Health			
	Current Target	Current Value	Traffic Light Icon
Domestic Noise Complaints - Average Time to attend on site for (Non Part V - Average Dog Barking and EPA Domestic) Annual Average	48 hours	31.6 hours	
High Priority Pest Control - % completed within 30 days	100%	97.5%	
Low priority Pest Control % completed within 30 days	100%	100%	
High Priority Public Health - % completed within 30 days	100%	69.7%	
Low Priority Public Health -% completed within 30 days	100%	70.6%	
Dog Fouling - % responded to within 2 days	100%	96%	
Dog Fouling -% completed within 30 days	100%	96%	
All Other Dog Complaints - % responded to within 5 days	100	94.6	

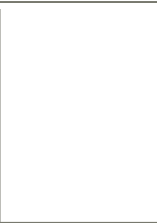
All Other Dog Complaints - % completed within 30 days	100	91.9	
Food Safety Hygiene Inspections % premises inspected 6 monthly	100%	95.65%	
Food Safety Hygiene Inspections % premises inspected 12 monthly	100%	99.23%	
Food Safety Hygiene Inspections % premises inspected more than 12 monthly	100%	90.32%	
Analysis			Date Updated
Performance on public health complaints, noise complaints and food hygiene inspections has been affected by the loss of two further members of professional staff. Efforts are being made to recruit new staff but Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) in particular are proving hard to recruit. Across the environmental health service, workload continues to be prioritised such that matters presenting the greatest risk to public health or safety are addressed first. Pest control and dog warden services, where there are no staff shortages currently, continue to perform well.			25-Feb-2014

Community Safety			
	Year to Date	Last Year to Date	Traffic Light Icon
Serious violent crime (cumulative total)	213	235	
Assault with less serious injury (cumulative total)	831	1058	
Wilful secondary fires (wheelie bin/ grass/ refuse) (cumulative total)	201	228	
Antisocial behaviour (cumulative total)	10,166	11,348	
% of calls attended that were attended within one hour in the year	95%	94.7%	
Customer Satisfaction with the service received from the Anti Social Behaviour Investigation Team (ASBIT)	80%	50%	
Analysis			Date Updated
Community safety in Aberdeen is continuing its overall reducing trend. From 1 April to 31 December 2013 there has been a 9.4% reduction in serious violent crime compared with the same period in 2012. This also represents a 34% reduction in incidents compared with average rate over the previous 5 year period. Progress continues to be made to improve safety in the city centre and in November 2013 the local partnership was awarded Purple Flag accreditation recognising excellence in managing the night-time economy. Assaults in the city centre have reduced by 21.5% this year to date. Community fire safety also shows improving trends with an 11.8% reduction in wilful secondary fires. Accidental house fires have reduced by 3.7% and structural			26-Feb-2014

wilful fires by 42.9%.

Substantial reductions are being experienced in antisocial behaviour complaints. There has been a 10.4% reduction in disorder complaints.

Neighbour complaints to the ASBIT have decreased by 26.3% this year. 94.7% of complaint calls requiring attendance are attended to within one hour. However, customer satisfaction with the ASBIT service remains low compared with the 80% target. A new questionnaire has been developed to assist accurate measurement and understanding of areas for improvement. This will be implemented from 1 April 2014.



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COMMITTEE:	Housing and Environment
DATE:	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard & Angela Scott
TITLE OF REPORT:	2013/14 Housing Capital Programme
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/019

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide elected members with a status report for the 2013/14 Housing Capital Programme as at 31 December 2013 summarising both income and expenditure.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:-

- a) Notes the financial information contained within this report and
- b) Instructs that the Head of Finance continues to update the Committee in consultation with the Director for Housing and Environment on the actual outturn position for 2013/14 following completion of the year end statutory accounts; and
- c) Approves the virements outlined in Appendix 2.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The monies required to fund the housing capital programme can be achieved through external borrowing, capital receipts, capital grants and a revenue contribution. There are adequate resources available to finance the projected capital spend in 2013/14, as required by the Prudential Code.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Failure to adequately maintain and improve the Council's housing stock may lead to the Council breaching health and safety regulations, poorer housing conditions in Aberdeen and result in lower demand.

The Council's Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) Standard Delivery Plan was approved by the former Communities Scotland in August 2006. This outlines the Council's strategy for meeting SHQS by 2015. If the Council cannot achieve the targets set within the Delivery Plan, within reasonable rent increases, then the Scottish Housing Regulator could intervene.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Council is required to manage its capital programme within the regulations set out in Part 7 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. This allows Councils to set their own borrowing limits, provided that they comply with the Prudential Code.
- 5.2 The Prudential Code requires Councils to set a capital programme that is affordable, prudent and sustainable. The main test of affordability is whether the capital financing costs can be contained within revenue budgets.
- 5.3 Council on the 19 December 2012 approved a funded Housing Capital Programme for 2013/14 of £41.5M.

POSITION TO DATE

- 5.4 The summary financial statement at Appendix 1 outlines the original budget for the current year and expenditure and income as at 31 December 2013.
- 5.5 Appendix 2 details the range of projects expected to be undertaken within the overall budget and spend to date.
- 5.6 The under spend remains at £5.5M from the funded budget of £41.5M. This is a result of potential under spends within the following projects Multi Storey structural repairs (item 2.1), Structural repairs (item 2.1.2) and Modernisation Programme (item 4.1).

EXPENDITURE

- 5.7 As at 31 December 2013 £20.4M of the approved budget has been spent to date.

SUMMARY

- 5.8 It is currently forecast, based on figures to date, that the Housing Capital programme outturn will be managed within the framework as set out in the Prudential Code.

6. IMPACT

- 6.1 Corporate – the housing capital programme encompasses projects which will link in one or several ways to the Community Plan, Single Outcome Agreement, Corporate and Individual Service Plans and Aberdeen – the Smarter City.
- 6.2 Public – this report will be of interest to the public as it demonstrates financial performance.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There are many factors that can lead to project delays such as consultation with tenants, decanting of tenants and access to properties. Such delays would result in the opportunity to advance other projects. There is a need for the capital programme slippage to be kept to a minimum to allow the Council to achieve the SHQS by 2015.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

19 December 2012 Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Housing Capital Budget 2013/14 to 2015/16

9.. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Helen Sherrit,
Finance Partner,
hsherrit@aberdeencity.gov.uk
(34)6353

2013/14

	Approved Budget £'000	Actual at 31/12/13 £'000	Estimated Out-turn £'000	Notes
Expenditure	46,930	20,482	36,033	1
Slippage	(5,397)			2
<u>Total Expenditure</u>	<u>41,533</u>	<u>20,482</u>	<u>36,033</u>	
<u>Funded by:</u>				
Borrowing	17,917	1,669	12,949	3
CFCR	22,116	17,313	23,084	4
Grant Income	1,500	1,500	1,500	
<u>Total Income</u>	<u>41,533</u>	<u>20,482</u>	<u>36,033</u>	

(Note 1) Expenditure

As at 31 December 2013 the Council has paid £20.4M of the budgeted £41.5M.

(Note 2) Slippage

The total available budgeted programme for capital expenditure of £46.9M is set to allow for slippage. (contract price variations, projects starting later than anticipated, projects being amended etc)

(Note 3) Borrowing

This is the level of borrowing the Council has approved to undertake in 2013/14.

(Note 4) Capital From Current Revenue (CFCR)

At present it is anticipated that £23M for the revenue contribution to capital will be made.

The overall level of the revenue contribution will be subject to variation dependent on the final position of the Housing Revenue Account and the Capital programme.

Appendix 2

Housing Capital 2013/14

Project	Original Approved Programme £'000	Actual As at 31 Dec £'000	Notes
SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS			
1 Compliant with the tolerable standard			
1.1 Major Repairs	1,301	91	
Roofs Renewal/Gutters/RWP/Roughcast			
Undertaking large scale repairs to Roofs/Gutters/RWP/Roughcast			
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	1,301	91	
2 Free from Serious Disrepair			
2.1 <u>Primary Building Elements</u>	5,676	2,834	9
Structural Repairs Multi Storey			
Multi Storey blocks are surveyed on a 5-7 year cycle to identify any works required to the Structure of the buildings in order to keep the buildings safe and prolong their life.			
Structural Repairs General Housing	1,184	13	10
Structural works carried out in order to keep the building stable and structurally sound			
<u>Secondary Building Elements</u>			
2.2 Upgrading Of Flat Roofs General	350	1	11
Replacement of existing roof covering and upgrading of insulation to meet current building Regulations.			
2.3 Upgrade Flat Roofs Multi Storey	1,038	564	
Full replacement of the flat roofs and also checking the replacement of roof ventilation as required			
2.5 Mono Pitched Types	581	359	1
Replacement of the external render of the building, replacement of gutters and downpipes and environmental works			
2.6 Window Replace General	725	572	2
A rolling programme of double glazing where previously single glazing, or replacing Double glazing to meet current standards. This is based on a cyclical programme.			
2.7 Window Replace Multi Storey	0	0	
A rolling programme to replace existing double glazing to meet current standards. This is on a cyclical programme.			
2.8 Balcony Storm Doors	60	0	
Replacement of existing doors with more secure, solid doors			
2.9 Balcony Glass Renewal - Multi Storey	1,398	1,685	3
Replacement of existing balcony glazing on a cyclical basis			
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	11,012	6,028	
3 Energy Efficient			
<u>Effective insulation</u>			
3.1 General Houses Loft Insulation	50	7	
Installation of loft insulation where there is none previously or the topping up of existing Insulation to comply with current building regulations.			
<u>Efficient Heating</u>			
3.3 Heating Systems Replacement	5,230	2,913	4
Replacement of boiler/whole system as deemed necessary.			
3.4 Medical Need Heating	50	0	
Installation of gas/electric heating depending on the medical assessment.			
This can be installing a completely new system, modifying or extending an existing system.			
3.5 Energy Efficiency Multi Blocks	1,720	1,265	5
Contribution to Aberdeen Heat & Power for the creation of Combined Heat & Power Plants			
3.6 Energy Efficiency Sheltered	250	110	
Introduction of energy efficiency measures in sheltered housing such as new or upgraded Systems.			

Project	Original Approved Programme £'000	Actual As at 31 Dec £'000	
<u>Additional Energy Efficiency measures</u>			
3.7 S.C.A.R.F. Payment to SCARF for work carried out by them under the Energy Efficiency programme to Individual council properties. The work carried out includes the installation of loft insulation, Draught proofing and compact fluorescent bulbs. Also, providing tenants with energy efficiency Advice and information.	35	0	
3.8 Solid Wall Insulation Installation of solid wall insulation where there was none previously.	250	1	
3.9 Vestibule Doors Installation of new doors where there were none before.	0	0	
	7,585	4,296	
4 Modern Facilities & Services			
<u>Bathroom and Kitchen Condition</u>			
4.1 Modernisation Programme Replacement of bathrooms and kitchens.	14,293	5,470	12
	14,293	5,470	
5 Healthy, Safe & Secure			
Healthy			
5.1 Condensation Measures Installation of heating systems and ventilation measures to combat condensation.	51	22	
Safe			
5.3 Rewiring Replacement of cabling, fittings and distribution boards as necessary. This work is carried out in every property on a cyclical basis	1,140	728	
5.4 Lift Replacement Multi Storey/Major Blocks Replacement of lifts where they are beyond economical repair. This can be full replacement replacement of specific parts of the lift.	1,050	343	
5.5 Smoke Detectors	155	35	
5.6 Services Cyclical maintenance/replacement of the following services Ventilation Systems, Water Tanks/Pipework, Refuse Chutes/Chamber Dry Riser Systems, Standby Generators	50	0	
5.7 Entrance Halls/Concierge Provision of security service	50	0	
5.8 Laundry Facilities Replacement of laundry equipment	194	189	6
5.9 Upgrading of Lighting Installation of lighting controlled by photo cell i.e. switches on and off automatically depending on the level of natural light. Installation of lighting in areas where there was none before.	43	87	7
Secure			
5.11 Door Entry Systems Installation of door entry and replacement of existing doors where required	40	0	
5.12 Replace Door Entry Systems - Major Blocks Installation of door entry and replacement of existing doors where required	200	0	13
5.13 Other Initiatives Upgrading of stairs and installation of security doors and door entry systems	750	257	
5.14 Crime Prevention /Safety Measures			
	3,723	1,661	

Project	Original Approved Programme £'000	Actual As at 31 Dec £'000	
NON SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS			
6 Community Plan & Single Outcome Agreement			
6.1 Housing For Varying Needs New build including extra care housing.	500	382	8
6.2 S.U.R.E. Refurbishment of properties or environmental improvements in designated areas.	304	86	
6.4 Regeneration/Affordable Housing Early Action projects linked to Regeneration and Master planning Briefs for Regeneration & provision of consultation events.	0	0	
6.5 Acquisition of Land/Houses Acquisition of land for new build programme	300	55	
6.6 CCTV – Concierge Provision of CCTV for the new Concierge service	150	47	
6.7 Adaptations Disabled Installation of level access showers, ramps, stair lifts and kitchen adaptations	1,330	734	
6.8 Special Initiatives/Barrier Free Housing Provision of specialist facilities or housing for tenants with particular needs i.e. extensions	650	3	
6.9 Housing For Varying Needs- Amenity/Adaptations Conversion of properties to Amenity Level standard	200	116	
6.10 Housing For Varying Needs- Extra Care/Adaptations Adaptations required to ensure existing sheltered housing stock meets current standards	152	182	
6.11/ Roads/Paths	100	0	
6.12 Upgrade of Roads to an adoptable standard and the Formation or upgrading of paths	100	40	
6.13 Garages Upgrade of Garages	0	-5	
6.14 New Affordable Housing	1,015	721	
	<u>4,801</u>	<u>2,361</u>	
7 Service Development			
7.1 Conditions Surveys Surveying of Council houses to identify failures against Scottish Housing Quality Standard	50	0	
7.2 Property Database Various items of IT equipment including hardware and software	100	6	
7.3 Integrated Housing System Various purchase of PC's and software packages	100	67	
	<u>250</u>	<u>73</u>	
8 Service Expenditure			
Corporate Fees	3,963	502	
	<u>3,963</u>	<u>502</u>	
Total Budget	<u>46,930</u>	<u>20,482</u>	

SUBTRACTIONS

ADDITIONS

Note 1 - 2.5 Mono Pitched Properties

Sum to be vired £30,000

Additional properties have been added to the programme.

Note 2 - 2.6 General Window Replacement

Sum to be vired £550,000

Fountain Grange window replacement has been brought forward to tie in with the district heating upgrade to enhance energy efficiency grant funding.

Note 3 - 2.9 Balcony Glass Replacement

Sum to be vired £550,000

Additional funding is required due to the inclusion of structural repairs to blocks which were identified during balcony glass replacement.

Note 4 - 3.3 Upgrading of Heating Systems

Sum to be vired £312,000

Additional addresses have now been included in the programme

Note 5 - 3.5 Energy Efficiency – Multi Blocks

Sum to be vired £255,000

Preparatory work for the provision of CHP at Cornhill and Tillydrone multi storey blocks is required.

Note 6 - Laundry Equipment

Sum to be vired £69,000

The increase in budget requirements is due to the costs for replacing existing cash card system with Accord Card system.

Note 7 - 5.9 Lighting of Common Areas

Sum to be vired £50,000

Additional areas have been identified during the financial year where existing lighting fails SHQS.

Note 8 - 6.1 Housing for Varying Needs

Sum to be vired £250,000

Further funding is required to cover under estimate in expenditure for Clashieknowe refurbishment.

SUBTRACTIONS

Note 9 - 2.1.1 Multi Storey Structural Repairs

Sum to be vired £500,000

Reduced as the consultation with owners has taken longer than anticipated on the proposals to carry out structural repairs at the multi storey blocks in Seaton area and legal consultation was required on the over cladding of Cornhill multis.

Note 10 - 2.1.2 General Housing Structural Repairs

Sum to be vired £500,000

A reduction due to further consultation with owners in 770-864 Great Northern Road and further investigation to the extent of structural work required at 36 Stafford Street.

Note 11 - 2.2 Upgrading of Flat Roofs in General Housing

Sum to be vired £300,000

Due to competing priorities the service has been unable to progress with this project in 2013/14.

Note 12 - 4.1 Modernisation

Sum to be vired £586,000

Following surveys a number of properties have been deleted from the modernization programme due to addresses already meeting SHQS and some tenants have refused work.

Note 13 -5.12 Replacement of Door Entry Systems in Major Blocks

Sum to be vired £180,000

A survey of the blocks identified for this year's Door entry programme have identified a number which do not need replaced.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Housing and Environment

DATE: 11 March 2014

DIRECTOR: Pete Leonard & Angela Scott

TITLE OF REPORT: 2013/14 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

REPORT NUMBER: H&E/014/20

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to
- i) bring to Committee members notice the current year revenue budget performance to date for the Services which relate to this Committee;
 - ii) advise on any areas of risk and management action; and
 - iii) approve the request to earmark a sum of £400K.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- i) consider and note this report and the information on management action and risks that is contained herein;
 - ii) instruct that officers report the year end position to the appropriate committee; and
 - iii) approve the request to earmark £400K from the 2013/14 under spend for 2014/15 to spend on environmental improvements linked to Aberdeen's Greenspace Strategy and in Bloom agenda.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 3.1. The HRA which has gross expenditure budget of £80M is ring-fenced and is funded mainly from housing rents.
- 3.2. The forecast position on the HRA, as outlined, indicates that there will be a working balance of £5.5M after taking account of the 2013/14 outturn and other agreed commitments. This is in excess of the recommended minimum level of £5.2M.

General Fund

- 3.3. The total Housing and Environment budget amounts to £36.4M net expenditure, excluding the HRA budget.
- 3.4. The forecast position indicates an under spend of £2.8M.
- 3.5. Further details of the financial implications are set out in section 5 and appendix A attached.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The Service revenue monitoring reports and associated notes are attached at Appendix A

Financial Position and Risks Assessment

Housing Revenue Account

The projected net saving for the year is forecast at £23M. It is anticipated this will be used to provide a CFCR contribution to fund the capital programme and increase the working balance. The principal movements within this total relate to an increase in dwelling house income and voids, a reduction in management & admin & capital financing. The impact of Welfare Reform on the HRA is being closely monitoring, there was also a provision made in the 2012/13 accounts to mitigate some of the potential impacts.

General Fund

In overall terms the position forecasts an under spend of £2.8M on the total Housing and Environment Budget (excluding the HRA).

- 5.2 The areas contributing to this movement are as follows

	£'000
Homeless	(1,110)
Trading Standards & Env Protection	(580)
Supporting People	(170)
Other Housing	(180)
Grounds Maintenance	(240)
Recycling & Waste Disposal	(530)
Environmental	10
Community Safety	(10)
ASSL	(50)
	<hr/> <hr/> (2,860)

- Homeless is forecast to be £1.1M lower than budget. This is due mainly to a reduction in the use of bed & breakfast as a result of private sector leased flats now being used, changes in contracts to outside agencies, reduction in forecasts for admin & management charges and lower than anticipated spend on furniture services and tenancy set up fund. The forecast is based on current activity.
 - Supporting People are forecast to be £170K below budget due to staff vacancies and reduced forecasts for courses, office supplies and software support as a result of historical budgets.
 - Other Housing is forecast to be £180K under budget due to the anticipated reductions in administration costs.
 - Recycling & Waste Disposal is forecast to be £530K under budget. This is due to an under spend on staff costs and Internal Fleet charges based on 12/13 costs, however this has partly been offset by a reduction in Commercial Waste income, the higher costs of Landfill tax based on tonnages to date & Food Waste Programme.
 - Charges for Fleet costs up to Period 8 have been applied where insufficient or no budgets are in place. These affect Waste, Environmental Services and Environmental Protection. A number of these charges are currently in dispute with Fleet therefore the outturns have not been amended to reflect current charges. If the charges remain unchanged and continue at the same rate there could be an over spend of £200K.
- 5.3 A request is made to earmark £400K of the under spend from Housing & Environment in 2013/14 for 2014/15 for environmental improvements linked to Aberdeen's Greenspace Strategy and in Bloom agenda. These improvements would be sustainable and would be of benefit across the city. It is envisaged that the funding will be split equally, £200K each, between Housing & Environment and Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure. The budget would be managed by Housing & Environment.

The money allocated to Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure would include works for –

- Lighting column painting
- Fencing / railing repairs / replacement
- Road repairs
- Roundabout improvements
- Verge improvements

The money allocated to Housing & Environment would include works for –

- Enhancing the city gateways
- Community / Friends groups match funding
- Formal gardens improvements

- General shrub bed and rose bed refurbishment
- City Centre planting
- Helping to deliver school projects
- Refurbishment of key park assets ie water fountains

The money would allow for many projects to be invested in which at the moment the service can not afford. The improvements would be seen in all areas of the city and would allow for community projects to get underway.

A further benefit of the additional spend would be to help Aberdeen's Britain in Bloom 2014 campaign.

6. IMPACT

As a recognised top priority the Council must take the necessary measures to balance its budget. Therefore Committees and Services are required to work within a financial constraint. Every effort is being focused on delivering services more efficiently and effectively.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

To ensure the anticipated forecast outturn is maintained the service has been -

- Managing controllable costs for example staff vacancies and overtime
- Maximising the potential income streams of the service.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Financial ledger data extracted for the period.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Helen Sherrit
Finance Partner
hsherrit@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 346353

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
REVENUE MONITORING 2013/14

DIRECTORATE : Housing and Environment

As at	31 December 2013	Full year Revised Budget	YEAR TO DATE			FORECAST TO YEAR END			Change from last report
			Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure	Variance Amount	Outturn	Variance Amount	Variance Percent	
ACCOUNTING PERIOD 9		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000
HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY		6,608	4,956	2,898	(2,058)	5,137	(1,471)	(22)%	1,481
HEAD OF REGENERATION AND HOUSING INVESTMENT		(1,921)	(1,441)	(1,654)	(213)	(1,920)	1	(0)%	0
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT SERVICES		30,641	22,981	22,323	(658)	29,255	(1,386)	(5)%	(687)
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT MANAGER		1,071	803	700	(103)	1,069	(2)	0%	0
TOTAL BUDGET		36,399	27,299	24,267	(3,032)	33,541	(2,858)	(8)	794
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT		(23,034)	(28,484)	(28,695)	(211)	(23,084)	(50)	0%	(24)

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
REVENUE MONITORING 2013 / 2014: HEAD OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY SAFETY

DIRECTORATE : HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT
DIRECTOR : PETE LEONARD

As at	31 December 2013	Full year Revised Budget	YEAR TO DATE			FORECAST TO YEAR END			Change from last report
			Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure	Variance Amount	Outturn	Variance Amount	Variance Percent	
ACCOUNTING PERIOD 9		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000
STAFF COSTS		4,455	3,341	3,001	(340)	4,228	(227)	-5%	1,056
PROPERTY COSTS		2,512	1,884	2,058	174	2,743	231	9%	276
ADMINISTRATION COSTS		1,226	920	536	(384)	1,423	197	16%	624
TRANSPORT COSTS		67	50	34	(16)	57	(10)	-15%	2
SUPPLIES & SERVICES		1,266	950	518	(432)	780	(486)	-38%	97
TRANSFER PAYMENTS		6,870	5,153	4,180	(973)	5,816	(1,054)	-15%	(232)
CAPITAL FINANCING		0	0		0	0	0	0%	0
GROSS EXPENDITURE		16,396	12,297	10,327	(1,970)	15,047	(1,349)	-8%	1,823
LESS:									
INCOME		(9,788)	(7,341)	(7,429)	(88)	(9,910)	(122)	1%	(342)
TOTAL INCOME		(9,788)	(7,341)	(7,429)	(88)	(9,910)	(122)	1%	(342)
NET EXPENDITURE		6,608	4,956	2,898	(2,058)	5,137	(1,471)	-22%	1,481

VIREMENT PROPOSALS

None

REVENUE MONITORING VARIANCE NOTES

Overall Note

The large movements from the last report relate to the Movement of the Hostels from the HRA to General Fund, this is at no cost.

Employee Costs

(227) 1,056

The anticipated outturn is based on the current level of staffing and the main under spend is within Homeless.

Property Costs

231 276

The over spend mainly relates to factoring, an outturn of £269K has been included however this will be balanced by income received.

Administration Costs

197 624

The over spend principally relates to bad debt forecasts within Homeless for the flats, B&B, private sector leasing & the hostels.

Transport Costs

(10) 2

This budget is for travelling expenses and outturns have been reviewed based on spend to date.

Supplies and Services

(486) 97

The underspend relates mainly to an anticipated lower spend on furniture purchases & Bed & Breakfast in Homelessness.

Transfer Payments

(1,054) (232)

Principally the anticipated underspend is from £720K in Homeless from the reduction in the usage of bed and breakfast and furniture and the £220K in the improvement grants.

Capital Financing Costs

0 0

Capital Financing Costs have now been removed from the budgets and will be treated corporately.

Income

(122) (342)

The forecast over spend relates to increased income from Homeless Flats of £101K, Private Sector Leasing of £258K, Factoring of £294K which is netted off by a reduction in Bed & Breakfast income of £425K & Improvement Grants of £232K

(1,471) 1,481

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
REVENUE MONITORING 2013 / 2014 :HEAD OF REGENERATION & HOUSING INVESTMENT

DIRECTORATE : HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT
DIRECTOR : PETE LEONARD

As at 31 December 2013	Full year Revised Budget	YEAR TO DATE			FORECAST TO YEAR END			Change from last report
		Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure	Variance Amount	Outturn	Variance Amount	Variance Percent	
ACCOUNTING PERIOD 9	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000
STAFF COSTS	3,169	2,377	2,074	(303)	2,697	(472)	-15%	0
ADMINISTRATION COSTS	56	42	12	(30)	53	(3)	-5%	0
TRANSPORT COSTS	92	69	38	(31)	53	(39)	-42%	0
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	489	367	476	109	646	157	32%	0
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
GROSS EXPENDITURE	3,806	2,855	2,600	(255)	3,449	(357)	-9%	0
LESS								
INCOME	(5,727)	(4,295)	(4,254)	41	(5,369)	358	-6%	0
TOTAL INCOME	(5,727)	(4,295)	(4,254)	41	(5,369)	358	-6%	0
NET EXPENDITURE	(1,921)	(1,441)	(1,654)	(213)	(1,920)	1	0%	0

VIREMENT PROPOSALS

None

REVENUE MONITORING VARIANCE NOTES

	FORECAST VARIANCE £'000	CHANGE £'000
Employee Costs	(472)	0
The anticipated outturn is based on the current level of staffing and the underspend is £348K for Construction Consultancy & £124K from Housing Repairs.		
Administration Costs	(3)	0
The outturn is based on actual to date and previous years spend.		
Transport Costs	(39)	0
This budget is for travelling expenses and outturns have been reviewed based on spend to date.		
Supplies and Services	157	0
The overspend of £156K is as a result of a increase in projected expenditure on Consultants Fees due to the nature of the activities in Construction Consultancy and the Victoria House new build.		
Capital Financing Costs	0	0
Capital Financing Costs have now been removed from the budgets and will be treated corporately.		
Income	358	0
The budgeted fee income from Housing capital in Construction Consultancy is forecast to be below budget based on current activity.		

1	0
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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
REVENUE MONITORING 2013 / 2014 : HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT SERVICES

DIRECTORATE : HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT
DIRECTOR : PETE LEONARD

As at 31 December 2013	Full year Revised Budget	YEAR TO DATE			FORECAST TO YEAR END			Change from last report
		Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure	Variance Amount	Outturn	Variance Amount	Variance Percent	
ACCOUNTING PERIOD 9	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000
STAFF COSTS	18,350	13,763	12,891	(872)	17,084	(1,266)	-7%	(492)
PROPERTY COSTS	806	605	609	5	898	92	11%	(59)
ADMINISTRATION COSTS	413	310	200	(110)	404	(9)	-2%	(7)
TRANSPORT COSTS	1,986	1,490	1,678	189	1,859	(127)	-6%	1
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	9,983	7,487	7,537	50	10,894	911	9%	584
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	8,226	6,170	6,835	666	8,226	0	0%	0
CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS	0	0		0	0	0	0%	0
GROSS EXPENDITURE	39,764	29,823	29,750	(73)	39,365	(399)	-1%	27
LESS: INCOME								
INCOME	(9,123)	(6,842)	(7,427)	(585)	(10,110)	(987)	11%	(714)
TOTAL INCOME	(9,123)	(6,842)	(7,427)	(585)	(10,110)	(987)	11%	(714)
NET EXPENDITURE	30,641	22,981	22,323	(658)	29,255	(1,386)	-5%	(687)

VIREMENT PROPOSALS

None

REVENUE MONITORING VARIANCE NOTES

Employee Costs

Staff costs are to date below budget, an underspend of £1.2M is being anticipated this is split over a very wide variety of services including Grounds Maintenance & Waste.

FORECAST VARIANCE	CHANGE
£'000	£'000
(1,266)	(492)

Property Costs

The main reason for the forecast over spend is £82K in the Winter Gardens due to increased fuel costs, this has reduced from the last report due to a reduced requirement.

92 (59)

Administration Costs

The main underspend is £10K for Trainee Health Officers with the difference from a wide variety of services..

(9) (7)

Transport Costs

This budget is for travelling expenses and outturns have been reviewed based on spend to date.

(127) 1

Supplies and Services

The predicted over spend relates to an increase in Waste of £952K, Tree Squad of £45K and £36K in Commercial and reduced by an under spend within Contaminated land of £150K.

911 584

Capital Financing Costs

Capital Financing Costs have now been removed from the budgets and will be treated corporately.

0 0

Income

The forecast over spend relates to income £143K incorrectly budgeted within Street Sweeping this will be corrected for 2014/15, a forecast reduction of £150K in Commercial Waste which is netted off with potential increases in income from Tree Squad £53K, Grounds Maintenance £50K, Other Collection £895K, Crematorium £114K & ASSL £74K.

(987) (714)

(1,386)	(687)
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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
REVENUE MONITORING 2013 / 2014 : OPERATIONAL SUPPORT MANAGER

DIRECTORATE : HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT
DIRECTOR : PETE LEONARD

As at 31 December 2013	Full year Revised Budget	YEAR TO DATE			FORECAST TO YEAR END			Change from last report £'000
		Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure	Variance Amount	Outturn	Variance Amount	Variance Percent	
ACCOUNTING PERIOD 9	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000
STAFF COSTS	1,075	806	813	7	1,075	0	0%	0
PROPERTY COSTS	301	226	233	7	299	(2)	-1%	0
ADMINISTRATION COSTS	72	54	59	5	72	0	0%	0
TRANSPORT COSTS	16	12	4	(8)	16	0	0%	0
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	348	261	25	(236)	348	0	0%	0
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
GROSS EXPENDITURE	1,812	1,359	1,134	(225)	1,810	(2)	0%	0
LESS: INCOME								
INCOME	(741)	(556)	(434)	122	(741)	0	0%	0
TOTAL INCOME	(741)	(556)	(434)	122	(741)	0	0%	0
NET EXPENDITURE	1,071	803	700	(103)	1,069	(2)	0%	0

VIREMENT PROPOSALS

None

REVENUE MONITORING VARIANCE NOTES

Overall Note

A review has been completed on the recharges to other heads. The forecast will be updated in future reports.

FORECAST
VARIANCE
£'000

CHANGE
£'000

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
REVENUE MONITORING 2013 / 2014 - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

DIRECTORATE : HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT
DIRECTOR : PETE LEONARD

As at	31 December 2013	Full year Revised Budget	YEAR TO DATE			FORECAST TO YEAR END			Change from last report
			Revised Budget	Actual Expenditure	Variance Amount	Outturn	Variance Amount	Variance Percent	
ACCOUNTING PERIOD 9		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000
PROPERTY COSTS		30,212	22,659	21,630	(1,029)	30,236	24	0%	1
ADMINISTRATION COSTS		10,985	8,239	7,326	(913)	10,888	(97)	-1%	0
SUPPLIES & SERVICES		542	407	311	(96)	509	(33)	-6%	(1)
TRANSFER PAYMENTS TOTAL		2,034	381	1,873	1,492	2,614	580	29%	(30)
CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS		13,593	131	117	(14)	13,355	(238)	-2%	17
GROSS EXPENDITURE		57,366	31,816	31,257	(559)	57,602	236	0%	(13)
LESS: INCOME									
OTHER GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS		(234)	(176)	(117)	59	(234)	0	0%	0
INTEREST		(148)	(111)	0	111	(138)	10	-7%	0
OTHER INCOME		(80,018)	(60,014)	(59,835)	179	(80,314)	(296)	0%	(11)
TOTAL INCOME		(80,400)	(60,300)	(59,952)	348	(80,686)	(286)	0%	(11)
NET EXPENDITURE		(23,034)	(28,484)	(28,695)	(211)	(23,084)	(50)	0%	(24)

VIREMENT PROPOSALS

REVENUE MONITORING VARIANCE NOTES

Property Costs

The forecast over spend is principally made up of a number of services including Council Tax £80K & Cleaning Sheltered Housing £50K which is offset by under spends in Security £70K & cleaning of the Multi Storey Blocks £40K.

