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## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the draft housing revenue account business plan and to make comments if considered appropriate. This draft plan has already been submitted to GO East together with the draft housing strategy for comment and endorsement as 'fit for purpose.' Any comments received will be reported at Committee.
- 1.2 A full copy of the business plan will be sent under separate cover, which Members are requested to bring to the meeting.

### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan sets out the Council's projections of income and expenditure on the Council stock over the next 30 years within the context of the Council's Performance Plan, Capital Strategy, Asset Management Plan and Housing Strategy.
- 2.2 Priorities for the Council's stock include achieving Decent Homes, energy efficiency, security, health and safety of tenants and leaseholders, minor estate improvements, adaptations for elderly and disabled people, tenant involvement, and maximising the use of the existing housing stock. The Council can meet the Decent Homes Standard in 2010 through the major repairs allowance.

### 3 ONGOING REVIEW

- 3.1 The Council is currently carrying out a Housing Options Appraisal now due for completion in April 2005. The draft business plan will require to be further reviewed in the light of the results of the options appraisal, the 2004 conclusions of the older persons housing care and support strategy and the 2004 housing needs survey.

### 4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

#### 4.1 Strategic Risk / Resource Risk / Operational Risk / Reputation Risk

It is important that there is ongoing reassessment of the projections of local housing needs and the resources required to address these.

#### 4.2 Regulatory Risk

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan is a key component in the work of the Council in delivering its housing strategy and is assessed as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

**5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The priorities identified in the business plan will influence decisions on future social housing provision.

**6 RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That, subject to any comments from Members, the draft Housing Revenue Account Business Plan be endorsed.

Steve Clarkson

Head of Revenue and Housing Management

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**Background Papers:-**

None

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**Rochford District  
Council**

# **Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2004**

**Final Draft**

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## **Executive Summary**

Rochford District Council's Housing Revenue Account Business Plan sets out the Council's projections of income and expenditure on the Council stock over the next 30 years within the context of the Council's Best Value Performance Plan, Capital Strategy, Asset Management Plan and Housing Strategy, Housing Needs Survey 2004 and Housing Care and Support Strategy for Older People in Rochford.

The Council has a corporate objective to maintain and improve the Council's housing stock to keep it in decent condition.

The Council is currently carrying out a Housing Options Appraisal now due for completion in April 2005. The Council can meet the Decent Homes Standard in 2010 through the major repairs allowance. Much of the progress in meeting the standard is the significant investment over a number of years in the Council's stock as evidenced by the Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2003 and independently validated by King Sturge. Further work has been undertaken to ensure additional information is available to inform the Options Appraisal, including a 20% stock condition survey.

Priorities for the Council's stock include achieving Decent Homes, energy efficiency, security, health and safety of tenants and leaseholders, minor estate improvements, adaptations for elderly and disabled people and tenant involvement and maximising the use of the existing housing stock.

The Council has completed Best Value reviews of its repairs and housing management service and significant improvements have been implemented, for example, repairs appointments are available when required by tenants. Performance in service delivery is critical. The Council is in the top quartile performance for rent collection.

A 30 year business plan has been substantially completed which shows that the HRA's current position is robust in both revenue and capital terms. The investment available within the Business Plan is expected to ensure the Decent Homes Standard is achieved by 2010. An action plan has been completed which focuses on four key priorities. These are:-

- to deliver a sensitive and efficient housing management service to tenants and leaseholders which is subject to continuous improvement;
- to sustain a rolling programme of planned maintenance and improvements so as to maintain the stock in decent condition;
- to maximise the involvement of tenants and leaseholders in the running of the housing management service.
- to address issues around anti-social behaviour and make local communities safer places to live and work;

The priorities have been informed by feedback from tenants and leaseholders through a range of consultative forums including Residents Association meetings and repeated tenant opinion surveys.

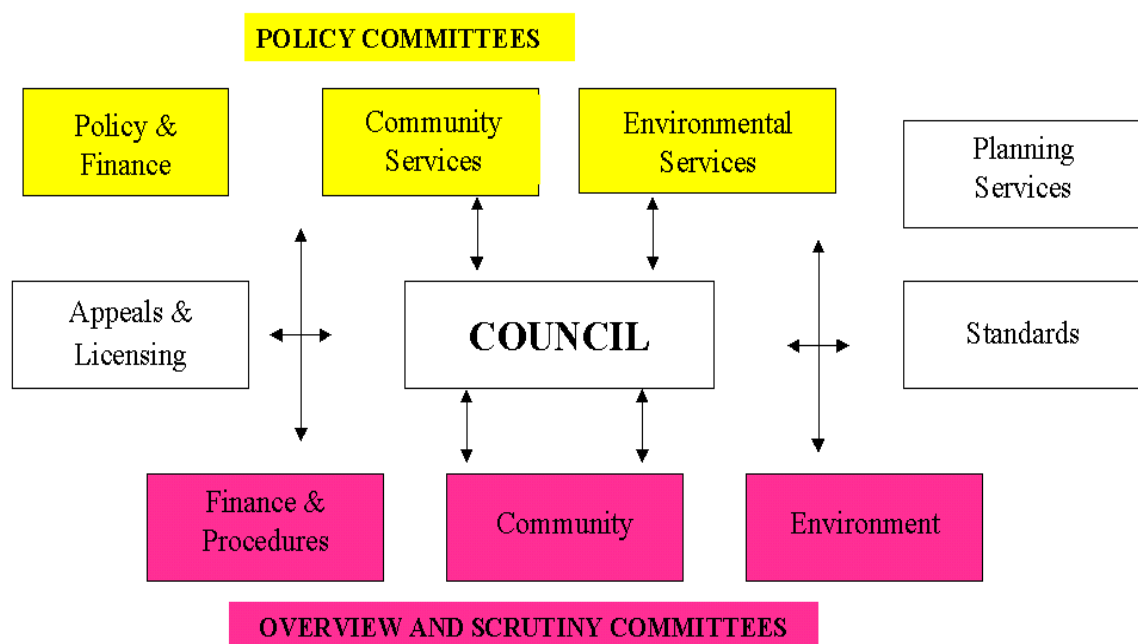
This Business Plan contains a number of appendices containing more detailed information on particular topics. A contact list for further information is available at the end of the report. The Business Plan is also available on request in a variety of formats including Braille, large print and alternative languages.

## 1 Introduction

The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan is set within the context of the Council's corporate vision and the more specific Housing Strategy (2004-2007). It has clear links with the Best Value Performance Plan 2003-2004 (incorporating the Corporate Plan), Tenant Participation Compact, Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy April 2002- March 2005, Capital Strategy, Community Plan and Strategy 2004, Supporting People Strategy and should be seen as an integral part of the Council's wider role in relation to community planning and developing sustainable communities. In addition, the plan is also informed by the Council's Racial Equality Standard (2002) and Asset Management Plan (2003.)

The diagram below indicates the corporate structure and describes how the Business Planning process fits into the Council's agenda.

## NEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



## 1.1 District Profile

### Location

The District of Rochford is situated within a peninsula between the Rivers Thames and Crouch, and is bounded to the east by the North Sea. The District has land boundaries with Basildon and Castle Point Districts and Southend-on-Sea Borough. It also has marine boundaries with Maldon and Chelmsford Districts. It is ideally situated within south Essex, with linkages to the M25 via the A127 and the A13 and direct rail links to London.

The Rochford District covers an area of 65 square miles. It is rich in heritage and natural beauty, with miles of unspoilt coastline and attractive countryside. There are more than 200 sites of archaeological interest, 14 ancient woodlands and several nature reserves across the District.

Rochford District is predominantly rural with three larger urban areas and a number of smaller settlements. The District's towns and villages are diverse in character reflecting their history, location and size. The character, location and form of groups of buildings, streets and spaces make a significant contribution to providing a sense of place and adding to the quality of life in town and country. Residents have a strong sense of identity with their own settlement.

Home to around 78,500 people, the District is one with an ever increasing percentage of older residents. The District is considered to be reasonably affluent, except for a few small pockets of deprivation and has a low rate of recorded crime compared to the rest of the country.

## 1.2 Corporate Aims and Objective

**The Council's vision is to make Rochford the place of choice in the County of Essex to live, work and visit.**

The corporate aims set out below take into account the findings of recent residents surveys and the draft community strategy which was based on widespread public consultation. In total the Council now has six aims, which are listed below:

1. To provide quality cost effective services.
2. To work towards a safer and more caring community.
3. To promote a green and sustainable environment.
4. To encourage a thriving economy.
5. To improve the quality of life for people in the District.
6. To maintain and enhance the local heritage and culture.

These aims are underpinned by the Council's strategic housing priorities:

1. To ensure provision of sufficient affordable and sustainable housing for local people including those with special needs, which takes account of cost, size and location of requirements.
2. To ensure all homes in the District are of a suitable standard for modern housing and for the promotion of safety and good health.
3. To improve performance in dealing with homelessness
4. To ensure that older persons housing care and support needs within the District are effectively addressed.
5. To ensure that the option appraisal in relation to the Council's housing is completed to timetable

## 1.3 Implementation

The attached action plan matrix sets out in greater detail the Council's intentions for implementing these:

In addition the Council has identified specific housing aims and objectives:

### **Housing Aim 1**

To provide quality cost effective services

**Objectives**

- Provide high quality services and strive for excellence through continuous improvement

**Housing Aim 2**

To work towards a safer and more caring community

**Objectives**

- Engage with and ensure services are easily accessible to all, paying particular attention to ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities, and other groups with specific needs
- Ensure the district is kept clean, attractive and healthy for the whole community
- Help people feel safe and be safe whilst living in, working in and travelling around the district
- Reduce homelessness and help residents stay in their own home
- Maintain and improve the council's housing stock to keep it in a decent condition

**Housing Aim 3**

To promote a green and sustainable environment

**Objectives**

- Promote and implement environmental good practice
- Preserve the Green Belt and enhance conservation areas and green spaces in accordance with a democratically agreed District Plan
- Regulate parking to balance the economic well being of the district with the needs of residents

**Housing Aim 4**

To encourage a thriving economy

**Objectives**

- Help people to overcome economic and social disadvantage
- Work with partners and funding agencies to sustain a thriving local economy

- Support opportunities for businesses and employees seeking to enhance their skills and improve their performance

**Housing Aim 5**

To improve the quality of life for people living and working in the District

***Objectives***

- Represent community views to government and providers of major public services
- Help local communities develop the skills and give them the power to identify and meet their local needs
- Maximise the amount of decent, secure and affordable public and private sector housing in the district
- Reduce fuel poverty and enhance energy efficiency across all housing within the district
- Improve services, facilities and opportunities which provide a healthy environment and healthier lifestyles for all local residents

**Housing Aim 6**

To maintain and enhance the local heritage and culture

***Objectives***

- Work in partnership with other voluntary, statutory, commercial and community organisations to meet the needs of the whole community
- Conserve and seek to improve the character and attractiveness of the environment throughout the district
- Preserve the heritage of the district,
- Provide quality, affordable sport, leisure and arts opportunities to all
- Promote Rochford district as a tourist destination and for local residents to enjoy
- Support learning opportunities for local people to improve their skills and life chances

Throughout this Business Plan there are several examples of how the Council's housing service contributes to the corporate aims as set out below:

1. **To provide quality cost effective services**
  - introduction of new services to benefit the whole community e.g. mediation service,
  - lead role in implementing the actions arising from Best Value Reviews
  - accessibility of services through issues like Language Line and Housing Benefit Visiting Officers
  - close working with Housing Benefit staff in relation to the development of a debt advice service
  - improving void turnaround times
2. **To work towards a safer and more caring community**
  - partnership working around community safety;
  - membership of the Local Strategic Partnership.
  - development of close working relations with the Police and Council's Community Safety Officer;
  - budgetary provision for minor estate improvements and other security measures for example door entry systems
  - installation of carbon monoxide detectors and hard wired smoke alarms to all of the Council's sheltered housing stock.
3. **To promote a green and sustainable environment**
  - recycling facilities on Council Estates
  - street front houses already included in District Wide recycling scheme;
4. **To encourage a thriving economy**
  - a rolling programme of improvements to ensure all properties meet the Decent Homes Standard;
  - encouragement of local businesses to be on the Council's Approved List of Contractors.



