

To view the Plan (in pdf format) link to:

http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/Your_Home/downloads/hra-bus-plan-draft2003.pdf

COMMITTEE:	Cabinet
DATE:	17th July 2003
SUBJECT:	Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan – 2003
REPORT OF:	Head of Housing Management
Ward(s):	All
Purpose:	To give Cabinet Members an opportunity to amend and / or endorse this year's HRA Business Plan.
Contact:	Janet Canny, Head of Housing Management Telephone 01323 415306 or internally on extension 5306.
Recommendations:	That Cabinet endorses the content of our HRA Business Plan and gives delegated authority to the Cabinet Spokesperson for Housing and the Director of Housing, Health and Community Finance to finalise the plan, once feedback has been received from Government Office of the South East and has been considered by Tenants Advisory Group.

1.0	<u>Background / Introduction</u>
1.1	The Government introduced Resource Accounting for the Housing Revenue Account in April 2001. As part of this new financial regime, all Authorities having ownership of Council housing stock are required to produce an annually updated Business Plan.

1.2	Initially Business Plans were expected to focus upon a 5 year period, but they are ultimately required to address a period of 30 years.
1.3	Last year's Business Plan was considered by Cabinet on the 1 st August 2002. As previously, our Business plan will be submitted to GOSE alongside the Council's Housing Strategy and the Corporate Capital Strategy. It will form part of the overall assessment towards the discretionary allocation of resources available to the Council.
1.4	Our Business Plan and Housing Strategy were assessed jointly as above average as part of the 2003/04 Single Capital Pot Allocation made by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) in December 2002. As a result we received an additional £70,000 discretionary credit approval.
1.5	In reaching this assessment, detailed feedback was provided that we have been able to address in this year's plan. We are also able to share the 2003 draft plan with GOSE so that we may receive additional guidance from them, prior to the formal submission. Once again the plan will be considered against the `Fit for Purpose` assessment criteria.
2.0	Business Plan 2003 / 2004
2.1	Copies of the Draft Business Plan have been circulated to Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet members and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee only. A copy has been placed in the Members' Room and is available at the Town Hall Reception. A copy is also available on the Council's website at - http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/Your_Home/downloads/hra-bus-plan-draft2003.pdf
2.2	It should be noted that we have continued to build upon the range of information within the plan in respect of both the commentary and the financial appendices that are attached (e.g. information on stock condition and stock sustainability).

2.3	The content of the Business Plan will form an important element in finalising our Stock Option Appraisal, which, it is anticipated, will be submitted to GOSE for sign off later this year. It is also recognised that this Plan will provide part of the backdrop to the Decent Homes related element of the Corporate Performance Assessment.
3.0	<u>Decent Home Standard</u>
3.1	<p><u>In July 2000, following its Spending Review, the Government announced a significant increase in resources for social housing. As part of its desire to link increased spending to better outcomes it established a target to:</u></p> <p>“ensure that all social housing meets set standards of decency by 2010, by reducing the number of households living in social housing that does not meet these standards by a third between 2001 and 2004”</p>
3.2	An important focus of our Business Plan and associated decisions concerning Housing Stock Options is our ability to meet such targets for the Council’s housing stock.
4.0	<u>Consultations</u>
4.1	Our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan has been drafted following consultation with Tenants Representatives at our Quarterly Policy Forum and is also due to be considered further at Tenants Advisory Group on the 22 nd July. It also formed part of a separate housing briefing for Members held in June

4.2	<p>In addition, a wide range of information contained reflects tenants' views, expressed both via Tenants Advisory Group and particular consultation events, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Tenants Survey · Housing Best Value Reviews · Tenants meetings · Housing Service Plans
4.3	<p>We are also finalising a Tenant Consultation strategy in respect of the stock options appraisal process, which will allow the appointment of an Independent Tenant Advisor, and will include close consultation with the wider tenant and leaseholder body.</p>
4.4	<p>As detailed above, we have also submitted a draft of the Plan to GOSE for their comments and have held discussions with the Community Housing Task Force around the future arrangements for the final deliberations around housing stock options.</p>
5.0	<p><u>Human Resource Implications</u></p>
5.1.	<p>There are no human resource implications as a result of this report.</p>
6.0	<p><u>Financial Implications</u></p>
6.1	<p>Our proposed Capital Programme forms part of the Council's Capital Strategy. It has been developed in support of objectives identified in the Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan. Each has been developed collaboratively, and is being considered by Members concurrently.</p>
7.0	<p><u>Environmental; Youth; Anti-Poverty; Community Safety Implications</u></p>

7.1	The quality of housing and our housing management service plays a significant role in the overall quality of life both for our tenants and those who are in need of affordable housing. Our service seeks to underpin the Council's Corporate Plan objectives. It is recognised that poor housing affects the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals, and threatens the economic sustainability of the whole community. Our HRA Business Plan has been developed in this context.
8.0	<u>Summary</u>
8.1	Our HRA Business Plan provides a framework for future investment in Council Housing Stock against a backdrop of projected resources and stock options available to us. In line with Housing Investment Programme guidance, it has been developed in the context of wider requirements, including Housing Strategy, Corporate Objectives and regional / national priorities for housing.
8.2	Cabinet is invited to amend and/or endorse the content of our updated HRA Business Plan and to give delegated authority to the Plan being finalised by the Cabinet Spokesperson for Housing, together with the Director of Housing Health, and Community Finance, once feedback has been received from GOSE and also once Tenants Advisory Group have had the opportunity to consider the Plan.
Janet Canny Head of Housing Management	
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Background Papers: The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 'A New Financial Framework for Local Authority Housing – Guidance on Business Plans' (DETR) · Delivering Decent Homes – Options Appraisal (ODPM) · Decent Home – definition and guidance (DTLR) · Housing Services Resource Accounting Business Plan (2002 / 2003) 	