FORECAST VARIANCE £'000 CHANGE £'000

24 1

Administration Costs

The projected variance is principally due to a decrease in management & admin of £490K which is based on a detailed analysis of current vacancies and potential central support charges. In addition there is also a increase of £420K in former tenants arrears based on the outturn for 2012-13.

(97) 0

Supplies and Services

The Provision of meals outturn has been increased by £20K to reflect the actual costs for 2012/13 & there is an under spend anticipated of £40K on equipment purchases.

(33) (1)

Transfer Payments

The main reason for the over spend is the loss of rent for Council Houses which is high as result of properties moving from the capped rent and delays in gas checks and OT property reviews, this has improved as an OT has been appointed.

580 (30)

Capital Financing Costs

Capital Financing Costs are posted at the end of the financial year. It is forecast that capital financing costs are £230K under budget these are the latest forecasts from Corporate Accounting based on capital expenditure for 2012/13 and Outturn for 2013/14.

(238) 17

Income

The forecasts for Dwelling House Rent Income and various other rents are based on current forecast level of income. Principally as a result of properties moving from the capped rent when the property becomes void.

(286) (11)

(50) (24)

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing & Environment
DATE	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Capital Monitoring – Housing & Environment Projects
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/13/153

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Committee of the capital spend to date for the Housing & Environment projects included within the Non-Housing Capital Programme.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee note the current position.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The monies required to fund these projects are achieved through external borrowing, capital receipts and grant income. These projects are all accommodated within the Non-Housing Capital Programme. Any underspend, carry forward or overspend will have implications for the programme. There are no issues at present that would result in such implications. As part of the Council's five year business plan, capital expenditure is now monitored within a five year timescale where appropriate. This has given budget holders the ability to profile across the full five years. In year monitoring will continue, alongside monitoring the complete Capital Programme.

Some projects are now profiled for little or indeed no expenditure in the current financial year. In these instances, budget holders have profiled the intended expenditure in the appropriate financial year. Budget holders who are profiling slippage on a legally committed project into the next financial year(s) are also profiling this expenditure into the appropriate year.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications at this time but as projects progress or indeed fail to progress then other implications may arise and will be reported at an appropriate Committee.

5. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

As reported at the Finance & Resources Committee in June 2012 the overall responsibility for the monitoring / management of the Capital Programme lies with the Head of Asset Management & Operations. The Planning & Monitoring Officer within Asset Management & Operations is in regular contact with the Service Representative and the Capital Accountant, reporting in the first instance to the Corporate Asset Group. This ensures that the spend figures are always up to date and accurate.

Housing & Environment has a total of 4 projects, totaling £14.742 million allocated to it from the 2013/14 Non-Housing Capital Programme. The projects and total budget committed to each project included in the programme are:-

- 1) Duthie Park & Winter Gardens – Cost Net of HLF
£158,000
- 2) Private Sector Housing Grant
£1.094 million
- 3) Victoria House
£2.452 million
- 4) Waste: Implement Waste Strategy
£11.038 million

Spend for all projects to the end of January is £2.954 million. Spend profiles provided by budget holders show it is anticipated that underspend this financial year will be picked up in the following financial year(s).

Appendix A provides a breakdown of expenditure to date and supporting information where appropriate.

An update on the capital position will be reported to this Committee on 20 May 2014.

6. IMPACT



Corporate - The capital programme encompasses projects which link to the Community Plan, Single Outcome Agreement, Corporate and Individual Service Plans.

Public - This report will be of interest to the public as it outlines the Council's capital spending to date on Housing & Environment projects.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Non-Housing Capital Programme 2012/13 – Capital Monitoring Report
approved at Finance & Resources Committee on 19 June 2012

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

David Marshall
Planning & Monitoring Officer
 damarshall@aberdeencity.gov.uk
 01224 523191

**Appendix A:
Capital Monitoring – Housing & Environment projects 2013-14 to 2017-18**

Project Description	Revised Budget 2013/14	Spend to January 2013	Profiled out-turn 2013/14	Five year budget '13-'18	Legal Commitments	Profiled out-turn 2013-18
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Duthie Park & Winter Gardens - Cost Net of HLF	158	142	152	158	10	152
Private Sector Housing Grant	1,094	432	520	6,206	197	3,920
Victoria House	2,452	444	670	2,452	2,096	2,502
Waste: Implement Waste Strategy	11,038	1,936	2,563	26,363	600	26,363
Totals	14,742	2,954	3,905	35,179	2,903	32,937

*Revised budget includes carry forward / adjustments approved by Finance & resources Committee.

- The final account for the restoration works at Duthie Park is still to be agreed with the main contractor. There will be minimal expenditure early next financial year to settle this.
- The Victoria House Design Team has confirmed that contingencies have been reduced in the contract, allowing savings of £57,000 to be made. This will allow the project to be delivered within the authorised capital budget commitment. The overall project will be completed in Summer 2014.
- The Waste Strategy budget holder continues to re – profile each aspect of the Waste Strategy. All of these will become more refined next financial year following discussions with CITA.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Housing and Environment
DATE : 11th March 2014
DIRECTOR: Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT: Affordable Housing – Grant Assistance
REPORT NUMBER: H&E/14/027

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report seeks agreement from Committee on the provision of grant assistance to Grampian Housing Association to help deliver a housing development at Hopetoun Grange.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Committee:-

- Agree a grant of up to £261,734 to enable the provision of 16 social rent units, and
- The grant to be paid from developer contributions received from Section 75 obligations.
- Approval of grant will contribute to the Strategic Infrastructure Plan target of 2,030 new affordable houses by 2017.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Any grant funding to a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) for such a project falls within the scope of State Aid. The Council has determined that the Grant comes within the ambit of the Services of General Economic Interest block exemption which permits unlimited funding (in accordance with the framework) to Registered Social Landlords in the area of social housing, however the Housing Service routinely consults with Legal Services on a case by case basis.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The increased provision of good quality affordable housing will make a significant contribution towards tackling the housing need identified in Aberdeen and in particular increase provision of housing for homeless households.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils in conjunction with the Aberdeen City & Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority undertook a Housing Need and Demand Assessment in 2011. The assessment identified a need for 415 new affordable houses per annum for the next ten years. This information has been used to inform the Strategic Development Plan, the Local Development Plan and in turn informed the Local Housing Strategy 2012-17.

Strategic Local Programme (SLP)

The SLP agreed at Committee in May 2013 includes Hopetoun Grange and it was also included in the Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) submitted to the Scottish Government in August 2013, which was based on the SLP.

Grampian Housing Association has submitted an application for grant assistance to 16 affordable housing units from Persimmons at Hopetoun Grange for social rented housing. The units are 2 bedroom flats and the likely completion date is July 2015.

The site at Hopetoun Grange is now part of the Aberdeen Strategic Housing Investment Programme agreed with the Scottish Government. One of key goals of the Aberdeen Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SIP) is to achieve a “Step change in the supply of housing”, with a target to provide 2,030 new affordable houses by 2017. The site at Hopetoun Grange will contribute 16 units to this overall target .

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) has been allocated new funding by the Resource Planning Assumption (RPA) of £10.06 million by the Scottish Government for the three year period to March 2015. Current commitments against the RPA for developments at Copper Beech, Old Church Road and Cattofield is £3.446million, which results in £6.615 million still to be committed to projects from RPA. The Hopetoun Grange project would require Scottish Government grant of £1,011,520.

Aberdeen City Council Grant Assistance

Although there has been an increase in the subsidy level (8th July 2013) from the Scottish Government the current grant available for social rented housing is still significantly below that previously provided. The costs of development locally (land and construction costs) together with the rental income generated to service private borrowing can not cover the development costs for projects in

Aberdeen without the City Council providing additional grant support. This grant funding can come from two different sources:

a. Section 75 Negotiations

Section 75 agreements negotiated through the planning process with Housing Developers may, on occasion, require that the developer makes a financial contribution toward affordable housing rather than delivering affordable housing on the specific site to which the planning permission applies.

Agreements to date have provided an income detailed below.

Section 75	£
Income received	2,708,138
Interest received (to 31.3.13)	149,774
Grants paid to RSLs	1,777,081
Commitments to RSLs	372,819
Available Balance	708,012

The funding comes with a requirement to be spent within 5 years of receipt, with the money held in an interest bearing account. The oldest payment the Council has received is from August 2011.

Agreements are in place to provide a further income of £1,712,500. All other forms of affordable housing delivery are explored before accepting a financial contribution.

b. Council Tax Discount on Second Homes and Long-term Empty Properties

The Council used its powers to reduce the Council Tax Discount to 10% for these properties from 2005/06. The extra income raised from this can be used by local authorities for the direct provision of affordable council housing as well as grant funding for RSLs.

Income received and commitments to date are shown below.

	£
Income	9,604,445
Paid	4,519,930
Commitment	2,079,141
Available Balance	3,005,374

The Council Tax Discount provided an income of £1,371,444 for 2012/13. Based on current void rates in both the private and public sector, projected annual income is assumed to be around this figure

but shall be closely monitored every year and assumptions adjusted accordingly.

Hopetoun Grange – Grampian Housing Association

It is proposed there will be 16 x 2 bed social rented flats. The flats will be for 4 people as they will be bigger than those normally offered by developers. The Scottish Grant benchmark level to be applied would be for a four person property.

Discussions have been held with Grampian to identify the additional grant funding support which would be required to see the delivery of the Hopetoun Grange site.

Without this additional grant from the Council Grampian HA could not provide the number of social rented housing units proposed based on the development costs, levels of Scottish Government grant and the rental income available to service private borrowing.

The total grant requirement and shortfall is given in the table below:

Total Grant requirement	Scottish Government Grant from RPA	Grant Shortfall to be provided by ACC	Private Finance (RSL contribution)	Total cost of development
£1,273,254	£1,011,520	£261,734	£784,349	£2,057,603

This report seeks agreement to provide grant of up to £261,734 to allow the development of the Hopetoun Grange site subject to a Minute of Agreement and Standard Security with Grampian HA. The grant figures shown for Aberdeen City Council are the maximum value. We are reviewing the position and may offer a lower level of grant.

6. IMPACT

Corporate

SOA, National Outcome 10, “We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need”.

- Work with Registered Social Landlords to develop affordable housing including 2,000 new affordable houses

The 5 Year Corporate Business Plan and Housing and Environment Business Plan housing priorities:

- We will build new houses to increase provision of affordable houses for the council
- We will play our part in partnership working on community safety, protecting vulnerable people , health and well being and other community planning priorities

Public

The public would be interested in this report as it shows the Council's commitment to work with partners in the provision of new affordable housing to meet the identified housing needs in the City.

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been carried out in relation to this report.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

A positive decision on this report would result in increasing the provision of affordable housing in Aberdeen City. A negative decision would result in people's housing needs not being met.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Strategic Infrastructure Plan.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Les McGonigle
Local Housing Strategy Officer
Email - lmcgonigle@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Telephone - 01224 522582

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Housing and Environment
DATE 11 March 2014
DIRECTOR Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT Rent Arrears - Update
REPORT NUMBER: [H&E/14/026](#)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the actions being taken to implement targets for the management of rent arrears, and in particular those tenants with 13 weeks or more of rent arrears as requested at the last Housing and Environment Committee of 14 January 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

Committee are asked to note the report

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

N/A

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

At the end of January 2014 the overall balance of outstanding arrears was £3.9m with almost £2.5m of this debt being due for arrears greater than 13 weeks, including those with arrears of less than £250.

Of the 2804 cases with arrears greater than 13 weeks a significant proportion of these cases have either, been served with a Notice of Proceedings, enrolled in court or indeed suspended in court following an arrangement having been agreed with the Sheriff. The numbers and values are as follows:

- 286 cases at NOP stage with a value of £293,854
- 456 cases enrolled in court, with a value of £723,328
- 526 cases suspended in court, value of £733,328

This brings the total value of cases already within the Court arena to more than £1.75m and largely outwith the control of the Housing Management teams.

A further 481 cases have an acceptable arrangement in place to repay their arrears. These cases account for a further £410,000 of the outstanding arrears greater than 13 weeks. The balance of these cases is currently at the pre-NOP stage and are in the process of being escalated unless arrangements to pay are agreed with the tenant

Members should be aware that the maximum number of cases that Aberdeen City Council are currently allowed to lodge into the Heritable Property Court are restricted by the Scottish Court Service. Currently the Court will only hear 30 “new” cases and 35 “incidental” (returning) cases each week. These maximum numbers are due for review soon and the concern is that the Scottish Court Service may further reduce the number of spaces available to the Council.

The small number of cases being heard each week at Court does mean that there is a bottleneck effect on the rent arrears, which of course results in higher arrears balances.

The percentage of arrears greater than 13 weeks is currently sitting at 9.5% with a current target of 8.6%. As part of the Performance Review and Development meetings individual Housing Officers are being given a target of their own to meet, to try and ensure that the overall target of 8.6% is achieved for next year.

Given the fact however that largely Housing staff have little control of the case once the arrear has passed the Notice of Proceedings stage, it is more important to focus on the early intervention work, and try to reduce the number of cases escalating to an arrear greater than 13 weeks. This however is dependent on tenants engaging with us when contacted.

Some of the early actions that have now been introduced since the last Committee are that new guidance has been issued to staff on how to come to an arrangement with tenants in arrears. This is attached at Appendix 1 for information. This was introduced following concerns that staff were not confident when agreeing a repayment plan which could be sustained by the tenant. This new guidance provides information for staff on how to do this and appropriate levels for repayment in different circumstances, but still leaves Housing Officers with the option of agreeing a more flexible approach where necessary.

A new pre-abandonment procedure has also been introduced. This will be used when a tenant has failed to respond to our overtures to make contact during escalation and we cannot be sure whether they are in fact still resident. Housing Officers can consider the history of the

tenancy and issue a warning of possible future abandonment action. This approach can save time and money, particularly in terms of avoiding the lengthy court process, thereby avoiding further arrears and court costs. This procedure will also help where tenants who have been unwilling to come and discuss their arrears with us, encourages or forces contact from the tenant. Feedback from other Scottish Local Authorities confirms that this approach can work well in specific circumstances. It will certainly help us determine whether a property has been genuinely abandoned or someone with no attachment to the property and no intention to pay. Similarly, it will also help us identify tenants who need specialist support and advice.

Housing Benefit Clawbacks account for approximately £28k being added to the rent accounts every month. This is where tenants who have previously been in receipt of Housing Benefit have been paid too much and therefore the Revenues and Benefits Team seek to recover the overpayment from the tenants ongoing housing benefit award. The average amount recovered in this way is £9.00 per week from individual tenants, however this amount can be reduced where tenants complete an income and expenditure form. A new procedure has been introduced where all new Housing Benefit claw-backs are identified as soon as they are added to the rent account with a prompt to the relevant Housing staff to intervene. The staff member will seek to contact the tenant to explain what has happened and why; attempt to get a revised payment arrangement in place and consider an application to the Revenues and Benefits Service to have the claw-back reduced using the income and expenditure form as evidence that the tenant cannot realistically afford the amount being recovered. This procedure will also assist in identifying whether an application for Direct Deductions can be made to the Benefits Agency to help cover the extra cost.

Members asked for information relating to tenants who claim partial Housing benefit and how they are managing to pay the remaining rent. There are approximately 19% of our tenants who are receiving partial housing benefit. The actual sum they receive will vary considerably depending on their personal circumstances. This equates to approximately 4200 tenancies. In order to establish which of these tenants are in arrears with their rent this would require a substantial manual exercise which would also need to distinguish between tenants in arrears alone and those who have had any Housing Benefit clawback, those affected by the reduction in the spare room subsidy, any in receipt of assistance with our furniture scheme and related service charge and also anyone benefitting from Heat with Rent which would not be discounted by Housing Benefit. In entering into any arrangement to clear any outstanding arrears housing officers will seek to take account of all household income to endeavour to reach a sustainable arrangement.

Finally, some of the other actions that will be taken in the coming months are:

- A further rent statement issued at the end of February 2014
- Further contact with tenants for new claims of Discretionary Housing Payments
- More partnership working with Money and Debt Advice colleagues
- Increased emphasis on training for staff
- Review of new tenants and their ability to pay
- Closer working with colleagues in respect of Housing Support

6. IMPACT

Corporate

This report relates to Aberdeen – The Smarter City

- We will challenge inequalities wherever they exist and bring our communities closer together
- We will use early intervention to help people sustain their tenancies
- The report meets the National Outcome Measure 15
- Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

Public

This report is likely to have significant interest within the public arena due to the increasing levels of debt and the likely reasons for this. The public are also likely to be interested in the case studies presented as well the actions being taken by the Council to deal with the outstanding rent arrears

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK N/A

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS N/A

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Wendy Carle, Housing Manager

Tel 01224 489526

Email: wcarle@aberdeencity.gov.uk

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT

RENT MANAGEMENT

Rent Arrears Repayment Arrangement Guidance

February 2014

Background

This guidance is produced to help Housing Officers arrive at arrangements with tenants which are designed to clear their outstanding arrears and take cognisance of both the City Council's responsibility to collect rent due but also take account of individual tenants' financial and personal circumstances. Importantly it does not remove the need for staff to make early contact with tenants where payments have been missed and arrears are likely to accrue.

Rent arrears have steadily increased over the last 12 months and it is critical that we have confidence in the quality of repayment arrangements being entered into across the city.

Rent arrears repayment arrangements are currently agreed by a large number of Housing Officers and Assistant Housing Officers, many of who possess relatively limited specialist arrears knowledge and who have historically had little support in the form of guidance on parameters regarding the repayment instalments they should agree to. This can often result in repayment plans taking an unreasonable length of time to clear the outstanding balances. There are also significant risks in entering into arrangements which tenants cannot afford to maintain.

Concerns also exist around how consistent our approach to rent arrears repayment arrangements has been across the city, and our ability to ensure consistency and equity regarding how our tenants in rent arrears are dealt with, particularly around agreeing repayment plans.

Vision

We are committed to helping those tenants in rent arrears to clear their debt and thereby help them to sustain their tenancies.

However, we also have a responsibility to collect all outstanding rent arrears within a reasonable timeframe. We have a duty to protect the Council's financial position and to collect as much income as possible to allow us to re-invest in our housing stock.

We are striving to ensure both consistency in the quality of the arrangements we agree to, and to provide some equity in how we reflect our tenant's financial position when calculating what is considered a reasonable repayment arrangement.

We aim to consider each tenants' individual circumstances and financial position before arriving at a repayment arrangement that should be both affordable and sustainable.

The guidance set out in this document seeks to set typical minimum values that Housing staff should endeavour to achieve when entering into arrangements. However, flexibility is available where this is shown not to be practicable based on individual assessment. Further guidance is given later in this document regarding the need for Income Assessment calculations.

Issues

The following issues have been identified across the city, around repayment arrangements for rent arrears.

1. Arrangements are sometimes agreed without regard to whether the instalment is sufficient to cover any on-going rent charge or claw-back, together with a reasonable sum being paid towards reducing any arrears.
2. Arrangements are often agreed without first drilling down into the reasons why the arrears are accruing, nor considering whether what is being agreed to is sustainable for the tenant.
3. The process for arriving at instalment values needs clarity. Without this there is the risk of poor decision making and inequalities in the process.
4. The previous method of comparing 'Income against Expenditure' as a means to establish what is affordable for a tenant is flawed. The expenditure information supplied can be inaccurate and open to abuse, unless time consuming checks are made on the validity of the expenditures quoted. Genuine expenditures can also be missed from the calculation in error, resulting in the tenant being penalised in what they are asked to repay.
5. Without clear guidance or limits, tenants and staff alike will often resort to the smallest instalment amount possible (this is currently perceived as a value equal to Rent Arrears Direct @ £3.60 per week).
6. Arrangements are agreed where the outstanding debt could take 5 years or more to clear, which is not sound financial management on the Council's part, but can also result in the tenant being burdened with their Housing debt for longer than necessary.
7. There is currently no mandatory process in place to carry out quality checks on the arrangements being agreed, and as a result no opportunity to provide feedback and advice to assist in learning.

Solutions

New recommended minimum repayment arrangement instalment bandings will be introduced across the city from early February 2014.

These minimum instalment amounts will be expected to be paid on top of any existing rent charges (including HB overpayment claw-backs), and will be separate from any additional application for Rent Arrears Direct.

Tenants will be placed into a banding according to the household's income level.

Quality assurance checks will be introduced to ensure quality & compliance across the city, and to assist with feedback on how the new policy is operating.

Income Assessment forms, comparing Household Income against DWP Applicable Amounts (amount set down by Central Government as what is required for an individual or family to live on) for the

tenant(s), will be the recognised route for all requests for repayment instalments below the designated minimum values.

Intensive staff training will be undertaken across the city to include arrangement 'best practice' in conjunction with these new minimum instalment guidelines.

REPAYMENT ARRANGEMENT GUIDELINES

Minimum repayment to arrears - £5.00 per week (on top of any rent charge and/or HBC and RAD)

- Tenant(s) in receipt of full Housing Benefit while receiving the following DWP benefits - Income Support; Jobseekers Allowance(Income Based); Employment Support Allowance (Income Related); & Guaranteed Credit
- Tenant(s) in receipt of full Housing Benefit with no recognisable income or with an income only equivalent to or less than IS; JSA; ESA; GC
- Tenant(s) in receipt of full Housing Benefit while receiving reduced rates of DWP benefits awaiting the outcome of a DWP appeal
- Tenant(s) who are self-employed but in receipt of full Housing Benefit due to non-profitable business

This list is not exhaustive. Full HB refers to the full 'available' amount – ie HB Under Occupancy shortfall should not prohibit a tenant's inclusion in a banding.

Minimum repayment to arrears - £10.00 per week (on top of any rent charge and/or HBC and RAD)

- Tenant(s) in receipt of partial Housing Benefit, with incomes above the basic levels of IS; JSA; ESA; or GC
- Tenant(s) in receipt of IS; JSA; ESA; or GC and with other adult(s) in the household receiving an independent income
- Tenant(s) who are self-employed but in receipt of partial Housing Benefit due to poor financial gains from business
- Tenant(s) in part-time or low paid jobs and receiving partial Housing Benefit and/or Working Tax Credits

This list is not exhaustive.

Minimum repayment to arrears - £20.00 per week (on top of any rent charge)

- Tenant(s) not entitled to Housing Benefit and engaged in full time remunerative work
- Tenant(s) in part-time or low paid jobs who are not entitled to Housing Benefit due to the income(s) of other adult(s) in the household

This list is not exhaustive.

An Income Assessment Form template is included at the end of this document for your information, along with the DWP Applicable Amount tables for 2013/14 & 2014/15. There are also several case studies to assist better understanding of the process.

Income Assessment

The front page allows a full picture of the household income, including any 'non-dependant' adults or grown children living in the property that would be expected to contribute towards the rent. It also provides ample opportunity for the tenant and/or their representative to propose an alternative repayment plan, with a full explanation for the figure quoted including any circumstantial or financial details. An expenditure breakdown may also be submitted as further evidence if deemed appropriate.

The reverse page allows the Housing Officer to calculate the DWP Applicable Amount for the tenant(s); to calculate whether any surplus income exists; and consider the tenant's proposal against an 'expected' repayment instalment, calculated as 10% of any surplus income. This 'expected' figure would be deemed an affordable contribution towards their arrears, and is there a guide figure so that the Housing Officer has a reliable figure to negotiate around with the tenant.

The entire process is much more consistent.

The method of taking 10% of any surplus income is believed to be fair and reasonable, but it is not binding on the Housing Officer. All staff are encouraged to show flexibility in the arrangements they are negotiating, paying particular attention to those tenants living on the lowest income levels.

The introduction of Income Assessment forms should also encourage all staff to focus on individual tenant's circumstances and financial position before making a decision on what they should be paying towards their arrears. It also allows the officer to identify the reasons why the tenant may be in arrears and consider any relevant 'sign-posting' for specialist advice.

Quality Checks

A new monthly performance report of all new arrangements will be compiled for the Senior Housing Officers to carry out quality checks on arrangements being agreed in their geographical areas of responsibility.

These checks can be random or targeted as appropriate. Questions to be considered include:

Does the arrangement comply with the minimum instalment allowed? If not, has an Income Assessment form been completed?

Is the timeframe required to clear the arrears reasonable?

Are any Housing Benefit Claw-back charges being sufficiently accounted for?

INCOME ASSESSMENT FORM
Rent Arrears Repayment Arrangement

Tenant name(s): _____ Other adults in property: _____

Property address: _____ Contact number(s): _____

Payment reference number: _____ Arrears balance: _____

HOUSEHOLD INCOME DETAILS (calculated as weekly)

	<u>Person 1</u>	<u>Person 2</u>	<u>Person 3</u>	<u>Person 4</u>
Tenant (*delete):	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Net Earnings:	£	£	£	£
IS/JSA/ESA/GC:	£	£	£	£
PIP/AA:	£	£	£	£
Tax Credits:	£	£	£	£
Child Benefit:	£	£	£	£
Maintenance:	£	£	£	£
Student loan/grant	£	£	£	£
Pensions	£	£	£	£
Other	£	£	£	£
Total	£	£	£	£

TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME (A): £ _____ per week

 PROPOSED REPAYMENT PLAN: £ _____ per week

PAYMENTS TO BE MADE: _____ Weekly/Fortnightly/4-weekly/Monthly (*delete)

FIRST PAYMENT TO BE MADE ON: _____

REASON(S) FOR PROPOSAL:

Please provide an explanation for the proposed repayment figure, including all relevant details of your expenditure and/or personal circumstances. Include a separate weekly expenditure breakdown sheet if you wish.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Signature: _____

On completion of this page, please return the form to your local Housing Officer for a decision.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME (A): £ _____ per week

Applicable Amount calculation (calculated as weekly)

Personal Allowance(s): £

Dependant Allowance(s): £

Premium(s): £

£

TOTAL APPLICABLE AMOUNT (B): £ _____ per week

Surplus Income calculation (calculated as weekly)

Total Household Income (A) – Total Applicable Amount (B) = Surplus Income (C)

SURPLUS INCOME (C): £ _____ per week

Repayment Instalment calculation (calculated as weekly)

(C) X 10% = (D) Expected Repayment Instalment

REPAYMENT INSTALMENT (D): £ _____ per week

This expected repayment instalment figure should represent an affordable plan under the tenant(s) current circumstances. This can of course be reviewed following any significant change in circumstance.

Tenant(s) identified as having no significant surplus or indeed having a deficit should be sign posted to Housing Benefit if not already in receipt. In these circumstances, repayment instalments can be negotiated below the standard minimum thresholds.

Tenant Proposal: £ _____ per week Accepted: Yes/No (*delete)

Counter proposal: £ _____ per week Confirmed: Yes/No (*delete)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Once completed, pass for scanning onto Northgate Documents under tenancy ref.

HB APPLICABLE AMOUNTS - April 2013 (& April 2014)

PERSONAL ALLOWANCES

££££ (p/w)

WORKING AGE

Single person

under 25	56.80 (57.35)
under 25 (but on main phase ESA)	71.70 (72.40)
25 or over	71.70 (72.40)

Lone Parent

under 18	56.80 (57.35)
under 18 (but on main phase ESA)	71.70 (72.40)
18 or over	71.70 (72.40)

Couple

both under 18	85.80 (86.65)
both under 18 (but claimant on main phase ESA)	112.55 (113.70)
one or both 18 or over	112.55 (113.70)

PENSION AGE

Pensioner

Single person under 65	145.40 (148.35)
Single person 65 or over	163.50 (165.15)
Couple both under 65	222.05 (226.50)
Couple one or both 65 or over	244.95 (247.20)

DEPENDENT ALLOWANCES

Dependent Children (per child or qualifying young person)

- under 20	65.62 (66.33)
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COMPONENTS (ESA only)

Work Related Activity Component	28.45 (28.75)
Support Component	34.80 (35.75)

PREMIUMS

Family premium (if in receipt of Child Benefit)	17.40 (17.45)
Lone Parent rate	22.20 (22.20)

Carers Premium (if entitled to or have underlying entitlement to Carers Allowance)	33.30 (34.20)
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Disabled Child Premium (if child is registered blind or receives DLA)	57.89 (59.50)
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Disability Premium

Single	31.00 (31.85)
Couple	44.20 (45.40)

Enhanced Disability Premium - if in receipt of DLA Care Component at the highest rate or have been placed in the Employment Support Allowance support group. Can be paid at three rates depending on whether a single claimant, couples where both satisfy the criteria or for a child.

Single	15.15 (15.55)
Couple	21.75 (22.35)
Child	23.45 (24.08)

Severe Disability Premium - if in receipt of DLA care component at the middle or highest rate or Attendance Allowance and nobody receives Carers Allowance for looking after the person. Awarded to each person who satisfies the criteria.

Single	59.50 (61.10)
Couple (low)	59.50 (61.10)
Couple (high)	119.00 (122.20)

Case Studies

Paul is a 27 year old single male in receipt of JSA(IB) at the rate of £143.40 per fortnight. He qualifies for full HB and his arrears balance is £410.

Paul fits clearly into the £5.00 per week minimum instalment band.

However, Paul states he cannot afford that much due to increasing utility bills; food costs and extra expenses associated with regular visits with his son.

Paul completes an IA form proposing £1.00 per week towards his arrears, which he believes is reasonable.

Income:	71.70
Applicable Amount:	71.70 (1 x Personal Allowance over 25 years)
Surplus Income:	0.00 per week

Paul has completed an IA form and has no surplus income above what he requires to live on, so we are free to negotiate a repayment plan less than the £5.00 per week minimum. Given the relatively small arrears balance of £410 and the fact that he is in receipt of full HB to cover his on-going rent, we could perhaps propose £3.00 per week as a starting point in the negotiations. Paul is in receipt of JSA(IB) so we could submit an application for Rent Arrears Direct (RAD @ £3.60 per week). Perhaps you may wish to rely more on payments direct from DWP and advise Paul to pay anything else he can afford on top of this. The decision will ultimately sit with the individual Housing Officer.

Mr & Mrs Smith are a couple in their 40s. He works full time earning a net wage of £920 per month. They do not qualify for HB and their arrears balance is £1,150 and rising.

They fit clearly into the £20.00 per week minimum instalment band.

However, they state they cannot afford that due to personal loans; car repayments (he needs his car for his work); and Council Tax arrears repayments.

They complete an IA form proposing £20.00 per month (£5.00 p/w) towards their arrears.

Income:	230.00
Applicable Amount:	112.55 (1 x Personal Allowance Couple Rate)
Surplus Income:	117.45 per week
Arrangement instalment:	117.45 X 10% = 11.75 per week

The Smiths have completed an IA form and we have calculated what should be an affordable repayment instalment of £11.75 per week, so we are free to negotiate below the £20.00 per week minimum. Given their relatively high balance, we could perhaps propose £15.00 per week as a starting point, still giving ourselves some room for negotiation down towards £11.00 or £12.00 if required. They have flagged up several other debts on the form that are impacting on their ability to clear their arrears. Perhaps also a referral to Debt Counselling may be appropriate to try and get their other debt repayment instalments reduced.

Yvonne (22) is a single mother of 2 boys aged 4 & 2. She works 20 hours per week qualifying for Tax Credits to top up her wages. She advises she just fails to qualify for HB and her arrears balance is worrying at £2,300.

She fits into the £10.00 per week minimum instalment band as she works part-time and is in receipt of Working Tax Credits.

However, she advises she cannot afford this as she only works part-time and has 2 small children to support without any help and her ex-partner refuses to pay regular maintenance.

She completes an IA form proposing £3.00 per week towards her arrears.

Income:	473.00 [Wages £170;Tax Credits £270;Child Benefit £33]
Applicable Amount:	227.14 [Personal Allowance;2 x Dep Allowance; Family Premium]
Surplus Income:	245.86 per week
Arrangement instalment:	245.86 X 10% = 24.59 per week

Yvonne should be able to afford a weekly repayment of nearly £25.00 on top of her rent. The £10.00 per week minimum banding will stand. Debt Counselling may be able to assist her in terms of budgeting assistance or a financial health check. Alternatively, Benefits Advice may be able to help with maximising her income. It may be worth sign-posting her to CSA regarding child support. All this information has come to light through the completion of the IA form. Her proposal given her income and outstanding balance is completely unrealistic and this needs to be reinforced with her. Negotiate a repayment plan somewhere between £10.00 and £25.00 per week, starting perhaps at the higher end.

Bryan (19) is signing on JSA while he looks for full time work. Due to his age he only qualifies for £56.80 per week. He was allocated his tenancy last year when he came through the 'Homeless' route. He had some Tenancy Support but this stopped some time ago and he has accrued some arrears since due to gaps in his Housing Benefit from missing Job Centre appointments and interviews without acceptable explanations.