5. **To improve the quality of life for people in the District**
  - ongoing programme of adaptations for disabled people
  - revised allocations scheme.
6. **To maintain and enhance the local heritage and culture**
  - development of a learning package for tenants through TPAS and Your Choice Housing Consultants;
  - access to education and other training programmes for tenants and tenant representatives;

The Council's corporate aims and objectives are supported by a well-motivated, well-trained and effective workforce. The Council's housing department supports a number of staff through post entry training.

#### 1.4 **Community Strategy**

The Local Government Act 2000 requires every local authority to prepare a strategy for promoting or improving economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their area. Rochford District Council organised the inaugural meeting of a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in 2002, to commence the process of developing a strategy. The LSP is made up of elected members and senior officers of key organisations across the District, including the local Federation of Small Businesses, Essex County Council, Essex Learning and Skills Council, Essex Police, local Churches, Parish and Town Councils, Rayleigh Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Service, schools, South Essex Partnership Primary Care Trust, Thames Gateway South Essex, etc. In identifying key themes for the Strategy a wide range of consultation was carried out in late 2001 and early 2002. This assisted in identifying key themes of which the following relate to housing:-

- Feeling safe
- Looking after our environment
- Healthy living,

The first draft of the strategy was completed in early 2003 and widespread consultation was carried out during July and August 2003. The LSP endorsed the strategy in July 2003. There was then consultation in July and August and it was launched in April 2004.

The Council believes that housing is integral to its wider responsibility to support the economic, social and environmental well being of Rochford district and the development of sustainable communities. Throughout this Business

Plan there are many examples of how the Council's actions influence the above

### **1.5 Community Strategy**

Key Council Housing Contributions to Community Sustainability include

- a well maintained Council housing stock which contributes to meeting housing need;
- maximising use of the Council's existing housing stock and garage sites and other assets so as to extend the housing choice;
- inclusion of energy efficient and security measures in its own improvement programmes to ensure sustainable communities;
- involving tenants and leaseholders so as to shape future policies through the Tenant Participation Compact and the development of service standards;
- active involvement in community safety issues to address anti-social behaviour;
- joint working with the Star Partnership, involving Police, Housing, Victim Support and Essex Social Services to install additional security measures for vulnerable residents who have unfortunately been burgled or are victims of bogus callers;
- community based projects in partnership with key local agencies
- use of housing scheme facilities for a programme of learning skills courses and workshops run by the library service incorporating IT across the District through local residents groups;
- establishing an after schools club jointly with the Star Partnership;
- a youth group meeting regularly with an outreach worker on one of the Council's estates at Stambridge Youth Club and a local housing association estate at Rochford supported jointly by the Council and Springboard Housing Association.

### **1.6 Key Council Housing Contributions to National Priorities**

In addition to the Council's Strategic Aims and Objectives this Housing Revenue Account Business Plan provides examples of progress towards meeting national priorities. Some examples are included below:

- a programme of works to ensure compliance with Decent Homes Standard;
- a Housing Options Appraisal commenced in March 2004;
- ongoing progress with rent restructuring which commenced in April 2002;
- maximising use of the Council's existing stock;
- measures to improve the energy efficiency of the stock and reduce fuel poverty;
- optimising opportunities for the development of a affordable housing by reviewing sites;
- contributing to the Crime and Disorder agenda by implementing measures to tackle anti-social behaviour inclusive of the wider community;
- participating in the development of a corporate improvement plan to address Comprehensive Performance Assessment issues.

## 2 Housing Supply and Demand

2.1 The District is one of the least deprived in the country and is ranked 313th (out of 354) on the deprivation index. The District enjoys a high standard of housing across all tenures. The housing stock within the District totals around 32,000 dwellings of which 86% are owner occupied, with some 8% renting from the Council and Housing Associations and about 6% privately rented or living rent free. House prices are amongst the highest in the region. A Housing Needs Survey completed in December 2004 identified that in order to access the open market via a one bedroom flat, a minimum annual household income of £24,900 (1999 £22,500) is required.

The high cost of housing and land makes it very difficult for low and middle income households to either rent or buy the type of housing they need in the district at a price they can afford.

2.2 The 2004 Housing Needs Survey shows that an annual net shortfall of 281 new affordable subsidized dwellings over the period to 2011, which will require to be met jointly with RSL's and particularly by application of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 through Policy HP9 of the District Local Plan 1996-2011, Details of the Survey including information on the housing market and special housing needs are incorporated in the Housing Strategy. Examples of how we are addressing affordable housing issues within the District are listed below:

- implementing Supplementary Planning Guidance in order to negotiate between 10% and 20% affordable housing on qualifying sites, which will require to be amended to 35% of new units negotiated on all suitable sites, largely for rent.
- partnership working with local housing associations to bring forward developments for affordable housing
- allocating additional resources within the Housing Investment Programme to support affordable housing initiatives.

During 2004/06 local RSL's will be providing in excess of 100 units of affordable housing, much of it for those with special needs, 58% of whom have walking difficulties and a further 9% of whom use a wheelchair.

2.3 In addition to the survey data, the detailed information that already exists in relation to homelessness and those on the housing register, reinforces the fact that there is a substantial current demand for rented social housing from those who are unable to rent or purchase on the open market. At the end of 2003/04 there were some 436 applicants on the general register and a further 136 on the elderly persons list.

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- 2.4 Homelessness applications have tended to average around 3 per week over the last four years with the number of acceptances (full duty owed) during 2003/04 amounting to 67 compared to 56 in 2002/03. Around 30 homeless applicants have been housed by the Council from its Register each year over the last four years. However, homelessness looks set to rise particularly with an increase in the number of 16/17 year olds and those aged 18-20 who might formerly have been in care presenting themselves as homeless to the Council. The Council produced its Homelessness Strategy in July 2003 and further information on the Strategy and action plan is available on the Council's website and in the Housing Strategy.
- 2.5 The supply of accommodation is limited to vacancies arising within the stock and nominations to registered landlords. The figure for relets in 2003/2004 was 89 (5% of stock).
- 2.6 Demand for Council housing in all areas of the District remains high with no particularly difficult to let estates. On occasions management problems do arise and these are addressed through sensitive lettings, minor estate improvements and additional void work. However, retirement housing schemes form a significant proportion of all voids and demand for this accommodation which has a high proportion of bedsits (11% of sheltered housing 3% of total stock) is much lower. The Housing Needs Survey carried out in 2004 recognises that there is a need to develop an older persons strategy within the District and to address the issues of the mismatch of supply and demand of rented retirement accommodation. Consequently a review of local retirement accommodation provision is currently being undertaken alongside the Housing Options Appraisal.
- 2.7 The Council recognises the need to ensure that the social rented stock is used as flexibly as possible. Given the shortage of family sized accommodation, the Council also tries to make best use of its own housing stock by actively encouraging tenants who are under-occupying their accommodation to move to smaller accommodation. Assistance includes a lump sum payment based on a 'surplus' bedroom formula. In addition, the Council has an ongoing programme of converting some of its existing stock to larger accommodation. £180,000 is included within the Capital Programme which enables 2 conversions to be carried out each year. Over the past 3 years some £220,000 has been expended in conversion of 7 properties at Hatfield, Twyford, Pulpit, Cagefield and Rochford Garden Way shops.

**2.8 Housing Need**

Key findings of the 2004 housing needs survey indicate that, while 92% of households consider their present accommodation adequate for their needs, 17% of households contain someone with a support need. 48% of local owner occupiers own their homes outright.

### **3 The Council's Housing Stock**

- 3.1 As at 31 March 2004 the Council's housing stock was 1778. The main change in stock numbers in recent years arises from properties being sold under the RTB. The effect of RTB on the stock over a number of years is to erode the Council's ability to house families in appropriate accommodation.
- 3.2 In total 45% (791) of the stock comprises flats and maisonettes and 55% (968) houses and bungalows. The majority of the housing stock was built between 1945 and 1974. The Council only has one block in excess of 3 storeys.
- 3.3 The Council currently still owns and maintains its housing stock, operating from a single central location at the District Council Offices in South Street, Rochford.
- 3.4 Historically there has been a high level of satisfaction with the existing service, demonstrated by repairs satisfaction surveys, a low level of formal complaints and generally positive feedback from residents associations across the District.

The Council has embarked on a Housing Options Appraisal, which is now programmed for submission to GO-East for sign off by April 2005. The Council has established a steering group to oversee the process - the Rochford Housing Options Appraisal Board was established in April 2004, comprised of four tenants and one leaseholder representing from local residents associations, four elected councillors, two staff representatives, an RSL representative and a strategic partnership representative. The tenant and leaseholder representatives on RHOAB have appointed an Independent Tenant Adviser, Your Choice Housing Consultants. A financial adviser, Graham Moody Associates, was appointed by a joint RHOAB/council panel in September 2004. The Tenant Empowerment Strategy and Consultation and Communications Strategy have both been agreed by RHOAB and approved by GO-East as has a revised project plan. A series of special editions (also available in Braille, audio tape and large print) of the Your Home newsletter has been sent to all tenants and leaseholders along with residents in homeless accommodation and applicants on the Housing Register, providing information on the Housing Options Appraisal. Staff and trade union representatives are receiving briefings from the ITA. The ITA has also issued newsletters and set up a free phone enquiry line.

As part of the Housing Options Appraisal, the Rochford Housing Options Appraisal Board is evaluating all four options covering stock retention, setting up an arms length management organisation (ALMO), private finance initiative (PFI) and transferring the housing stock to a new or existing housing association (LSVT).

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- 3.5 The Council has been able to embark on the Options Appraisal process from a position of relative strength, given the condition of its housing stock.
- 3.6 In addition, the Council will build on the Options Appraisal to achieve other objectives, in particular to develop a programme of service improvements, in the light of comments received in Best Value and CPA inspections, to improve quartile performance across key Best Value Performance Indicators and review use of low demand accommodation in the Council's retirement housing stock.
- 3.7 Resources available in the long term will be critical to the process along with the priorities and aspirations of tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders. The financial modelling commenced in September 2004, and it is anticipated that the Stock Options report incorporating priorities/improvements will be completed in January-February 2005 with widespread tenant and leaseholder consultation undertaken in February-March 2005.

#### 4 Condition of the Council's Stock

An independent condition survey of the Council's housing stock was carried out during the autumn of 2003 by King Sturge. That survey covered a sample of 5% (95) houses, flats and bungalows. The stock condition report also incorporated information on the following:-

- catch up repairs;
- improvements;
- cyclical and responsive maintenance;
- future major works;
- contingent major repairs;
- level of non-decent homes.

The key survey findings at 2003 stock levels and prices were:-

- the stock condition is good overall with many elements not requiring replacement within the first ten years;
- £64 million of work is required over the next 30 years to maintain the stock excluding improvements;
- £22 million is required to maintain the stock over the next 10 years excluding improvements;
- £4,250,000 of catch up repairs is required over the next five years;
- the average SAP rating of the stock was 56;
- the total non decency percentage is 18% ( based on SAP rating of 56)
- the cost to repair and improve those properties which fail the decency standard is 40,000

The results of the survey showed that the Council has benefited from a substantial level of investment over the last 5-10 years with an effective cyclical maintenance programme.

##### 4.1 Updating the Stock Condition Data

The information on which the Stock Condition Report is based is currently held in Excel format. Information regarding those properties which are currently non-decent and those which will become non-decent in future years



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can be extracted from the database using the filter attribute on the programme. As works are completed to change the status of the property from non-decent to decent, the Council's property list is updated to record the works carried out. The Council recognises the need to further develop its computerised programme to hold, retrieve and update information on the housing stock and work is in progress to address this during 2004/05.

To ensure sufficient sampling is sufficiently robust to support the Housing Options appraisal process, the Rochford Housing Options Appraisal Board has commissioned a further independent sample survey of some 20% of the stock and its findings will be scrutinized in January 2005.

### 4.2 Decent Homes Standard

In the summer of 2001 the Government introduced a requirement that all public sector landlords must bring their properties up to the Decent Home Standard (DHS). The standard included two targets: the first being that one third of non-complying properties must be brought up to the DHS by 31 March 2004 and the other that all properties must comply with the DHS by 31 March 2010.