He is currently in receipt of full HB and his arrears balance is £335.

Bryan fits into the £5.00 per week minimum payment banding. However, it is clear that asking a young man to sustain a tenancy and repay his rent arrears on top of all household bills on £56.80 per week is a tall order. You encourage Bryan to complete an IA form to allow you to assist him further.

Income:	51.80
Applicable Amount:	56.80
Surplus Income:	-5.00

Bryan advises that he has £5.00 per week taken from his JSA to pay off a Court imposed fine from last year although he thinks this is about paid off now. This further reduction to his income that has come to light through the completion of the IA form suggests a different approach may be relevant here. Given the relatively small balance and the fact that his on-going rent charge is currently being covered in full, perhaps an arrangement for £1.00 per week may be acceptable as perhaps might asking for nothing at present and checking when the fine deductions are due to end and review the position then. Again, it will be at the Housing Officer's discretion.

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COMMITTEE Housing and Environment

DATE 11th March 2014

DIRECTOR Pete Leonard

TITLE OF REPORT Proposed HMO Licence Fees for 2014/15

REPORT NUMBER H&E/14/025

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek Committee’s approval to set revised HMO Licensing fees from 1st April 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that committee agree to: -

1. Implement the new fee structure for the period of 2014/15 as set out in the following table, which shows a 10% reduction on the 2013/14 fees.

RENEWALS				NEW APPLICATIONS			
No. Tenants	Fee £	Part 1 £	Part 2 £	No. Tenants	Fee £	Part 1 £	Part 2 £
3 - 5	250	125	125	3 - 5	495	370	125
6 - 10	360	235	125	6 - 10	720	600	120
11 - 20	675	550	125	11 - 20	1,350	1,225	125
21 - 50	1,260	1,090	170	21 - 50	2,520	2,355	165
51 - 100	2,115	1,785	330	51 - 100	4,230	3,900	330
101 - 200	3,420	2,920	500	101 - 200	6,840	6,340	500
201 +	3,690	3,025	665	201 +	7,380	6,715	665

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HMO Licence fee is raised for the purposes of processing HMO applications as per Part 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 and the Provision of Services Regulations 2009, and is ringfenced solely for the purposes of HMO Licensing activities.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other issues that have not already been addressed within this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The fee currently in place was set having taken into consideration representation by Landlords at the Housing and Environment Committee in March 2013.
- 5.2 HMO Licensing is a statutory function imposed on local authorities under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Part 5, s124. The setting of fees is covered under s161. The Scottish Ministers also issue statutory guidance for the operation of HMO Licensing duties and the setting of fees. The authority must also take cognisance of the Provision of Services Regulations 2009.
- 5.3 The HMO Licensing duties for Aberdeen City Council are performed by the Private Sector Housing Unit. There are currently 6.8fte staff working on HMO duties, these staff comprise;
- HMO inspecting Officers who are responsible for on-site HMO Licence applications and enforcement duties, unit manager and administration staff.
- 5.4 **The 2013/14** cost of administering the service is forecast to be circa £290,424 against a projected income of £205,000, thus leaving a negative balance of £85,424 to be offset against the carry forward of £313,521 from previous years. The above figures take account of all corporate costs and make an allowance for Legal fees incurred in operating the service. It is anticipated that this will mean that a carry forward of £228,097 will be taken into the 2014/15 budget. This carry forward is a historical surplus from previous years that the Council is now endeavouring to reduce to balance over a 3 year period.
- 5.5 In calculating the fees, **for 2014 - 15**, officers have taken into consideration the running costs of the unit, including corporate and legal costs, along with the number of new applications we could reasonably expect to receive plus renewals from current licenses that are due to expire. An attempt has been made to factor potential additional new cases found through continued enforcement activities.

No. Tenants	New applicant	FEE £	Possible Renewals	FEE £	Income £	Cost Difference to Budget
3 – 5	146	495	280	250	142,270	
6 – 10	11	720	24	360	16,560	
11 – 20	1	1,350	1	675	2,025	
21 – 50	1	2,520	1	1,260	3,780	
51 – 100	4	4,230	2	2,115	21,150	
101- 200	0	6,840	0	3,425		
201 +	0	7,380	0	3,690		
Sub total	163		308		185,785	
TOTAL			471			
Budget 2014 - 15					292,381	- £106,596
Forecast – Carry forward from 31st March 2014					228,097	
Carry forward to 2015/16						£121,501

In arriving at these fees, officers have predicted an operating cost of £292,381 to carry out the HMO functions; this is detailed in Appendix 1. An income of £185,785 from the new fee structure is anticipated thus leaving a potential surplus of £121,501 to carry forward into 2015/16. This surplus will help to compensate for any discrepancy in applications not being realised and will be reviewed in setting the 2015/16 fee structure.

It will be noted that there is a figure of £228,097 which is forecast to be brought forward from previous years' income. In order to achieve a balanced budget over a 3 year period, previous fee setting has endeavoured to reduce this carry forward by reducing fees. It is anticipated that the predicted overspend for 2013 – 14 will not be achieved therefore failing to reduce the carry forward by as much as predicted.

The above fee scales are based on a 3 year rolling budget which is the life span of a HMO Licence and takes note of the guidance from our external auditors. Therefore, in order to bring the reduction back on target, officers are proposing a further reduction of circa **10%** for 2014/15 to help reduce the surplus to a manageable level.

In conclusion; officers have endeavoured to set a HMO Licence fee for 2014 - 15 that reflects the anticipated workload of the unit based on predicted income against known expenditure while endeavouring to comply with the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 and the Services Directive 2009.

6. IMPACT

This report will be of interest to all private sector landlords in the city who either operate or intend to operate an HMO property as the fee relates directly to their operating costs.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

It is impractical to accurately identify the number of applications that will be received for an HMO Licence. Assumptions have been made that all current Licences due to expire in 2014/15 will be renewed and the number of new applications reflects that lodged during 2013/14. There is little or no risk to the budget should the actual numbers fall short of that, while an increase will result in the Council having to make further reductions to the fee in following years.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Name: Andy Pitblado
Job Title: Private Sector Housing Strategy Officer
Email Address: apitblado@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Phone Number: (52)2339

Appendix 1
Houses in Multiple Occupation

Financial Years	Outturn Forecast 2013/14	Budget 2014/15
	£s	£s
Staff Costs		
Salaries (including on costs)	204,029	197,968
	204,029	197,968
Administration Costs		
Printing	0	300
Stationery	150	500
Legal Expenses	10,000	10,000
Mobile Phone/Pagers	300	250
Courses	2,000	4,000
Advertising	5,000	5,000
Management & Admin Costs	6,938	6,400
Charges - Central Support	48,081	55,000
	72,470	81,450
Transport Costs		
Hire of Taxis	0	150
Travelling Expenses - Aptc & Co	7,000	6,500
Car Parking	5,125	4,713
	12,125	11,363
Supplies & Services		
Software Purchases	1,600	1,250
Other Expenditure	200	350
	1,800	1,600
Expense Total	290,424	292,381
Income		
Fees-Hous'G Multi Occup	-205,000	-185,785
Income Total	-205,000	-185,785
Net Expenditure/(Income)	85,424	106,596
Previous Year(Income)/expenditure b/f	313,521	228,097
Net Balance for year		
Carry Forward	228,097	121,501

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT
DATE	28 Jan 2014
DIRECTOR	PETE LEONARD
TITLE OF REPORT	REVIEW OF REPAIR PRIORITIES
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/017

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide members with information in relation to the review of priorities for Response Repairs

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

To approve the proposed changes to the priorities for Response Repairs as set out in the Review of Priorities for Response Repairs (at Appendix A) and allow allocation of each priority to corresponding repair categories

- Amendment of the repair priorities as follows
 - Emergency (4 hours)
 - Urgent (24 hours) - New
 - High (3 days)
 - Non-Emergency (5 days) - New
 - Routine (10 days)
- Allocate relevant repair categories to each of the priorities listed above to ensure each priority reflects the level of priority required i.e. Emergency means anything which may affect tenants safety or cause significant damage to the fabric of the building.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is anticipated that a review of the priorities for Response Repairs would mean a potential saving to the Housing Revenue Account estimated at approx. £143,000.00. This will result from the lack of "premium" charged to cover the overtime element of out of hours work.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Resources within the Repairs and Maintenance Team can be re-distributed with a view to more emphasis being given to the planned maintenance programme thereby increasing the sustainability of our property portfolio.

Discussion is ongoing with Union Representatives on potential impact this has on Trade Operatives who work overtime.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The Building Services Team has been reviewing its costs and performance to look for ways of improving the repairs and maintenance service we provide to council tenants.

This has been prompted by a number of things

- The introduction of the Scottish Social Housing Charter which commits us to providing a high quality repairs service focused on outcomes for tenants
- Feedback as a result of Customer Engagement
- The requirement for us to demonstrate Best Value in providing services to our tenants
- The high level of emergency jobs carried out
- A comparison of our service with that of other housing providers (“benchmarking”)

In order for us to provide a better service which meets (or exceeds) the expectations of our customers there is a requirement to review the delivery of our repairs and maintenance service so that we can deliver on time and be cost effective.

At the moment we are recording the majority of reported repairs as Emergency Works which need to be attended to within 4 hours. Our experience, performance reports and benchmarking has shown that this is not sustainable in the long term and does not meet the needs of our tenants. Although we are able to attend to Emergency Works within 4 hours we have been unable to “first-time fix” the reported problem, primarily because of the volume of repairs being categorised as Emergency. The result of this is that we have to attend to the repair on more than one occasion, which is inconvenient for the tenant and is not the most efficient use of our resources.

We require to make changes to the repairs and maintenance process and to use the resources and technology we have at our disposal to offer the tenants of Aberdeen City Council a more effective and efficient service. The proposed changes are set out in the Review of Priorities for Response Repairs at Appendix A.

The changes will allow us to

- Programme works more effectively
- Understand the needs of our tenants more effectively and develop a more consistent approach to their expectations

- Ensure more work is done as a “First Time Fix”
- Improve the use of our scheduling tool to allow more convenient appointments for customers
- Use our resources more effectively to ensure a structured asset management approach to our planned maintenance regime
- Improve customer satisfaction with the repairs service

See attached full report on the Review of Priorities for Response Repairs at Appendix A for further information

6. IMPACT

The Housing and Environment Business Plan 2011-2016 sets out our vision for the future of the service – we will retain a large stock of quality, well maintained affordable housing matching the highest of standards.

It also meets the objectives in the policy document “Aberdeen – the Smarter City” - we will provide quality services to our council tenants to enable them to have a dry, warm home in a safe and enjoyable environment.

We have consulted with Tenants’ representatives, other Heads of Service, Housing Officers and some Councillors in connection with these changes.

Although these changes may not be obvious for tenants as they involve amending our IT systems and processes they will reflect the need for a more effective and efficient Repairs and Maintenance service which meet the needs and expectations of our customers.

Of note, we have engaged with approx. 300 tenants, and the overwhelming response has been in support of this proposal.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

We currently carry out an extraordinarily high number of emergency repairs and this level of work is unsustainable in the long term. With these current work levels we have not been able to fully implement a planned maintenance regime as we have not had resources to do so. This has an impact upon our asset management strategy and the sustainability of our properties.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Scottish Social Housing Charter
- PWC Audit Report – July 2013

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Kiemon Stewart

Operations Manager
KieStewart@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Bob Kerr
Quantity Surveyor/Procurement
RKerr@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Jan Gordon
Business Development Officer
Jangordon@aberdeencity.gov.uk



ABERDEEN

CITY COUNCIL

Review of Priorities for Response Repairs

Taking into account Scheduling, Diagnostic Repairs and Right To Repair

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PREFACE

Building Services – Review of Repairs

During the last 6-12 months the Building Services team has been reviewing its costs and performance to look for ways of improving the core service we currently provide for Housing tenants.

The review has been prompted and supported by a number of factors:

- **External Tendering:** Building Services bidding for external maintenance work with other public sector bodies such as Aberdeenshire Council, housing associations and University of Aberdeen.
- **Performance Management:** The introduction of a new national performance management regime based to support the Scottish Government's Social Housing Charter.
- **ISO 9001:2009 Certification:** Building Services are currently working towards gaining ISO 9001:2009.
- **Customer Callbacks:** The introduction of 'customer callbacks' to test tenant satisfaction with our service and identify potential improvements.
- **Factoring:** The introduction of factoring and the requirement to demonstrate best value for owners and to produce more accurate and timely billing information.
- **Internal Audit Report:** Internal audit report on Building Services processes.
- **Benchmarking:** Building Services is a member of a benchmarking organisation, which has compared our performance against around 150 other UK social housing response repair organisations.

The benchmarking exercise, in particular, raised a number of issues about the way that our services are organised and pointed to some improvements that we can make if we are to be compared with 'best in class' organisations across the UK.

Key messages from the benchmarking exercise

There are a number of areas where we compare well:

- We do a high percentage of non-emergency jobs on time
- Our responsive repairs spend per property is at or just below the average and the average cost of a responsive repair job is relatively low
- We have a very high number of apprentices compared to other social housing organisations
- Our turnover per skilled operative is relatively high.

On the other hand there are a number of areas for improvement:

We do far too many jobs as emergencies – more than double the average of other organisations.

- We complete fewer emergency jobs within target
- Most organisations measure their time taken to complete an emergency job whereas we measure our time to attend
- We do too many out of hours jobs – again more than double the average of other organisations

- Although we undertake most routine jobs within target we tend to do them towards the end of the available time slot, so our average time to complete is relatively high
- This may also contribute to us having a relatively high number of aborted jobs. (If the appointment is booked for four week's time there is more chance of the tenant forgetting than if it is in one week's time)
- We are slightly below average in the percentage of appointments kept
- The cost of an average void and the time each void is with the contractor are slightly higher than average.

The exercise of collating the data to complete the benchmarking also told us that we:

- We don't categorise and record work as responsive, planned or cyclical as well as we could
- We could improve the accuracy of data collection in relation to the detailed costs of individual jobs
- We have difficulty in accurately reporting performance where operatives don't use hand held devices
- We need to improve the timeliness of data recording and collation for both reporting and invoicing purposes.

From this analysis we have built a picture of the model responsive repairs service which we are aspiring to provide. It is one in which:

- We have a proactive and analytically designed programme of cyclical inspections/work and planned work to try to minimise the amount of reactive work required
- We minimise pre-inspections
- Only real emergencies' which threaten tenant safety or have the potential to cause significant property damage are dealt with immediately - i.e. within 4 hours
- It enables us to get to all of the 'real' emergencies promptly and attempt to complete the repair in one visit
- All other 'one day' repairs are undertaken by the end of the next working day - again with the vast majority completed in one visit
- All non-emergency repairs are undertaken by appointment with a view to over 95% of tenants getting a 'first time fix'
- Appointments are arranged at the point of contact and reminders sent by text the evening before the appointment - appointments will normally be within 5-7 days of making the call, but driven by the convenience of tenants
- Appointments, once made, will not be changed without the tenants consent
- Tenants are increasingly enabled to order repairs on line
- Major works e.g. full window replacements, new ceilings, full redecoration etc will be carried out as part of the planned programme and will be carried out by appointment within one month or within three months depending on the specific nature and volume of the work to be done and the time needed to take delivery of any materials

One of the key changes we will need to make in order to work towards this model service is an overhaul of our priority response time targets.

CURRENT PRIORITIES AND DEFINITIONS

Current priorities and their definitions for response repairs are as follows:

- **Emergency** (P1) - ATTEND Within 4 hours during normal working day
- **Urgent** (P2) - COMPLETE Within 10 working days
- **Communal Urgent** (P2F) - COMPLETE within 10 working days
- **Routine** (P3) - COMPLETE within 24 working days
- **Communal Routine** (P3F) - COMPLETE within 24 working days
- **Inspection** (P7) - COMPLETE Within 3 working days
- **Irregular** (P8) - COMPLETE Within 3 calendar months
- **High priority** (P12) - COMPLETE Within 3 working days: (*Introduced in Aug 2001*)
- **Emergency** (P99) - ATTEND Within 4 hours out-with normal working hours

These priorities have been in existence, in the main for over 20 years and during this time have remained unaltered. To our knowledge they have not been subjected to review or challenged in terms of comparison with other social housing organisations. Our recent involvement with Benchmarking and Tendering etc. has exposed their limitations and restrictiveness in developing the response repairs service into a class leading service.

Our Benchmarking submission allowed us to compare our performance/service delivery with similar sized organisations within our sector.

What has become apparent is that we currently have Priorities, which are outdated in terms of definition and application e.g. "ATTEND" as defined for P1 & 99 is not a parameter utilised for benchmarking purposes. Benchmarking of response jobs is primarily based upon "COMPLETE" within a defined timescale. The main objective referred to as "First Time Fix".

Examination of Priority Usage

Currently all Emergency work (P1 and P99s) account for **36.66%** of all repairs allocated to our tradesmen. In job terms this amounts to 30,175 out of a total completed of 82,399.

The Priorities, which exist in our repairs system hold no meaning or familiarity in terms of their codes and are outmoded, as they have lain unaltered by Housing and Building Services for over 20 years. Priority 12 (3 working days) has been the only significant introduction to the pool of priorities in August 2001 in an attempt to close the gap between P1- 4hrs and P2 - 10 days.

Our experience with systems containing parameters, which have not been subject to regular review, is that stagnation creates inconsistencies, with an outdated approach and unrealistic expectation regarding performance.

All Emergencies are defined by "Attending within 4 hours" the level of jobs reported and logged with this priority is approximately 27% higher than businesses having similar housing stocks to maintain, thus making benchmarking extremely difficult and Building Services unable to realise the full potential of their dynamic scheduling tool.

The shortest timescales available leave a gap between 4 hours and 3 days. This naturally results in far too many repairs (36.66%) being generated by tenant's responses designating repairs as "Emergency".

We have analysed the type of jobs reported through the Keyfax diagnostic scripts and assessed whether the emergency priority allocated to some repair category scripts are actually warranted by type of repair reported.

The current repairs system: Totalmobile + Xmbrace (scheduling) + Keyfax (script diagnostic) were introduced in February 2008. However, although we are employing a dynamic scheduling tool, we are unable to realise its full potential which results in less appointment slots being available for tenants to book their repair.

It was felt appropriate to review priorities and their definitions and look to not only enhance service delivery but to also increase tenant satisfaction. Having reviewed repairs reported we are proposing to apply new priorities, in particular - 24 hours (U24) and also 5 (D5) working days.

These revised priority categories and timescales will help us realise the potential of our scheduling tool and will allow far greater flexibility for tenants to report their repair and choose a convenient appointment.

Proposed Modifications to Priorities

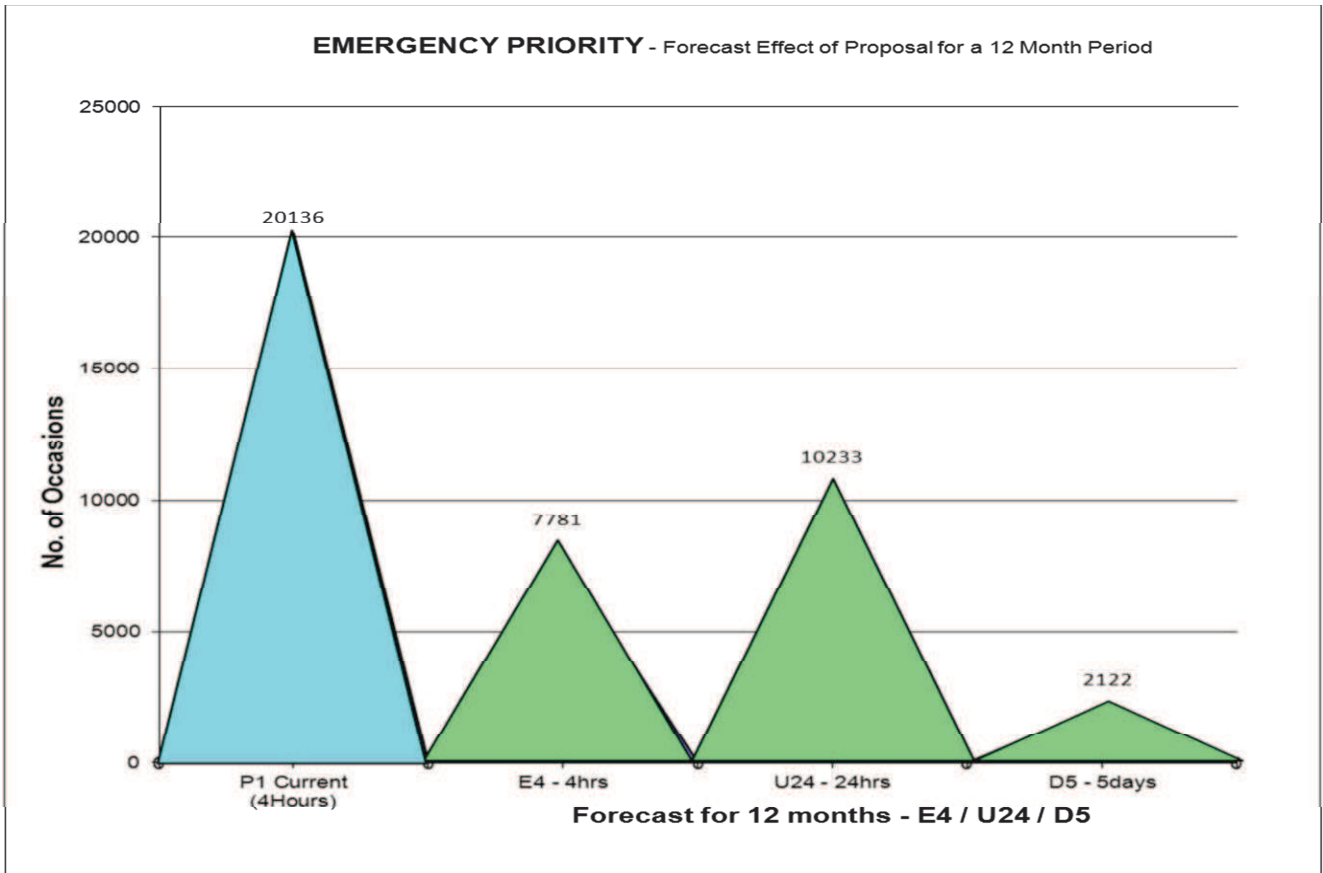
	NON EMERGENCY PRIORITIES					EMERGENCY PRIORITIES		
	3 working days	10 working days	24 working days	3 calendar months	3 working days	4 hours	4 hours	24 hours
CURRENT PRIORITIES (P)	7 – Inspection	2	3	8	12	1	99	
PROPOSED	I3	D10	PL24	PL90	D5-ACC Tradesman D3- Contractor	E4	E4 (OOH)	U24

Proposal to complete work for these priorities in given timescales. Aim for "First Time Fix" and rename/ redefine priorities to allow for greater familiarity with applicable timescales.

In 2012/2013 we experienced **20,136 Jobs** attracting a Priority 1 through tenants' responses to reporting repairs through the Contact Centre (Keyfax Diagnostics).

Progressive Approach: The graph below shows that by simply adding two additional Priorities - 24 hours (U24) and 5 working days (D5) and reviewing definitions for Emergency Repairs (P1) for the repairs carried out in the last 6 months, by applying a more balanced rationale in terms of what actually constitutes a true emergency the outcome is a far more balanced approach and will allow an opportunity to realise more first time fixes, together with far greater appointment flexibility for tenants.

Forecasted Effect of Modifications to Priorities



PROPOSED CHANGES

Introduce/ Redefine Response Priorities as follows:

- **Emergency (E4)** - direct replacement for Priority 1 – Make good or make safe within 4 hours - complete within 24 hours
- **Emergency (E4 OOH)** - direct replacement for P99 - Make good or make safe within 4 hours and complete within 24 hours
- **Urgent (U24)** – Introduce - denotes complete within 24 hours
- **Non-Emergency (D3)** – direct replacement for Priority 12 – complete within 3 working days (Term contractors)
- **Non-Emergency (D5)** – Introduce - denotes complete within 5 working days
- **Non-Emergency (D10)** – direct replacement for Priority 2 – complete within 10 working days
- **Inspection (I3)** – direct replacement for Priority 7– Inspection within 3 working days
- **Planned (PL24)** - direct replacement for P3 - complete within 24 working days – redefined as Planned Work.
- **Planned (PL90)** - direct replacement for P8 - complete within 90 working days – redefined as Planned Work.

IMPACT OF PROPOSED CHANGES

Aim of Modifications to Priorities

Assess current application of Emergency jobs and investigate possibility of reducing level experienced so that only “True” Emergency jobs attain this level of attention (Attend in 4 hours).

- Create 24 Hour Emergency priority – Benchmarking and Charter requisite
- Realise Potential Savings – reduction in charges (reduction in P1s containing 5% uplift and also reduction in some P99s containing 55% uplift) made to Housing
- All Emergency Repairs to be completed within 24 hours – subject to availability of material(s).
- Adherence to Tenants “Right to Repair” – 24 hour prioritised response repairs
- Realise full potential of dynamic scheduling tool (Xmbrace)
- Review all Priorities to afford a flexible approach to Service Delivery
- Increase First Time Fix repairs
- Reduce need for follow on repairs
- Examine possibility of increasing repair types reported on-line
- Allow tenants to schedule more of their repairs on-line
- Enhance Tenant’s experience on-line and overall satisfaction with Response Repairs
- Reduce telephone call cost to tenants by enhancing online reporting

Benefits/ Potential Improvements if New Priorities Implemented

Current Emergency (P1) jobs are to be only attended to within 4 hours. We are proposing that all emergencies will be made good/safe within 4 hours and completed within 24 hours. In addition to this the Urgent (U24) and Non-Emergency 5 day repairs (D5) will all achieve first time fix, if material availability allows. The ability to increase first time fix will in itself reduce inconvenience for tenants, as no follow on work should be required.

Benefits and potential improvements should be realised by all concerned parties involved in responsive repairs: Tenant – Contact Centre – Building Services – Housing – (Tenants Participation Groups).

- **Familiarity/Understanding:** New set of Priority References e.g. D5 - within 5 working days - this will allow all who come into contact with these priorities an ease of familiarity/understanding in terms of timescale of delivery. From Tenant through to Tradesman. Consistent approach to definitions and expectations.
- **Ease of Application:** New Priorities – better fit timescales
 - **U24 - 24hour to complete:** This will allow some repairs, which currently attract P1 to be allocated / scheduled in a reasonable manner to allow timescales to be fully realised and repairs completed rather than just attended to. (*Aim would be to complete U24s well within 24 hours*).
 - **D5 - 5working days to complete (ACC tradesmen):** Introduction of this priority is again aimed at ease of scheduling and increase in customer satisfaction. This new priority will in the main replace occurrences of former priority; P2 - 10 working days. (*Most repairs other than those requiring material items with a long delivery period will fall under a 5 day turnaround D5 or better still 24 hours U24*).

- **Financial Savings:** Reduction in P1s raised = reduction in charges to Housing. Some P1s will attract U24 or D5 depending upon severity of repair reported. Therefore reduction in applicable uplift as charged through current P1s. **Potential saving of £143k.**
- **Ease of Scheduling:** Scheduling will be far simpler as we aim to complete the majority of repairs as a “first time fix”. This will increase tenant flexibility in choosing a convenient appointment for the repair to be carried out and has the potential to increase customer satisfaction.
- **Genuine Emergencies still attract 4hr attendance:** Only repairs which are genuinely an emergency or influenced by vulnerable/disabled tenant or are of risk to fabric of building and security of property will attract and Emergency priority (E4 - attend in 4 hours or less – with repair to be effected within 24 hours). Aim is for emergency response repairs to be reduced to 10-15% (*to be reviewed after 6months of operating*).
- **Emergency Repairs to be Completed within 24 Hours:** Emergency Repairs whether made safe or attended to in 4 hours will be completed in 24 hours (subject to availability of material).
- **Tailored Scripts:** Amendments to scripts to allow responses to generate genuine emergencies.
- **Schedule Repairs On-Line:** Development of On-line Repairs to allow tenant’s to schedule repairs.
- **Widen Range of On-Line Repairs:** Reduce or remove restrictions placed on On-Line Repairs Reporting Tool. Allows tenants greater scope of repairs to report.
- **Improved use of the Scheduling tool (Xmbrace):** This will impart greater understanding to work planners, as the tool will be fully utilised for the purpose it was intended, "***Dynamic Scheduling***".
- **Increase First Time Fixes:** Increased flexibility for Building Services with the added benefit of greater realisation of “*First Time Fixes*” and with this a reduction in follow on repairs and inconvenience for tenants.
- **Increase in Tenant Satisfaction** – Scheduling system, which has more even spread of priority timescales thus imparting greater flexibility to tenants’ appointments to have repairs carried out in timescales more in line with their expectations.
- **Reduction in Responsive Repairs:** Therefore reduction in tradesmen dedicated to response repairs. Allows focus to be given to other areas e.g. planned maintenance, Factoring and property MOTs.
- **Tenants Handbook:** Modified Priorities to be outlined within New Tenants and/or Repairs Handbook.

- **Future application of new priorities within Term Contracts:** Extend same prioritised timescales into current term contracts and/or reference in future tenders.

SUMMARY

Building Services are currently carrying out a review of Response Repairs. This amounts to 82,399 Responsive Repairs reported annually - these are the repairs carried out to ACC's council housing stock.

We hope to create a more balanced approach to responsive repairs, which affords tenants greater flexibility with appointments and allows only emergency repairs to be truly classified as such.

Currently 36.66% of response repairs (30,175 per year) generate an Emergency Response (Priorities 1 & 99), which are required to be attended to within 4 hours.

The current Prioritised Timescales are both limiting to the customer and Building Services as provider: These timescales are restrictive for tenants scheduling appointments and for our Service which is now also providing a Factoring service for some owners.

Our objective:

- To create a list of priorities, which meet the demands of the customers' needs.
- Descriptive Priority Timescales which offer a clearer approach in terms of marrying priorities exactly to the nature/urgency of the repairs being reported.

Our aim:

- To increase the level of first time fixes
- Reduce the level of Emergency Priorities
- Improve use of systems employed
- Improve customer experience/ satisfaction.

Any changes to priorities and their implementation, if approved, would be seamless, as they are set directly into Keyfax (Contact Centre's diagnostic reporting tool). There would be no interruption to services provided, merely a better tailored progressive approach to what is a very demanding service.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing & Environment
DATE	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Replacement of Handheld Devices (Trades Operatives)
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/018

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the procurement of 200 handheld devices (smartphones) under an appropriate framework agreement, which devices are to be used by the trades operatives within Building Services. These devices are to replace existing ones which are more than 4 years old and which are now progressively less economic and efficient.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee approve the procurement of 200 handheld devices (smartphones) under an appropriate framework agreement or other appropriate tendering process, which devices are to be used by trades operatives within the Council's Building Services in replacement of existing devices and will entail a total estimated expenditure of up to **£148,000**.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Building Services intend to recover the cost of the replacement devices through the charging of the Housing Repairs Response contract and any shortfall will be met through the Service's contribution to the Housing & Environment General Fund Budget by way of its Trading Accounts surpluses.

The Trading Accounts generate surpluses annually, however since the introduction of the use of IT devices to improve productivity nearly 5 years ago, there has never been an expenditure line for depreciation of IT equipment. This has resulted in the requirement for this one off expenditure to update equipment and in the future additional improvement in IT will be accounted for through the budgeting process.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There will be resource implications for the Corporate Information Technology Services (ICT) the Central Procurement Unit (CPU) and Legal Services of the Council in order to procure and configure the devices.

ICT will be requested to provide the staffing resources that will be required to ensure that the devices are appropriately configured to Council's systems and provide the necessary backup needed to support their ongoing workings.

The input of the CPU and Legal Services will be required in order to ensure the procurement of the devices complies with legislation and the Council's standing orders.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The current handheld devices were purchased over four years ago to automate the manual timesheets completed by the trades operatives within response repairs and to allow the scheduling of jobs. The devices also enable details of works to be sent to the trades operatives without the need for them to attend Kittybrewster depot. The data captured by the devices also assists in satisfying the data capture required by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Therefore the devices reduced downtime and allowed additional work to be undertaken.

However they are now starting to fail and are requiring increasing on going care and maintenance. In addition the operating system that the devices run on is no longer supported and in order to continue to operate the total mobile system through the mobile devices they will need to be replaced with devices which are supported by an operating system.

Therefore the recommendation is that we renew the devices at a cost of no more than £148,000.

Building Services will work in conjunction with CPU, ICT and Legal Services in order to procure the devices in the most appropriate manner.

6. IMPACT

The community plan sets out our vision for the future of the City – an even better place to live and work, where people can expect high quality services to meet their needs.

The purchase of the handhelds for Building Services meets the following objective:

- Homes challenge – improve the quality of housing and environment for individuals and the community.

It also meets the objective in the policy document “Aberdeen the Smarter City”:

Smarter living - we will provide quality services to our council tenants to enable them to have a dry, warm home in a safe and enjoyable environment.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

If the devices were not replaced responsive repairs would be unable to schedule jobs, be required to complete manual timesheets and have to return to Kittybrewster depot on a regular basis for information on future work. The response contract currently under takes on average 15,000 jobs a month therefore additional resources would be required for time sheet input & allocating work resulting in reduced efficiency. Previously this role was carried out by 15 people.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Kiemon Stewart – Operations Manager

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Environmental Health Food Regulatory Service Plan 2014/2015 including Review of the 2012/2013 Service Plan
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/13/069

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Food Standards Agency's 'Framework Agreement' requires local authorities to prepare a service plan and annually review their performance against it.

The report presents to the Committee a revised Food Regulatory Service Plan (Appendix A) for approval by the Committee which also contains an improvement plan for the forthcoming year.

At this time it is impossible to predict accurately the number of food businesses that will be operating in the City or the number of hygiene interventions required for each category of business in 2014/2015; however following examination of the figures for the last few years it can be assumed that there will be a slight increase in intervention numbers due to the emergence of new catering businesses.

The review of performance against the 2012/2013 Food Safety Service Plan is also presented to the Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Committee approves in principle the maintenance and development of food regulatory services necessary to satisfy the requirements of the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement
2. That the Committee approves the Food Regulatory Service Plan 2014/2015.(Appendix A)
3. That the Committee notes the Review of the 2012/2013 Food Regulatory Service Plan.(Included in Appendix A)

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Currently the service as proposed within the Regulatory Service Plan can be provided within the existing budget.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Risk Management:

Failure to provide a Food Regulatory Service Plan and associated implementation of that plan is a failure to comply with the Framework Agreement. Ultimately the Food Standards Agency has default powers by virtue of any order made by ministers under section 42 of the Food Safety Act to discharge the duties of an authority. If it is considered that the authority has not been discharging its obligations satisfactorily under the Act. The powers also allow the Agency to recover any reasonable expenses incurred by them from the defaulting local authority.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Food enforcement services provided by Aberdeen City Council are located in the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service, a city-wide service within Housing and Environment. The majority of food enforcement work takes place within the Commercial Section of this Service, with a number of enforcement officers having a dual role being qualified to enforce both food and health and safety law.

A number of enforcement staff have left the Service over the last year and steps are currently being taken to recruit new officers.

Local authorities are required by the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) 'Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities to prepare a Service Plan and review their performance against it on an annual basis.

The FSA sees the Service Plan as an important part of the process to ensure national priorities and standards of food enforcement are addressed and delivered locally. Service plans also:

- a. Focus debates on key delivery issues;
- b. Provide an essential link with financial planning;
- c. Set objectives for the future, and identify major issues that cross service boundaries; and
- d. Provide a means of managing performance and making performance comparisons.

The FSA suggest a common format for Food Regulatory Service Plans which should assist local authorities in performance reviews under the Best Value regime.

The FSA has a key role in overseeing local authority food enforcement activities and is proactive in setting and monitoring standards and auditing local authorities' enforcement activities in order to ensure these are effective and undertaken on a consistent basis. Powers to enable the Agency to monitor and audit local authorities are contained in the Food Standards Act 1999. It should be noted that the FSA has default powers by virtue of any order made by ministers under section 42 of the Food Safety Act to discharge the duties of an authority in its place.

Aberdeen City Council, as a 'food authority', is subject to routine audit by the Food Standards Agency. The results of the audit are published on the Agency's web-site. The FSA has powers to require an action plan after audit which authorities must implement within a specified period.

6. IMPACT

Corporate

The work of the Environmental Health Service contributes to making Aberdeen a highly successful City which is a great place to live, work and visit.

1. Links to the 5 year Corporate Business Plan

The Service has a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce who makes best use of the financial resources available, delivering improvement in the specific service priorities in the most cost effective manner

2. Links to Community Planning Single Outcome Agreement 2013

This Food Regulatory Service Plan contributes to making Aberdeen an attractive, clean, healthy and safe place to live and work; a City that is welcoming to business and values its business community

3. Links to Aberdeen- the Smarter City

The Service Plan also has links with the visions contained within Aberdeen- the Smarter City. The Service assists with the promotion of Aberdeen as a great place to do business and visit and works with partners to promote the city as a place to export from.

Public

This report may be of interest to the public as it details how the food safety regulatory service is provided within the City. The Public are aware that there is the potential to contract food poisoning after consuming food made in premises that do not comply with food hygiene legislation.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Food Standards Agency's (FSA) 'Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Andrea Carson

Principal Environmental Health Officer

acarson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Telephone: 522741

**Appendix A 2014/2015 Food Regulatory Service Plan including
the Review of Performance against the 2012/2013
Food Regulatory Service Plan**

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
FOOD REGULATORY SERVICE PLAN
2014/2015

Introduction

Definition of the Statutory Food Regulatory Function

In January 2006 European Legislation came into force which applies directly to food businesses in the UK. The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 provide the framework for the EU legislation to be enforced in Scotland.

The principle objective of the general and specific hygiene rules is to ensure a high level of consumer protection with regard to food safety.

An integrated approach is necessary to ensure food safety from the place of primary production up to and including placing the items on the market.

The legislation falls into two broad areas of 'Food Standards' and 'Food Safety'.

Food Standards relates to issues of description, labelling and composition of food. This legislation is aimed at ensuring that consumers are not misled and can make informed choices founded on basic information contained in labelling or advertisements about the type and composition of food for sale.

Food safety relates to the safety of food supplied for human consumption at all points after harvesting/slaughter. The term applies both to the condition of the food itself and to the conditions under which it is handled prior to consumption. Local Authorities have a statutory role in the enforcement of legislation that is intended to ensure the hygienic handling of food and the safety of the final product in terms of its wholesomeness and fitness for consumption.

The term 'enforcement' is not restricted to the use of legal sanctions to achieve the aims of the legislation. 'Enforcement' is also taken to include:

1. The provision of advice about the application and interpretation of legislation.
2. The provision of advice about best practice.
3. Encouragement of food businesses to achieve compliance and adopt good practice through awareness raising, promotion, education and provision of feedback.
4. Raising the awareness of consumers about safe food handling practices and about how to interpret labelling and descriptions of food in order to make informed choices.
5. Partnership arrangements with the business and voluntary sectors and other agencies.

Formal enforcement options include:

1. The use of enforcement notice procedures to require improvements to safety controls or prohibit or limit any dangerous operations.
2. The power to seize or detain unfit food.
3. In certain cases the regulation of activities through a system of prior approval.
4. Reporting matters to the Procurator Fiscal with a view to instigating prosecution.

The circumstances under which these options are judged appropriate are set out in the Food Safety Enforcement Policy

The actions associated with enforcement are concerned with the monitoring of food safety and food standards performance through the following:

1. Intervention and audit of food handling and manufacturing operations and processes.
2. Investigation of consumer complaints.
3. Sampling of food.
4. Investigation of issues passed on by other food authorities or the Food Standards Agency.
5. Investigation of cases of food-borne disease.
6. Review of guidance issued to businesses in the light of technical or legislative developments.

The term *food business* used in this report includes food provided by the voluntary sector, public sector and non-profit making organisations.

The Council also offers a service providing export certification for food manufactured or processed in the City in appropriate cases.

Key Partnership Agencies

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) oversees the enforcement process relating to both food standards and food safety in order to ensure that good practice is promoted and employed consistently between authorities. The FSA also has powers to direct food authorities in the conduct of enforcement activities and to implement ministerial directives. One major area of joint involvement with food authorities is in the co-ordination and dissemination of 'Food Alerts'. These are divided into three categories:

1. Food alerts for action where food in the supply chain is considered to be unfit
2. Product Withdrawal
3. Product Recall

The FSA issues a 'Product Withdrawal Information Notice' or a 'Product Recall Information Notice' to let local authorities and consumers know about problems associated with food. 'Food Alerts for Action' provide local authorities with details of specific action to be taken on behalf of consumers and are often issued in conjunction with a product withdrawal or recall by a manufacturer, retailer or distributor.

A Product Withdrawal Information Notice and /or Product Recall Information Notices are issued where a solution to the problem has been put in place – the product has been, or is being, withdrawn from sale or recalled from consumers, for example.

These warnings are issued to Food Authorities via e-mail. They are also distributed through a secure on-line communications network ('EHC Net').

The *Meat Hygiene Service* (MHS) is an executive arm of the FSA and is responsible for the enforcement of food safety regulations at licensed slaughter-houses, meat cutting establishments and catering butchers. The objective of the MHS is to provide an integrated traceable system of controls on fresh meat from the slaughter-house to the wholesale outlet. Local authorities are generally responsible for all other aspects of enforcement in Scotland. Enforcement of the Regulations in cold stores was handled by the MHS but under the new Regulations this has transferred to Local Authorities.

Grampian Health Board and the Local Authorities within Grampian have a responsibility for the prevention and control of infectious disease including food poisonings. A local Infectious Disease Incident Plan, has been produced and outlines in detail the roles and responsibilities shared by the various organisations included within the plan; this is reviewed periodically. The Health Board provides a designated medical officer (Consultant in Public Health Medicine (Communicable Disease/Environmental Health) to the Local Authority who has powers on behalf of the Local Authority to exclude individuals, who present a public health risk, from work or school.

1. Service Aims and Objectives

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Food Service is to protect public health, consumer interests and consumer confidence with respect to the safety, composition, description and labelling of food. This aim is pursued through a mix of interventions that include:

- a) Intervention, partial intervention, audit; both programmed preventative visits and also visits in response to complaints and enquires.
- b) Verification, to ensure specified requirements have been fulfilled at establishments
- c) Education, which includes advice given during interventions as well as the provision of education, training and the general promotion of food safety and food standards issues.
- d) Intelligence, which includes the gathering of information through food sampling, monitoring technological/legislative changes and inter-authority/ agency communication.

The main objectives of these enforcement approaches are:

Improvement in hygiene practices and standards within food premises.

The prevention of the causes and spread of food-borne infections.

The removal of unsafe food from the food chain.

The prevention of illegal and unfair trading practices.

A set of written procedures is in place detailing the way in which the Service is provided. These procedures will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

The full scope of the service provided by Aberdeen City Council is set out in Section 2.3.

Linkage to Corporate Aims and Objectives

1. Business Plan

The Service has a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce who make best use of the financial resources available, delivering improvement in the specific service priorities in the most cost effective manner

1.2 Links to Community Planning Aberdeen Single Outcome Agreement 2013

This Food Regulatory Service Plan contributes to making Aberdeen an attractive, clean, healthy and safe place to live and work; a City that is welcoming to business and values its business community.

1.3 Links to Aberdeen- the Smarter City

The Service Plan also has links with the visions contained within Aberdeen- the Smarter City. The Service assists with the promotion of Aberdeen as a great place to do business and visit and works with partners to promote the City as a place to export from.

2. Background

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Aberdeen City Council is a mainly urban port authority with a population of approximately 225,000. The City is the main port for the oil industry within Europe and retains a significant, if diminishing, fishing industry.

A moderate fish processing business sector exists however the authority is no longer served by a fish auction market. There is also a major manufacturing dairy and meat products factory within the City. Additionally, the City has a diverse catering sector producing a wide range of traditional and ethnic meals, the majority of which are contained within the city centre area. The City also has a thriving airport and seaport.

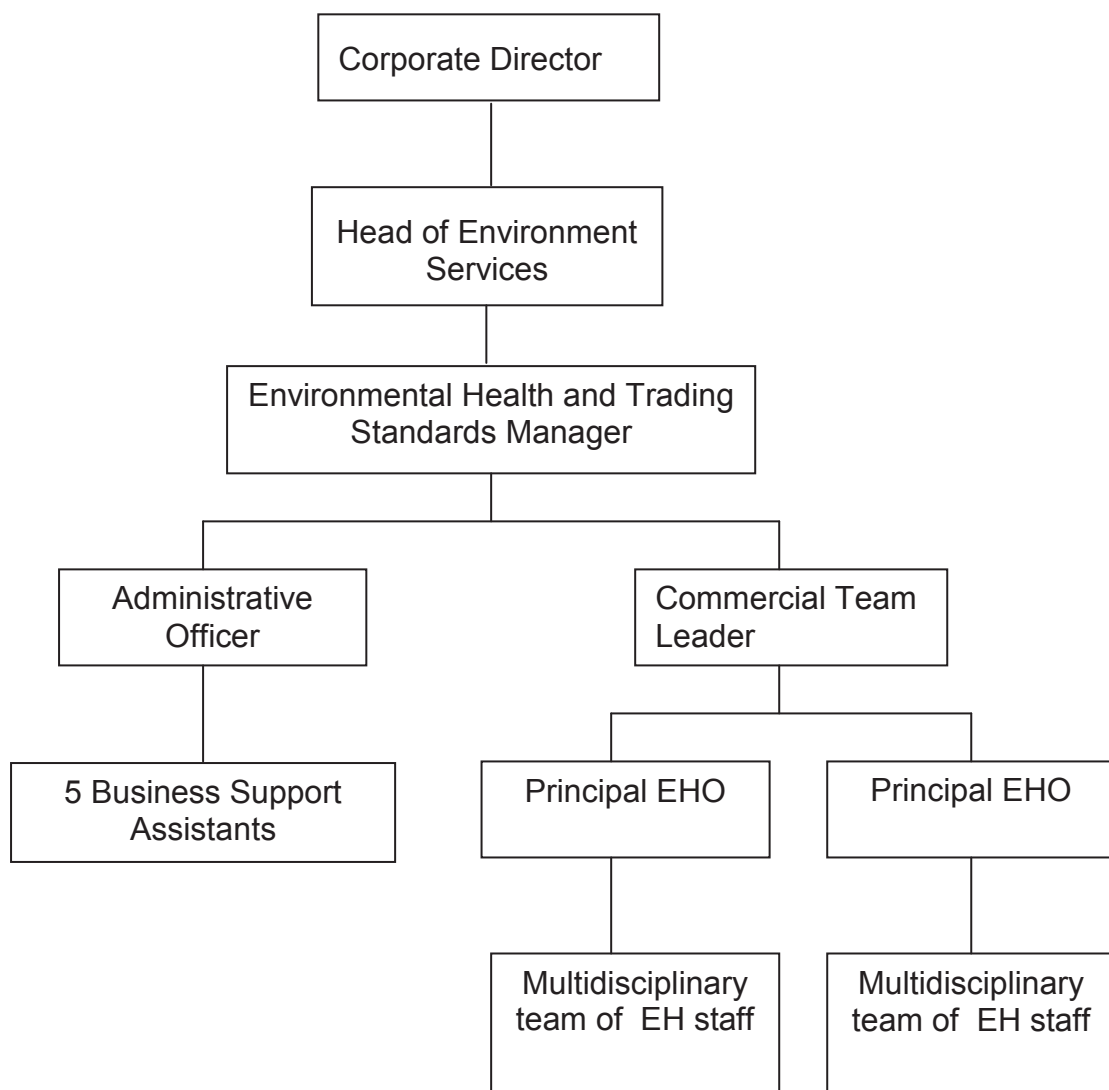
2.2 Organisational Structure

2.2.1 The Food Regulatory Service

The food regulatory service is a city-wide service provided from within the Environmental Health Commercial Section of the Housing and Environment Service by a mix of staff that includes Environmental Health Officers, Authorised Officers and administration staff. A number of the staff have joint responsibility for both food enforcement and enforcement of Health and

Safety at Work. The section also has responsibilities for port health work, liaison with the Licensing Board and Licensing Committee and for liaison over planning and building warrant applications with a view to providing advice on environmental health issues that may be involved. Control of feedingstuffs falls within the responsibility of the Trading Standards Section and arrangements for this function are detailed within the Trading Standards Service Plan.

The Commercial Team is currently composed of 2 multi-disciplinary area based teams.



2.2.2 Committee Structure

The Following Committees operate within Aberdeen City Council:

Audit and Risk
Education Culture and Sport
Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure
Finance, Policy and Resources
Housing and Environment
Social Care, Wellbeing and Safety
Petitions
Planning Development Management
Licensing
Appeals
Pensions Panel

The bulk of food related matters are reported to the Housing and Environment Committee. When appropriate, food related matters may also be reported to the Finance and Resources or the Audit and Risk Committees.

2.3 Scope of the Food Service

The authority has a responsibility for the provision of food law enforcement protection services covering approximately 2000 food businesses. Table 1 illustrates the number and type of food businesses within Aberdeen City.

At this time it is impossible to predict accurately the number of food businesses that will be operating within the City in 2014/2015 however looking at the figures for the last few years it can be assumed that there will be a slight increase in the number of caterers.

Table 1: Number and Type of Food Businesses within Aberdeen City

Food business Type	Premises	
	1 April 2012	1 April 2013
Primary Producers	4	4
Manufacturers & Packers	63	61
Importers/Exporters	1	1
Distributors/Transporters	39	41
Retailers	450	445
Restaurant & Caterers	1453	1487
Total	2010	2039

The principal responsibility is the intervention and audit of these premises, however there is also responsibility to investigate food complaints relating to the safety or standards of food sold from these establishments. This includes

a responsibility to investigate, where appropriate, on behalf of other enforcement agencies under the Home Authority Principle.

Additionally, the authority has responsibility for co-ordinating a monitoring and surveillance programme for foods produced in the area.

Many of the staff carrying out food safety interventions also have responsibilities for inspecting premises under health and safety legislation as detailed in Section 2.2. As an urban authority there is little involvement in feedingstuffs controls. Detailed arrangements for control of feedingstuffs are contained within the Consumer Protection Section Service Plan and Quality Management systems.

The Service utilises Aberdeen Scientific Services, also based within the Council, to analyse and examine food samples.

2.4 Demands on the Food Service

2.4.1 Food Premises Profile

The number of approved fish processing premises is a particular feature of demand in the area. In addition requests for export certificates for fishery products are a complementary aspect of the overall international trade in fish and fish products. The City also contains a high concentration of large 'superstore' retail outlets which serve a significant number of consumers beyond the Aberdeen City boundary.

The City has a comparatively small number of major manufacturers outside the fish processing sector.

All local authorities have responsibility for imported food controls to ensure that food imported into Great Britain from outside the EU is safe and complies with EU and UK requirements. Significant amounts of food of non-animal origin will not have been physically checked at ports of entry and products of animal origin may be illegally imported. Resources are therefore allocated to this area during routine interventions.

2.4.2 Approved/Licensed Premises

Establishments producing products of animal origin have to adhere to specific health rules and require approval under specialist legislation.

Currently there are 44 approved premises in the City . These are categorised as follows:

Fishery products	40	premises
Dairy products	2	premises
Meat products	4	premises

*One business in the City is approved in all three categories.

2.4.3 Primary Production

Regulation EC 852/2004 on Hygiene of Foodstuffs applies to primary producers of food and is executed and enforced in Scotland by the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Primary production is the rearing or growing of primary products including harvesting, milking and farmed animal production prior to slaughter.

The frequency of primary production food hygiene inspections undertaken is determined by risk assessment as described in Annex 10 of The Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland). Membership of a recognised farm assured scheme is factored into the risk assessment as it may help the business to comply with hygiene requirements.

The primary production enforcement regime applies only to land based agricultural activities; arable, horticulture and livestock including farmed game. It does not include dairy, egg, fish or shellfish production. Due to the small number of these establishments in the Aberdeen area only 5 require to be inspected annually. These inspections are funded by the Food Standards Agency.

2.4.4 Service delivery points

The staff of the service are based at Marischal College, Broad Street. The general philosophy is that the service is taken to the client in relation to intervention of businesses or public contact to pick up food that is subject of complaint. The planning and licensing liaison services are based at Marischal College for the purposes of most meetings with clients (or more usually their agents), with field visits as necessary.

The service can be accessed by businesses and public by telephone or in person at Marischal College between the hours of 8:30am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday. Telephone calls made outside these hours will be recorded by the telephone answering service. At weekends and evenings an Environmental Health duty officer is on standby for emergencies. The Service can also be accessed at any time via e-mail, although e-mails will only be accessed by the service staff during office working hours.

2.5 **Enforcement Policy**

The Food Safety Enforcement Policy was last reviewed in 2013 to take account of legislative changes.

3. **Service Delivery**

3.1 **Food Premises Interventions**

The requirement to carry out periodic inspections of food premises using a risk based approach is derived from EC Regulations 882/2004 and the Framework Agreement on Food Law Enforcement in respect of legislation relating to Scotland.

Standards of Food hygiene and safety for businesses in the European Community are set out in the EC Regulation 853/2004 on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs. These contain both structural and operational requirements that apply to all food businesses. Additional requirements for food businesses that must obtain approval in relation to the production of products of animal origin are contained in EC Regulations 853/2004.

Codes of Practice issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990 and Regulation 6 of the Official Feed and Food Controls (Scotland) Regulations 2006, together with associated practice guidance and industry guides assist enforcement authorities in performing their duties. The Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) was last revised in 2009 principally to replace the inspection focussed approach to food law enforcement with one whereby local authorities can use a wider range of interventions to monitor, support and increase business compliance. The Code has recently undergone another revision; the draft of which was consulted on at the beginning of 2014 - a final version is awaited. The aim stated by the Food Standards Agency and endorsed by this Service is to ensure that resources are directed at those food businesses that present the greatest risk to public health. Previously inspections were conducted at food businesses, these have now been replaced with a suite of interventions as defined below.

Interventions

Interventions are defined within the Code of Practice as activities that are designed to monitor, support and increase food law compliance within a food establishment. They include, but are not restricted to official controls, which are defined at Article 2(1) of Regulation 882/2004.

Methods for carrying out tasks described as official controls are specified in Article 10 of Regulation 882/2004.

These Include:-

- Monitoring,
- Surveillance,
- Verification
- Audit,
- Inspection
- Sampling and Analyses

Non-official controls are:-

- Education, advice and coaching
- Information and intelligence gathering

The majority of official controls are undertaken unannounced. However in some circumstances an appointment may be necessary. For example if the business is a domestic premises or successive attempts to gain access have been unsuccessful.

3.1.1 Frequency of Interventions

Interventions will take place at a frequency determined by an interventions risk rating assigned at the last inspection/intervention. This date can be bought forward if a problem has been identified (e.g. through a complaint investigation, notification of an issue from another authority, poor sampling result etc) Dependent upon the gravity of the problem the intervention rating may be reconsidered along with the appropriateness of the next planned intervention

All interventions should be planned so that they are carried out no later than 28 days after the due date.

Food premises are inspected at intervals ranging between 6 months and 2 years, depending on a national risk rating system which is required to be followed by all food authorities. An alternative enforcement strategy may be used for very low risk premises.

The projected number of programmed interventions due for 2013-2014 is 470 for food safety (Table 2) and 440 for food standards (Table 3). Approximately 50% of premises will require one or more revisits following a food hygiene intervention. It is important to note that these figures exclude the category C risk rated premises as these have been removed from the inspection programme. In addition the actual number of interventions required could vary slightly from the forecast at the beginning of each year due to changes in risk ratings during the year.

3.1.2 Control of Cross Contamination Strategy

In February 2011 the Food Standards Agency published guidance on the Control of Cross Contamination in response to the serious outbreaks of E coli O157 in Scotland in 1996 and Wales in 2005.

The guidance was developed for use by food businesses and clarified the steps required to control the risk of food becoming contaminated and detailed the steps to be taken to protect customers. It was also to be used by local authority food law enforcement officers when inspecting those businesses.

Although E coli O157 is the key focus of the guidance, the measures outlined will also assist in the control of other pathogenic bacteria such as campylobacter and salmonella.

In order to assist local authorities in implementing the Control of cross contamination guidance, a Cross Contamination Initiative Strategy was developed by the Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee and agreed by The Food Standards Agency in Scotland to allow Scottish local authorities to engage with medium risk food businesses outwith the annual planned food intervention programme.

The strategy allows local authorities to focus resources on addressing cross contamination controls until 31st March 2015. During this time the frequency of planned interventions of high risk food premises and manufacturing establishments requiring approval will remain unchanged.

As a result of this strategy both high and medium risk rated food businesses will be subject to focused inspections dealing primarily with the control of cross contamination and once an initial inspection is carried out the business will be re-visited repeatedly until compliance with food law has been achieved.

Low risk and unrated food businesses will only be subject to reactive interventions during the initiative strategy period unless resources dictate otherwise. This will mean that some of these businesses may fall overdue for inspection during the implementation period. However it should be remembered that this is because premises presenting a greater risk to the public are being targeted.

The implementation of the strategy will result in an increase in the number of focused interventions of medium risk premises. It is more than likely that revisits to some premises will also be required to ensure compliance. It will not be possible to estimate the number of premises that will require formal intervention or additional visits until the project has been running for a period of time.

The national emphasis on cross contamination will result in an increase in the use of formal sanctions where there are instances of loss of control and food hygiene risks are being inadequately addressed by business proprietors. These formal sanctions will include the issue of the following notices: Remedial Action Notices, allowing certain practices to be stopped

immediately; Hygiene Improvement Notices requiring works to be done within a specified time and Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices requiring the business to shut immediately. Reports to the Procurator Fiscal may also be prepared where there is continuing non-compliance with legislation. This formal approach has been encouraged by the Food Standards Agency.

Any increase in the level of formal enforcement action will place an additional burden on the Environmental Health Service.

Table 2: Number of business due for food hygiene Interventions in 2013/2014

Risk category	Inspection Frequency	Number of premises
A	6 months	17
B	12 months	191
C	18 months	Currently excluded
D	24 months	149
Not risk rated	N/A	100
E	Alternative Enforcement Strategy every 3 years	89
Overdue from previous year		13
Total		559

The table above illustrates the number of businesses that were due for food hygiene interventions in the last financial year.

At this time it is impossible to predict accurately the number of food hygiene interventions required for each category of business within the City in 2014/2015 however following examination of the figures for the last few years it can be assumed that there will be a slight increase in intervention numbers due to the emergence of new catering businesses.

Our aim is to hit 100% of Category A and B premises on or before the due date for intervention.

Category C premises will be dealt with under the Control of Cross Contamination Strategy as described in 3.1.2.

Low risk food hygiene interventions, Category D premises, and low risk food standards interventions will be carried out when competing service demands allow. Work will be prioritised firstly by the risk and secondly by the length of time the intervention has been overdue. Category E premises requiring food hygiene interventions and Category C premises due a Food Standards intervention will be tackled by an Alternative Enforcement Strategy (AES) in the form of a telephone questionnaire that will be undertaken by the Administration Team.

UK Food Hygiene legislation was updated in January 2006 providing officers with a set of European Regulations and The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

This legislation sets out the duty of food business operators to produce food safely.

Another key feature of this legislation is the requirement of most food businesses, including caterers, to establish, and document, food safety management procedures (FSMP) based on the application of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.

Table 3: Number of business due for food standards intervention in 2013/2014

Risk category	Inspection Frequency	Number of premises
A	12 months	20
B	24 months	125
C	Alternative Enforcement Strategy every 5 years	155
Not risk rated		140
Total		440

At this time it is impossible to predict accurately the number of food standards interventions required for each category of business within the City in 2014/2015 however following examination of the figures for the last few years it can be assumed that there will be a slight increase in intervention numbers due to the emergence of new catering businesses.

To maximise the use of existing staffing resources, interventions of different types will be carried out at a single visit, where practicable. For example, food hygiene and food standards interventions will be, wherever possible, synchronised. However, savings made through this type of rationalisation have to be carefully balanced against the cost of bringing a programmed action to an earlier date and hence increasing the overall frequency of interventions.

3.2 Food and Feedingstuffs Complaints/Service Requests (Including Food Hygiene Complaints)

The trend over recent years has been for a year on year increase in the number of food related complaints received. Based on previous years it is anticipated that there will be in the region of 600 service requests received in 2014-2015.

Our aim is to ensure all food complaints/service requests are evaluated on receipt by the Principal EHO (Food) or in her absence the Commercial Team

Leader or other Commercial Team Principal EHO. The decision making process for action on a given complaint is informed by the documented food complaints procedure of the Commercial Section and the Service's Food Safety Enforcement Policy. Handling food complaints is a resource intensive process and action in relation to individual complaints will be proportionate to risk. Complainants are informed of the proposed course of action and also of the progress and outcome of their complaint.

Control of Feeding stuffs is the responsibility of the Trading Standards Service and the complaint investigation policy is contained within the Trading Standards Service Plan.

3.3 Home Authority Principle and Primary Authority Scheme

The food safety and food standards service procedures fully acknowledge the home authority principle and Primary Authority Scheme. In cases where a designated home authority exists, they will be contacted prior to taking formal enforcement action in order to assess best enforcement practice in relation to the issue at hand.

From April 2009, Food Authorities in England had the choice to become the Primary Authority for a food business operator that has establishments in more than one Local Authority area. Scottish Authorities have been advised to treat Primary Authorities as if they were the "Home Authority"

Home Authorities are also informed of food complaints both as an aid to Aberdeen City's enforcement assessment and in order to ensure that the relevant home authorities are able to gain the fullest picture of the food safety/standards performance of their partner businesses.

The Service procedures also acknowledge the duty of Aberdeen City Council to respond to requests for originating authority reports from any food authority whose investigations have led to a point where a manufacturer or supplier within Aberdeen should require to be included in the overall investigation.

Aberdeen City Council is not formally registered as a home authority for any of the businesses producing food within in its area. However, the City Council acts as originating authority for any such businesses. The current policy is to investigate all Home/Originating Authority referrals thoroughly in order to fully meet the requirements of the referring authority. On average this authority receives less than 10 such referrals per year and so this is not particularly demanding of resources. This level of service will be maintained.

3.4 Advice to Businesses

The service provides advice, through the planning liaison service, to potential business start-ups or when significant refurbishment is being considered.

The bulk of additional advisory work is carried out during interventions and visits. The dual capabilities of some staff on both food hygiene and food standards aspects also assists by enabling advice on any aspect of food regulation to be provided at any food regulatory visit regardless of the specific purpose of that visit.

The Service also provides advice on request to both businesses and consumers. Over the past few years the number of enquiries from businesses and the public relating to food safety has increased. Enquiries relating to food standards have also increased. On this basis the service can expect to receive approximately 140 food safety enquiries and 15 food standards enquiries in the forthcoming year.

3.5 Food Intervention and Sampling

This Service actively participates in a food sampling programme which is coordinated by Aberdeen Scientific Services. This involves taking routine surveillance samples as well as participating in both national and regional surveys.

Programmed sampling does not include formal sampling, which is required where formal enforcement action is anticipated, and is usually in response to prior information from investigation of a complaint, or failure of an informal sample taken by an enforcement officer.

Environmental Health Officers and Authorised Officers assisted by members of the admin team carry out sampling.

The Council provides food analytical services and bacteriological examination services through Aberdeen Scientific Services, which is accredited to all the necessary standards. Aberdeen Scientific Services also acts as the Council's Appointed Food Examiner. This Service has a Service Level Agreement with this organisation to perform analysis of the bulk of food samples. From time to time, other appropriately accredited laboratories may carry out specific analyses.

3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

The food regulatory service has a number of staff appropriately trained to deal with potential or actual cases or outbreaks of food poisoning and food borne disease. The Service has adopted the Health Board's Infectious Disease Incident Plan. Where issues of public health dictate, staff will be diverted from pro-active intervention and sampling work and from lower priority response work.

The Service has out-of-hours arrangements via a 'duty officer' stand-by system. The availability of staff for drafting in over holiday periods cannot be guaranteed but it is statistically unlikely that insufficient staff would be available due to the number of staff potentially available and the number likely to be required at short notice. The Service also holds a list of out of hours contact details for its food enforcement staff, which can be utilised in situations where there is a serious threat to public health requiring an immediate response.

The food regulatory service currently carries out field investigations of food related infectious disease in all cases where it is judged by Environmental

Health staff or the Health Board's designated Consultant in Public Health Medicine that a particular food premises is implicated. Around 90 alleged cases of food poisoning are reported to the Service every year, but not all warrant detailed investigation.

The Service also investigates sporadic cases confirmed as suffering from a food borne diseases such as salmonella and dysentery where no particular food premises are implicated.

3.7 Food Safety Incidents

The Food Regulatory Service is advised of Food Alerts (FA), Allergy Alerts, Product withdrawal and Product recall information via e mail. Out-of-hours contact arrangements are registered with the FSA, including communication via e-mail and text message to key personnel.

All responses to Food Alerts will continue to be in keeping with the category of the warning either for action or information. All service procedures for dealing with food hazards occurring within the authority are in line with the guidance contained in The Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) and the associated Practice Guidance- which sets out the protocols for advising the FSA and other authorities as circumstances dictate. Availability of staff in emergency situations is as described in section 3.6 above.

In terms of numbers, the trend appears to be towards a decreasing number of Food Alerts from the FSA.