The standard comprises four criteria and the 5% stock condition survey by King Sturge in 2003 identified 13% non decent properties as at 1 April 2003.

#### Decent Homes Standard – Non-Decency Within the Housing Stock April 2002

Year	Number Made Decent	Number requiring works to ensure do not become non-decent	Balance Non-Decent Homes
2003/04	0	320	320
2004/05	0	661	661
2005/06	0	120	0
2006/07	0	160	0
2007/08	0	89	0
2008/09	0	165	0
2009/10	0	260	0

The Council records as to the condition of its stock include a full 14 year record of repairs and contracts. This data has been subject to external validation.

#### 4.3 Potentially Non-Decent Stock

The condition of the housing stock does not stand still and properties which comply with the DHS now may fall below the standard in the future. To address this the Council is targeting future works in the 30 years programme to ensure that no further homes fall below the standard. A programme has been drawn up for the period to 2010, which is linked to the 30 year programme.

#### 4.4 Non Traditional Dwellings

The council has no non-traditional dwellings.

#### 4.5 Energy Efficiency

Information from the 2003 stock condition survey showed that in general the Council's properties are well insulated and centrally heated. This is reflected in the response to the 2004 tenants aspirations survey. The Council's ongoing programme of energy saving works has continued to provide improvements to tenants. For example, the cavity wall insulation programme has been completed, and 12 flats had external wall insulation completed in 2003/04.

During the last 6 years there has been:

- an ongoing programme of replacing central heating boilers to ensure that they comply with the latest regulations
- completion of a loft insulation programme
- a window replacement programme that continues to include early replacement of double glazing schemes

Since April 2003 the following work has been carried out to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock:-

Type of Work	Number of Properties	
	2003/04	2004/05 (so far)
Loft Insulations	0	200
Cavity Wall Insulations	0	1
Boiler Replacements	59	47
Condensing Boilers	0	0
Installations pvcu Windows	0	2
External Cladding	12	0
pvcu external doors	107	62

#### 4.6 Health and Safety

It is imperative that the Council responds to health and safety issues which arise in relation to its housing stock. Recent priorities have included the installation of hardwired smoke alarms in all sheltered housing schemes and properties having DH upgrading. The Housing Investment Programme to 2010 includes provision for the replacement of carbon monoxide detectors. In addition works are in progress in relation to our retirement housing schemes and homeless hostels in order to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

#### **4.7 Minor Estate Improvements**

Estate improvements are a key feature of the Council's activity. Tenant and leaseholder participation is encouraged and received in the decision making process. An annual sum is incorporated within the Housing Investment Programme to carry out such work which has included security lighting, fencing, refurbishment of bin areas and landscaping.

#### **4.8 Security**

The Council has had a programme for several years covering controlled access systems to blocks of flats across the District. Over time these have developed in order to incorporate the latest technology. In most locations they help to create a safe environment but ongoing issues can occur where there are significant management problems. Further work is underway in consultation with residents to deliver a more robust/effective system linked to the installation of CCTV.

#### **4.9 Extensions**

An extension policy has been in place which over the last 3 years has seen 3 properties converted in order to provide larger accommodation for families on our Housing Register. This is still considered a priority and ensures that the Council is maximising the use of its existing housing stock.

#### **4.10 Adaptations for Disabled People**

The Council has a strong commitment in partnership with Essex County Council Social Services to deliver adaptations to disabled people. These works range from minor jobs to ramps, rails, to larger works such as stair-lifts and extensions. Given the ageing population as identified in the Housing Needs Survey, this is likely to remain a priority. The occupational therapist service has been widely publicised among the Council's tenants. 102 properties benefited from disabled adaptations in 2003 and 66 properties so far in 2004.

#### **4.11 Procurement of Future Contracts**

The Best Value Review of the Repairs Service included a recommendation to explore the potential for partnering arrangements.

A partnering agreement has been implemented to provide all residents with loft insulation. This initiative has enabled matched funding to be obtained, thereby enabling a larger programme of work to be carried out.

New purchasing arrangements are being introduced for the Decent Homes works programme. These are aimed at securing a better trained contractor, better client satisfaction and economies.

#### **4.12 Tenant Involvement in Priorities for Maintaining the Stock**

Many decisions relating to maintenance have been taken in consultation with resident representatives at Residents Association meetings and as a result of tenant surveys. The key priorities to date have been around pvcu window replacements, roofing, kitchen and bathrooms, door entry systems and energy efficiency improvements. The recent status survey identified kitchens/bathrooms, estate improvements and car parking as key priorities for future investment in the housing stock. The 2004 tenants aspirations survey has reinforced these findings. Tenants are increasingly becoming involved in decision making on refurbishment work and a substantial telephone consultation panel has now been established as a means of speedily obtaining their feedback on issues that arise. The existing Rochford Tenant Compact is being redrafted to embrace these improved arrangements.

## 5 Performance Management and Performance Information

- 5.1 The Council has undertaken a review of the way each department collects and manages performance information, how this information is reflecting the strategic priorities of the Council and how it is used or can be used to drive service improvement.

A housing service plan has been developed and implemented which draws together data on actions and initiatives arising. The actions incorporated into the current service plan are drawn from a range of sources including:

- The action plans arising from the Best Value Review of housing management
- The Tenant Compact
- The local Strategic Partnership Community Plan & Strategy
- The Housing Strategy
- The Racial Equality Standard
- Options Appraisal consultation

The Service Plan is updated and monitored quarterly through the Corporate Management Board and is reported to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- 5.2 Within the housing service there is a system in place for regular collection and monitoring of performance information. Some of this information is a statutory requirement and is reported to the Audit Commission. Other performance information is a local Rochford requirement and is used to monitor and if necessary, address deficiencies in service delivery.

Each section within the Housing Service is required to report on Best Value Performance Indicators on a monthly basis. This is channeled through the Head of Service to Management Team and Members. Performance information is produced annually to tenants and leaseholders through the Your Home newsletter. In addition feedback is regularly provided at tenants' meetings across the District.

- 5.3 Information set out at Appendix 6 in the Housing Strategy indicates the local performance, including targets for the short and medium term. The table demonstrates that while performance is generally satisfactory, there remains further scope for improvement. Performance has remained consistent in relation to rent arrears as a proportion of the Council's rent roll. The average time to relet dwellings has improved significantly and further measures were implemented during 2003/04 to improve performance in this area, with relet repairs times being halved to an average of 11 days.

In 2003 the Council received a 1 star service rating with unlikely prospects for improvement in relation to its housing service. The areas for improvement identified are being addressed

- 5.4 Comparisons of Rochford performance against other local authorities is carried out. A benchmarking arrangement exists with other Essex authorities. In addition the Council is keen to learn from best practice and high performing authorities, including attending beacon events in order to improve the Rochford performance further.
- 5.5 In 2003 a status survey was carried out with a questionnaire issued to all tenants. The survey was conducted using a postal methodology as recommended in the ODPM guidance and elicited a substantial response 1046 (59%). The survey showed that service users' satisfaction with the Council's housing management service remains high.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

### 6 The Landlord Function

6.1 The landlord function is carried out by a number of teams within the Council. These teams and their responsibilities are summarised in the table below.

Team	Structure	Responsibilities
Housing Management Team	1 housing manager 1 assistant housing manager 2 estate managers 1 allocations officer 1 caretaker 1 tenant participation officer 2 applications officers 1 policy officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>management of rent collection and arrears collection</li> <li>tenancy management nuisance, succession, etc;</li> <li>estate management and caretaking services;</li> <li>responsive repairs;</li> <li>tenant consultation and participation;</li> <li>leasehold services</li> <li>provision of a housing reception service</li> <li>disabled adaptations;</li> <li>annual gas servicing and repairs;</li> <li>management of the Housing Investment Programme;</li> <li>service contracts e.g. lifts</li> <li>taking calls from tenants and processing repair requests;</li> <li>processing invoices;</li> <li>contractor monitoring;</li> <li>management of void property until ready to let;</li> <li>management of 13 retirement housing schemes;</li> </ul>
Property Maintenance Team	0.5 Property services manager 1 Office manager (admin) 2.5 Surveyors 2.5 Admin support	
Housing Support Team	1 Scheme manager coordinator 13 Scheme managers	

The council was one of the early members of the Community Safety Partnership and has taken a lead role in a number of initiatives including establishing the Racial Incidents Panel The council's community safety officer is the lead officer for liaison with and development of initiatives within the service.

### 6.2 Tenant Consultation and Participation

Over recent years the Housing Service has reviewed and extended its efforts to promote tenant participation and consultation. This process has been assisted by the introduction of the Tenant Compact. The council employees a full time Tenant Participation Officer but the commitment to participation and consultation is being incorporated into the job descriptions and grading criteria of all housing management staff and maintenance surveyors.

There are now 3 resident associations across the district. These have formal arrangements and a constitution, while other residents groups are a loose arrangement of a number of residents with concerns meeting on a regular basis with the Tenant Participation Officer or estate management staff. These arrangements are flexible enough to allow individual tenants to have their say

through attendance even in areas where there are few tenants or leaseholders. Transports and crèche facilities are available to encourage attendance, in particular by those from minority groups or with disabilities, and these are regularly utilized

The Service has a commitment to working with other agencies where possible to enhance and improve our working arrangements with our residents. In recent years we have invited a number of external organisations to attend individual tenant meetings or the residents associations to talk about their work and promote their services to tenants. These include:-

- local police;
- local fire safety officers;
- Pensions Department representatives

Residents associations hold quarterly meetings, usually at locations convenient to local residents. held at the Council Offices, but each year at least one meeting is held at an alternative venue in the district. The meetings are attended by Members, Officers and resident representatives, in addition guest speakers as above may be invited to attend. Refreshments, child-care and transport facilities are provided.

Since the original Tenant Compact was developed a number of initiatives have already been implemented, which include the following:

- extra financial resources available for resident participation
- clear standards in place for recognising residents associations and a 'starter pack' of useful information for anyone interested in setting up a residents association
- 3 new associations developed

The Council is keen to promote learning opportunities for tenants, particularly from ethnic minority communities. The Tenant Compact has been distributed to all tenants.

Aspects of the Compact are incorporated into the Service Plan. Implementation and progress within the Service Plan is monitored quarterly. In addition, an update covering all actions is reported to each round of residents association meetings.

In addition, as part of the Housing Options Appraisal the Council has adopted a Tenant Empowerment Strategy to enable tenants and leaseholders to participate and be fully engaged in the decision-making process.



### 6.3 Tenancy and Estate Management

Tenancy and estate management are carried out by the housing management team. A review of the caretaking service is being carried out during 2004/05. The aim is to provide direct line management of the caretaking team and structured liaison with other departments on a range of the services provided on housing estates e.g. grounds maintenance, refuse collection, communal repairs and estate improvements.

There have been a number of improvements to the tenancy and management service. These include:

- welcome pack for all new tenants
- revised Housing Handbook distributed to existing and new tenants
- mediation service for addressing neighbour disputes
- translated leaflets on request
- implementation of a tenant contents insurance scheme
- implementation of a new tenancy management support service in partnership with Mosaic Essex Housing Association
- implementation of repairs appointment system covering pre-inspections by Housing Surveyors.

The recent status survey shows a good level of satisfaction with the housing service. In relation to repairs (which is identified as the most important service within the survey) there has been an increase in satisfaction summarised in the table below:

#### The Repairs Service – Customer Satisfaction Survey

Measure of Performance	March 2004	March 2002
	%	%
Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service	97	98
Rating of Overall Quality of Repair	97	99
Rating Attitude of Workers	98	99
Rating of speed with which repair work was completed	98	98

### **The Status Survey**

The status survey supports the view expressed by resident association representatives that the Council's housing estates are well managed. Problems which do occur are more likely to be slight than a serious problem. Problems associated with drug dealing and other crime continue

An effective strategy for tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is essential in ensuring the well being of the community. Close partnership working through the Community Safety Partnership is ensuring a joined up approach to addressing specific problems arising on estates across the District. Recently a strong link has been forged between the police and the Council to deal with anti-social behaviour. A joint approach is being taken with the police focusing on the criminal side and the Council with the tenancy side. Joint visits have proved effective.

Issues identified by the status survey are being explored more widely with tenants and leaseholders throughout the Housing Options Appraisal.

### **6.4 Retirement Housing**

The Council is reviewing its retirement housing service to elderly people, following the recent production of a housing care and support strategy.

Changes made arising from this review include:

- Transfer of one scheme found to be not fit for purpose to a RSL for redevelopment and a new Part 2.5 scheme to meet under-provision of this style of scheme.
- Alteration of the working hours of scheme managers in line with the European working time regulations.
- Progressive major works/refurbishment on schemes to improve take up of void properties e.g. conversion of bedsits into one bedroom flats and reduction in the use of shared facilities;

The service is now in a strong position to face the changes arising from Supporting People. Service reviews are being progressed and the Housing Options Appraisal will include an assessment of our retirement housing stock.

### **6.5 Void Property Management**

Due to a number of initiatives taken over recent years, the average void to ready-for-letting time for repairs has fallen by 11 days over the last 12 months. There is still scope for further improvement and the management of void properties is under constant review.

Accompanied viewings have been standard practice for some time. The council is reviewing the way in which void works are allocated to contractors.

**7 Asset Management**

- 7.1 The Council has, for many years, maintained an asset register listing all assets including HRA properties.
- 7.2 In addition to the housing stock at 1 April 2004, the Council maintains a stock of 451 lock-up garages. The average garage void rate in recent years has been reduced and improved garage area security fencing has improved letting take-up to 98%.
- 7.3 The 2003 Stock Condition Survey found properties to be in sound condition. The Council has an ongoing programme to address component replacement, including roofs, doors and boilers.
- 7.4 In recent years the former site of Hardwick has been passed to a local housing association for affordable housing and for key workers.
- 7.5 The Council is required to produce an Asset Management Plan in conjunction with the valuation requirements of Housing Resource Accounting and Corporate Capital Strategy. This business plan links into these documents, of which the capital strategy was recently given a rating of 'good' by GO-East.

## 8 Financial Resources

### Capital Expenditure

- 8.1 The Council's Capital Strategy sets out the Council's priorities for capital expenditure and links to the Council's overall aims and objectives and Asset Management Plan.
- 8.2 The Council has invested in its HRA from the Major Repairs Allowance, using other capital resources for General Fund priorities including supporting RSLs to produce affordable housing for District residents.
- 8.3 Capital financed expenditure on the housing stock over the last four years has included works on the following items:
- Adaptations for disabled
  - Cavity insulation/external enveloping/central heating replacements
  - Roofing
  - Estate Improvements/door entry systems/digital TV
  - Extensions to Council dwellings
  - General and structural
  - Kitchens and bathrooms
  - Smoke Detectors/Co2 detectors
  - Lift upgrades
  - Pvcu window replacements
  - Alarm systems
  - Temporary accommodation
  - Warden flat conversions
- 8.4 With the changes brought about by the Local Government Act 2003 and the challenges of meeting the Decent Homes Standard the Council's investment policies are under review, although the "base case" HRA Business Plan assumes no change to this policy.
- 8.5 We have commissioned a stock condition survey as part of our Options Appraisal and the outcome is due to be reported early in 2005. We shall populate the "investment requirements" sections of our model once the

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

information is available. In the meantime we are restricted to projections of the revenue position and the extent of capital resource availability.

### Revenue Expenditure

- 8.6 The main source of income for revenue expenditure is from rents. The income from dwellings is estimated at £4.89 million for 2004/05. The Council commenced rent restructuring in April 2002 and is progressing to meet target rents in April 2011. This is illustrated in the chart at Figure 1.
- 8.7 The Council is a net beneficiary from the real increases in Management and Maintenance Allowances, with significant real gains in the Maintenance Allowance. This has helped to produce a robust long-term HRA position as set out later.
- 8.8 The projected outturn for 2004/05 shows a balance carried forward of £503,000. The table below shows the main budget headings and the estimated forecast for expenditure up to 2006/07.

### Housing Revenue Account: Expenditure

Expenditure	2004/05 Estimate	2005/06 Estimate	2006/07 Estimate
Supervision and Management (incl. Special)	£1,835,600	£1,836,000	£1,900,000
Repairs	£921,000	£1,000,000	£1,035,000
Miscellaneous	£309,000	£59,309	£9,637
Cost of Capital	£1,038,192	£1,038,688	£1,040,705
Major Repairs Allowance	£1,139,000	£1,133,000	£1,149,000
Contribution to Government	£642,300	£595,325	£675,326
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,885,092</b>	<b>5,662,322</b>	<b>5,809,668</b>

- 8.9 The HRA has a relatively high debt outstanding, so that the cost of capital and consequent subsidy calculations mean that the contribution to Government (negative HRA Subsidy) is relatively low for a District Council.
- 8.10 The effect of the changes involved from 2004-2005 in paying rent rebates from the General Fund rather than the HRA have had only a minimal impact on HRA.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

### Business Plan Financial Performance

- 8.11 We have recently developed a long-term HRA Business Plan financial model as a part of our current Housing Options Appraisal, with 2004-2005 as year 1, and incorporating draft HRA budgets for 2005-2006.
- 8.12 The detailed assumptions underpinning our HRA Business Plan model are shown out at Figure 2 together with our long-term financial projections.
- 8.13 We have used the Business Plan model to ask the key question about the long-term viability of the HRA, namely "Is the HRA in balance?".
- 8.14 We have measured this in two ways by asking:
- Whether on an annual basis the HRA balances; and
  - Whether the HRA is overall in credit taking balances brought forward into account.
- 8.15 The Table below sets out the answers to these questions under our "Base Case" (see Figure 2) and a range of sensitivity analyses as noted. The sensitivity analyses have been developed from an analysis of the Base Case HRA to test the robustness of the projections to adverse circumstances.
- 8.16 The key sensitivities developed are:
- 1 RTB numbers increase 50% over their Base Case levels.
  - 2 The real growth in HRA Subsidy after 2005.06 does not materialise.
  - 3 Real growth in management and maintenance costs increases to 2% pa.

<b>Outcome of HRA Viability under specified sensitivity analyses</b>				
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Base Case</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Revenue HRA				
First year when in-year deficit	19	14	14	13
First year when overall deficit	30	22	23	20

- 8.17 This analysis reveals a healthy position in the Base Case Housing Revenue Account with balances generated for 16 years.

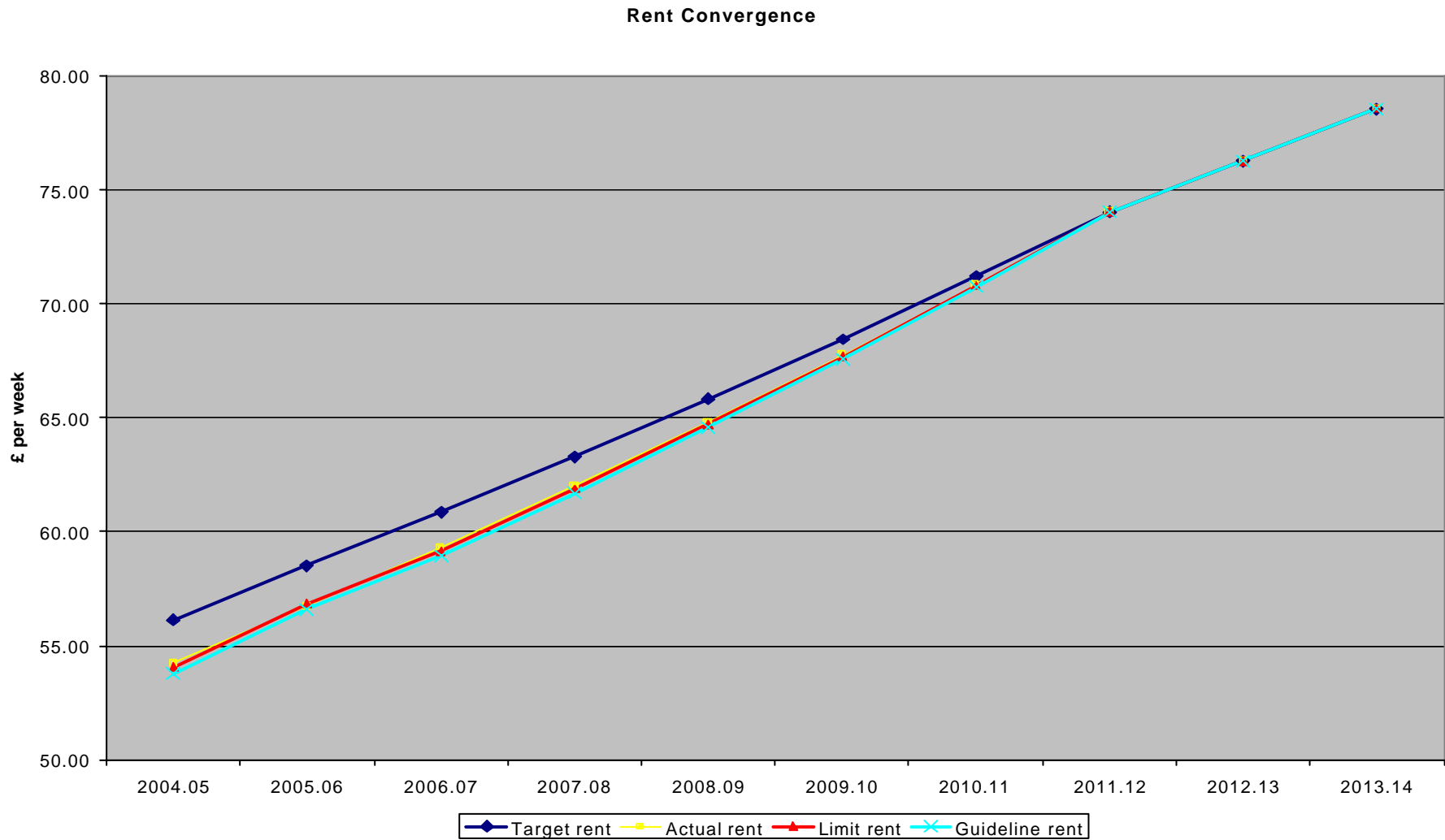
**Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004**

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- 8.18 Although the HRA's in-year position shows a deficit in year 19, accumulated balances are sufficient to sustain the HRA until year 30. Additionally by year 19 the projected stock level has fallen by 225 homes to some 1,544, and staff and other operational cost savings would be available. This long-term availability of savings from stock reduction is available to all the sensitivities, and is enhanced under the increased RTB loss scenario.
- 8.19 The sensitivity analysis reveals a robust Business Plan position. No sensitivity shows the HRA in deficit within 10 years, and HRA savings are available to reduce costs in relation to RTB losses in all cases.
- 8.20 Overall we believe that this shows a robust financial position for the HRA's revenue position, with no need to cut service budgets to maintain the account in balance in the medium to long term.
- 8.21 The Council will review the capital position and its ability / options for achieving the Decent Homes Standard on the stock condition survey outcome becoming available early in 2005.

Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

Figure 1





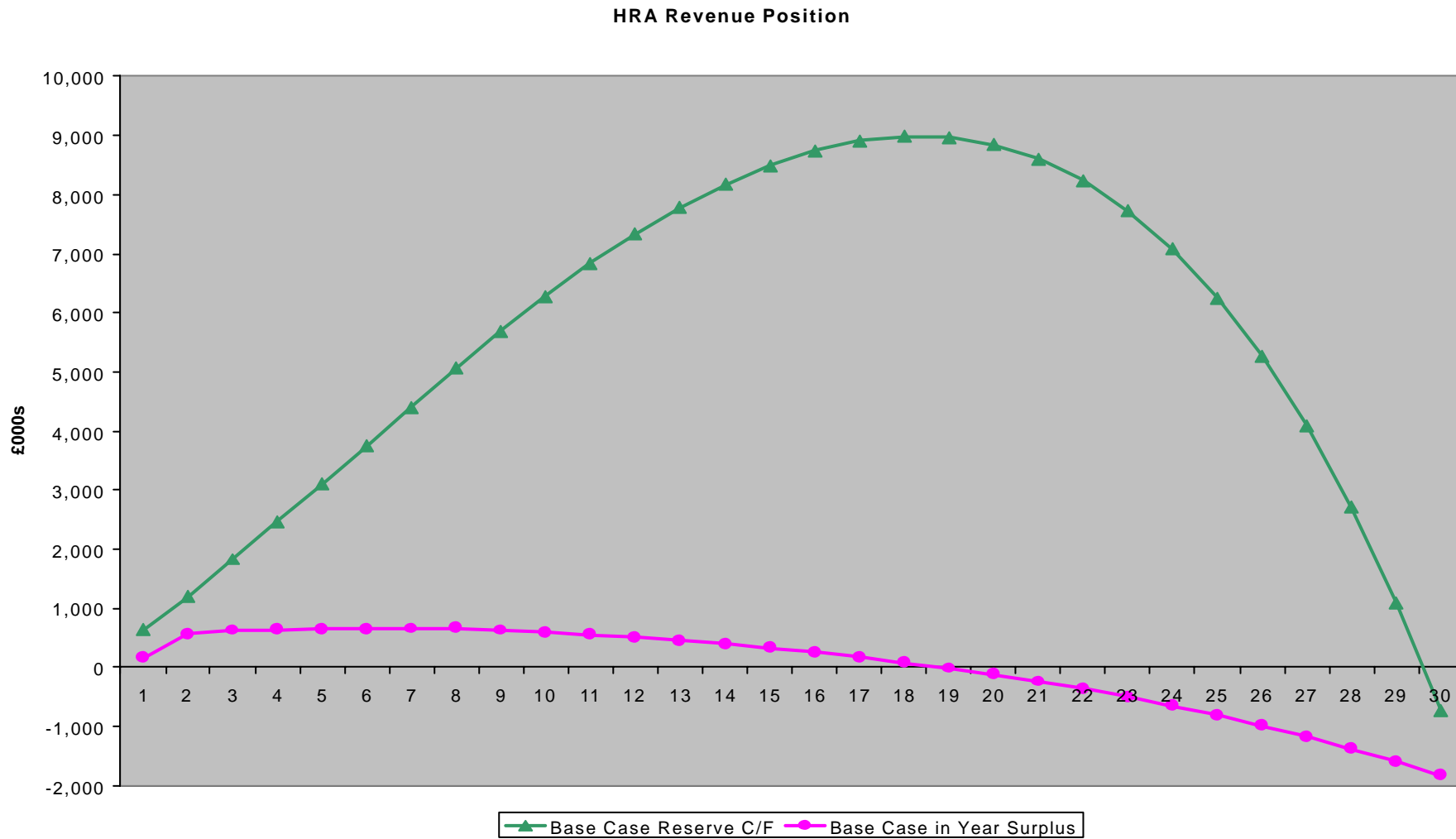
We have built the HRA model upon the following key assumptions:

1. Formula rents increase by RPI+1.5% pa up to and including April 2011, after which they increase by RPI+0.5% pa.
2. Actual rents, Limit rents and Guideline rent all move evenly from their 2005.06 levels to converge with Formula rents in April 2011.
3. Void and bad debt losses remain at their current level of 1.5% and 0.18% of rents respectively.
4. Management and Maintenance subsidy targets increase from their (consultation) levels in 2005.06 by RPI+2% pa until 2011.12 in line with Government commitments. Actual Allowances move to meet target levels by 2011.12.
5. Management and Maintenance costs grow at RPI+1% pa from 2005.06 levels and are not reduced with RTB sales.
6. RTB sales reduce from their estimated level of 19 homes in 2004.05 by 5% per annum (rounded).
7. RPI is 2.5% pa throughout.

The "Base Case" HRA projections resulting from these assumptions are shown diagrammatically and in tabular form below.

Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

Figure 2



8.22 The Council intends to keep the Business Plan under review at least annually and consider any changes needed to its policies as circumstances unfold.

### **External Sources of Funding**

8.23 In addition to utilising its own finances the Council does take every opportunity to attract external funding in order to meet its priorities. This includes:

- The Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme, which provided over £3m in 2004/06
- Funding from the Homelessness Directorate to support homelessness initiatives within the District. Additional funding £20,000 has been allocated for 2005/06.
- E-Government funding in 2002/03 and 2003/04 for electronic service delivery
- Building Safer Communities Funding in 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06 with funding earmarked to be spent on drug related projects
- Government Innovation Grant allocated to tenant participation in Essex to develop tenant participation opportunities for black and minority ethnic groups
- Planning Delivery Grant to support the planning process in 2004/05.

8.24 In addition S106 Planning Agreements provide a critical resource for funding infrastructure amenities thereby contributing to sustainable communities.

8.25 In conjunction with its partners it is intended that these should further help meet investment and service improvement objectives in relation to the local environment.

**9 Actions Completed against Previous Targets**

Since the last housing revenue account business plan for Rochford two important key achievements have been:

- completion of a housing needs survey
- development of an older persons support strategy
- advancing the programme for affordable housing provision by local RSL's

## 10 Consultation

10.1 The Council considers the process of consultation with all residents to be a continuous one. The Council has recently produced a Communications Strategy, which sets out how the Council will consult with its customers. This has been supplemented by the communications strategy adopted by the Rochford Housing Options Appraisal Board. The key housing related consultation methods which have helped to inform this Business Plan are listed below:-

- Best Value Reviews in relation to the repairs and housing management service
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey completed in March 2001 and March 2004
- 3 Residents Associations established
- Housing Strategy Conference held in May 2003
- Feedback from residents associations and satisfaction surveys
- Tenants and leaseholders aspirations survey November 2004

The key issues arising from the above, which have influenced our priorities are:-

- meeting Decent Homes Standard
- implementing additional improvements to the housing stock
- addressing anti-social behaviour
- maximising use of the existing housing stock
- continuing with improvements to the housing service
- affordable housing which is addressed within the Housing Strategy
- enhancing tenant participation in the housing service

## 11 Priorities

In deciding on the key priorities for this Business Plan, we took into account the results of consultation with tenants and leaseholders, tenant status survey, resources available within Housing Investment Programme and Housing Revenue Account and through external partnership working. In addition we also considered:

- the issues of greatest concern to tenants and leaseholders
- national and regional policies as set out in the Housing Strategy
- Rochford District Council's Corporate Aims and Objectives  
outcomes of the housing needs survey and stock condition survey  
legislative changes
- best practice
- how the Council's own housing stock assists in meeting the actions and priorities within the Housing Strategy

The four key Business Plan priorities are:

- to deliver a sensitive and efficient housing management service to tenants and leaseholders which is subject to continuous improvement
- to address issues around anti-social behaviour and make local communities safer places to live and work
- to sustain a rolling programme of planned maintenance and improvements so as to maintain the stock in decent condition, taking account of the options appraisal
- to maximise the involvement of tenants and leaseholders in the running of the housing management service

These priorities are summarised diagrammatically overleaf together with explanations on why certain actions are not being pursued. The action plans illustrate how the priorities will be delivered. Information on how these priorities were selected can be found in the Business Plan.

**PRIORITY ONE**

To deliver a sensitive and efficient housing management service to tenants and leaseholders which is subject to continuous improvement



The following actions are not being pursued:

- (1) Specialist Arrears Recovery Team - current arrears collection figures do not warrant this approach and a generic approach is favoured.
- (2) Tenant Reward Scheme - no significant housing management issues that this would resolve.
- (3) Specialist Leasehold Team - Council considered a member of staff with particular responsibility for leasehold management but concluded this not to be an effective use of staff resources; work is done by generic housing management staff.
- (4) Pilot choice based lettings – insufficient lettings to warrant this at present as generally more demand than supply. Practice could increase the void rate.

**PRIORITY TWO**

To address issues around anti-social behaviour and make local communities safer places to live and work.



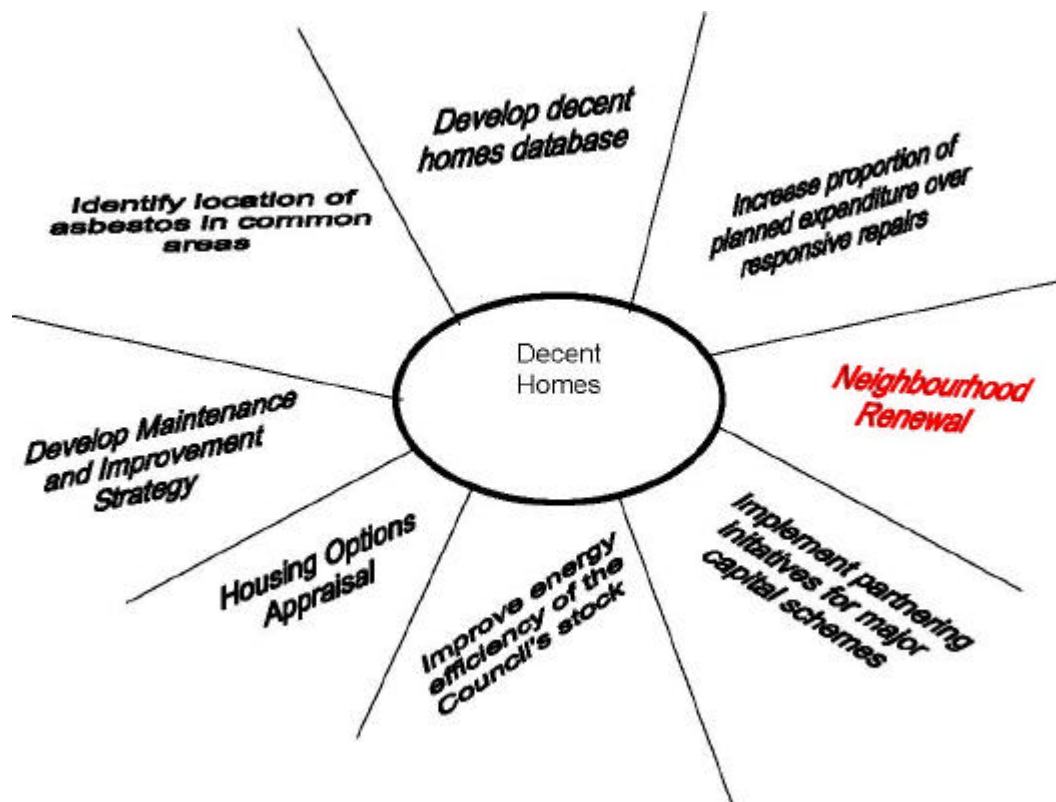
The Council has not adopted the following options:

- (1) Curfew powers - these have not yet been necessary.
- (2) Closing Crack Houses - this has not yet become necessary.
- (3) Neighbourhood Wardens - level of anti-social behaviour has not warranted this approach to date, but is under review .
- (4) Specialist anti-social behaviour teams - as above



**PRIORITY THREE**

To sustain a rolling programme of planned maintenance and improvements so as to maintain the stock in decent condition.



The Council has not adopted the following options:

- (1) Neighbourhood Renewal - neighbourhood renewal is not being pursued as stock condition is generally good and this approach is not warranted.

**PRIORITY FOUR**

To maximise the involvement of tenants and leaseholders in the running of the housing management service.



The following actions are not being pursued.

- (1) Tenants are supported to attend national conferences although there are difficulties in finding tenants willing to attend over a weekend
- (2) Leaseholders Forum not yet pursued as leaseholders are fully included in residents associations.
- (3) Priorities will continue to be reviewed through updates to the HRA Business Plan

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

### 12 Action Plan

- 12.1 Our key actions over the next three years are set out under each of the priorities and link to the Council's Corporate Aims and Objectives. In addition the action plan identifies the resources, lead officer(s) and the expected outcomes.

The actions in the Business Plan will be monitored by Members through the Service Planning process which is reported to Overview and Scrutiny (Community Services) every quarter.

Tenants and leaseholders will provide input into the monitoring process with progress reports provided on actions completed, those still in progress with outcomes, and through the residents associations which meet quarterly, Your Home Newsletter which is also distributed at least quarterly. These forums will provide tenants and leaseholders with the opportunity to review progress with the Action Plan and to review priorities set out in the Business Plan.