3.8 Liaison with Other Bodies

The principle vehicle for inter-authority liaison is the North of Scotland Food Liaison Group on which the authority is represented by the Principal EHO (Food Safety) who is the chairperson. The Principal EHO (Food Safety) also attends the Fish and Shellfish Working Group Scotland and Northern Ireland and represents the North of Scotland on the Scottish Food Enforcement Liaison Committee (SFELC) which meets quarterly.

The authority is represented by the Principal EHO (Food) at the monthly meeting of the multi-disciplinary Infectious Disease Group of Grampian Health Board and at the Health Board's 6 monthly in depth review meetings.

These liaison arrangements demand approximately 14 days of Principal EHO time per year.

It is intended that these existing liaison arrangements will be continued, as they not only assist the authority in ensuring a consistent enforcement approach with other Scottish Local Authorities but also enable efficiencies through partnership initiatives, particularly for staff training and promotional activities.

The Service also has internal liaison arrangements with the Building and Planning Control Services for prospective refurbishment of food business premises, and with the Licensing Committee for licensed food premises and Street Traders.

3.9 **Food Safety and Food Standards Promotional Work**

From time to time the authority participates in promotional activities with external agencies such as neighbouring local authorities and Grampian Health Board.

EatSafe Project.

This Service intends to continue with the Eat safe project this year.

Food Standards Agency Scotland's (FSAS) Eat Safe award scheme is designed to promote excellence in food hygiene and food safety management and improve public confidence and consumer choice in catering establishments across the country.

The Eat Safe 'award scheme provides an incentive to caterers to strive for standards beyond those required by law, and helps consumers make informed choices about where to eat out in Scotland by providing a recognisable and well publicised sign of excellence in standards of food hygiene. Those premises who meet the standards are entitled to display the Eat Safe logo which is a readily recognisable symbol of high food hygiene standards across Scotland.

Eligible establishments are assessed for the Eat Safe award as part of scheduled food hygiene interventions. In Scotland there have been over 1000 Eat safe awards issued. Aberdeen City has issued 30 awards to date.

This Service reviews Eat Safe award status at every planned food hygiene intervention.

Food Hygiene Information Scheme

The Food Hygiene Information Scheme was launched in Scotland on 6 November 2006. It provides consumers with an insight into the hygiene standards found at food hygiene inspections. The scheme was developed to increase consumer confidence and help people make informed choices about where they eat or buy their food.

Aberdeen City was one of the five pilot authorities in Scotland to introduce this scheme and the results can be viewed on the Aberdeen City website. In addition to the scheme a copy of the most recent inspection report is also displayed on the website. Some reports will not be available where legal action is pending- these are withheld until the outstanding matters are resolved. This project has now been rolled out nationally and the majority of Scottish local authorities have agreed to take part.

The scheme applies to all food outlets that supply food to consumers. Each is asked to display a certificate on the door or window of their premises, confirming that they have passed their most recent food hygiene inspection. The inspection outcome applies to a business trading at a particular address, so that a change of business operator at a given address will require a fresh assessment. The outcomes of the assessments are divided into four categories as detailed below: Pass:

A 'Pass' indicates that the business broadly met the legal requirements. These requirements include the hygiene conditions found during the inspection and the management procedures in place for providing safe food.

Improvement Required:

Where a business has failed to meet these requirements it will not be issued with a "Pass" certificate. This outcome will appear as an "Improvement Required" on the website.

Exempt Premises:

A very small number of premises may be registered as food businesses in circumstances where it is unlikely that customers will view them as food premises. The assessment for such premises will have concluded that the food safety risk is negligible.

In such cases (and only with the agreement of the business), a certificate will not be issued and the information on the local authority website will indicate that the business is currently exempt from the food hygiene information scheme.

Awaiting Inspection:

Where a business has not yet been inspected, it will be issued with a temporary certificate advising consumers of that fact. This will appear as 'Awaiting Inspection' on the website. Premises will also require to be re-inspected where they have changed ownership.

The scheme is applied throughout the City.

4. Resources

4.1 Financial Allocation

The financial allocation for the food regulatory service is set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Financial allocation for the food service¹ 2014/2015

Expenditure		Food Total £
	Staffing	365113
	Training	12000
	Sampling	220000
	Other operating costs	56448
	Total Expenditure	653561
Income		
	Total Income	44441
Net Cost		609120

¹ Estimate based on number of full time equivalent staff working in support of the food enforcement service

4.2 Staffing Allocation

The current allocation of full time equivalent staff to the Food Regulatory Service is detailed in Table 5 below. Due to staff shortages, the actual staffing level is significantly below the number of established posts.

Table 5: Allocation of full time equivalent staff to the Food Service

Full Time Equivalent Staff	Food
<u>Section Management</u>	
Trading Standards and Commercial Premises Manager	0.3
Commercial Team Leader	0.5
Principal Environmental Health Officers	1.2
<u>Field Staff</u>	
Environmental Health Officers	5.0
Senior Authorised Officers	1.6
Authorised Officers	2.8
<u>Section Support</u>	
Administration Staff	2.6
Total	14.0

4.3 Staff Development Plan

The service ensures that:

- [a] All staff involved in food safety interventions are qualified Environmental Health Officers or hold the SFSORB Higher Certificate in Food Safety.
- [b] All staff involved in the seizure or assessment of foods are Environmental Health Officers or Authorised Officers with specialist qualifications in food inspection. Additional specialist qualifications are required for the seizure of red meat and fish.
- [c] All staff involved in the assessment of quality systems have had suitable specialist training.

The Service is committed to taking advantage of all opportunities to send staff on the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland Law Enforcement School and a HACCP auditing course. The majority of staff have attended the necessary HACCP auditing course and current shortfalls have only reflected the availability and frequency of courses. It is intended that all food enforcement staff who have not previously attended a recognised HACCP auditing course do so at the earliest possible opportunity.

It is also intended to send a proportion of staff on the REHIS sponsored Food Update Course each year subject to budget availability, course content and the availability of places.

Technical update meetings will continue to be held every month to disseminate information on policy, new legislation and new developments in food enforcement and the food industry in a structured way. These meetings promote consistency of enforcement approach between enforcement staff.

5. Quality Assessment

The Service has established a Quality Monitoring System for intervention activity, which is designed to ensure:

- [a] Properly planned and resourced risk based food hygiene interventions are undertaken;
- [b] Officers with the appropriate levels of experience and training are selected to carry out interventions;
- [c] The consistent application of the Councils' food enforcement policy;
- [d] That the intervention itself is viewed as more than a specific visit;
- [e] Appropriate training, guidance and coaching is provided to enforcement officers in the furtherance of the objective of continuous professional development;
- [f] Consistency of enforcement approach between enforcement officers.

Outstanding sample results are monitored for each Officer on a regular basis by the Principal EHO.

6. Review

6.1 Review Against the Service Plan

The Service Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis following the end of each financial year.

6.2 Identification of any Variation from the Service Plan

Review of the plan will include assessment of performance against the plan, identify areas for improvement and forecast the demands on the service and the appropriate service mix required to meet those demands. The Service Plan will be revised as appropriate.

6.3 Areas for Improvement

- [a] Review of Policy and Procedures as required.
- [b] Continue to establish partnership agreements for promotional and educational initiatives where possible.
- [c] Implementation of mobile working for food hygiene inspections
- [d] Continued involvement in the food sampling programme.

- [e] Continued application and support of Food Hygiene Information Scheme.
- [f] Continued involvement in the Eatsafe Project.
- [j] Promote careers as Environmental Health Officers/Food Safety Officers at school careers fairs whilst reinforcing the message and importance of food safety.
- [k] Continue to implement an alternative enforcement strategy whereby category E (low risk) premises will be assessed by telephone questionnaire.
- [l] Maintenance of the strategy to deal with the risk of cross contamination in food businesses

Food Regulatory Service Plan Review

2012/2013

1. Food Hygiene Interventions

The number of food hygiene interventions achieved between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013 within the target time were as follows:

Risk Category	2011/12		2012/13	
	Inspections Due	Inspections Achieved	Inspections Due	Inspections Achieved
A (High)	16	16	28	28
B (High)	161	161	160	158
C (Medium)	484	462	407	393
D (Low)	87	84	112	102
TOTAL	748	723	707	681

The figures indicate that the performance achievement in respect of high risk premises decreased by 1% to 99% from the previous year with two premises missed.

The performance achievement in respect of medium risk premises improved from the previous year to 97%.

The performance achievement in respect of low risk premises decreased by 6%, however, the number of inspections required increased by 29%.

It must also be noted that the total number of food hygiene inspections that were carried out in 2012/13 was 874; 193 more inspection jobs that were not in the work programme for the year. These additional inspections are mainly attributed to new premises that have begun trading in the City.

The percentage of "broadly compliant" premises is 92% for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. Broadly compliant businesses with no critical risks to food safety, and few minor non recurring contraventions will receive a Pass certificate in the Food Hygiene Information Scheme.

The continued implementation of the Scheme has encouraged food business operators to carry out necessary work on minor recurring contraventions promptly in order to obtain a Pass certificate for display at the premises.

2. Food Standards Interventions

The number of food standards interventions undertaken between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013 was 537, a decrease of 345 from the previous year. This figure will fluctuate year on year depending on how many food standards

inspections are due. The number of new businesses that began trading in the area also effects this figure as each new business will require both a food hygiene and food standards inspection at start-up.

3. Formal Enforcement Action

106 Hygiene Improvement Notices were served under Regulation 6 of the Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 in respect of 38 food premises. This represents an increase of 5 % from the previous year. The number of notices fluctuates year on year depending on the inspections that are due during that period.

A breakdown of the non-compliances contained within the Notices is as follows:

Non Compliance	2011/12	2012/13
Facilities and equipment	31	27
Food Safety Management System	36	33
Structural repair	23	17
Personal Protective Equipment	0	0
Training	7	3
Pest control	4	4
Cleaning	0	22
TOTAL	101	106

In addition 5 Remedial Action Notices were also served. These notices immediately stop the storage, handling, preparation and sale of either ready to eat or non ready to eat foods.

It is proposed to continue the practice of serving formal action Notices on food business operators at the first revisit stage following the notification of a contravention of the Regulations including an appropriate time scale for improvement.

It is also anticipated that the service of formal Notices will increase significantly with the implementation of the Control of Cross Contamination initiative as all Scottish Local Authorities have been strongly recommended by the Food Standards Agency in Scotland to adopt a robust enforcement regime when finding any loss of such control.

Five reports were submitted to the Procurator Fiscal during the year. Two resulted in successful prosecutions; one in a fiscal fine, another still has to be dealt with by the Fiscal Service and the fifth is set for trial in the Sherriff Court in February 2014.

4. Food Complaints

A total of 131 food complaints in respect of food and food premises were received in 2012/2013. These were dealt with according to the Services' food complaints procedure and Enforcement Policy. It should be noted that on average complaints form only a proportion of the total number of requests for service. In all categories bar one there has been an increase in the number of requests received.

A breakdown of food service requests received is as follows:

Service Requests	2011/12	2012/13
Suspected food poisoning	71	88
Food Hygiene Enquiry	142	174
Food Standards Enquiry	14	17
Food Observations	28	45
Food Condemnation	1	2
Food Hygiene Complaint	78	44
Hygiene of Food Premises	30	101
Food Standards Complaint	79	87
FHIS Revisit Request	26	28
TOTAL	469	586

5. Food Sampling

There is no statutory target in respect of obtaining and submitting food samples.

Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory operates a unit charging scheme and a fixed number of units is allocated, on an annual basis, in respect of food microbiological examination and food chemistry analysis.

Sampling targets for the year were calculated as 384 chemical and 220 microbiological. These totals include general monitoring, local targeted exercises and regional and national surveillance surveys. They do not include re-active samples such as those taken as a result of consumer complaints or as part of investigations of food poisoning outbreaks.

The actual samples submitted for laboratory analysis or examination during 2012/2013 totalled 410 chemical which equates to 107 % of the target figure and 416 microbiological which equates to 189 % of the target figure. The increase in sampling numbers can be partially attributed to the additional samples taken during the horse meat investigation.

All sample failures were followed up and the results provided to the food businesses. Premises visits to discuss required remedial action were also undertaken and repeat samples procured to assess legal compliance.

6. Notification, Control and Investigation of Outbreaks of Foodborne Disease

Notifications received from NHS Grampian in respect of foodborne disease totalled 53. This figure includes 5 instances of viral illness associated with care homes and residential institutions, one instance connected to a nursery and one case of suspected legionella.

All were investigated fully in partnership with the NHS Health Protection Team without the necessity of any formal action.

A breakdown of specific diseases is as follows:

Disease	2011/12	2012/13
Salmonella	39	38
E.Coli O157	9	0
Hepatitis E	2	1
Dysentery	7	5
Campylobacter	1	2
TOTAL	58	46

Officers from the Service conducted interviews with patients gathering information for Enteric Disease Surveillance Forms. This information is shared with colleagues in the Grampian Health Board Health Protection Team. The 2012/13 statistics are not that dissimilar from the previous year apart from the E Coli O157 figure. In the 2012/13 year the Health Protection team dealt with these investigations.

No major food borne disease outbreaks occurred during the year .

7. Food Hazard Warnings

The food alerts received from the Food Standards Agency during 2012/2013 are classified and compared to previous year's trends below.

Category of Alert	2011/2012	2012/2013
For Action	2	17
Recall	38	34
Withdrawal	3	3
Allergy Alert	41	61
TOTAL	84	115

Officers are made aware of the withdrawal, recall and allergy alerts and accordingly check for products on sale when they are carrying out routine inspections and premises visits. In the case of the Alerts for Action the premises known to stock the items in question are specifically targeted at the time the Alert is issued to ensure that there is no product on site.

8. Export Certificates

The Service issued 269 Export Certificates for fishery products during 2012/2013 some 62 less than the previous year. The number of certificates issued will fluctuate annually depending on the export market.

Performance on Areas for Improvement 2012/2013

Areas for Improvement	Action
Review of Policy and Procedures as required	Target met
Continue to Establish Partnership Agreements for promotional and educational initiatives where possible	Officers participated in Food Safety week where talks were given to over 500 primary school children in six schools in the area. S3 pupils also received talks on food safety as part of the curriculum. Representation at school Careers Events promoting careers in Environmental Health
All staff to complete the HACCP course by the end of 2013	Constrained due to course availability
Continued involvement in the food sampling programme	Target met
Continued application and support of the Food Hygiene Information Scheme	Target met
Continued involvement in the Eatsafe Project	Target met
Promote careers as Environmental Health Officers/Food Safety Officers at school careers fairs whilst reinforcing the message and importance of food safety	Target met
Continue to implement an alternative enforcement strategy whereby category E (low risk) premises will be assessed by telephone questionnaire	Members of the admin team contacted low risk businesses throughout the year by telephone. This will be an on-going requirement in 2013/14
Maintenance of the strategy to deal with the risk of cross contamination in food businesses	Category C premises have been inspected in the last quarter of the year. This strategy will continue in 2013/14.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	11 th March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Occupational Health and Safety Intervention Plan 2014/15 with review of 2013/14
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/016

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents an Occupational Health and Safety Intervention Plan outlining the Environmental Health Service's proposals for delivering the occupational safety and health regulatory service for 2014/15.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee approves the Occupational Health and Safety Intervention Plan for 2014/15, and instructs the Director of Housing and Environment to make arrangements for its implementation

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Service delivery as proposed within the Intervention Plan can be provided within the existing budget.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Aberdeen City Council is an Enforcing Authority (EA) for Occupational Safety and Health enforcement in the Service Sector. LAs have a duty to 'make adequate arrangements for enforcement' under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The National Local

Authority Enforcement Code sets out what is meant by 'adequate arrangements for enforcement'. This Code replaces the existing S18 Standard and concentrates on the following four objectives:

- a) Clarifying the **roles and responsibilities** of business, regulators and professional bodies to ensure a shared understanding on the management of risk;
- b) Outlining the **risk-based regulatory approach** that LAs should adopt with reference to the Regulator's Compliance Code, HSE's Enforcement Policy Statement and the need to target relevant and effective interventions that focus on influencing behaviours and improving the management of risk;
- c) Setting out the need for the **training and competence** of LA H&S regulators linked to the authorisation and use of HSWA powers; and
- d) Explaining the arrangements for collection and publication of LA data and peer review to give an **assurance on meeting the requirements of this Code**.

The 2014/15 Intervention Plan will reflect this approach.

6. IMPACT

Corporate –

Links to Aberdeen-the Smarter City. Accords with the visions contained within Aberdeen-the Smarter City. The Service assists with the promotion of Aberdeen as a great place do business and visit, and works with partners to promote the city.

Business Plan-

The Service has a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce who makes best use of the financial resources available, delivering improvement in the specific service priorities in the most cost effective manner.

Links to Community Planning Single Outcome Agreement 2013. The regulation of commercial premises within the city contributes to making Aberdeen an attractive, clean, healthy and safe place to live

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Failure to prepare and implement a Health and Safety Intervention Plan could lead to criticism that the Council is failing in its duty under Section 18 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, which places a duty on the council to make "adequate arrangements" for enforcement of the Act. The HSE has default powers to take over services where authorities fail to make adequate arrangements for enforcement

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Occupational Health and Safety Intervention Plan 2013/14 HELA – LAC 67/2(rev. 4) Advice/Guidance to Local Authorities on Targeting Interventions

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/LAU/lacs/67-2.htm>

National Local Authority Enforcement Code Health and Safety at Work

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/lau/national-la-code.pdf>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/lau/supplementary-guidance.pdf>

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Andrew Gilchrist 522720 agilchrist@aberdeencity.gov.uk

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Intervention Plan

APRIL 2014-2015

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Foreword

Aberdeen City Council's Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service's Intervention Plan has regard to recent developments in Council Policy and the changing Occupational Health and Safety landscape.

In 2014/15 the Service activities will, to an extent, be determined by the HSE's priorities linked to the National Local Authority Enforcement Code. However there is flexibility in the Code that allows LAs to address local priorities.

The Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Commercial Team Leader in conjunction with the Principal Environmental Health Officer specialising in Occupational Health and Safety.

Introduction and Definitions

The principal statute regulating standards of health and safety at work is the Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974 (HSWA). Numerous subordinate statutory instruments provide detailed specialist regulatory measures. HSWA places a statutory duty on local authorities to enforce the relevant statutory instruments in relation to classes of business determined from time to time and defined by statutory instrument. The Enforcing Authority Regulations 1998 define the classes of activity which come under local authority enforcement and those which fall to enforcement by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has responsibility for overseeing enforcement of health and safety measures across the UK and advising government on policy issues.

The HSE has the statutory power to direct local authorities in the conduct of health and safety enforcement and default powers to take over services where authorities fail to follow relevant directions.

The term 'enforcement' is not restricted to the use of legal sanctions to achieve the aims of the legislation. 'Enforcement' is also taken to include:

- 1 The provision of advice about the application and interpretation of legislation.
- 2 The provision of advice about best practice.
- 3 Encouragement of businesses to achieve compliance and adopt good practice through awareness raising, promotion, education and provision of feedback.
- 4 Raising the awareness of employers, self-employed and employees about safety and health issues and the measures necessary or available to control them.
- 5 Partnership management with the business and voluntary sectors and other agencies.

Formal enforcement options include:

- 1 The use of enforcement notice procedures to require improvements to safety controls or prohibit the dangerous operations.
- 2 The power to seize or render safe dangerous equipment, substances or articles.
- 3 In certain cases the regulation of activities through system of prior approval.
- 4 Reporting matters to the Procurator Fiscal with a view to instigating prosecution.

The circumstances under which these options are judged appropriate are set out in the Health and Safety Enforcement Policy, which will be updated to reflect new guidance and direction from the HSE.

The actions associated with enforcement are concerned with the monitoring of work activities and safety management in workplaces for which the Aberdeen City Council is the enforcing authority through the following:

- 1 Inspection and audit of work premises, work activities and processes.
- 2 Investigation of complaints from employees or members of the public about workplaces and work activities.
- 3 Investigation of work related accidents, ill health and dangerous occurrences.
- 4 Receipt and, where appropriate, investigation of statutory notifications, for example reports of lifting equipment found to be defective on thorough examination, notifications of proposed asbestos removal and notification of cooling towers and evaporative condensers.
- 5 Provision of advice to businesses and workers on workplace health and safety.
- 6 Review of guidance issued to businesses in the light of technical or legislative developments.

Health and Safety Intervention Plan

1 Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the Occupational Health and Safety Service is to work with others to protect people's health and safety by ensuring risks in the workplace are managed properly

Officers seek to ensure that the health and safety of members of the public is not compromised by ensuring businesses comply with their obligation to provide safe systems of work.

1.1 [contd.]

These aims are passed primarily through the enforcement of relevant legislation by a variety of means but principally through advice given during proactive inspection and audits of work systems. In addition, these aims are also achieved by the provision of advice and promotion of relevant issues to employers, employees and, where appropriate, to the wider public.

The full scope of the Service is set out in Section 2.2 below.

1.2 Key Partnership Agencies

Health and Safety Executive [HSE]

Alongside local authorities, the HSE is the primary health and safety enforcing authority within Great Britain. The HSE is responsible for enforcing health and safety within the remaining businesses that are not Local Authority enforced.

From April 1st 2008 HSE became the single national regulatory body responsible for promoting the cause of better health and safety at work.

More recently, after the Loftstedt Review, HSE has been given additional powers to guide Local Authorities on their approach to health and safety enforcement.

Local Authority Unit [LAU]

The LAU is a free standing Unit within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). LAU works with the HSE/LA Enforcement Liaison Committee (HELA) to give national advice, information and guidance to LAs. The Unit is the central focus for the development of LA enforcement policy and also provides LA enforcement officers with training and support. LAU has close links with the local authority associations who are the representative bodies for local government. These comprise the Local Government Association (LGA) in England and Wales and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA).

Health and Safety Executive/Local Authority Enforcement Liaison Committee (HELA)

The HELA Committee deals with major policy and strategic issues concerning health and safety enforcement by LAs. It promotes and protects the interests of LA's in discussion with central government and other stakeholders and develops and monitors the HELA Strategic Plan which sets out LAs' contribution to HSEs continuing aims and key priorities for improved health and safety performance.

1.2 [contd.]

Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives

This agency is an occupational health and safety service that provides access to free, confidential information, advice and support on workplace health and safety issues.

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

This Service has a close working relationship with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, and has previously undertaken joint initiatives such as compliance with safety requirements in licensed premises.

Police Scotland

Initiatives in partnership with Police Scotland have previously taken place in regard to preventing violence to staff within retail premises. Opportunities will be considered in 2014/15 to develop further joint initiatives.

Care Inspectorate

The Care Inspectorate is a national organisation set up under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 to regulate and inspect Scottish care services. The Care Inspectorate is working towards putting in place a new, unified and effective system of care regulation that puts the safety and well-being of people who use care services at its heart. The work of the Care Inspectorate impacts on the Health and Safety Enforcement Service of Local Authority enforced care services, particularly care homes and private nurseries, and this necessitates close working.

1.3 **Linkage to Corporate Aims and Objectives**

Aberdeen - the Smarter City

Accords with the visions contained within Aberdeen - the Smarter City. The Service assists with the promotion of Aberdeen as a great place to do business and visit, and works with partners to promote the city.

Business Plan

The Service has a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce who makes best use of the financial resources available, delivering improvement in the specific service priorities in the most cost effective manner

1.3 [contd.]

Links to the Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013

This Health and Safety Intervention Plan contributes to making Aberdeen an attractive, clean, healthy and safe place to live and work; a City that is welcoming to business and values its business community

Links to the Grampian Joint Health Protection Plan

This Health and Safety Intervention Plan also contributes to the overall aims of the Grampian Joint Health Protection Plan in terms of the investigation, control and prevention of communicable disease and environmental hazards to human health, specifically in terms of:

- 1 the control of the spread of infection in workplaces where workers and/or members of the public may be exposed to infectious biological agents,
- 2 workers exposure to hazardous substances and harmful levels of noise in the course of their work activities,
- 3 exposure of the public to hazardous substances and harmful levels of noise arising from work activities

2 **Background**

2.1 **Profile of the Local Authority**

Aberdeen City Council is a mainly urban authority with a population of around 228,800. The City is the administrative centre for many oil-related businesses. Consequently there is a thriving service sector of hotels, employment agencies, contract cleaning companies, architects, surveying and computer consultancy firms, a variety of retail outlets and a wide range of both indoor and outdoor leisure facilities. Catering for the non-working population, there are also numerous care facilities for the young and the elderly, from day nurseries and crèches to residential care for the elderly and those with disabilities.

Within the city boundaries there are numerous industrial estates, encompassing both light and heavy industrial warehousing and transport depots.

2.2 **Scope of and Demands on the Health and Safety Regulatory Service**

As an Enforcing Authority, the authority has a responsibility for the provision of health and safety enforcement services covering a range of businesses, mainly within the service sector, covering approximately 4,000 premises.

2.2 [contd.]

The principal activities in regard to these premises are-

- 1 Investigating complaints relating to safety, occupational health and welfare at these workplaces,
- 2 Investigating reported accidents arising in the course of work activities,
- 3 Investigating reports of statutory examination of certain types of work equipment, where the examination has revealed defects,
- 4 The service also receives notifications of work involving asbestos that may require to be followed up to ensure adequate controls are in place,
- 5 Engaging in focussed intervention programmes

Many of the staff carrying out health and safety inspections also have responsibilities for inspecting premises under food safety legislation as detailed in the organisational structure set out in Section 2.2.1

The business profile for which the service is responsible for health and safety enforcement is detailed in Table 1 below (as of 01/04/12):

Table 1: Business Profile for Health and Safety Enforcement in Aberdeen

Type of Premises	No. in category (1/04/12)
Retail	1098
Wholesale	153
Office	1247
Catering	826
Hotels	136
Residential Care	36
Leisure	169
Consumer Services	442
Other	67
Total	4174

Organisational Structure

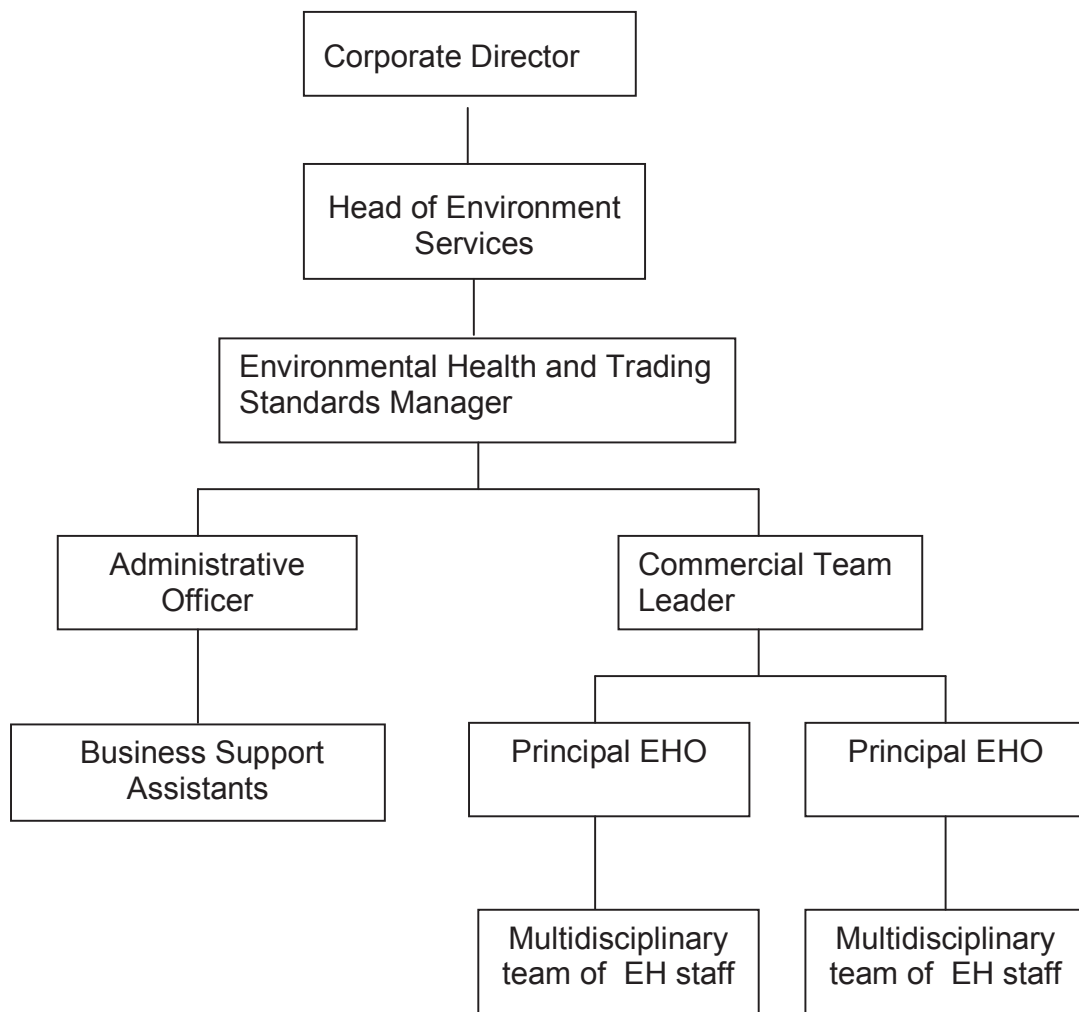
2.2.1 The Health and Safety Regulatory Service

The Health and Safety regulatory service is a city-wide service provided from within the Environmental Health Commercial Section of the Housing and Environment Service by a mix of staff that includes Environmental Health Officers, Authorised Officers and administration staff. A number of the staff also

2.2.1 [contd.]

carry out a range of additional activities including food safety, licensing, planning and animal health and welfare inspections which give the opportunity to deal with health and safety concerns at that time.

ORGANISATION CHART



2.2.2 Committee Structure

The following Committees operate within Aberdeen City Council:

- Appeals
- Audit and Risk
- Education Culture and Sport
- Enterprise, Strategic Planning and Infrastructure
- Finance, Policy and Resources
- Housing and Environment
- Licensing
- Pensions
- Petitions
- Planning Development Management
- Social Care, Wellbeing and Safety

The bulk of health and safety related matters are reported to the Housing and Environment Committee. When appropriate, health and safety related matters may also be reported to the Finance, Policy and Resources or the Audit and Risk Committees.

2.2.3 Service delivery points

The staff of the service are based at Marischal College, Broad Street. The service can be accessed by businesses and public by telephone or in person at Marischal College between the hours of 8:30am and 5:00pm Monday to Friday. Telephone calls made outside these hours will be recorded by the telephone answering service. At weekends and evenings an Environmental Health duty officer is on standby for emergencies. The Service can also be accessed at any time via e-mail, although e-mails will only be accessed by the service staff during office working hours.

2.2.4 Enforcement Policy

A revised health and safety enforcement policy was approved by the Environment and Infrastructure Committee on 25th May 2004

The policy will be reviewed and updated by 1st April 2014 in light of new developments and guidance to be provided to Local Authorities.

3. Service Delivery

Local authorities have a duty to ‘make adequate arrangements for enforcement’ under Section 18 of the Health and Safety etc. at Work Act 1974.

“The National Local Authority Enforcement Code – Health and Safety at Work” sets out what is meant by ‘adequate arrangements for enforcement’. and concentrates on the following four objectives:

- a) Clarifying the **roles and responsibilities** of business, regulators and professional bodies to ensure a shared understanding on the management of risk;
- b) Outlining the **risk-based regulatory approach** that LAs should adopt with reference to the Regulator’s Compliance Code, HSE’s Enforcement Policy Statement and the need to target relevant and effective interventions that focus on influencing behaviours and improving the management of risk;
- c) Setting out the need for the **training and competence** of LA H&S regulators linked to the authorisation and use of HSWA powers; and
- d) Explaining the arrangements for collection and publication of LA data and peer review to give an **assurance on meeting the requirements of this Code**.

Practically, this Service is guided to achieve this by:

- a) having a risk-based Intervention Plan focussed on tackling specific risks;
- b) considering the risks that they need to address and using the whole range of interventions to target these specific risks;
- c) reserving unannounced proactive inspection only for the activities and sectors published by HSE or where intelligence suggests risks are not being effectively managed;
- d) using national and local intelligence to inform priorities;
- e) ensuring that officers authorised to enforce the requirements are trained and competent;
- f) setting clear expectations for delivery;
- g) having a clear and easily accessible enforcement policy;
- h) providing easily accessible information on services and advice available to businesses;
- i) publishing data on our health and safety inspection records;
- j) having an easily accessible complaints procedure.

3. [contd.]

Arising from the Enforcement Code is a list produced by the HSE of high risk activities/sectors that may be subject to proactive inspections and which guides the Service's direction in enforcement activity.

Additionally Local Authority Circular (LAC) 67/2 (rev 4) provides LAs with guidance and tools for priority planning and targeting their interventions to enable them to meet the requirements of the Code. In summary, this means the LAs ensuring their planned regulatory activity is focussed on outcomes-primarily working to deliver those national priorities set by HSE ,taking account of local priorities and be accompanied by an inspection programme meeting the requirements of the Code.

The programme has therefore been developed to meet targets that are attainable and meaningful.

3.1 Work Programme 2014/15

What	Why	How
Control of legionella Asbestos awareness Gas safety in restaurants/takeaways	National priority and high risk sector National priority High risk sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proactive inspection of registered cooling towers/evaporative condensers • reactive inspection of new cooling towers /evaporative condensers • Advisory visits to leisure activity premises having spa pools <p>On receiving intelligence of at risk businesses use appropriate measures to raise awareness of asbestos , including enforcement action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of written advice on maintenance responsibilities • Training of officers to identify matters of evident concern (MEC) • Reactive visits as a result of knowledge of MEC
<u>Premises formerly under Aberdeen City Council Control</u> Premises (largely community centres) transferred to “arms length” trusts. Enforcement responsibility moves from HSE to this Service.	In accordance with LAC 22/10- “Enforcement in premises in which they may have an interest”.	Advisory visits to be made to these premises to assess the extent of their health and safety arrangements.
<u>Accident investigation</u>	In accordance with National Enforcement Code and LAC 67/2- Advice/Guidance to Local Authorities On Targeting Interventions. Primarily meets: Reactive intervention (incident and accident investigation).	Targeting of investigations using HSE Incident Selection Criteria
<u>Service requests</u> (general enquiries/complaints including adverse lift reports)	In accordance with National Enforcement Code and LAC 67/2 Primarily meets: “Reactive intervention (dealing with issues of concern)”	Risk based approach to service requests
<u>Licensing</u>	As consultee on licensing applications with skin piercing and public entertainment having particular significance	Inspection visits
<u>Advice to Businesses</u>	In accordance with National Enforcement cement Code and LAC 67/2 – Education and awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On receiving intelligence of new business start up , visits scheduled to brief them on their responsibilities • Provision of comprehensive information on Service web pages, primarily to assist small/medium businesses in meeting their responsibilities. . • Other opportunities as developed.

3.2 Liaison with Other Bodies

The principal vehicle for inter-authority liaison is the North of Scotland Health and Safety Liaison Group on which this Service is represented by Principal EHO. This forum facilitates consistency of enforcement in northern Scotland. The Principal EHO (PEHO) attends the quarterly REHIS Health and Safety Co-ordinating Group (HASCOG) meeting. This allows officers from Scottish local authorities to exchange experiences and views with each other and with representatives of the HSE. It is also an important forum for updates on political and strategic developments.

The Service will also continue to develop liaison arrangements with other Council services, including building standards and planning development for prospective refurbishment of work premises, and with the Licensing Committee for premises licensed for activities such as skin piercing and public entertainment.

4. Resources

4.1 Staffing Allocation (as of 1/02/2014)

	Full time Equivalent Staff involved in health & safety enforcement
Section Management	
Commercial Team Leader	0.3
PEHO	1.2
Admin Support	0.5
Field Staff	
EHO	1.1
SAO	0.7
AO	-
Total	3.8
Section Support	
Administration Staff	3

The Service will only deploy officers to carry out enforcement tasks for which they possess the appropriate qualifications and experience. An accreditation scheme using the Regulators' Development Needs Analysis (RDNA) approach has been established to ensure a basic level of competency for health and safety enforcement. Officers who are not yet accredited operate under the close supervision of the PEHO. Formal enforcement action [service of notices or preparation of reports to the Procurator Fiscal] is always subject to the supervision of the PEHO or Commercial Team Leader.

4.2 Staff Development Plan

The authorisation procedures of health and safety regulatory service have recently been reviewed to take account of Section 18 guidance which states the need for a trained and competent inspectorate.

Currently all the PEHOs and the Commercial Team Leader are fully authorised under the Health and safety at Work Etc Act 1974 as are some members of Trading Standards.

Section 18 guidance sets out key competencies for HSE inspectors and Local Authority health and safety enforcement officers. Essentially, officers must have adequate standards of competence in these core areas, or be supervised by other officers who possess them. The HSE says that it is up to individual local authorities how they choose to demonstrate the achievement of standards of competence but have suggested that the level of attainment is to RDNA core competences.

The current arrangements in place for ensuring a competent enforcement staff are as follows:

- [a] Staff involved in health and safety enforcement activities (including safety inspections, accident investigations, complaint investigations and giving advice) are qualified Environmental Health Officers or hold the NEBOSH certificate in occupational safety and health or other appropriate health and safety qualification.
- [b] The Service has a quality assurance scheme for accrediting enforcement staff who have attained a basic level of competency in health and safety enforcement. Accredited staff have a reduced level of supervision on basic inspection and audit activities.
- [c] All formal enforcement actions [service of Improvement Notices, Prohibition notices and Reports to the Procurator Fiscal] are closely supervised by either the PEHO or Commercial Team Leader.
- [d] In-house training is provided by the PEHO on procedural and policy matters and new legislation.

The current arrangements will comply with the imminent National Local Authority Enforcement Code.

5 Quality Monitoring and Assessment

Documented Procedures for Quality monitoring and quality assessment of the Service have been established and as part of this joint inspections, where competency is assessed and consistency checks are made are carried out throughout the year. These should ensure adherence to the Service's Health and Safety Enforcement Policy, internal enforcement procedures and the HSE guidance and the Enforcement Management Model.

6 Review

6.1 Review of Intervention Plan

The Service Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis following the end of each financial year.

6.2 Identification of any variation from the Intervention Plan

Review of the Plan will include assessment of performance against the plan, identify areas for improvement and forecast the demands on the service and the appropriate service mix required to meet those demands. The Plan will be revised as appropriate.

6.3 Areas for Improvement

- [a] Ensure that the profile of occupational health and safety is maintained and enhanced, primarily by the interventions detailed in this Plan.
- [b] Continue to establish and partnership agreements for promotional and educational initiatives where possible.
- [c] All field staff to be assessed as to their competencies primarily by means of the Regulators Development Needs Assessment (RDNA). Ongoing development needs to be addressed therefrom.
- [d] Ensure the publication of data of the Service's health and safety activities.
- [e] Review and where necessary amend the Enforcement Policy and procedures in line with Government requirements/guidance.
- [f] Engage in peer review with other neighbouring local authorities.
- [g] Develop and publish a complaints procedure that clearly references the Independent Regulatory Challenge Panel.

Appendix- Intervention Plan Review 2013/14

Intervention Programme

What	How	Outcome
<p>Estates Excellence An initiative promoted by the HSE to improve H&S knowledge in small/medium size businesses in industrial states by providing free training and health screening. Targeted at areas with poor health statistics and high/poor safety statistics.</p>	<p>Physical survey of Mastrick, Northfield, St.Machar and Mugiemoos industrial estates to gauge the extent of interest of businesses in the offer of free training. If favourable response, training workshops and health screening to be organised.</p>	<p>97 businesses in target estates , 36 regarded as being suitable for project and approached, 22 expressed an interest , 7 subsequently agreed to the training , 5 actually participated in the training. Evaluation of responses to feedback questionnaires revealed an average increase in knowledge of 2.5%. It is felt that the initiative was a reasonable success based on expectations arising from other Estates Excellence projects in the UK . At the very least it afforded an opportunity for updating intelligence on the businesses within the estates.</p>
<p>Activities/sectors for proactive inspection List in Annexe A of LA Enforcement Code–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1 Legionella •2 Violence at work •3 Gas safety •4 Falls from height •5 Industrial diseases •6 Safety at public events •7 Transport safety 	<p>Targeting of inspections based on national and local information.</p>	<p>Restricted to reactive interventions as definitive list confirmed too late in year to allow planned, proactive activity</p>
<p>Premises formerly under Aberdeen City Council Control Premises (largely community centres) transferred to “arms length” trusts. Enforcement responsibility moves from HSE to this Service.</p>	<p>Advisory visits to be made to these premises to assess the extent of their health and safety arrangements.</p>	<p>No activity due to other workload priorities.</p>
<p>Major injuries/accidents</p>	<p>Targeting of investigations using HSE Incident Selection Criteria</p>	<p>33 investigated (1st April – 30th September).</p>
<p>Service requests (general enquiries/complaints including adverse lift reports)</p>	<p>Risk based approach to service requests</p>	<p>47 (1st April – 30th September).</p>
<p>Licensing</p>	<p>Inspection visits</p>	<p>Over 80 applications (skin piercing/theatres/public entertainment) processed</p>
<p>Advice to Businesses</p>	<p>Early liaison at business start – ups. Enhancement of Service web pages. Other opportunities as developed.</p>	<p>10 advisory visits (1st April – 30th September).</p>

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	11th March 2014
DIRECTOR	Peter Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Revision of the Aberdeen City Waste Strategy
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/023

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the committee on the requirement to revise the existing Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2010-2025 and to approve the amended version.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Housing and Environment committee approves the revised Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2014-2025 and recommends it for the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee. The main text is included at Appendix 1.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no major financial implications associated with approval of this paper. However minor costs would be incurred if a small volume of the Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2014-2025 (ACWS) is to be printed. These costs would be covered by existing waste marketing budgets

The financial implications of the implementation of the strategy have been addressed through previous reports and incorporated into the Priority Based Budgeting process.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal, personnel, resource, property, equipment, sustainability, environmental, Health and Safety and/or policy implications associated with the approval of this paper.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The ACWS 2010-2025 was finalised in 2010 following a thoroughly informed consultation and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Recent changes in legislation and confirmation of investment from Aberdeen City Council for the development of new waste infrastructure are not reflected within the existing ACWS.

A revised ACWS has been developed to encompass these minor amendments. A copy of this is available with Appendix 1.

The changes can be summarised as follows:

- A review of targets in line with changing legislation;
- Revision of the performance data;
- More emphasis on waste infrastructure plans and the need for mixed recycling collections including glass;
- Reference to closed loop systems; and
- Greater prominence of the key deliverables.

It should be noted that a full SEA was not necessary for this revision, with only a scoping exercise being conducted. Only three responses were received as part of the scoping exercise, all of which concluded that they were content with the scope and level of detailed with the revised Environmental Report produced to accompany the amended ACWS.

Following the scoping exercise, it was determined that the changes provided within the ACWS do not fundamentally alter the content or direction of this strategic document.

The revised ACWS has also been updated to reflect the Aberdeen Recycling and Energy brand.

6. IMPACT

Corporate - The development of alternatives to landfill and enhanced recycling will help Aberdeen move to become a Zero Waste City - a key action within the Smarter Environment – Natural Resources Strategic Priority of the Five Year Business Plan.

Public – There are no impacts on the public relating to the revised ACWS that have not already been considered as part of the previous version.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

There are no risks associated with the approval of the ACWS.

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Pete Lawrence, Waste and Recycling Manager
plawrence@aberdeencity.gov.uk or 01224 489331

APPENDIX ONE – ABERDEEN CITY WASTE STRATEGY 2014-2025

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS THE MAIN BODY TEXT OF THE STRATEGY AND DOES NOT INCLUDE SMALL INFORMATION BOXES AND INFOGRAPHICS. ALL FORMATING AND REFERENCES WILL BE FINALISED DURING THE GRAPHIC DESIGN PHASE.

1- FOREWORD BY COUNCILLOR NEIL COONEY

I am pleased to present this revised Aberdeen City Waste Strategy (ACWS) for our city. This document demonstrates our long term plans to reduce the social, economic and environmental consequences of waste. As a city we understand the benefits when we reduce, reuse and recycle our finite resources and these principles underlie the plans within this document. All of the materials in our waste containers can offer significant value to our homes and our businesses; we recognise the opportunities available to us when we recover these resources for our benefits - moving from a history of costly and damaging landfill to a future of sustainable resources and energy.

Your Council is making widespread improvements in our waste and recycling facilities. Households across Aberdeen will benefit from improved Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) offering convenient collections for a wide range of materials. A new mixed recycling service will be introduced to all households across the city allowing us to recycle a wider range of materials. We will enjoy compost, developed in our city using our own garden and food waste. As we move away from the costs and dangers of landfill, we intend to use non-recyclable materials as a fuel source within our own Energy from Waste (EfW) facility, helping many of the 30,000 residents struggling to heat their homes in a climate of rising fuel and heating costs. Our plans underline one simple principle; that our waste is no longer a problem, it is a resource.

I am proud to support this ACWS. Implementing these proposals will make Aberdeen a zero waste city, providing long term social, economic and environmental benefits to us all. I look forward to enjoying the new and improved recycling services detailed throughout these plans. The themes outlined in our strategy - and the improvements they will deliver - are the right choice for our residents, our schools and our business community, allowing Aberdeen to thrive and be an example to other Local Authorities (LA) across Scotland and Europe.



Neil Cooney

Convener
Housing and Environment Committee
Aberdeen City Council

2. CONSULTATION

An initial consultation on the key themes of the ACWS was undertaken in early 2009. The results of this consultation were then built into the development of the draft ACWS which was submitted to, and approved, by the Housing and Environment Committee in November 2009.

Following the approval, the draft ACWS was published for public consultation during December 2009. The main means of communication was electronic - either by direct e-mailing to established stakeholders or via the Aberdeen City Council (ACC) website - where an online consultation opportunity was established. A small number of hard copy versions of the strategy were printed and distributed where requested. Presentations were also made to community groups and professional bodies in Aberdeen during the consultation period.

The consultation closed on 25 February 2010, although late responses were received and considered up to 5 March 2010. Respondents ranged from individuals to community groups to government bodies, such as the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

Several helpful suggestions and comments were received through the consultation; these have been incorporated into the final strategy and reviewed further as part of this revision. Many respondents wish to see more effective communication regarding the need to reduce, reuse and recycle. No respondents stated opposition to the potential for EfW facilities in Aberdeen; responses in relation to this were confined to the need for careful site selection, appropriate capacity and the need to ensure value is gained through Combined Heat and Power (CHP) use.

As part of revising this ACWS a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was not deemed necessary. The overall content reflects the key themes as before but incorporates the requirements of the Zero Waste Plan (ZWP) and future measures to establish a Waste Prevention Plan (WPP).

Stakeholder engagement is a continual process. This activity is undertaken through the work of our Recycling Officers and the waste strategy team. Raising awareness of the importance of the waste hierarchy and our need to attain the strict targets set by Zero Waste Scotland (ZWS) is essential in order for Aberdeen to improve its waste performance.

3. THE IMPORTANT BITS

Our ACWS details our plans to manage waste until 2025. It introduces the next generation of waste infrastructure and recycling services which will meet the needs of our city.

Key elements of this strategy are based upon:

- Closed loop circular economy
- Waste is a resource not a problem
- The proximity principle
- Equality of service provision
- The waste hierarchy
- Precautionary principle
- Pragmatic and value for money
- Contributions to wider Council policies

The ACWS has been designed to ensure Aberdeen works towards meeting national and international legislative targets:

Target 1 Waste growth will be eliminated by 2015.

Target 2 We will work towards the targets set in the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Plan 2010:

- 50% of household waste to be recycled by 2015
- 60% of household waste to be recycled by 2020
- 70% of all waste to be recycled by 2025

Reflecting the densely urban nature of our city, the following targets are have been set for Aberdeen City:

- 50% of household waste to be recycled through source separation by 2020
- 56% of household waste to be recycled through source separation by 2025
- Further recycling can be achieved by processing mixed waste

Target 3 Introduce an organic waste collection for all households by 2016

Target 4 Develop facilities within the Aberdeen area to recover our resources.

- Develop a wider range of modern HWRC designed to cater to high traffic levels and collect a wider range of recyclable materials.
- Develop a mixed recycling (also known as co-mingled) Materials Recycling Facility (MRF)
- Develop organic waste treatment facilities in Aberdeen
- Develop facilities to produce Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF)
- Develop residual treatment capacity in Aberdeen by using non-recycled waste to generate heat and power.

Target 5 No more than 5% of household waste should be landfilled by 2025.

Key deliverables:

- Minimise waste production
- Minimise landfill
- Maximise recycling/organic waste treatment
- Recover value from other wastes
- Local solutions where possible

4. SETTING THE SCENE

4.1 What is the purpose of the ACWS?

The purpose of our ACWS is to provide a statement on the future requirements for waste management policy, infrastructure and services for the city. It provides a clear set of themes, goals and objectives that move waste management in the city from a disposal-based approach to a system that reflects the waste hierarchy, treats waste as a resource and something that has value if handled correctly. There is a particular emphasis on setting out a clear framework for those elements of the waste hierarchy that ACC can most directly affect, namely the collection, treatment and disposal of waste produced in the city.

4.2 How has the ACWS developed?

ACC has had an ACWS for many years and it has been updated as regulation and community expectations have changed.

A series of key themes were developed through public consultation in early 2009 in response to changing national waste and recycling policy. These key themes continue to underpin the WS. In 2009, a draft ACWS was published for consultation. The views expressed in this consultation were considered and reflected in the ACWS adopted in April 2010.

4.3 Why review the ACWS?

Waste management and strategic direction has evolved over the years. There has been a series of major policy changes in Scotland, the UK and Europe. Most recently, the agreement of EU Directive 2008/98/EC on Waste (The Waste Framework Directive – WFD) and the development of the Scottish Government’s (SG) ZWP which have enshrined high recycling rates and the need for efficient use of energy generated from waste into our guiding policies.

In February 2013, ACC adopted a new Waste Infrastructure Plan and has allocated up to £28 million of investment for implementation of new waste services and construction of new infrastructure. These facilities will assist our transition from being landfill dependent to becoming a more closed loop economy. Many of these changes were anticipated in the 2010 Strategy. As a result, this revision of the ACWS is evolutionary and is focussed on taking into consideration the implications of these changes and embedding them into our own policies and procedures. This will ensure focus is maintained on achieving zero waste to landfill, whilst balancing the needs of the residents and the on-going pressures placed upon us to make financial efficiencies.

4.4 What does the ACWS include?

Our ACWS identifies arrangements for the sustainable management of household waste controlled by ACC. It provides a framework for addressing waste prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery in line with the waste hierarchy; covering collection, treatment and disposal. In addition, it considers the management of waste produced from industry, commerce, construction and demolition with particular emphasis on the scale of other waste sources

and their growing influence. The ACWS also identifies the planning system as a major means of achieving infrastructure delivery for all wastes produced in the city.

4.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment

A SEA was produced alongside the development of our 2010 ACWS. The initial scoping of the SEA was completed in summer 2009, the findings of which informed both the ACWS development and the production of the Environmental Report (ER). A draft ER was available for public consultation between 16 December 2009 and 22 February 2010 with the final version completed in April 2010. A Screening Report (SR) was completed in September 2013 and confirmed that the amendments made within this revision did not warrant a new SEA.

4.6 What has already been achieved?

ACC has come a long way since recycling first started to emerge in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The recycling rate for ACC was approximately 4% in 2000/01, there were very few Recycling Points (RP), HWRC were essentially 'dumps' for bulky waste, no material was collected for composting and a single paper salvage recycling scheme was in operation in parts of the city. ACC disposed of 119,068 tonnes of household waste to landfill in the same year.

With the emergence of European legislation and increased environmental awareness, the situation in Scotland and the UK as a whole, began to change. RPs and kerbside collection services started to appear and soon it became a standard service for many. Those without such facilities started to expect them and pressure was placed on LA to provide or expand recycling collections. The positive shift in attitudes both from the public and its representatives has created numerous challenges and has had a huge impact on the way we as a nation view our waste and how we should deal with it.

4.7 Waste production and performance in Aberdeen

In 2013 Aberdeen produced 10,9429.51 tonnes of household waste. Of this waste, 71,326.08 (65.2%) tonnes was landfilled, and 38,103.43 tonnes (34.8%) was recycled and composted.

There is also a significant amount of commercial and industrial waste produced in and around the Aberdeen area. This waste also has an impact on the environment through its production, recycling and disposal.

The tables indicate that waste produced from households comprises a relatively small percentage - compared to waste produced in Scotland overall. To have a real impact, it is critical that any strategy takes into account management of other streams and not just those wastes produced through households.

Table 1 – Waste arisings for X - Data for source of waste in Scotland

Household	333,257
Commercial	632,760
Industrial	357,419
Construction and Demolition	1,262,695
	2,586,131
Household	2,936,258
Commercial	5,467,654
Industrial	2,340,844
Construction and Demolition	8,633,219
	19,377,974

Significant improvements in Aberdeen recycling performance can be attributed to the introduction of kerbside collections in 2004, introduction of garden waste collections in 2002 and this service being expanded to include food waste in 2009. Continued development of HWRCs, new bring facilities, both public and private and the increase in waste types accepted have also helped. The figure will continue to rise as a result of service expansions covering food waste to all residents and the proposals to implement mixed recycling to all.

Table 2 – ACC performance – Information from SITA UK

Year	Household waste arisings (tonnes)	Household waste recycled / composted (tonnes)	Household waste recycled / composted (%)	Household waste incinerated (tonnes)	Household waste incinerated (%)	Household waste landfilled (tonnes)	Household waste landfilled (%)
2013	109,429	38,103	34.8	-	0.0	71,326	65.2
2012	97,242	36,242	37.3	12	0.0	60,988	62.7
2011	97,184	34,662	35.7	0	0.0	62,522	64.3

It is clear that some progress has been made; Aberdeen is currently the best performing city for recycling within Scotland but we must do more to meet national targets and reduce our landfill costs.

4.8 Current recycling facilities in Aberdeen

ACC currently operates a fortnightly, kerbside collection of dry recycling from over 75,000 properties; approximately 70% of households in the city. Those eligible for the service use a box and bag system to recycle: paper, cardboard, glass bottles and jars, food and drinks cans, foil, aerosols and plastic bottles. It is envisaged that this service will be replaced over the next few years by a wheeled bin service accommodating mixed recycling including glass.

There is also a fortnightly, kerbside collection of food and garden waste for over 51,000 properties; 47% of households in the city. Food waste collections have expanded to serve multi-occupancy dwellings comprising: multi-storeys, tenements, courtyard developments and social housing. This is part of a phased expansion of this service across the city. We expect to complete the roll-out of on-street communal food waste bins by the end of 2015.

For those properties where ACC is unable to offer a kerbside collection there is a range of other recycling opportunities available. On-street paper recycling bins located alongside general refuse bins are now available in the following locations:

- Urquhart Road
- Rosemount
- Ashvale
- Torry
- Powis
- Ferryhill

ACC also operates a network of 4 HWRC, 46 public RPs and 106 private RPs. Communal facilities have also been introduced to several developments: sheltered, council, private and social housing areas. We are expanding our network and in January 2014 opened a new HWRC at Grove Nursery, Hazlehead. Further investment in bring facilities is planned, with development scheduled for the next few years aligning with the introduction of mixed recycling collections. Further information on this is referred to in section 7.

Our HWRCs continue to offer a wide range of options for recycling including: aerosols, batteries, cardboard, foil, food and drinks cans, garden waste, glass, paper, plastic, scrap metal, tetrapak, textiles, Waste Electrical and Electronic (WEEE) appliances and wood.

4.9 Current waste prevention initiatives

ACC actively participates in many national waste prevention campaigns co-ordinated by groups such as Zero Waste Scotland. These include the “Love Food Hate Waste” (LFHW) campaign aimed at the prevention of food waste, and the “European Week for Waste Reduction” (EWWR).

Promotion of reuse networks is undertaken through local charitable organisations and ventures across the city. ACC work in partnership with these organisations to develop focussed messaging on waste prevention. These types of partnerships are essential and it is envisaged that reuse containers will be a familiar site at our HWRC.

Aberdeen Forward, a partner of ACC, help to spread waste messages wider through their network of volunteers and community advocates - engaging with city residents about reducing and recycling food waste, composting, the Creative Waste Exchange (CWE) and the Grampian Real Nappy Project.

All of these schemes aim to cut the amount of waste going to landfill and, in the case of the CWE, provide low cost materials to community groups and schools.

Our Waste Aware Team actively promotes all of these services and provides advice on how to reduce, reuse and recycle waste. The team gives talks to schools, community groups, residents' associations and hold information stalls in a variety of locations across the city.

DRAFT

5. THE CHALLENGES

5.1 Why are we changing our waste services?

ACC is working hard to reduce the inequalities in service provision across the city. Presently residents living with suburban areas receive a better recycling service than those residents living within multi-occupancy dwellings such as multi-storeys, tenements, courtyard developments and social housing. These dwelling types pose challenges in the way waste is collected in terms of space within households, manual handling, where facilities can go and how the waste is actually collected. The current kerbside collection services in parts of the city cannot be replicated in these areas and the preferred collection method is communal on-street recycling facilities.

When trying to address these inequalities and implement service changes we will always act in a way that produces the best outcomes for Aberdeen; delivering results that offer value for money, social justice and environmental benefits. Our work is shaped by a range of organisations and institutions. Our ACWS is influenced by a range of factors:

Regulatory issues

We must work toward achieving ambitious statutory obligations. The SG introduced the WSR which directs the aspirations of our service.

We are required to offer all households access to a recycling service, collecting a minimum of paper, plastics, metals and glass. We need to increase our recycling to reach new targets issued in the ZWP for recycling and composting household waste: 50% by 2015, 60% by 2020 and 70% by 2025. Our mixed recycling collection service, facilitated by our MRF, will allow us to collect a range of materials and to offer high quality resources to our re-processors.

Biodegradable materials will be **banned** from landfill from 1st January 2021; this encompasses all types of biodegradable material. All households must be offered a separate food waste collection service to eliminate household biodegradable material going to landfill by 2016. Businesses that generate over 50kg of waste per week must also recycle their food waste by January 2014 and for those creating between 5kg and 50kg a separate food waste collection is required by January 2016.

The WFD requires member states to recycle or compost 50% of municipal waste by 2020. As of November 2013, this Directive is currently under review by the European Commission (EC) and more demanding targets may arise.

Financial

The cost of disposing of our waste has almost trebled since 2000. Disposing of one tonne of waste has increased from £53.52 in 2000 to £133.52 in 2013. ACC landfilled 71326.08 tonnes in 2013 Landfill Tax is a levy paid on each tonne of waste we send to landfill. The tax is a powerful tool to divert valuable resources from landfill and to encourage greater recycling. ACC was taxed £72 per tonne of waste sent to landfill in 2012/13, resulting in a £5.5million burden upon our budgets. Landfill tax will rise to £80 per tonne in April 2014; presenting an anticipated cost of £6million to our city in 2014/15. Our operational costs, including fuel and

labour, continue to rise. The costs for collecting and disposing of waste in our expanding city surpassed £19.9million in 2012/2013.

Against this background of increasing cost pressures, LAs across the country are experiencing reduced income from central government and Council tax. In Aberdeen, this challenge is being met through a Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) approach that projects income and costs over a five-year period. All departments have to identify ways to improve efficiency and tailor services to ACC income and our service must play its part in this process.

Internal policy drivers

ACC has set challenging policies to reduce our internal waste and recover resources where possible. These include:

- Single Outcome Agreement – aspires for Aberdeen to be an “energy efficient city with low levels of pollution and waste”.
- Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan – ACC and Aberdeenshire Council illustrate a commitment to work together to landfill no more than 54,000 tonnes of biodegradable waste by 2020
- Our Environmental Management Statement Policy commits ACC to reduce, reuse and recycle waste where possible.

Energy drivers

- The SG’s Renewables Action Plan promotes the benefits of EfW toward energy targets.
- Scotland’s Renewable Heat Strategy 2008 recommended that biodegradable waste to landfill be prohibited in order to promote its use for energy production. This endorses the Scottish Government’s position on preventing combustion of any form of waste without recovery of heat via CHP or district heating to local properties. This was incorporated and approved through the WSR.

Carbon reduction targets

Carbon Management Programme: ACC has a responsibility to reduce carbon emissions from our city activities. The Carbon Management Plan (CMP) requires us to reduce our emissions by 23% for 2015 and 42% by 2020; that is 27,000 tonnes by 2015 and 49,000 tonnes by 2020 based upon 2008/09 emissions. Carbon emissions from the landfilling of our waste are the second largest contributor to ACC carbon emission, contributing 26,148 tonnes of carbon in 2012/13. This is complemented by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 whereby Scotland should reduce overall emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) by *at least* 80% by 2050. The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requires ACC:

- to contribute to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets;
- to deliver any statutory adaptation programme; and
- to act in a way that it considers most sustainable.

Deliverability, practicality and cost

In addition to the regulatory and policy environment within which our ACWS has been developed, there are other significant drivers that require consideration. These drivers are less tangible than specific legislation or targets but have a very important impact on the ability to deliver the outcomes outlined in our ACWS.

Our ACWS sets the framework within which solutions for waste management will be determined with consideration to:

- Behavioural change drivers (for example, working with residents to promote recycling and making clear the cost of not recycling our resources);
- The variable socio-economic and living conditions of householders and how these impact on residents buying habits and how you manage your waste; and
- The cost across the range of waste management systems.

It is inevitable that further drivers will come into play during the life of this ACWS. Wherever possible anticipated changes have been included and on-going engagement with residents provides an invaluable opportunity to identify and resolve new challenges – and to grasp new opportunities.

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6. IN RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGES

There are many drivers influencing waste management policy. It is important to understand how these are interpreted and implemented. Future changes to policy can then be seen in the context of these principles.

6.1 Waste is a resource not a problem

In an environment where raw materials are becoming increasingly scarce and more expensive, where significant energy and environmental impact has been invested in the production of the goods we discard, simply disposing of these materials to landfill is a significant lost opportunity.

The linear 'take, make, and dispose' model relies on large quantities of easily accessible resources and energy. This approach is increasingly unfit for how we manage waste and resources today. The Ellen McArthur Foundation describes a **closed loop economy** as an industrial economy that is restorative by intention; aims to rely on renewable energy; minimises, tracks, and hopefully eliminates the use of toxic chemicals; and eradicates waste through careful design. The term goes beyond the mechanics of production and consumption of goods and services.

A complementary theme to regarding waste as a resource is the principle of designing a waste management system that generates value from all our waste. This theme applies across many sectors of waste production.

Value can be defined in economic, resource use and environmental terms. Where the financial cost of recovering a material is lower than that of disposing it, value can be generated for our community. In resource use terms, value can be defined as deriving a product from waste that is at least as useful as its 'natural' counterpart, thereby displacing the use of virgin resources. Environmental value can be achieved in two ways. Firstly, through either the reuse or recycling of a material such that the energy use embedded in the production of the material is greater than the energy used to prepare for reuse or recycle the material. Secondly, the generation of EfW displaces the use of fossil fuels.

In simple terms, value can be derived in two forms – as a material resource (for example, recycling) or an energy resource. It is logical that Aberdeen develop solutions that lead to the value embedded in the resource being enjoyed by the city.

6.2 Principles in practice

When human activities lead to unacceptable harm that is scientifically plausible but uncertain, actions should be taken to avoid or diminish that harm. This approach is known as the **precautionary principle**. Not producing waste in the first instance is the key to sustainable waste management, whereby prevention is better than cure. The concept of not producing the waste initially aligns with the methodology of the precautionary principle. ACC raises awareness about waste prevention through its on-going campaigns. These are important but have limited impact when compared to international regulations setting standards for products and sale of goods. Through intelligent product design the waste

produced at each stage of a product's lifecycle can be reduced or eliminated. ACC should therefore use its influence at national and international level to shape the development of policy and economic instruments that reduce waste at source.

Ensuring that the city benefits from the value embedded in waste is complementary with the **proximity principle**, whereby waste should be treated as close to the point of generation as possible. There are a number of strands supporting this principle:

- Collective responsibility. Anyone that produces waste should take responsibility for dealing with the consequences of waste production.
- Environmental sustainability. Minimising unnecessary transport and landfill emissions.
- Economic value. Value is lost through transportation (for example fuel costs or inability to benefit from heat recovered through EFW).

ACC actively encourages the implementation of the **waste hierarchy**, a classification system of waste management options that are in order of environmental impact. The presumption is that waste and resource management practices should progressively move up the hierarchy.

In March 2010 ACC approved the Carbon Management Plan 2010-2015. This commits us to deliver carbon targets of:

- 23% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2015 (based on 2008/09 emission levels);
- 42% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2020 (based on 2008/09 emission levels).

Around 28% of ACC carbon dioxide emissions relate directly to waste going to landfill, with a further 5% associated with fleet movements; of which a proportion will be attributed to refuse collection.

Adopting and implementing these principles in waste services in light of the requirement to provide an effective service at lower cost is difficult. Consideration has to be given to the achievability of the idea, practicability and cost.

6.3 Goals, objectives, actions and targets

The main goals, objectives, actions and targets of the ACWS are detailed in table 3 below. The goals outline broad, generic longer term actions; whilst objectives look at these in more detail over a mid to short term period; with targets providing more clarity on timeframes and levels to be achieved.