Further feedback from tenants and leaseholders will arise throughout the Housing Options Appraisal process, which in itself will inform the annual update to this Business Plan.

The arrangements for monitoring user satisfaction and quality of services provided are summarised in the table below.

Method of Monitoring Quality of Services	Frequency
Residents Association meetings	Quarterly
Tenant Satisfaction Survey	Completed 2003/04 Survey next due 2006/07
Tenant – leaseholder telephone panel	Ad hoc as issues arise
Your Home Newsletter	Quarterly
Satisfaction Survey - Repairs	Monthly
Satisfaction Survey - Capital Improvements	On completion of capital schemes
Customer complaints/compliments	Ongoing
Satisfaction Survey - Estate services	Annual

Information from the surveys, forums and conferences feeds into the planning process for updating the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

The Government will be assessing whether the Council's Housing Revenue Account Business Plan is 'fit for purpose' and assuming this is positive the Council will only be required to provide an annual report on delivery against the actions detailed and its work on further development of the plan.

The annual update in addition to the mechanisms listed above in relation to monitoring the action plans will be reported to the Council for approval.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

## Appendix 1 - Major Works Programme 2004/2010

Category of work	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	Total
Disabled Adaptations	75	75	75	75	75	75	450
Extensions to Council Properties	2	2	2	2	2	2	12
Cavity/Loft Insulations	260	300	300	300			1260
Estate Improvements							
Lift Upgrades		1	1	1	1	1	5
Renewal of Heating Systems							
Communal Heating	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Smoke Detectors							
Hard Wired Smoke Detectors	71	150	150	150	150	150	821
Door Entry Systems							
General and Structural							
Alarm Systems							
External Enveloping/Wall Treatment							
Re-Roofing	10	10	10	10	10	10	60
Electrical Rewiring	100	100	100	100	100	100	600
pvcu Glazed Screens							
Solar Energy Project							
Kitchen/Bathroom Modernisations	100	150	150	150	150	150	850
Removal of Asbestos							
PVCU Window Replacement	2	5	5	5	5	5	27
Ridgeview							
Road Resurfacing							
DDA Works							
Installation of Digital TV Aerials		300	300	300			900
<b>Total</b>							

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

## Appendix 2 - Performance Monitoring

No.	Description	Quartile	Target	Previous Year			Current Year	
				This quarter	Cum	Full Year	This quarter	Cum
	Statutory Indicators	2002/03	2004/05					
<b>BV 63</b>	Energy efficiency - the average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings	3 ↓	56	56	56	56	*see note	*see note
<b>BV 184</b>	(a) the proportion of properties homes which were non-decent at 1/4/04	1	15%	18%	18%	18%	37.36%	37.36%
	(b) the percentage change in proportion of non-decent homes between 1/4/04 and 1/04/05	4	67%	0%	0%	17.3%	Reported Annually	
<b>BV 185</b>	The percentage of responsive (but not emergency) repairs during 2004/05 for which the LA both made and kept an appointment	4	RDC does not operate an appointment system			0%	0%	0%
<b>RDC 6.2</b>	Percentage of post inspections that were satisfactory		97%	99.6%	99.6%	99.71%	100%	99.89%
<b>RDC 6.3</b>	Percentage of unplanned works completed within targets		97%	95.21%	94.51%	94.53%	96.09%	96.41%
<b>RDC 6.4</b>	The percentage of customer correspondence dealt with within 5 working days.		92%	51.81%	54.17%	65.53%	70.72%	74%
<b>RDC 6.5</b>	The percentage of urgent repairs completed within Government time limits		95%	100%	100%	98.05%	95.84%	96.92%
<b>RDC 6.7</b>	Percentage of tenants satisfied with repairs carried out to their homes		96%	New for 2004/05			Reported annually	
<b>RDC 6.10</b>	Backlog of maintenance costs expressed as total value					£354,000	Reported annually	
<b>BV 62</b>	The proportion of unfit dwellings made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority							Baseline reset for 2004
	(a) During the current year					1.14	0.7%	0.7%
	(b) Cumulative figure since last survey carried out in 2004	4 →←	2%			0.97%	0.7%	0.7%

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

No.	Description	Quartile	Target	Previous Year			Current Year	
				This quarter	Cum	Full Year	This quarter	Cum
<b>BV 64</b>	The number of private sector dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished during 2003/04 as a direct result of action by the local authority	3 → ←	2			0	0	0
<b>BV 183</b>	The average length of stay in: (i) bed & breakfast accommodation, and (ii) hostel accommodation, of households which include dependent children or pregnant women and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	4	12	27	21	16.4w	16	19
<b>BV 202</b>	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the authority	Not applicable	0.-10	New for 2004/05			0	0
<b>BV 203</b>	The percentage change in the average number of families, which include dependent children or a pregnant woman, placed in temporary accommodation under the homelessness legislation compared with the average from the previous year	Not applicable	-5%	New for 2004/05			3.6% increase	5.7% increase
<b>RDC 9.3</b>	Proportion of homelessness applications on which the authority makes a decision and issues written notification within 33 working days		85%	81%	79%	70%	36.4%	26.2%
<b>BV 66</b>	Local authority rent collection and arrears: proportion of rent collected	1 → ←	98.75%	93.62%	96.89%	98.7%	98.73%	96.68%
<b>BV 164</b>	Does the authority follow the CRE's code of practice in rented housing and follow the Good Practice Standards for social landlords on tackling harassment included in the Code of Practice for Social Landlords: Tackling Racial Harassment?	1/2/3 → ←	Yes			Yes		Yes

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

No.	Description	Quartile	Target	Previous Year			Current Year	
	Statutory Indicators	2002/03	2004/05	This quarter	Cum	Full Year	This quarter	Cum
<b>RDC 2.9</b>	Percentage of payments allocated to accounts via electronic means		90%	88.52%	88.45%	88.81%	89.62%	89.46%
<b>RDC 2.16</b>	Time between receiving housing application and acceptance as a qualifying person (working days)		3	3.23	3.76	2.35	3.27	3.86
<b>RDC 2.23</b>	The percentage of customer correspondence dealt within 5 working days							
	Housing Revenue		92%	84.85%	87.18%	87%	100%	100%
			92%	91%	87%	68%	76.7%	68.8%
<b>RDC 2.28</b>	Average attendance of scheme occupiers at surgery meetings		30%	31.5%	31.5%	28.66%	27.6	27.6
<b>RDC 2.30</b>	Average re-let times (days) for local authority dwellings (voids) let in the financial year <i>Previously BV68</i>		25	28	23	31.1	25.55	27.75

## Appendix 3 -The Housing Revenue Account: Financial Analysis

### 1 Approach and Modelling

### 2 The HRA Model Assumptions

2.1 The base case HRA model is founded upon initial budgets that replicate the Council's 2004.05 budgets (so that year 1 is 2004.05), and project the various income and expenditure components over the future 29 years. The basis of the projections reflects the following major items:

#### **Implementation of the Government's rent convergence and service charge policies**

As noted in previous HRA Strategies, we have assumed that the Government's rent convergence policies will be implemented and that the Council's rents will increase steadily to the equivalent RSL levels by 2011.12, and will then grow by 0.5% per annum.

#### **Voids and Bad Debt losses**

<b>Proportion of rent and service charge income lost</b>	<b>Void loss To be updated</b>	<b>Bad Debts</b>
General Need stock	0.83%	0.80%
Retirement stock	2.00%	0.80%

These levels reflect current performance, and the relatively unpopular nature of the Council's bed-sitting room retirement flats.

- Garage income reflects current levels and grows with RPI only.
- Implementation of the Government's stated intentions on implementing revised Management and Maintenance Allowance subsidy calculations. (We have assumed that the Government continues to implement its commitment to applying real HRA rental growth to improving the subsidy allowances for management and maintenance towards their full formula levels.)
- Responsive Maintenance budgets are assumed to reduce pro rata with the number of dwellings
- Major building works requirements are fully funded, covering the range of Decent Homes Standard works. The HRA investment will be reviewed as part of our Options Appraisal



- Right to Buy levels are assumed to continue at the current level. The Government's policy of increasingly reducing the amount of RTB receipts available to the Council is modelled, so that by 2007.08 75% is paid to Government and 25% only is available.

As regards the Council's allocation of Supported Capital Expenditure (i.e. new HRA borrowing where the Government provides subsidy on interest payments).

The HRA debt at the start of 2004.05 of £10.1 million is retained throughout (in line with the removal of MRP etc requirements and our assumption in relation to SCE as noted immediately above).

- The HRA balance requirements have been set at £150 per dwelling per annum at 2004.05 prices. This minimum balance requirement grows in line with the RPI and reduces with stock numbers.

### 3 Sensitivity Analysis

- 3.1 Projecting income and expenditure over a 30-year period is obviously an activity that is bound to "get it wrong" in at least some if not the majority of assumptions. The purpose of sensitivity analysis is to test whether the mainstream or base case option is robust in the sense of whether changes to the assumptions produce significant changes to the key outcomes.
- 3.2 We also have undertaken the following sensitivity tests to examine the HRA's robustness in both its capital and revenue position:
- The Council uses the assumed SCE for HRA purposes. RTB numbers reduce to 50% of their historic level over the first 5 years. The real growth in subsidy does not materialise. Real growth in Management and Maintenance subsidy after rent convergence equals the real growth in management and maintenance costs.
  - Real growth in management and maintenance costs increases to 1% pa.
  - The assumed reduction in real growth in major works costs in years 11 onwards does not materialise.
  - The real growth in major works costs continues for the first 5 years and reduces after 10 years. (Also as above but does not reduce.)
- 3.3 The results of the above sensitivities are set out in the Table at Annex 1, with brief notes commenting on the outcomes beneath.

**4 Conclusions**

- 4.1 Overall we believe that the base case and sensitivity analysis demonstrates that the HRA's position is robust in both revenue and capital terms.
- 4.2 The financial model and supporting information has been made available to Your Choice, the Independent Tenant Adviser for our Options Appraisal, who concurs with this view.
- 4.3 The available data will be subject to detailed review during the ongoing Options Appraisal. On the basis of this analysis, taking account in particular of the recent independent stock condition survey, the aspirations expressed by tenants and leaseholders, the recent housing needs survey and any need for further financial resources emerging from the consultation process, additional modelling will be undertaken to determine what need there may be for the Council to change the management or ownership of the HRA assets on the grounds of scarcity of revenue or capital finance for the HRA.

**Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004**

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**Strategic Priority 1**    **To ensure provision of sufficient affordable and sustainable housing for local people including those with special needs, which takes account of cost, size and location of requirements**

**Appendix 4 - Major Repairs and Improvements Financing**

**- see attached spreadsheet on Housing Capital Programme & Financing**

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 1** To ensure provision of sufficient affordable and sustainable housing for local people including those with special needs, which takes account of cost, size and location of requirements

**Appendix 5 - Action Plan****Corporate Aims**

1. To provide quality cost effective services
2. To work towards a safer and more caring community
3. To promote a green and sustainable environment
4. To encourage thriving economy
5. To improve the quality of life for people in the District
6. To maintain and enhance the local heritage and culture

**Key to responsibilities:**

HHCC - Housing Health and Community Care.  
 RHM - Revenues and Housing Management.  
 PS - Planning Services

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TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Development of affordable rented RSL homes to help maintain/develop sustainable communities.	High	5	49 homes between 2004 - 2006	Housing Corporation ADP 2004 - 2006	HHCC	Supply of additional homes towards meeting general housing need. 27 Former Read's Nursery Site. 22 Former Hardwick House site

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 1 To ensure provision of sufficient affordable and sustainable housing for local people including those with special needs, which takes account of cost, size and location of requirements**

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Target Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) in the private sector to those in greatest need	High	2	Budget used in full each year	Funding 2004/5 for DFGs	HHCC	Limited resources go to those in greatest need. Estimate 30 grants awarded.
Installation of aids & adaptations in Council properties	High	2	Ongoing	Capital funding of £60,000 2004/5	RHM	Assists elderly/disabled to live independently in own home. Increased facilities to cater for increasingly ageing population.
Provision of supported housing for a range of special need groups	High	2	By 2005 13 homes for special needs groups	ADP financing of through Housing Corporation and revenue funding through 'Supporting People' budget	HHCC	Additional homes towards meeting the housing needs of women escaping domestic violence, those with a learning disability, and move on limits 5 units – WFDV – Rayleigh 6 units – LD – Rayleigh 2 units – move on – Rochford and move on accommodation.
Seek use of Egan methods of construction in refurbishment and new homes	Medium	2	Ongoing project with one RSL partner to engage in this construction method.	Included in approved RSL funding bid submission	HHCC	Better value for money. Faster building process
Deliver affordable housing through use of Section 106 planning agreements	High	5	As planning permissions for larger sites are granted	Land identified by developers	PS	More affordable homes in District to meet local need.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 1** To ensure provision of sufficient affordable and sustainable housing for local people including those with special needs, which takes account of cost, size and location of requirements

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Identify Council owned sites for affordable housing sites	Medium	5	Three sites by 2007	Land in Council ownership	HHCC & RHM	Additional affordable housing in District.
Promote financial schemes to deliver more homes for rent	High	5	7 cash incentive moves completed each year	£75,000 for cash incentive scheme to deliver 3 homes for rent in 2004 – 2005.	HHCC	Release of three homes for reletting in 2004/5 and two each year in 2005/6 and 2006/7
Promote financial schemes to deliver more homes for rent	High	5	Four purchases completed by 2006	Deliver four homes	HHCC	Encourage owner occupation and release 4 homes for rent.
Promote financial schemes to deliver more homes for rent.	High	5	Operate Transfer Incentive Scheme in 2004/05, releasing six multi-bedroom properties per year	£20,000 in budget for 2004/05	RHM	Multi bedroom vacancies for re-letting to housing register and transfer list applicants
Develop a strategy to bring long-term empty homes in the District back into use	High	2	Strategy drafted for consideration by Council by April 2005.	Staff time/ consultants	HHCC	Strategy and implications for consideration by the Council.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 1** To ensure provision of sufficient affordable and sustainable housing for local people including those with special needs, which takes account of cost, size and location of requirements

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
			To achieve at least 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile BVPI performance in the number of empty homes brought back into use or demolished, by 2007	Will depend on strategy adopted	HHCC	More empty homes brought back into use or demolished
Work with neighbouring Authorities including those in Thames Gateway South Essex sub region to deliver cross-boundary schemes following completion of sub-regional housing needs and market assessment.	High	5	Housing Needs Study/Market Analysis completed by December 2004	£35,000 for Housing Needs Study for Rochford plus financial contribution from 4 other Local Authorities in region.	HHCC	Robust information for use in planning housing market interventions

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 2 To ensure all homes in the District are of a suitable standard for modern housing and for the promotion of safety and good health**

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
All Council properties to meet as a minimum the Decent Homes Standard	High	5	All Council homes compliant by 2010	Capital Programme	RHM	Decent Homes Standard achieved by 2010.
Identify and inspect HMOs	Medium	5	By end of 2006	£10,000 to employ staff/consultants in budget	HHCC	All multiple occupied properties identified and risk rated. Inspection programme in place. Enforcement where needed to ensure satisfactory standards.
Promote high standards with private landlords	Medium	5	Two Private sector landlord forum meetings held each year	From own resources	HHCC	Higher standards in private sector including energy efficiency and gas safety.
Promote financial incentives for owner-occupiers to repair their homes	High	5	Award grants to owner-occupiers 25 Grants awarded	Funding for 2004/5 for Home Maintenance and Adaptation Grants	HHCC	Elderly/disabled and low income households assisted to live independently in own home of a decent standard .
Reduce the number of unfit homes	High	5	To achieve at least 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quartile BVPI performance in the number of unfit homes made fit or demolished by 2007	Home Maintenance and adaptation grant budget	HHCC	Reduce numbers of residents living in unfit properties



## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 2 To ensure all homes in the District are of a suitable standard for modern housing and for the promotion of safety and good health**

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	RESOURCES	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Promote energy efficiency by						
(i) Continuity surveys to determine changes in home energy efficiency.	Low	5	Annually by July. 2000 surveys distributed. Target 400 responses as minimum	Within existing resources	HHCC	Will highlight need and evaluate targets to be more efficient.
(ii) Improve energy efficiency in Council homes by providing better loft insulation and by providing more efficient gas central heating boilers.	High	5	158 homes identified to be improved in 2004-2006	Capital Programme provision each year	RHM	All properties will meet DHS by 2006 in relation to thermal comfort.
(iii) Work with energy supply companies and Essex Energy Advice Centre to develop Projects.	Low	5	Minimum of one 'Affordable Energy Scheme' with Essex Energy Advice Centre implemented by end of 2005	Resources provided by EEAC	HHCC	More homes with energy efficiency measures installed.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

## Strategic Priority 3

## To improve our performance in dealing with homelessness

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	FUNDING	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
To produce proposals for housing advice services for consideration by the Council.	High	1	September 2005.	Options to be developed alongside proposals	HHCC	Decision made on most appropriate way for the provision of advice services for inclusion in 2006/7 estimates.
Faster homelessness application decision making.	High	1	85% of applications decided in 33 working days by April 2005.	ODPM funding for 2004/5 and 2005/6.	HHCC	Reduced time in making decisions and improved service to applicants.
Develop suitable alternatives to hostel and bed/breakfast accommodation	High	2	Comply with statutory requirements.  Five private tenancies secured p.a.	Revenue budget for accommodation	HHCC	Reduced use of bed & breakfast/hostel.
				New Service Improvement Office post agreed		
Reduce use of temporary accommodation in Council stock	High	5	Three additional properties for nominations from the Council by April 2006	Capital funding identified to assist RSLs purchase/develop properties	HHCC/RHM	Provision of permanent homes through RSLs.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

## Strategic Priority 3

## To improve our performance in dealing with homelessness

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	FUNDING	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Reconsider the process used to deal with homelessness reviews to try and reduce the time taken	High	1	100% of reviews completed with statutory limits by April 206	Within existing reserves	HHCC	Better service to homeless applicants undergoing review process.
Continue to use floating support to help prevent people from becoming homeless	High	2	100 hours per week support provided	Contractual agreement with partner RSL funded through Supporting People.	HHCC/RHM	Homelessness, especially repeat homelessness, prevented.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 4 To ensure that older persons housing care and support needs within the District are effectively addressed**

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	FUNDING	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
To work with a partner RSL to develop a frail elderly scheme in Rayleigh	High	2	March 2006 30 new homes available, with support services	Capital funding secured through ADP and revenue funding through 'Supporting People' programme.	HHCC	Will fill gap in supported housing for this 'Special Need' group.
Work with health and social care partners to provide intermediate care facilities in Council sheltered schemes	Medium	2	One scheme in use during 2004/5. Agreement reached with PCT/Social Care on need for further schemes by March 2005	Capital Programme	RHM	Promotes diverse use of accommodation, helps prevent delayed discharge of care and promotes independence.
To provide a garden maintenance scheme for vulnerable older people in conjunction with partner organisations.	High	2	Average of 8 gardens tidied per week	£10,000 from revenue funding 2004/05; £7,500 from Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership; £3,000 from Social Services	HHCC	Improved services for the elderly to help promote independent living opportunities reduced
To provide adaptations in Council properties	High	2	Budget used in full each year.	£60,000 in 2004 – 2005 programme	RHM	Improved services for those tenants who require adaptations to remain in their own home.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 4** To ensure that older persons housing care and support needs within the District are effectively addressed

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	FUNDING	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
To provide Disabled Facilities Grants	High	2	Budget used in full 18 grants awarded each year	Budget for 2004/5	HHCC	People who are vulnerable able to live independently.
To provide Home Maintenance and Adaptation Grants	High	2	Budget used in full each year	Budget for 2004/5	HHCC	People who are vulnerable able to live independently.
To provide Handy Persons service in conjunction with partner organisations	High	2	Annually	£10,000 revenue funding per annum £6,000 from Social Services £4,000 from PCT	HHCC	People who are vulnerable able to live independently..

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5** To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	FUNDING	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
Carry out a robust housing stock options appraisal in line with ODPM guidance as per key target timetable.	High	5	February 2005	HRA Budget provision of £300,000 for overall process	RHM	Deliver options for Council Housing stock.
(i) Planning project and setup period.			March 2004			Set up achieved to timetable.
(ii) Set up Options Appraisal Board.			April 2004			Rochford Options Appraisal Board formed to timetable.
(iii) Develop strategy for addressing local aspirations (Decent Homes Plus)			September 2004			On target.
(iv) Appoint Independent Tenants Advisor (ITA)			June 2004			ITA appointed to timetable.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5** To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	FUNDING	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
(v) Appoint Financial Consultant			September 2004		RHM	Financial Consultant appointed ahead of schedule.
(vi) Produce Tenant empowerment/ involvement strategy.			July 2004			Produced by August 2004.
(vii) Develop communications strategy.			July 2004			Produced by August 2004.
(viii) Carry out Housing Needs Study on sub-regional basis			Draft report by November 2004			On target.
(ix) Carry out stock condition survey			October 2004			On target.
(x) Technical and financial options detailed appraisal process.			February 2005			On target.
(xi) Submit report to GO-EAST for sign off.			May 2005			On target.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5** To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable

**Progress Monitoring, Development & Updating of Strategy**

TASK	PRIORITY	CORPORATE AIMS	TARGET/BY WHEN	FUNDING	LEAD TEAM	EXPECTED OUTCOME
To regularly review the implications of new legislation, changing national, sub regional and local priorities	High	1	Ongoing	Within existing resources	HHCC	Updated information in Housing Strategy
To review progress in delivering the Action Plan contained within the Strategy Statement	High	1	6 monthly reports to Committee	H	HHCC	Measurement of Performance
To incorporate the results of surveys and consultation into the Housing Strategy	High	1	Ongoing	H	HHCC	Updated information in Housing Strategy
To incorporate the targets contained within the Action Plan into the Council's performance management framework	High	1	6 monthly	H	HHCC	Regular progress monitoring



## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5** To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable

### Business Plan

**Priority One:-** To deliver a sensitive and efficient housing management service to tenants and leaseholders which is subject to continuous improvement.

**Corporate Objective 1.1** Provide high quality services and strive for excellence through continuous improvement  
Business Plan

**Priority Two:-** To maximise the involvement of tenants and leaseholders in the running of the housing management service

Task	Priority	Target	Resources	Lead Officer	Outcome
Continue to implement the actions arising from the Best Value Review of the repairs and management service	High	July 2005	Existing budgets	RHM	Provide a continuing range of service improvements
Implement the actions arising from the revised Tenant Compact	High	March 2005	Existing budgets	Tenant Participation Officer	Improvements in tenant participation
To complete and implement a Tenant Empowerment Strategy as part of the Options Appraisal	High	February 2005	HRA Budget item for Consultants	Tenant Participation Officer	To ensure tenants/leaseholders play an active role in Options Appraisal process
Review the caretaking service	Medium	March 2005	Staff time	RHM	To develop improvements to the service and increase satisfaction
Assess options for the continued provision of quality housing service ie stock retention, LSVT, Arms Length	High	February 2005	OA budget	RHM	To determine the preferred option to meet investment required and priorities of tenants/leaseholders

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5 To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable**

Task	Priority	Target	Resources	Lead Officer	Outcome
To maximise the Council's existing stock and other assets	High	Complete 3 extensions/ conversions per annum To commence a review of the retirement housing stock and present options by February 2005	Housing Investment Programme per annum  Staff time/ consultants	RHM  HHCC	Create more choice for residents on Housing Register  Maximise flexibility of existing stock to meet housing need
To achieve top quartile performance in relation to best value performance indicators covering decent homes, repairs appointments, SAP rating and satisfaction with housing services and arrangements for participation	High	Annual	Existing Budgets	RHM	Achieving excellence performance across a range of key performance indicators
To develop an improvement plan for the housing service	High	February 2005	£5,000 HRA via Housing Options Appraisal	RHM	To continually improve the housing service
To update the Action Plan and HRA Business Plan following feedback from tenants, leaseholders and Members via Housing Consultative Forum, Tenants and Residents Conference, satisfaction surveys and Housing Times Newsletter.	High	June 2005 June 2006 June 2007	Existing Budget	HHCC	To provide an annual update to HRA Business Plan