Table 3 – ACWS Goals, objectives, actions and targets

Goal	Objective	Actions	Target
<p>Minimise waste production – an underpinning priority to reduce to reduce the amount of waste produced by the city.</p>	<p>Reduce the amount of waste produced per person within the city by actively promoting waste prevention, reduction and reuse activities.</p>	<p>Promote 10 awareness raising campaigns per year.</p> <p>Waste growth will be eliminated by 2015.</p>	<p>Waste growth to be eliminated by 2015</p>
	<p>Reduce the amount of waste produced within the city by actively promoting producer responsibility schemes.</p>	<p>Promote 3 producer responsibility schemes per year.</p>	
	<p>Facilitate, promote and encourage partnerships that will reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.</p>	<p>Develop a pilot reuse scheme at one HWRC by 2015, which if successful, is rolled out wider.</p> <p>Formulate a reuse map of the city by 2014.</p>	
<p>Minimise landfill - landfill is the waste management option of last resort and is only appropriate for a very small proportion of the waste stream.</p>	<p>Drive the management of waste up the waste hierarchy.</p>	<p>Development of alternatives to landfill including the construction of a CHP plant in Aberdeen using non-recyclable waste as a fuel.</p> <p>In the interim convert non-recyclable waste into a fuel for use in energy from waste facilities outwith Aberdeen.</p>	<p>No more than 5% of household waste to be landfilled by 2025</p> <p>Scottish Government Zero Waste Plan recycling targets: 50% by 2015, 60% by 2020 and 70% by 2025.</p> <p>Introduce an organic waste collection for all households by 2016</p> <p>Develop facilities within Aberdeen to recover our resources.</p>
<p>Maximise</p>	<p>Maximise value through</p>	<p>Introduce easy to use</p>	<p>Scottish</p>

recycling/organic waste treatment.	recycling.	recycling services to all households by 2016. Develop a mixed recycling MRF by 2016 that produces high quality recyclables.	Government Zero Waste Plan recycling targets: 50% by 2015, 60% by 2020 and 70% by 2025.
	Expand organic waste collection services citywide.	All households to receive food waste collections by 2016.	Introduce an organic waste collection for all households by 2016
	Expand range of materials for recycling.	Undertake a Waste Composition Analysis (WCA) to identify materials that are not accepted by our current recycling services. We will then seek to develop partnerships and find new end markets to utilise these resources.	Develop facilities within Aberdeen to recover our resources.
Recover value from other wastes.	Any remaining waste should be treated in accordance with best value and sustainability considerations.	Development of localised waste recovery facilities, including EfW and RDF. Develop partnerships to facilitate the expansion of the district heating facilities by 2025.	Develop facilities within Aberdeen to recover our resources. No more than 5% of household waste to be landfilled by 2025
Local solutions where possible.	Minimise the city's environmental impact in line with the principles of proximity, self sufficiency and polluter pays. Ensure transport of waste is minimised. Work locally to promote, develop and stimulate sustainable recycling and composting initiatives consistent with green procurement codes.	Develop a wider range of modern HWRCs designed to cater to high traffic levels and achieve high recycling performance by 2020. Deliver all facilities under the umbrella of Aberdeen Recycling and Energy (ARE) by 2025.	Develop facilities within Aberdeen to recover our resources.

It is hoped that by offering improved waste services we will enhance the quality of life in Aberdeen by protecting communities from adverse impacts and encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their waste and the way it's dealt with.

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7. DELIVERING THE WASTE STRATEGY

Waste and resource management is a rapidly changing policy area and drivers will change during the life of our ACWS. The progress of this document will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose. This is the first review since 2010.

ACC is in a position to direct and influence the delivery of our ACWS in partnership with future contractors, other public authorities and government policy makers. We can influence investment and renegotiate external contracts to suit the city's long term strategic needs. By virtue of the wide variety of stakeholders involved in the waste sector, identifying responsible bodies for the delivery of specific actions can be more problematic.

7.1 Household waste

7.1.1 Resources for delivery

The cost of waste management is one of the fastest growing elements of ACC's budget. Investment is required to slow down and reverse the current cost pressures. ACC has committed £28 million for the development of new infrastructure and recycling services that will minimise the major cost pressure – landfilling of waste. Further significant investment will be required to develop an EfW facility in the city capable of generating heat and power from non-recycled waste. ACC will continue to secure additional funding sources for example from Government, the private sector and other alternative outlets.

7.1.2 Key priorities

Over recent years there have been significant improvements in recycling and composting performance but much remains to be done to become a Zero Waste City. The key priorities of ACC are as follows, with the preferred actions detailed in table 4 and the accompanying information boxes.

- to introduce new recycling collection arrangements and expand collection of recyclables to the whole city;
- to increase the range of recyclables collected to include plastic pots, tubs and trays and waxed beverage containers;
- to provide food waste collections to all households;
- and to construct an EfW facility generating heat and power from non-recycled waste.

Table 4 – Key priorities

Preferred action	Why this is needed	Refer to box:
Additional bring sites	Parts of our city are without a local HWRC meaning many residents cannot recycle a wide range of materials. This limits the ability of residents to recycle their waste; which could result in material going to landfill that could otherwise be recycled. This increases our costs of managing waste.	1
Mixed recycling collections	A mixed (or co-mingled) recycling service allows residents to put all recyclable materials into one container. Our current box and bag system is no longer fit for purpose; residents need more space in a container that is protected from the weather. Residents in flats are unlikely to have any recycling service – those who can recycle receive a minimal collection. This will significantly increase our recycling rates and will drastically reduce our landfill costs.	2
Materials Recycling Facility (MRF)	The MRF will sort out mixed recycling into individual waste streams. It will separate out each individual material; paper, cardboard, tins, cans and glass by colour. The materials will then be packaged for delivery to our waste processors.	3
In-vessel Composting (IVC)	The garden and food waste will be taken to our own IVC. An IVC is an enclosed container where on-site staff control the heat and oxygen content within. This encourages the food and garden waste to break down into a PAS100, British Soil Association (BSA), and approved compost for our households, horticulture and public parks.	4
Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF)	Bio-degradable waste – which makes up the bulk of our black bin waste – will be banned from landfill by 2020. The waste that is left in our black bins will be treated and prepared into a fuel. This fuel can be used to generate energy in facilities in either the UK or Europe. The production of refuse derived fuel is our preferred option until we open our own energy from waste plant. This will remove the need for ACC to landfill almost all of our household waste.	5
Energy from Waste (EfW)	We need an EfW plant. This will allow us to generate heat and power from our black bin waste. This will allow our city to benefit from heat and power produced from our waste resources; helping to tackle fuel poverty issues in our area, cutting our landfill costs and offering a sustainable energy resource.	6

Info box 1 - **Additional recycling facilities**

Our HWRCs allow residents to recycle a wide range of materials across the city. The centres are currently stretched to capacity and struggle to cope with the level of visitors using the sites. The network of HWRCs and RPs will be expanded, beginning with the opening of Grove Nursery in early 2014. A replacement to the Scotstown Road HWRC in the Bridge of Don area is urgently required and consideration should be given to improving or replacing the East Tullos HWRC.

As our kerbside service continues to offer more residents a convenient means of recycling at home, we will investigate opportunities for residents and visitors to recycle “on-the-go”. We will seek funding to install non-intrusive recycling facilities in the city centre and areas of high footfall – such as shopping vicinities and recreational hubs. This will allow residents to recycle materials outwith the home, allowing ACC to recover valuable resources whilst reinforcing the message of recycling your waste.

Info box 2 - **Mixed recycling collections**

We intend to offer residents a new and improved recycling service. A mixed recycling collection will allow residents to recycle all their materials together in one container. For properties served with our box and bag, these will be replaced with a new wheeled bin providing residents with three times as much recycling capacity. For residents served with on-street bins, these will be accompanied by bins that accept all our recyclable materials. This will allow ACC to provide near doorstep collection of recyclables for all city households. Our mixed recycling service will allow residents to recycle more materials in a much more convenient service especially for those residents in flatted properties. We will also increase the range of materials we can collect using this service and hope that residents will soon be able to recycle rigid plastics and other materials.

During the life of the ACWS, markets for additional recycling streams may develop and ACC will endeavour to take advantage of opportunities to increase the range of materials collected from households.

Info box 3 – **Materials Recycling Facility**

ACC will develop a MRF. Using a range of mechanical and optical sorting technologies, a MRF is used to separate mixed recycling into each recycling stream to a standard that allows re-processors to produce high quality products from our recycling. This facility will allow us to offer an easier to use recycling collection service across the city which will significantly increase participation and our overall recycling rate. Building an MRF will also create local jobs and provide the opportunity for complementary businesses to develop processing materials produced here in Aberdeen.

Info box 4 – **In-vessel Composting**

An IVC is an enclosed container for treating garden and food waste. On-site staff control the oxygen and heat within the IVC to encourage the breakdown of our materials into a valuable

compost resource. This compost can be used across the city in our gardens and public spaces; enriching our green areas using our own resources.

Info box 5 – **Refuse Derived Fuel**

RDF makes a resource from the materials left over in our waste stream that cannot be recycled. This waste is treated and formed into a fuel. The fuel is then transported and used in EfW plants to in the UK or Europe to create heat and electricity for local homes and businesses. Exporting our valuable RDF is a temporary measure until we have our own EfW plant.

Info box 6 –**Energy from Waste**

In accordance with the proximity principle waste should be managed as close to where it is produced as possible. To achieve this Aberdeen will build its own EfW facility. This will allow us to generate heat and electricity using the waste that cannot be reused or recycled. Our EfW facility will generate a much valued sustainable resource; heating and powering our local homes and businesses at a time when volatile energy prices continue to rise. The EfW facility will drastically reduce our landfill costs with little or no household waste ever being buried or causing a detrimental effect upon our local environment.

Any further improvement will need to be focused on achieving additional behavioural change. In future we will also open up opportunities to move waste management up the hierarchy, for example by further increasing the range of materials collected for recycling.

7.2 Communication

A major factor affecting the successful diversion of waste from landfill and making waste a resource will be the level of awareness of householders of the costs and benefits of their waste management behaviour. This applies at two levels, firstly the purchasing and disposal habits of householders which determine the form that waste is presented for treatment. Secondly, the awareness that infrastructure for handling and treating waste is required within the city and that this will inevitably lead to challenging land-use decisions.

Education and awareness-raising are essential activities to improve waste management behaviours. For example, effective communication on waste prevention will affect consumer behaviour and reduce unnecessary waste production.

In line with the waste hierarchy, ACC is encouraging residents to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste. Waste and Recycling Services (WRS) works with residents and community groups across the city, promoting the value in materials, which should be reused or recycled rather than disposed in landfill. Improvements to our recycling rates and reductions in our overall volumes of waste will only be achieved through extensive engagement with members of the public, business community and policy-making bodies.

Aberdeen City Council Waste Aware Team

Our team of experienced Recycling Officers encourage residents, school pupils and community groups to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste. The team are available to visit your community to:

- Attend community events including festivals, International Markets or local supermarkets to promote local services and take queries from residents; hosting a variety of workshops with residents and children.
- Deliver presentations and discussions to promote the recycling and reuse services offered across Aberdeen. These can be targeted to specialist groups such as Rotary Clubs, Scouts, ethnic minority groups etc.
- Discuss the ACWS including upcoming service and infrastructure improvements, answering resident queries and resolving problems.
- Developing a range of targeted awareness campaigns, working with our local Universities and Colleges to increase awareness amongst students and the wider communities.
- Introduce new recycling services across the city such as WEEE recycling at Morrisons King Street and Sainsbury's Berryden and on-street paper recycling bins throughout Powis.
- Work with charities and reuse organisations across Aberdeen to promote their services and to direct residents to donate or purchase items.
- Monitor problematic areas which are reported to our team i.e. overflowing bins. Conducting surveys with residents to explore any issues or opportunities for attention.
- Promote volunteering opportunities across Aberdeen to encourage others to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.

Please contact the Waste Aware Team on 08456 08 09 19, via email at wasteaware@aberdeencity.gov.uk or via Facebook at www.facebook.com/wasteawareaberdeen

7.2.1 Engagement and consultation

We will seek opportunities to engage with individuals and community groups to identify ways to maximise benefit from, and minimise impact of, changes required to waste infrastructure and services. WRS have engaged in extensive networking campaigns with Community Councils, business groups and at public events. We will continue to engage and will host public discussions across the city to discuss the proposed improvements with stakeholders.

7.2.2 Influencing policy development

Many of the drivers affecting waste management arise from outwith Aberdeen. ACC has an important role to play in influencing regional, national and international policy making. The

interests of Aberdeen must be promoted to ensure that policy is developed that meets our needs and enables change.

7.2.3 Waste prevention

Waste prevention is the most important step in waste management, appearing at the top of the waste hierarchy. Preventing waste reduces energy use and resource depletion. Greater consideration of the materials we buy and waste can allow each of us to save money whilst helping to reduce our environmental footprint.

There are two main activity streams required by the city to achieve waste prevention.

1. Influence national and international policy and regulation to minimise waste production. ACC has led the way in Scotland by lobbying the SG to introduce a beverage container deposit/return scheme thereby reducing material use and attaching a value to waste. By identifying the value of the container to the person discarding it, behavioural change is much more likely to be achieved. In 2013, The SG demonstrated their on-going commitment to the scheme, by further expanding the deposit/return pilot throughout Scotland.

In addition, through the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and other representative bodies, ACC actively influences the development of Scottish, UK and European legislation. We welcome all opportunities to contribute to waste prevention policies relevant to Scotland and we are currently contributing toward National WPP and European Union (EU) Directives.

2. Communication and awareness raising will continue to be an important strand of work and we will continue to work with ZWS to deliver information at a local level.

7.2.4 Reuse

By reusing our waste we can eliminate the need for costly collections and disposal treatments. We can further reduce our impact upon our world by being more aware of the value in our products and the potential lifespan these can have. We will continue to support reuse projects within the city and will seek out new opportunities to expand these initiatives.

7.2.5 Recycling

The next step in the waste hierarchy is to recycle and compost waste. ACC will work to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by maximising recycling and composting.

Cost effective and widespread collection of dry recyclables is an important step towards embedding recycling as a core activity for the residents of Aberdeen. By reducing the net cost of collection and management of recyclate, the financial case for more recycling is easier to make. By increasing participation in recycling activity, the costs of collection are further reduced as the operation becomes more efficient. Details of how this will be achieved are provided in section 7.1.2.

7.2.8 Disposal

Landfill is an undesirable activity producing adverse environmental and social consequences from the emission of methane gas (with a greenhouse gas effect 23 times greater than carbon dioxide), the potential for leachate run-off, contamination of soils and groundwater and reduced potential for future more beneficial land-use. The WSR also ban the landfill of biodegradable municipal waste from landfill by 2020 meaning that valuable resources that can be turned back into new products or used as a fuel to heat homes will not be dumped in the ground.

No further landfill sites are proposed in Aberdeen. Short to medium term landfill requirements will be fulfilled through the export of waste elsewhere in Scotland. It is imperative that alternatives to landfill are developed by ACC as soon as possible.

Any decision on the methods used to treat residual waste will be determined by a Best Available Technique (BAT) analysis as shaped by the overarching goals of the waste strategy. Options considered will include generation of CHP from waste and should take account of SEPA's Thermal Treatment of Waste Guidelines 2014. Land-use planning considerations for the delivery of such treatment facilities are considered within section 7.7. Any facility that is developed will comply with the EU Waste Incineration Directive.

Combined Heat and Power

"CHP is the simultaneous generation of usable heat and power (usually electricity) in a single process. CHP is a highly efficient way to use both fossil and renewable fuels and can therefore make a significant contribution to the UK's sustainable energy goals, bringing environmental, economic, social and energy security benefits." ²⁶

In terms of waste treatment technologies, CHP can be achieved either through combustion of waste or for organic wastes, biological treatment.

7.2.9 Internal waste management

To ensure a sustainable approach to managing waste from our own premises and service operations ACC has adopted an Internal Waste Minimisation Policy. This covers the strategic internal waste management goals which are to:

- Work to the principles of the waste hierarchy, to reduce the volume of ACC waste to landfill and ensure a reduction in resultant emissions from the disposal and treatment of waste.

- Make best use of resources and ensure efficiency and compliance of waste operations.
- Build improved awareness and understanding of the benefits of waste minimisation.

7.3 Other waste streams

ACC does not have any responsibility for the management of waste that is not household waste or business waste it collects but, as has been demonstrated elsewhere in the waste strategy, these wastes account for a large proportion of all waste produced in Aberdeen.

This ACWS seeks to ensure that measures are put in place to allow the development of more sustainable solutions for all waste management in the city. ACC will seek opportunities to work with business waste organisations such as the Business Environment Partnership (BEP) and the National Industrial Symbiosis Programme (NISP) to encourage and facilitate more beneficial waste management outcomes for the commercial and industrial sector.

A large proportion of adverse environmental impacts from wastes arise from the commercial and industrial sector where wastes are similar in nature to household wastes. Large proportions of commercial waste arisings are either paper/card products or organic waste from restaurant/catering establishments. ACC will facilitate increased collection of these segregated wastes by seeking to develop additional capacity in its proposed recycling, organic and residual waste treatment facilities in the city. By so doing, local outlets for these materials can be developed at competitive market rates. The spatial planning system should also facilitate the development of treatment infrastructure for commercial and industrial wastes.

Waste from construction and demolition activity produces approximately half of all wastes in Scotland with reduced amounts being disposed of to landfill in recent years.

ACC promotes improved waste management within this sector. Our Sustainable Building Code requires all developments to be covered by a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) that seeks to identify opportunities for recycling and landfill diversion. The revised WFD identifies a target of 70% recycling for construction and demolition by 2020. ACC will work with the sector to achieve this target.

We will continue to lobby for the adoption of challenging waste prevention and recycling targets in future developments through intelligent design standards, good operational management practices and, where appropriate, through the planning control system.

7.5 Business waste collection services

ACC provides a business waste collection service. This service includes collections of mixed recycling with additional separate collections of paper/cardboard and glass bottles where applicable. A commercial food waste collection to enable food producers to comply with the upcoming regulations has also been introduced.

In April 2013, ACC adopted a charging mechanism that favours recycling over general waste collection. We will continue to pursue methods that encourage the adoption of the principles of the waste hierarchy within commerce and industry.

7.6 Community/charities

ACC has a wide range of relationships with community and third sector organisations, most notably a longstanding relationship with Aberdeen Forward delivering waste and sustainability related projects.

We understand and encourage the importance of our resources by promoting opportunities to reuse our belongings. We continue to seek any opportunities to work with local charities and reuse organisations including Instant Neighbour, Somebody Cares, the New Hope Trust and high-street charity organisations. Working with the third sector organisations we have introduced new services to residents including textile banks and have brought Aberdeen's charities and schools together in partnership for a well received Green Santa Christmas campaign.

ACC recognises that these organisations have an important role to play both in managing waste and raising awareness. We will seek to work in partnership with organisations such as Aberdeen Forward and the Community Food Initiative North East (CFINE) on developing innovative new services and awareness campaigns across Aberdeen. Collaboration with external bodies is pivotal to our success and we welcome invitations from other organisations or interest groups with whom we can develop new projects.

Such relationships are to be valued and continued where resources allow. ACC remains open to new opportunities to develop waste management projects that move waste up the hierarchy.

We will introduce reuse facilities at our HWRC. These will allow residents to donate goods for reuse by social enterprises and charities. We intend to create a pilot re-use project in 2014. This will be rolled out to additional HWRCs if proven successful.

7.7 Planning

ACC has a statutory duty to develop land-use management plans and is the Planning Authority determining planning applications within the city boundary. As such, ACC has an important role to play in facilitating the provision of waste management infrastructure. Council Officers in WRS work closely with developers and Planning Officers to ensure that new developments are designed to accommodate recycling facilities. As the city continues to expand at a rapid rate, WRS will continue to influence the planning process. We will provide comment on all planning applications to ensure residential developments have sufficient waste and recycling collection facilities. Our improved Supplementary Planning Guidelines advise developers on vehicle access and container needs. We are an important contributor to development masterplan discussions for large projects, such as Countesswells' 3000 properties. We will continue to work with developers to influence the design of new developments to deliver convenient, simple and future-proof facilities for all residents.

7.7.1 Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan

The Structure Plan identifies the need for Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on the location of regionally important waste infrastructure. It is important that this is developed in the near term. Location criteria for siting of waste infrastructure must take into account the opportunity to utilise heat generated from EfW facilities if this is identified as BAT.

7.7.2 Aberdeen City Local Development Plan (LDP)

The Aberdeen City LDP process identified waste management as one of the main issues for the new Plan. In particular, there is a need for the LDP to specify suitable sites for the development of waste and recycling infrastructure such as energy from waste facilities, in-vessel composting and HWRC. WRS will work closely with planning colleagues and other stakeholders to ensure that planning policies and the LDP actively contributes to the delivery of essential infrastructure.

The LDP also ensures that suitable waste storage facilities are included in all developments and that these facilities allow for recycling storage in addition to residual waste. SPG has been developed specifying the scale, type and location of waste storage facilities. Our SPG advises developers, architects and planners to:

- Ensure adequate space for shared or individual waste and recycling collection containers without jeopardising the aesthetic values of the community.
- We promote underground containers or communal facilities throughout developments to reduce the number of bins on pavements, improve the value of communities and to deter fly-tipping. Underground or communal containers reduce the need for frequent visits by several collection vehicles.
- We ensure safe and sufficient access throughout the development for our collection vehicles without risk to vehicles or pedestrians.

ACC developed a Sustainable Building Code in 2008 for its own developments and this code includes requirements for sustainable waste management. The LDP should include similar requirements for all developments.

7.7.3 Aberdeen Strategic Infrastructure Plan

The Strategic Infrastructure Plan evaluates the investment needed by ACC and SG to attract investment and employment to the city. The plan has explored our current stock of infrastructure serving the city and identified potential barriers to further growth. The plan identifies waste management as a key area for investment. The council has committed £28 million to the development of a new collection depot, introduction of the new mixed recycling collection service and waste treatment technologies including IVC.

8. GLOSSARY

ACC	Aberdeen City Council: the local government authority with the responsibility for delivering the waste strategy.
ACWS	Aberdeen City Waste Strategy
ARE	Aberdeen Recycling and Energy; the umbrella brand which encompasses the infrastructure and upcoming changes to waste and recycling services. ARE will feature heavily in marketing material and stakeholder engagement exercises.
BAT	Best Available Technique a term applied with regulations on limiting pollutant discharges with regard to an abatement strategy. BAT takes into account the balance between the costs and environmental benefits.
BEP	Business Environment Partnership is a government funded consultancy service advising local businesses on how to achieve efficiencies and improve environmental performance
Carbon footprint	A measure of the total amount of carbon dioxide and methane emissions of a defined population, system or activity, considering all relevant sources, sinks and storage within the spatial and temporal boundary of the population, system or activity of interest.
CFINE	Community Food Initiative North East. A local charity and partner of Aberdeen City Council. CFINE work to promote employment and volunteering opportunities whilst encouraging healthy eating and smarter shopping and cooking behaviours to minimise food waste.
CHP	Combined Heat and Power is the generation of both heat and electricity.
CMP	Carbon Management Plan is Aberdeen City Councils strategy to reduce our carbon emissions by 23% by 2015 and 42% by 2020.
Closed loop	This is where the waste product, or by-product, in producing one item is used as a source in the production of another item. A closed loop system utilises the waste from one process as a valuable resource for another process.
Co-mingled	The collection of various recyclable materials in one container. Paper, plastic bottles, metals and mixed glass will all be collected together in the same container in our co-mingled service. Co-mingled and <i>mixed recycling</i> are alternative terms for the mixing of recyclable materials.
Communal	Communal containers are shared facilities for communities to recycle or dispose of their resources.

Compost	Compost is the end product of organic materials that have decomposed to form a fertilising material for the growth of new organic materials
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. COSLA and Aberdeen City Council work together to shape national policy, resolve legislative concerns and to lobby central government.
EC	European Commission is the executive of the European Union with responsibility for approving and delivering legislation.
EfW	Energy from Waste is the generation of electricity from the treatment of residual waste. Several technologies are available for converting waste to electricity.
EU	European Union. The economic and political union of member states across Europe. The EU is responsible for a range of environmental targets and other legislation which ACC must adhere to.
EWWR	European Week for Waste Reduction is a week of EU wide campaigns to promote waste awareness and to encourage sustainable behaviours among residents.
GHG	Green House Gas emission are toxins that absorb and emit radiation within our atmosphere. GHS's are the cause of global warming in reflecting heat back to the earths surface. The main GHG's are carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide.
Household waste	Any waste produced from a domestic dwelling
HWRC	Household Waste Recycling Centres are communal recycling centres that allow residents to recycle a wider range of materials than the kerbside service, communal on-street containers or recycling points. Examples of other materials include wood, rubble, fluorescent bulbs, chemicals and electrical items.
IVC	In-vessel Composting is the controlled decomposition of organic material. Oxygen and heat content within an enclosed container is carefully controlled to encourage the breakdown of materials resulting in an end product of compost.
LA	Local Authority is the local government body responsible for the running of the communities within their boundaries.
Landfill	The disposal option of last resort. Landfill is where materials are buried underground to decompose over time. Landfill is Aberdeen city councils second largest contributor of carbon dioxide emissions.
LDP	Local Development Plan is the economic and strategic vision of a local authority to encourage development and investment across the city. The

	LDP stipulates geographical areas of the city to be used for specific purposes such as for employment facilities, residential developments and waste management infrastructure.
LFHW	Love Food Hate Waste is a campaign to raise awareness about food waste issues and steps you can take to reduce your food waste
Mixed recycling	Also known as co-mingling, whereby all recyclable waste is collected within the same container and segregated away from the point where it was produced
MRF	Materials Recycling Facility is a complex wherein mixed recyclable materials (such as paper, metals, glass) can be separated mechanically for transport to re-processors.
NISP	National Industrial Symbiosis Programme
On-street	Where kerbside boxes and bags are not available, on-street containers are the larger communal bins.
PBB	Priority Based Budgeting is the principle of seeking savings across council budgets due to pressing financial constraints. As an authority we must prioritise our spending to deliver needed services in a cost effective way.
Precautionary principle	The notion that any outcome of a decision should eliminate any concern of negative impact of a social, economic , environmental or other nature.
Proximity principle	Waste and resources should be handled and reprocessed as close to the source as possible. Aberdeen City Council should manage our waste locally – where facilities allow – to not burden other communities or authorities with our waste.
Recycling	Recycling is the action wherein a by product or unwanted material is altered or treated to form a new product for use.
RDF	Refuse Derived Fuel is where waste materials with calorific value are shredded and pelletized to form a feed source for use in energy from waste plants.
RP	Recycling Point is a public recycling area where paper/cardboard, metals, plastics, glass and – dependant upon area – other materials such as textiles, electrical items and batteries or bulbs can be recycled.
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment is a decision making tool used to identify all social, economic and environmental issues expected from a plan or programme.
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency is the organisation responsible for regulating and enforcing the protection of Scotland’s environment.

SG	Scottish Government is the national, central, government for Scotland.
Stakeholder engagement	Stakeholder engagement is the consultation and working partnership that will develop between Aberdeen City Council and any other party with an interest in delivering the waste strategy. Stakeholders can include, but is not limited to, residents, charities, environmental organisations and commercial organisations.
SWMP	Site Waste Management Plan is required for all development work across Aberdeen. They stipulate how a construction company intends to reuse and minimise on-site waste.
WCA	Waste Composition Analysis is the separation of waste materials from residential containers into separate streams. The analysis explores the content of bins to highlight materials that can or cannot be recycled. A local authority can then develop awareness materials to encourage greater recycling of accepted materials, or we can explore new contractors to collect new materials which are dominant or valuable within our bins.
WEEE	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment are any electrical items with a plug which are no longer needed. WEEE can continue to work or it can be beyond repair. WEEE includes any electrical items such as televisions, kettles, toasters etc.
WFD	Waste Framework Directive is an EU initiated directive which defines the point where refuse becomes waste. It also sets recycling targets (below the Scottish Government targets) and introduces the waste hierarchy.
WRS	Waste and Recycling Service
ZWP	Zero Waste Plan is the Scottish Governments ambitious plan for minimising waste and increasing recycling. The plan sets the recycling targets which Aberdeen City Council should aspire to achieve.
ZWS	Zero Waste Scotland is the body tasked by the Scottish Government to disperse funding packages to local authorities and assists in delivering and promoting support programmes and awareness initiatives.

APPENDIX 1.

Drivers for Change

1. Regulatory Issues

1.1 Waste Framework Directive

The Waste Framework Directive was introduced by the EU in November 2008. The directive enshrined the concept of the “waste hierarchy”, moving the focus from disposal of waste to reducing, reusing and recycling.

The Waste Framework Directive highlights the importance of the Proximity Principle - dealing with waste as close to its source as possible - and the use of BPEO analysis for waste management.

The Directive sets a significant target for recycling of 50% by 2020, this has been interpreted by the UK and Scottish Governments to include organic waste treatment as well as ‘dry’ recycling materials such as paper and glass.

The Directive also promotes ‘measures to promote high quality recycling and, to this end, shall set up separate collections of waste where technically, environmentally and economically practicable and appropriate to meet the necessary quality standards for the relevant recycling sectors’ by 2015. The UK government has interpreted this to mean that commingled collections remain viable beyond 2015 where it is not practicable to provide separate collections.

1.2 Climate Change

The Scottish Government passed the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 which created the statutory framework for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. The Act sets an interim reduction of 42% by 2020 and an 80% reduction target by 2050.

It has been calculated that waste is the second largest climate change contributor from the activities of Aberdeen City Council, largely a result of extensive use of landfill: approximately 28% of the Council’s greenhouse gas emissions arise from waste management. Carbon emissions from landfill fell from 45,207 tonnes in 2008/09 to 26,148 tonnes in 2012/2013. The impact of waste from the wider economy is significantly lower with waste contributing an estimated 4% of Scotland’s greenhouse gas emissions with a 68% decrease in emissions between 1990 and 2010.

As signatory to Scotland’s Climate Change Declaration 2008, Aberdeen City Council recognises that “Climate change is occurring and human activities are having a significant and potentially dangerous influence” and that “We all in Scotland have duties and responsibilities to take action to both mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to promote the sustainable development and well-being of our local communities”. Through Scotland’s Climate Change Declaration, Aberdeen City Council is committed to: reduce its greenhouse gas emissions from its services and estate, take action to reduce emissions from the Local Authority area and produce an annual statement of plans, activities and achievements.

Primary sources of climate impact from waste management are transport and emissions from waste treatment or disposal. Disposal in particular is harmful where methane gas is emitted. BPEO analysis tools take these climate change impacts into account.

1.3 The Eco-design Directive for Energy-using Products (2005/32/EC)³⁷

This Directive, adopted in 2005, came into force in August 2007 and places obligations on producers to design low energy products and to phase out less energy efficient technologies. The most well known example to date is the phasing out of incandescent light bulbs. Further expansion of Eco-design is anticipated in the future with the emphasis on the minimum use of materials in products, the reduction in the hazardous content of products and design with recycling/reuse in mind.

1.4 Voluntary Agreements

1.4.1 The Courtauld Commitment (2005)

The Courtauld Commitment is a UK level voluntary agreement between the government and the major grocery retailers in the country. The main aims of the agreement are to:

- design out packaging waste growth by 2008 (achieved)
- To deliver absolute reductions in packaging waste by 2010
- To help reduce the amount of food the nation's householders throw away by 155,000 tonnes by 2010, against a 2008 baseline.

This Commitment will have a major impact on the ability of householders to reduce their waste and help the UK's waste prevention efforts. The Scottish Government has introduced a bill to levy a charge of 5p on each plastic bag sold beyond October 2014.

1.4.2 BREEAM³⁹

The BREEAM environmental assessment method for buildings has also had an influence on waste issues. One of the assessment criteria is to show that recycled material has been used in the construction or redevelopment. This has increased demand for recycled or reusable materials from the construction industry.

1.5 Producer Responsibility Regulations.

The End of Life Vehicle Directive⁴⁰ and the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations are the first major examples of Producer Responsibility legislation. Both place obligations on producers to recover and recycle proportions of the products sold within Europe.

2. Financial Drivers

2.1 Landfill Tax

Landfill Tax is a fiscal penalty paid on waste sent to landfill; its purpose is to discourage this method of disposal.

There is an escalator in operation for active wastes sent to landfill, which increases the tax each April. At present the Landfill Tax is £48 per tonne and will rise by £8 every April until 2014/15 when it will reach £80 per tonne.

The landfill tax adds a significant cost onto the disposal of waste at landfill. In 2007/08 for example, Aberdeen City Council landfilled 107,658 tonnes of waste at £32 per tonne - a total of £3.4 million in Landfill Tax.: this will increase to approximately £5.4 million in 2013/14 unless changes are made.

3. National and Local Policies

3.1 National Waste Strategy – Zero Waste Plan⁴⁴

In September 2009 the Scottish Government produced a draft Zero Waste Plan for consultation with the final version published in 2010. The Plan outlines the Government's vision for waste management and how we can all play our part in reducing the amount of waste we produce, reusing valuable resources and increasing recycling levels to help Scotland become a Zero Waste Society. It also sets more aspirational recycling targets as well as a limit on the percentage of waste that can be landfilled or treated through Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities.

The new waste targets for all wastes (municipal and non-municipal) are:

- By 2025 not more than 5% landfilled.
- Year Recycling/composting rate
 - 2013 50% (Household waste)
 - 2020 60% (Household waste)
 - 2025 70% (All wastes)

The Plan states that 80% of the recycling/composting should be achieved by source segregated collections, for 2025 this equates to 56% of all waste will managed through source segregated recycling and composting (including anaerobic digestion of source segregated organics).

Current municipal EfW limit:

From 2008 Not more than 25% EfW

The Zero Waste Plan does not include the introduction of powers to allow for direct and variable charging of householders for waste collection and disposal. This does not provide for the demonstrably most effective tool for changing householder behaviour and calls into question the deliverability of high levels of source segregation of waste.

Importantly, this plan also takes into account waste created from commercial, industrial, construction and demolition practises as well as households and incorporates them into the plan.

3.2 National Planning Framework (Scotland)

The National Planning Framework (Scotland) was developed “to guide the spatial development of Scotland to 2025”. It emphasises the need for a strategic approach to development of infrastructure and although the guidance it provides is not binding, it should be taken into consideration throughout the planning process.

In terms of waste, the framework recognises that the siting of facilities will need to take the proximity principle into account as well as the available transport networks and operational landfill sites. The framework suggests that local authorities will need to work together to achieve economies of scale, avoid duplication and to ensure that facilities are located in the optimal location. It also suggests that treatment plants and transfer stations should be developed on industrial sites and that facilities “should be linked to landfill sites in a ‘hub and spoke’ arrangement, where possible by rail.” The framework states that no more than 25% of municipal waste should be treated through energy from waste.

3.3 Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan and North East Area Waste Plan

There are regional policies that effect how waste is dealt with in Aberdeen, including the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan and the North East Area Waste Plan (AWP).

The aim of the Structure Plan is “to set a clear direction for the future development of the North East towards which the public and private sectors can work to deliver” the vision. This document has recently been approved by the Scottish Government and adopted by the two Councils.

The Structure Plan covers waste management under the Sustainable Development and Climate Change chapter. The Plan clearly states that we must change the way we manage our waste to ensure that we are adhering to the waste hierarchy, proximity principle and that our measures are both efficient and environmentally friendly. To do this, the Plan states that we must take “account of how we manage waste at the earliest stages in the development proposals and providing new infrastructure to meet the targets”.

For the Aberdeen City and Shire area, the Structure Plan sets a target that we will not landfill more than 54,000 tonnes of BMW by 2020.

The North East Area Waste Plan was published in March 2003 in response to the National Waste Strategy. It takes into account, the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle, and BPEO.

The key elements of the Plan include:

- 86% of households to be offered a segregated collection of recyclate with a view to achieving 23-25% abstraction by 2020.
- 54% of households to be offered a segregated collection of green waste with a view to achieving at least 105 abstraction by 2020.
- Develop a Materials Recycling Facility.
- Develop an Energy from Waste plant for Aberdeen City's residual waste
- Improve composting capacity in the area.

Neither of the major infrastructure elements in the Plan have been developed and the rationale underpinning the Area Waste Plan is no longer relevant calling into question its future role.

3.4 Aberdeen City Council Supplementary Planning Guidelines

The Planning Guidelines clearly show developers and planners our needs in the design stages of residential developments. The guidelines give a clear preference for underground bins or communal containers to minimise the bins left on the street, causing aesthetic issues and litter problems. The plans ensure that every resident in a new development has a convenient refuse, recycling and food waste service. The guidelines ensure that our vehicles can access the developments in a safe manner.

4 Energy-related Drivers

4.1 The Scottish Government's Renewables Action Plan, June 2009

The Scottish Government's Renewables Action Plan, June 2009 identifies bioenergy as an important source of renewable energy and that Energy from Waste can contribute to energy targets, now and in the long term. This is also highlighted by the national Planning Policy⁵¹. The Renewables Action Plan also set an ambition for a substantial increase in the uptake of heat from a range of bioenergy sources across the domestic, commercial and industrial sectors.

4.2 Scotland's Renewable Heat Strategy: Recommendations to Scottish Ministers,

Renewable Heat Group Report 2008⁵²

The Renewable Energy Development Scotland Renewable Heat Group was established by the Scottish Government in 2006 to help inform the content of a Renewable Heat Strategy for Scotland. One of the recommendations in the report relates to heat from waste biomass:

That the Scottish Government:

- charges SEPA to prohibit the dumping of waste biomass from industrial and commercial processes to landfill in order to promote its use for energy production.
- puts in place a policy to prevent the combustion of any form of waste without the recovery of heat, via Combined Heat and Power and/or district heating, and ensures that the regulatory and planning powers necessary to enforce this are adequate.

Municipal Waste contains a high proportion of biomass, typically 63%.

4.3 Local/Regional Economic and Energy Drivers

For decades the Aberdeen city economy has been dominated by energy: the exploitation of oil and gas for energy generation has been responsible for sustained economic growth and the establishment of Aberdeen as a global leader in energy services.

In recent years, Aberdeen City Council has recognised the economic opportunity and environmental sustainability of expanding this expertise into developing renewable energy infrastructure and knowledge base. The Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group which seeks to position the region as a renewable centre of excellence through initiating and delivering key renewable projects and the production of the Energetica concept by Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Futures are significant indicators that energy, especially in the form of renewable or low carbon heat and power, continues to be at the heart of the city's development.

Aberdeen City Council is leading the way in developing decentralised energy infrastructure through the provision of heat and power to social housing and public buildings. Four combined heat and power nodes have been established at Torry, Hazlehead, Stockethill and Seaton, currently fired by natural gas. The Seaton facility is capable of being converted to use biomass in the form of wood waste pellets and also have a network extension to public facilities by Aberdeen beach. Cost effective delivery of decentralised energy brings benefits to users and provide more sustainable solutions, reducing the carbon impact of the city. The city is seeking more opportunities to develop decentralised energy solutions with renewable or low carbon energy sources preferred.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	11th March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Recycling service changes and Implications for Mixed Messaging
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/022

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update on existing recycling services, proposed pilot schemes over the next year and the impact these have upon the effective messaging of increasing recycling performance.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the committee note the implications of this report and instructs officers to arrange a members' briefing session to explain the changing services.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report. All revenue and capital costs associated with any communications activity or the pilot schemes are covered by existing budgets.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal, personnel, property, equipment, Health and Safety or policy implications arising from this report.

The expansion of existing recycling services to encompass a greater array of waste streams and the development of a mixed recycling service will improve Aberdeen City Council's sustainability credentials. This includes working towards increased recycling performance and attaining zero waste to landfill.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Over the next year waste service provision for domestic and commercial customers of Aberdeen City Council will be undergoing significant change. The main drivers for these changes are the Waste

(Scotland) Regulations 2012 that introduces statutory obligations on Local Authorities and Businesses to make arrangements for recycling and food waste collections. These obligations mean that there will be a wide range of service changes including:

Commercial Collections

- Provision of food waste recycling for commercial customers;
- Provision of mixed recycling collections excluding glass for commercial customers;
- Provision of source segregated glass recycling collections for commercial customers
- Provision of historic paper/cardboard bundle collections for commercial customers;
- Provision of mixed recycling collections excluding glass for schools;
- Provision of food waste recycling facilities for schools;
- Provision of mixed recycling and food collections as appropriate for other Council properties and community centres.

Household Collections

- Provision of on-street communal limited recycling collections for mixed paper and cardboard as well as mixed plastic bottles and food and drinks cans;
- Provision of on-street communal food waste recycling facilities;
- Mixed recycling with glass communal recycling pilots within Powis and Union Grove;
- On-going provision of mixed food and garden waste collections through the brown bin service; and
- On-going provision of source segregated kerbside recycling services.

With this wide array of services there could be confusion as to what residents and commercial customers should recycle and how to use the service. This period of flux is likely to continue until mixed recycling collections including glass are rolled out city-wide and there is consistency and equal provision of waste services for all households

Members may be approached by constituents regarding the apparent inequalities or inconsistencies of services during the transition from existing services to city wide mixed recycling collections.

In order to ensure that members are aware of all the waste services mentioned above and how they are provided to constituents in their wards, it is proposed that a Members' Briefing be arranged in the Town House.

For each of the service areas, communications will be provided at all time to residents and commercial customers of any changes that may affect them, however, it is recognised that there may be confusion and 'mixed messaging'.

6. IMPACT

Corporate – The development of alternatives to landfill and enhanced recycling will help Aberdeen move to become a Zero Waste City - a key action within the Smarter Environment – Natural Resources Strategic Priority of the Five Year Business Plan.

Public – There will be an impact on the public in relation to these waste service changes. People may become confused as to what systems to use and how. This could lead to increased levels of contamination, potential for a fall in participation which will affect recycling performance and a increase in the volume of enquiries.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Effort will be made to limit the amount of mixed messaging residents and commercial customers will receive. Members and contact centre staff will be briefed and kept up to date of areas affected. Any marketing material will be developed to provide clear instruction and guidance to residents and commercial customers.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Please refer to the following:

- Waste Strategy Review - Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment August 2013
- Waste Strategy – Engaging with Stakeholders April 2010

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Peter Lawrence, Waste and Recycling Manager
plawrence@aberdeencity.gov.uk or 01224 489331

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	11th March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Installation of food waste and recycling facilities on private land
REPORT NUMBER:	H&E/14/024

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to establish the legal positioning of Aberdeen City Council in relation to installation of food waste and recycling facilities on land not owned or managed by us.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Housing and Environment committee notes the report and approves the use, as a last resort, of legislative notices to ensure all residents are treated equally in the provision of food waste collection and recycling services.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The only financial implications arising from this could be costs associated with legal matters should an occupier (land owner) dispute enforced provision of food waste or recycling facilities. Any such costs will be managed within existing budgets.

The cost to procure and install the food waste housing(s) is covered by the Zero Waste Scotland funding received to roll out food waste collections city wide. This amounts to £1.36million covering a period until the end of 2015; when food waste collections should be provided to all householders. All food waste housing and associated ground works will be managed and paid for by budgets within Waste Services, as will expansion of recycling facilities.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

A network of communal food waste collection and recycling facilities will enable Aberdeen City Council to meet its statutory obligation to provide recycling and food waste collections to all households.

Provision of this service will enable Aberdeen city to work towards a national ambition of zero waste to landfill. The facilities contribute toward improving

recycling performance whilst diverting a resource from landfill. All uncontaminated material collected will be converted into compost; helping support a closed loop economy.

There is a risk of Aberdeen City Council facing a legal challenge if we install such facilities on land not owned by us and without the permission of the occupier.

The work undertaken to identify the locations of food waste and recycling facilities will be conducted by members of Waste Services.

No Health and Safety or policy implications are envisaged from this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

It is imperative that Aberdeen City Council is clear in how it implements the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012; with particular emphasis on the requirements of food waste collection and recycling provision to all residents across the city.

To date, residents are offered food waste collections through brown bin mixed food and garden waste collections or through communal on-street facilities. Recycling collections are provided through either kerbside collections, communal on-street collections of specific recycling streams or through the network of bring facilities. Over the next few years such services will be expanded city-wide covering all multi-occupancy dwellings. This requires development of a network of communal bring facilities which are located on-street as near to residents and existing refuse/recycling facilities as possible. As part of the roll out, provision will need to be made to courtyard developments and social housing; many of which are owned or managed by private landowners, factors or associations.

There will need to be agreement between Aberdeen City Council and the private landowners, factors or associations to ensure facilities are provided to residents to enable them to recycle different waste types. Instances have arisen in the past in relation to provision of recycling facilities where the landowner or representative has not agreed to the installation of additional containers; in these situations Aberdeen City Council has not provided the recycling service.

The reasons cited by landowners include the lack of room within the site, the potential impact on other uses within the site (e.g. car parking or amenity planting) and concerns about litter and vermin. Aberdeen City Council now has a statutory obligation to provide these services and so the existing 'soft touch' approach is no longer viable. As a result, there is now a need to provide a position statement on how to proceed in these situations.

Proposed Approach

1. First and foremost measures will be made to arrange installation of communal recycling facilities in a cooperative manner.
2. Experience shows that this will lead to a successful outcome in many instances, however, if this process is not successful, the Waste and Recycling Service will advise landowners that the next step will be the use of its statutory powers under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This will involve serving a notice on the occupier specifying the placing and type of containers for the purpose of facilitating the emptying of them.
3. Should agreement still not be forthcoming, Aberdeen City Council will serve notice to the landowner, factor or association (deemed to be the occupier of the land). This will state the legal position of Aberdeen City Council and our requirement to enforce provision. A copy of the enforcement notice is detailed within Appendix One. This was drafted on advice from the legal department.
4. In relation to food waste Aberdeen City Council's preferred form of provision is to install a closed vermin and vandal proof housing containing a 140 litre wheeled bin as congruent with existing on-street services. This housing is required to be secured to the ground meaning some minor impact on the fabric of the property. Landowners may object to this. In this instance, the Council would make provision by means of a 140 litre wheeled container for food waste. Due to the insecure nature of this option vermin, odour and vandalism issues would be likely; this will be explained to the landowner and it will be made clear that it is their responsibility to manage the consequences of this decision. Should a landowner alter their mind once provision has been made and seek a secure housing; a charge may be applied for this by Aberdeen City Council.

As stated above, serving a legal notice is considered a last resort. This is a change to current practice and it is therefore important to ensure such measures are understood and approved by members.

Legal Services advise that the designation of landowners as occupiers may be open to challenge. The landowners may argue that only the tenants of the building can be deemed the occupiers. Waste Management have advised that for policy reasons they do not wish notices to be served on individual tenants. This is because the Council is providing a service to the tenants under the legislation.

Serving notices on the landowners has been suggested as a means of breaking the stalemate. However, if a Court found that the Council should not have served these notices on the landowners then there would be an argument that the Council has acted outwith the scope of the legislation.

As advised by the legal department any such notice will be provided in writing and be sent via recorded delivery. No other form of communications will suffice as these would not be considered usable as evidence within court. Prior to any notice being issued further advice will be sought from the legal department with confirmation of any maximum fines that maybe applied.

6. IMPACT

Corporate - The development of alternatives to landfill and enhanced recycling will help Aberdeen move to become a Zero Waste City - a key action within the Smarter Environment – Natural Resources Strategic Priority of the Five Year Business Plan.

Public - The recycling facilities to be installed will expedite a significant expansion of recycling services to all Aberdeen residents. This will ensure an end to the current iniquitous system whereby householders living in individual houses, largely in suburban areas, receive kerbside recycling and organic waste services and those in multi-occupancy properties only have general waste collections. Any occupiers who refuse permission to install such facilities will adversely impact on residents' ability to utilise these statutory services. Consequences could include:

- Provision of no recycling facilities to some residents and non-compliance with statutory obligations;
- Facilities being placed some distance away from the property that discourages use by the resident;
- An impact on waste being diverted from landfill; and
- Not attaining recycling performance targets.

Any development of waste infrastructure attracts interest from local communities, often centred on nuisance issues such as noise, odour, vermin and traffic. These issues have been addressed in previous papers relating to the implementation of the Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

In order to manage the risk; every attempt will be made to consult with private landowners who service courtyard and social housing. It is hoped that recycling locations can be mutually agreed between both parties through open dialogue and consultation prior to installation.

Should occupiers refuse permission to allow installation of these facilities on their property then alternatives will be sought and used if applicable. After which a letter enforcing our legal position will be provided to the occupier.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Please refer to the following:

- Waste Strategy Review - Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment August 2013.
- Waste Strategy – Engaging with Stakeholders April 2010.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Pete Lawrence, Waste and Recycling Manager
plawrence@aberdeencity.gov.uk or 01224 489331

APPENDIX ONE – EXAMPLE ENFORCEMENT NOTICE

Dear

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Notice for Waste Receptacles

[address of property] “Property”

Under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Scotland Act 1990, a waste collection authority is authorised to issue a notice to specify the kind and number of receptacles to be used for waste collection, including the receptacle required for the collection of waste to be recycled.

Section 46(4) authorises the waste collection authority to specify the size, construction and maintenance of the receptacles together with the placing of the receptacles for the purpose of facilitating the emptying of them, and access to the receptacles for that purpose.

We Aberdeen City Council, as the waste collection authority for the Property, hereby issue this notice requiring that a waste recycling receptacle be placed at the Property on the location [*delineated/circled red*] on the attached plan.

The waste recycling receptacle shall be the size and construction specified on the attached specification. Aberdeen City Council will supply and install the recyclable waste receptacle [free of charge].

[Once installed, Aberdeen City Council will be responsible for maintaining the recyclable waste receptacle to a reasonable standard. Collections of the recycling will take place [*details of collection*].]

As you are in control of the common refuse area for the Property, this notice is served on you as the occupier of the Property.

If you do not allow the specified waste recycling receptacle to be located as shown on the plan, you may be liable for a fine not exceeding [£1000].

This notice does not require you, other occupiers, residents or tenants of the Property to make use of the food waste receptacle.

[Aberdeen City Council reserves the right to issue new notices under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which alter any of the provisions contained within this notice.]

This notice may be appealed under section 46 of the Environmental Protection Scotland Act 1990 by way of summary application to the Sheriff Court on the ground that:

- (a) the requirement is unreasonable; or
- (b) the receptacles in which household waste is placed for collection from the premises are adequate.

The period allowed for making an appeal is 21 days from the day this notice was served on you.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Housing and Environment

DATE 11 March 2014

DIRECTOR Pete Leonard

TITLE OF REPORT City Play Areas

REPORT NUMBER: H&E/14/029

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Committee of the progress of the 1st Year of the Programme of Play Area Refurbishment Works.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- (i) Acknowledges the success of this year's refurbishment programme.
- (ii) Agrees that the Service should continue the rolling programme of Play Area Refurbishment as detailed in this Report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All works associated with play areas is undertaken within existing approved budget levels.

2013/14 Programme

Revenue £100,000
Capital £450,000

Capital funding is split £300K HRA and £150K Condition and Suitability programme.

2014/15 Programme

Revenue £120,000
Capital £450,000

Capital funding is split £300K HRA and £150K Condition and Suitability programme.

There are no further financial implications as a result of this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Housing and Environment staff undertakes implementation of all works associated with the rolling programme of Play Area Refurbishment.

There are positive implications of this rolling programme against International, National and Local Children's' Play Policy:

United Nations, Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 31 of the Convention states:

“Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.”

The Scottish Governments, Play Strategy for Scotland 21st June 2013 states:

“Children’s play is crucial to Scotland’s well being; socially, economically and environmentally. Our people are our greatest resource and the early years of life set the pattern for children’s future development.

‘The experiences children have in early life – and the environments in which they have them – shape their developing brain architecture and strongly affect whether they grow up to be healthy, productive members of society’ (Harvard University, 2007).

Play is an essential part of a happy, healthy childhood and ‘when children play their brains do two things: they grow and they become organised and usable’ (Hughes, 2013). By investing in all our children and young people now we can strengthen their ability to achieve their full potential.”

Aberdeen City Council upholds children’s rights to play in the City’s Play Policy. Some of the key action points contained within this policy are to:

- *Monitor the city’s network of fixed play equipment to ensure that they are safe, well lit and maintained to a high standard.*
- *Provide play opportunities within the city that are of high quality, challenging and safe.*
- *Promote the importance of play within the lives of ‘Aberdeen’s Children’ so that they are active and healthy.*

It is clear that the Council recognises that play is an essential part of a child's development and important to the future of Aberdeen. This can be clearly seen in the Council's Children's Strategy statement:

"Play is an essential part of everyone's life and is fundamental to human development and is freely chosen and self directed. Children engage in play as a mechanism to explore the world around them, for enjoyment and creative expression and as the medium through which skills are learned and developed. Play is the stimulus for physical, intellectual, emotional and social development."

There are direct implications arising from this report in terms of health and safety under BS EN 1176 Playground Equipment Standard and BS EN1177 Impact Absorbing Playground Surfacing.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Aberdeen City Play Areas

At present there are 154 play areas (62no HRA) throughout the City with an estimated asset value of £9 million. The play areas are categorised according to the industry standard of:

- 55no Local Areas of Play (LAP) (22no HRA), small play area.
- 69no Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) (32no HRA), medium play area.
- 30no Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAP) (8no HRA), large play area.

The Revenue Budget for maintenance of these areas is currently £100,000 a year, which gives approximately £649 per play area for repairs and maintenance. A rolling programme of refurbishment is underway to replace all 154 play areas over a 15 year period.

5.2 Play Area Inspection and Maintenance 2013

A review of the Cities play area inspection regime was carried out by the Service in 2012, as a result of an identified decline in the overall condition of play areas. The review is supported by Aberdeen City Open Space Audit conducted in 2010. The play areas were becoming increasingly difficult and expensive to maintain at an acceptable standard and inspection records were limited.

The review highlighted that existing reporting procedures and staffing levels were insufficient to ensure that inspections and repairs were being undertaken effectively. This led to the creation of a new more robust computerised reporting procedure and an additional inspection team. The inspection team, consisting of 5 staff, now carry out weekly inspections to every play area and undertake minor repairs to

equipment improving the safety of the areas whilst preventing repairs becoming increasingly costly.

This improved overall maintenance highlighted that the majority of the Cities play areas were reaching the end of their useful life. Many areas contain equipment well past the manufacturer's life expectancy of 10 to 15 years. It was decided to carry out an Audit of the condition and play value of the areas to create a base line for a rolling programme of refurbishment.

5.3 Programme 2013/14

Following on from this audit a priority list for play area refurbishment was created based on the site condition, play value and proximity to other play areas. Along side this, a separate list of individual items requiring renewal, removal or immediate repair was compiled using recommendations from the Annual Independent Play Inspection Report.

This allowed the Service to develop a programme to move the refurbishment forward as funding was made available. The programme is structured to target the areas most in need of refurbishment, balanced against overall condition, play value and proximity to other areas.

Capital Funding of £450,000 and an increased Revenue Budget of £100,000 have enabled the Service to move forward with the Refurbishment Programme previously described. This has been on a priority basis and has involved community consultation on the final design of each play area.

By the end of the 2013/14 financial year the Service will have fully refurbished:

Play Area	Capital Budget
Airyhall Community Centre	C&S programme
Alan Douglas Park	HRA
Denburn Court	HRA
Formartine Road	HRA
Gordon's Mills Road	HRA
Johnston Gardens East	HRA
Kaimhill Circle	HRA
Lemon Street	HRA
Willow Park Crescent	HRA

and carried out the following refurbishment works:

Play Area	Capital Budget
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Coronation Road, installation of a new accessible roundabout.	HRA
Westburn Park, 2 new climbing units.	C&S programme
Kincorth Circle, 2 kickwalls with goals, accessible roundabout and swings.	C&S programme
Powis Crescent, 2 kickwalls with goals and refurbishment of an aerial runway and cantilever swing.	HRA
Orchard Street, new bowtop metal railings.	HRA

Progress has been made on general maintenance with 75 of the 97 items highlighted in the Annual Independent Report as requiring attention being dealt with. The Inspection teams continue to improve areas by not only slowing deterioration but by also improving the overall condition, cleanliness, safety and play value.

Further development continues at the existing play areas within Duthie Park which should be completed by the end of April 2014. This is work funded by the 'Russell Bequest'.

Additional funding for play areas was secured from Britvic by 2 local community groups and works implemented by the Service. A further Community group secured funding from the Police Community Safety Fund to cover the installation of an accessible roundabout.

Feedback from the public has been extremely positive to the works with most delighted by the improvements. There has also been a great deal of positive press coverage.

5.4 Proposed Programme 2014/15

The 2013/14 refurbishment programme saw an improvement in the condition of the Cities Play Areas of 4% and in their play value by 5%. It is hoped that a similar improvement will be achieved following the 2014/15 programme.

A Play Area Audit of condition and play value has been completed in order that again refurbishment works are based on a priority order. At present the Service is in the process of finalising costs and design briefs for this years programme.

The following areas are programmed to be fully refurbished in 2014/15:

Play Area	Capital Budget
Girdleness Road	HRA
Kerloch Gardens	HRA
Leslie Terrace	C&S programme
Marischal Court	HRA
Mathews Road	HRA

Newton Terrace	C&S programme
Oldcroft Road	C&S programme
Thistle Court	HRA

with the following refurbishment works included:

Play Area	Capital Budget
Heathryfold, replacement of climbing units and landscaping works.	C&S programme
Cromwell Road, replacement of main climbing unit.	C&S programme
Gordon Park, replacement of swings and roundabout.	C&S programme
Greenbrae Drive,	HRA

The programme has yet to be finalised but design briefs should be completed and out to tender in May. Consultation on the design proposals with the community should be in June and July. It is expected that the installation of the equipment would be in November 2015.

6. IMPACT

The City Play Areas will contribute to the delivery of the five year plan “Aberdeen the Smarter City” commitments to:-

“promote and improve opportunities for physical activity and sport to enable Aberdeen's citizens to lead more active, healthier lives.”

“provide a clean, safe and attractive streetscape and promote biodiversity and nature conservation. We will encourage wider access to green space in our streets, parks and countryside. “

It will also assist the Council in delivering the Single Outcome Agreement’s National Outcome 12 “We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and enhance it for future generations” and will contribute to several other outcomes including No.6 “We live longer, healthier lives”, No. 7 “Tackling inequalities” and No. 10 “We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need”.

It will also help deliver the Council’s open space strategy particularly achieving objectives to improve the quality of open spaces and implementing quality standards provided in the Open Space Supplementary Guidance.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

This report is seen as a benefit to all, the assessment of risk associated with this report is very low.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Play Area Report 2012.
Independent Play Area Inspection Report 2013.
Play Area Priorities 2013/14.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Steven Shaw
Environmental Manager
stevens@aberdeencity.gov.uk,
Tel 489273

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Aberdeen in Bloom 2014
REPORT NUMBER	H&E/14/028

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Committee on Aberdeen's In Bloom campaign for the year ahead, this includes participation in Britain in Bloom 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- (i) Notes the content of the report.
- (ii) Requests a further report to Committee at its meeting in Autumn 2014, with an update on Aberdeen in Bloom' campaigns 2014.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All In Bloom work is undertaken within existing budget levels.

There are no further financial implications as a result of this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Housing and Environment staff will undertake implementation of all works associated with the In Bloom programme.

There are several positive implications from participating in In Bloom – actively engaging with and getting direct participation of Aberdeen's citizens in the sustainability / environmental agenda in Aberdeen. In Bloom helps to deliver benefits across the City at very little cost to the Council. It helps to communicate and support grass roots actions and behaviour change towards a more sustainable city. It helps to meet our environmental objectives for a clean city and towards reducing carbon

emissions. Community pride. Community cohesion. Active citizenship. Participants see not only cleaner and greener environments, but also reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour, renewed economic activity and pride of place.

There are no other direct implications arising from this report in terms of any legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, and sustainability and environmental, health and safety and/or policy issues.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Aberdeen in Bloom 2013 – Growing Smarter

The Beautiful Scotland Awards took place in Aberdeen at the Beach Ballroom on Friday 6 September 2013.

Aberdeen was very successful and gained a Silver Gilt award winning the City category.

Silver gilt is seen as a high standard entry which meets virtually all of the judging criteria and includes sections of exceptionally high standards. Exemplifies best practice in multiple areas and demonstrates very high potential for continuing development and sustainable effort.

The City was also awarded the Jim Murdie Trophy for Permanent Landscaping for the works at Duthie Park.

The Urban Community category was won by Dyce in Bloom who achieved a Silver Gilt award, with Culter in Bloom also gaining a Silver Gilt award. Cove In Bloom were entering the competition for the first time and did very well, being awarded a Silver award for their campaign.

The success of 2013's campaign for all groups is testament to all the hard work and dedication by staff, communities and local individuals in helping to keep Aberdeen looking good through enhancing our surroundings and creating a better environment in which to live.

Aberdeen has now been selected from more than 1,000 entrants to compete in the Britain in Bloom UK finals in 2014, nominated to represent Scotland in the City category.

5.2 RHS Britain in Bloom

Organised by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), Britain in Bloom is one of Europe's largest horticultural campaigns, involving over a

thousand communities each year and creating lasting improvements to local environments for the benefit of residents, workers and visitors.

Since 1964 Britain in Bloom has been part of the UK's cultural and horticultural landscape, impacting millions of people. Last year alone the campaign involved more than 200,000 volunteers across the UK, donating 4.4 million hours to projects that benefitted the wider community.

The ongoing popularity of the Britain in Bloom campaign can be understood through the real and lasting benefits that it provides to those taking part. Participants see not only cleaner and greener environments, but also reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour, renewed economic activity and pride of place.

The RHS believes that Britain in Bloom, as a community-driven horticultural campaign, will continue to create lasting improvements which reach beyond the green spaces and in to the far corners of society. Despite the inevitably tough economic times ahead, the campaign is well placed to continue serving the UK's communities, and is an invaluable source of ideas-sharing and inspiration for all those taking part around the country.

The RHS Britain in Bloom UK Finals brings together the highest achievers from all of the 16 regions and nations participating in the campaign and, as a result, the expectations are high and the judging is rigorous. Put simply, the judges are looking for the best and they are seeing the best from other regions within each category.

5.3 Aberdeen Britain in Bloom 2014

This year in particular is a special year to be a RHS Britain in Bloom finalist. This is the 50th anniversary of the campaign and Aberdeen will be doing everything it can to achieve success, and a gold medal in this golden anniversary year.

Aberdeen is one of the few local authorities to have been part of the competition since the beginning.

Aberdeen has a long and illustrious history with the competition, having won trophies on numerous occasions, first winning the Best Overall Trophy in 1965. It would be a fantastic achievement to repeat that triumph nearly 50 years later.

Aberdeen's campaign, 'Growing Smarter' is a 365 day campaign.

Everything the service is involved in day to day, from cutting grass, sweeping streets, planting bulbs, setting up a new friends group to

leading a group of volunteers in a weedathon contributes to the campaign.

Our campaign will involve In Bloom initiatives involving a wide range of people from within local communities. The overall aim is to ensure that the communities come together with the goal of enhancing their surroundings and creating a better environment.

The following list gives a sample of the partners / projects that will make up Aberdeen's In Bloom campaign for 2014:

- Duthie Park – Completed HLF project, Friends Group and Green Flag award.
- Aberdeen City Council Gardens Competition (involving schools).
- Garthdee Fields Allotments Association and partnership with RGU.
- Coronation Gardens, Great Southern Road – new planting regime.
- Core Paths project.
- Aberdeen Greenspace projects.
- Open Space Strategy.
- Gt Southern Road – school designed beds competition.
- Tree For Every Citizen Project.
- Rubislaw Terrace/ Queens Terrace Gardens – public art, business partnership and new crests.
- St Josephs School – school participation.
- Royal Court – Apprentice beds and school beds (Hamilton School).
- Union Terrace Gardens - crests and Friends Group.
- Aberdeen University - Cruickshank Botanic Gardens.
- Hazlehead Park – Climate Change/Friends Group/Hazlehead Primary/MacMillan Cancer Support/new café.
- Hazlehead Nursery – Partnership with social enterprise groups.
- Albert Terrace – resident's project.
- City Centre – baskets and planters – business partnership with Aberdeen Inspired and local businesses.
- Mounthooly Way – Community Orchard – Aberdeen Foyer.
- Seaton Backies – Community Project.
- Friends of Seation Park – park improvements with Aberdeen Greenspace.
- Waste Services initiatives.
- Powis Resident Group – Environmental Improvements
- Various Its Your Neighbourhood groups.
- In Bloom groups, Dyce, Culter and Cove.

There are many others and the campaign will continue to develop and grow throughout the year.

In Bloom will celebrate and promote all the fantastic and inspiring work carried out by the ever increasing bloom partners and friends.

Our 2014 campaign is already under way and we are very confident of success and many good news stories for Aberdeen throughout the year and in the Britain in Bloom competition later in 2014.

Britain in Bloom results will be announced during a ceremony in Bristol in October attended by representatives of all 74 finalists.

6. IMPACT

This report links generally to the Council's policy statement, Aberdeen: The Smarter City

Our Vision is for Aberdeen to be an ambitious, achieving, smart city. We will ensure all citizens are encouraged and supported appropriately to make their full contribution.

The report also links to the Council's Open Space Strategy.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

This report is seen as a benefit to all, the assessment of risk associated with this report is very low.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Aberdeen in Bloom Report October 2013

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Steven Shaw
Environmental Manager
stevens@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel 489273

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