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5 To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable**

**Corporate Objective 1.2 Engage with and ensure our services are easily accessible to all, paying particular attention to ethnic minority groups, people with disabilities and other groups with specific needs**

Task	Priority	Target	Resources	Lead Officer	Outcome
To carry out works to retirement schemes/homelessness hostels in order to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act	High	October 2004	£60,000 Housing Investment Programme 2004/05	RHM	To improve access for disabled persons and ensure compliance with DDA requirements
To maintain an annual programme of adaptations for disabled people	High	Annual	Housing Investment Programme	RHM	Assist elderly and disabled people to live independently in their own home
To hold an annual Residents Conference and Housing Strategy Conference	High	Annual	Existing Budget	Tenant Participation Officer HHCC	To engage with customers and improve their participation in the management of the housing service
To complete and implement a Tenant Empowerment Strategy as part of the Housing Options Appraisal	High	February 2005	HRA	RHM Tenant Participation Officer	To ensure all stakeholders tenants and leaseholders are consulted throughout the Housing Options Appraisal
To implement the action plan within the Tenant Compact	High	March 2005	Existing Budget	Tenant Participation Officer	To enhance tenant participation across the District
Continue to implement the actions arising from the Best Value Review of Social Inclusion	High	July 2005	Housing Revenue Account	RHM	Provide a continuing range of service improvements and make the service more accessible
To support minority ethnic residents groups	High	Annual	Existing budgets	Tenant Participation Officer	To engage with minority ethnic groups
To implement the action plan within the Equalities Scheme for housing	High	2004-06	Existing budget	RHM	To increase the level of accessibility to Housing Services

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5** To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable

**Business Plan Priority Three:- To address issues around anti-social behaviour and make local communities safer places to live and wo Corporate Objective 2.5 Help people feel safe and be safe whilst living in, working in and travelling around the District**

Task	Priority	Target	Resources	Lead Officer	Outcome
To continue with an ongoing programme of door entry systems (investigating alternative programmes to provide tenant security)	High	March 2007	Housing Investment Programme	RHM	To help residents feel safer in their homes
Contribute to the 'Safe' Scheme to install security measures for the elderly and vulnerable	High	Ongoing	Existing budget	RHM	To help vulnerable residents feel safer in their homes
To take a lead role within the Anti-Social Behaviour Group	High	Ongoing	Staff time	HHCC	To ensure a multi-agency approach in addressing anti-social behaviour
To review procedures in light of the recent Anti Social Behaviour Act	High	Ongoing	Staff time	HHCC RHM	To ensure current procedures adopt best practice and recent legislation
To implement the use of professional witnesses	High	Annual	HRA	RHM	Safer Communities

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5 To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable**

**Business plan Priority Four:- To sustain a rolling programme of planned maintenance and improvements so as to maintain the stock in decent condition**

**Corporate Objective 3.4 Maintain the Council's housing stock to keep it in a decent condition**

Task	Priority	Target	Resources	Lead Officer	Outcome
Meet Government's Decent Home Standard by 2010	High	33% compliance by March 2004 100% compliance by March 2010	Housing Investment Programme	RHM	Improvement in the standard of homes to meet the Decent Homes Standard
Develop a database for updating Stock Condition Survey/Monitoring of Decent Homes	High	2004/05	OA budget	RHM	Improve planning of future work/knowledge of housing stock . Working with Comino to implement stock condition module within housing repairs database (Saffron)
Develop a more efficient procurement for capital works	High	Implementation of pvcu partnering contract by June 2004 Implementation of partnering contract for kitchen and bathroom replacements by March 2005	Staff time	RHM	More efficient procurement in delivering capital works
Completion of an Options Appraisal	High	February 2005	OA budget	RHM	To identify the preferred Option for maintaining/ managing the Council's housing stock

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

**Strategic Priority 5 To ensure that the Option Appraisal in relation to the Council's housing stock is completed to timetable**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Improve energy efficiency of the Council's stock via upgrading insulation/central heating systems/replacement pvcu windows	High	Ongoing	Housing Investment Programme	RHM	More homes are energy efficient
Increase proportion of planned over responsive maintenance	High	Annual	Existing budgets	RHM	More effective use of HRA resources

**Corporate Objective 4.4 Support learning opportunities for local people to improve their skills and life chances**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
To promote a programme of learning skills courses and workshops incorporating IT across the District through local residents groups	High	Annual	Staff time	Tenant Participation Officer	To improve skills amongst tenants

**Appendix 6 -Glossary of Terms Used in Business Plan**

ADP	Approved Development Programme
CPA	Comprehensive Performance Assessment
DHS	Decent Homes Standard
Go-East	Government Office for the East of England
HIP	Housing Investment Programme
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
LSVT	Large Scale Voluntary Transfer
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
RTB	Right to Buy
SAP	Standard Assessment Procedure
TPAS	Tenant Participation Advisory Service

**Housing Strategy 0405\businessplan*****Definition of Technical Terms***

Annual Development Programme (ADP)	Yearly allocation of money made by the Housing Corporation to RSLs to fund schemes in partnership with local authorities.
Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO)	A company established by the local authority for the purpose of carrying out the landlord role for Council housing. The Council still retains ownership of the stock.
Asset Management Plan	A plan showing how capital assets will be maintained to meet user needs and the expected resources available for investment.
Capital Programme	Financial provision for the planned repair and improvement of Council housing stock.
Capital Receipts (RTB)	Money paid by the buyers of Council owned homes.
Capital Strategy	This sets the framework within which the Council will award capital investment to ensure the best use of capital resources.

## Rochford District Council Housing Revenue Account - Business Plan 2004

Decent Homes Standard	A requirement set by the Government for all social housing providers to meet specified minimum standards by 2010.
Go-East	The Regional Government Office for East of England covering 48 local authorities.
Housing Association/RSL	A non profit making organisation which provides affordable housing for those who cannot afford to buy a home.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	HRA covers Council income and expenditure on its own housing.
Local Strategic Partnership (LSM)	A group of organisations covering the district responsible for developing the Community Strategy.

### ***Housing Strategy 0405\businessplan***

Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	PFI involves the transfer of maintenance and upgrading works to an organisation who use private funding to carry out the work. The Council still owns the housing stock.
Section 106 Agreements	Agreements between landowners, developers and local authorities e.g. affordable housing, leisure facilities to be included within the development of a site.
Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)	An assessment of the energy efficiency of a home on a Scale 1-100. The higher the rating the more energy efficient the home.



**Appendix 7 - Contact Details**

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Housing Capital Programme & Financing								APPENDIX B	
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate		
	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11		
Cash Incentive	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	525,000	
Decent Homes								-	
Window Replacements	10,000							10,000	
Central Heating - upgrades	-							-	
Provision for Improvements. Doors	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	150,000	150,000	800,000	
Boiler replacements	117,000	117,000	117,000	117,000	117,000	115,000	117,000	817,000	
Electrical upgrades	42,000	42,000	42,000	42,000	42,000	42,000	42,000	294,000	
Bathroom Replacements	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	108,000	100,000	200,000	808,000	
Kitchen Replacements	276,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	1,476,000	
Central Heating	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000	238,000	
Loft Insulation	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	350,000	
Walls	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	56,000	
Roofs	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	8,000	50,000	
<b>Decent Homes Total</b>	<b>744,000</b>	<b>658,000</b>	<b>658,000</b>	<b>658,000</b>	<b>666,000</b>	<b>706,000</b>	<b>809,000</b>	<b>4,899,000</b>	
								-	
<b>Project Work</b>								-	
Roofing Works - Cagefield	-							-	
Rochford Garden Way - area regeneratio	-							-	
Boilers - Sheltered housing	75,000	75,000	75,000					225,000	
Smoke Alarms	-							-	
Conversion of properties	90,000							90,000	
Disabled Adaptations	60,000	65,000	70,000	75,000	80,000	85,000	85,000	520,000	
Hatfield House Improvements	52,000							52,000	
Link Radio Project	-							-	
Sheltered Homes conversion/Decent Hor	-	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	150,000	1,400,000	
Sheltered Homes - Communal works	15,000	16,000	17,000	19,000	19,000			86,000	
Fees to be allocated to schemes	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	700,000	
Door Entry system	-	30,000	10,000					40,000	
Digital Aerials	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	70,000	
Equity share - 30 Woodstock Cres.	-							-	
Rochford Garden Way. Shops conversion	-							-	
Lift Improvements - Highmead	-							-	
Ormond Avenue Provision	9,000							9,000	
Spa Court	-							-	
								-	
<b>Total programme</b>	<b>1,230,000</b>	<b>1,279,000</b>	<b>1,265,000</b>	<b>1,187,000</b>	<b>1,200,000</b>	<b>1,226,000</b>	<b>1,229,000</b>	<b>8,616,000</b>	

**APPENDIX C**

**Housing Capital Programme : Comparison of Provision -v- Actual for last 3 years**

	Revised 2000/01	Actual 2000/01	Variance %	Revised 2001/02	Actual 2001/02	Variance %	Revised 2002/03	Actual 2002/03	Variance %	
Housing Revenue Account										
Cash Incentive	19,100	19,100	-	57,300	19,100	- 0.67	44,000	44,000	-	202,599
Window Replacements	100,000	100,047	0.00	467,600	422,515	- 0.10	120,000	110,875	- 0.08	1,321,036
Central Heating - upgrades	240,000	235,106	- 0.02	147,000	166,168	0.13	-	-		788,274
Fire Prevention Works	75,000	71,678	- 0.04	51,000	46,979	- 0.08	-	-		244,657
CCTV Sheltered	-	-		25,000	16,084	- 0.36	-	-		41,084
Window Replacements - Sheltered	-	-		90,000	64,426	- 0.28	-	-		154,426
Provision for Improvements. Doors	-	92,399	1.00	-	-		75,000	67,983	- 0.09	235,382
Boiler replacements	-	-		80,000	58,603	- 0.27	86,000	89,200	0.04	313,803
Electrical upgrades	-	-		50,000	31,514	- 0.37	50,000	40,937	- 0.18	172,451
Roofing Works - Cagefield	-	-		-	-		-	-		-
Boilers - Sheltered housing	70,000	-	- 1.00	35,000	33,897	- 0.03	105,000	100,275	- 0.05	344,171
Smoke Alarms	-	-		-	-		30,000	29,667	- 0.01	59,667
Conversion of properties	-	-		-	-		40,000	1,370	- 0.97	41,369
Disabled Adaptations	-	-		-	-		50,000	49,981	- 0.00	99,981
Hatfield House Improvements	-	-		-	-		50,000	60,000	0.20	110,000
Link Radio Project	-	-		-	-		25,600	26,377	0.03	51,977
Sheltered Homes conversion	-	-		-	-		150,000	145,873	- 0.03	295,873
Fees to be allocated to schemes	-	-		-	-		100,000	100,000	-	200,000
Equity share - 30 Woodstock Cres.	-	-		20,000	90	- 1.00	20,000	20,000	-	60,089
	<b>504,100</b>	<b>518,329</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>1,022,900</b>	<b>859,376</b>	<b>- 0.16</b>	<b>945,600</b>	<b>886,537</b>	<b>- 0.06</b>	<b>4,736,842</b>
Other Housing										-
LA Social Housing Grant	130,000	130,000		375,000	-	- 1.00	375,000	300,000	- 0.20	1,309,999
Private Sector Renewal Grants	170,000	161,691	- 0.05	90,000	90,000	-	127,000	8,919	- 0.93	647,609
Disabled Grants	50,000	119,950	1.40	80,000	112,811	0.41	140,000	114,438	- 0.18	617,200
	<b>350,000</b>	<b>411,641</b>	<b>0.18</b>	<b>545,000</b>	<b>202,811</b>	<b>- 0.63</b>	<b>642,000</b>	<b>423,357</b>	<b>- 0.34</b>	<b>2,574,808</b>