

	<u>Improvement Required</u>	<u>Importance</u>	<u>Actions to be taken</u>	<u>Target for Completion</u>	<u>Progress/Comments</u>
1.	Provide a More Focussed Service				
	(a) Review corporate objectives and document strategy	High	Review relevant existing minutes Review existing Corporate Plan where it impacts on homelessness/housing advice Document homelessness strategy	Sept. 2001 Nov. 2001 Dependent on Homes Bill and guidance	
	(b) Document policies and procedures/guidelines	High	Analyse key activities and identify areas requiring written policies and procedures Document existing custom and practice Internal/external liaison to reach agreement Document relevant policies and procedures	Sept. 2001 Nov. 2001 Dec. 2001 Feb 2002	

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2.	(a) Improve Customer Awareness of Service				
	(a) Ensure adequate publicity for homelessness and advice services	Medium	Produce advice leaflet on homelessness and distribute	Oct. 2001	
3.	Develop a More Customer Focused Approach				
	(a) Evaluate customer satisfaction	Medium	Design feedback questionnaire Implement Record and analyse feedback	June 2001 June 2001 Ongoing	Form designed as part of review process Ongoing survey of all service recipients
	(b) Record and analyse all complaints about the service	Medium	Implement new corporate complaints procedure following trials	Dec 2001	

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4.	Provide a More “Joined Up” Service				
(a)	Establish protocols for liaison with other agencies for identifying and dealing with homelessness, improve linkages to provide a more seamless service	High	Identify agencies/organisations where a protocol would improve service Agree and document working arrangements and protocols	Sept. 2001 First protocol to be agreed and documented by Dec. 2001	
(b)	Develop more formal working arrangements with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)	Medium	Discuss with RSLs whether they can assist in providing accommodation for homeless persons	Hold discussions with two RSLs by Sept. 2001	Working arrangements with RSLs also being considered by Housing Strategy Best Value Review
(c)	Develop working arrangements with neighbouring Authorities	Medium	Investigate how far cross-border working arrangements and joint service provision can be improved	June 2001 And Ongoing	Some discussions have taken place during review process and in the Housing Strategy Review and Forum

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	(d) Maximise opportunities for joint work with other Council Departments	Medium	Introduce Service Level Agreement for client/contractor split Joint agreement on revised pointing scheme and allocations policy Develop protocol with Housing Benefits	Oct. 2001 Dependent on staffing in Revenues & Housing Mngt Division March 2002	Head of Revenues and Housing Management is Lead Officer
5.	Provide a More Consistent Service				
	(a) Ensure homelessness policy and practice complies with the Council's equal opportunities policies	Medium	Research good practice among other Local Authorities Consult with Race Equality Council Introduce monitoring of homelessness/advice work and periodic review of results	To be determined	Dependent on establishment of full Homelessness and Housing Advice Team
	(b) Introduce procedures to help ensure consistency in decision making	High	Introduce meetings to discuss cases/decisions	Ongoing	Much ad-hoc discussion takes Place

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			Review decisions to be discussed with homelessness staff. Provide staff and Member training	June 2001 June 2001 and ongoing	Feedback is being provided Member training provided June 2001. Further training to be organised for June 2002.
6.	Improve Quality of Service				
	(a) Ensure homelessness/advice service support corporate aims and community plan, including (i) Equality issues (ii) Social inclusion (iii) Community safety (iv) Quality objectives	High	Review policies to ensure compatibility with corporate aims	Nov. 2001	See also (1(a)) Links with community plan dependant on development of that plan
	(b) Improve quality of interim/temporary accommodation	High	Develop and implement improvements to Hatfield House Hostel	Jan 2002	
	(c) Develop strategy/options to minimise the use of bed	High	Discuss with Registered Social Landlords whether they can	Hold discussions	Linked with 4(b)

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	and breakfast accommodation		assist in providing accommodation for homeless persons Review allocations policy to ensure homeless people receive appropriate priority for permanent accommodation Increased use of Hatfield House Hostel for interim accommodation and of 125 High Road (pending decision on its future)	with two RSLs by Sept. 2001 Dependent on appointment of Housing Manager (Special Projects) Ongoing	See 4(d)
(d)	Improve monitoring of persons in interim and temporary accommodation	Medium	Introduce systems to ensure review of cases before expiry or 2 year duty Investigate ways of better monitoring of usage of interim accommodation	Oct. 2001 Dependent on staffing	
(e)	Improve interview facilities	Medium	Arrange, where appropriate, for home interviews I	Ongoing	To some extent, dependent on staffing as two staff may be needed for safety

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			Improve interview facilities at Rochford and Rayleigh offices	To be determined	reasons Referred to pilot review of reception facilities
(f)	Improve facilities for the protection of property	High	Investigate options for storage and select most appropriate action	Oct. 2001	May require committee report, dependent on costs
(g)	Reduce time taken to decide applications	High	Identify resources implications to meet upper quartile performance Report to Committee Appoint and train staff if approved by Committee	June 2001 July 2001 Nov 2001	Completed Finance & General Purposes, July 2001
		High	Reconsider Officer arrangements for investigating homelessness reviews	Dec 01	Dependent on Committee decision about revised establishment of Homelessness and Housing Advice Team
7.	Improve Delivery of Service				

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	(a) Develop realistic, challenging local performance indicators (PIs)	Low	Obtain information from other Local Authorities, evaluate and determine PIs to be used Put in place appropriate collection and reporting processes	Feb 2002 March 2002	
	(b) Provide better comparative information on performance	Low	Identify Local Authority group for comparison Agree performance indicators Establish information sharing and reporting processes	Feb 2002 Feb 2002 March 2002	
8.	More Cost-Effective Services				
	(a) Develop procurement strategy for temporary/interim accommodation that ensures cost effectiveness	Medium	Discuss with Revenues and Housing Management Division to agree future allocation of temporary accommodation Discuss with appropriate Registered Social Landlords	Oct. 2001 Hold discussions with two RSLs by Sept. 2001	See 4(b)

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			Consider tendering for bed and breakfast accommodation and tender if considered feasible	March 2002	
	(b) Develop procurement strategy for removals which ensures cost effectiveness	Low	Invite tenders for provision of removal service	June 2002	
	(c) Implement suitable information management software	Low	Research available systems and implement most suitable option	2005/06	Timetable is dependent on IS/IT strategy
9.	Increase Availability of Accommodation				
	(a) Improve range of temporary/interim accommodation available	High	Investigate assistance from Registered Social Landlords Investigate availability of private sector accommodation Review rent & deposit	Hold discussions with two RSLs by Sept. 2001 Hold discussions with two letting agents by March 2002 March 2002	See 4(b)

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			guarantee scheme Work with Rochford PCG and other organisations to investigate the use of part of Albert Jones Court as homeless persons' accommodation Consider use of capital programme/receipts to procure additional accommodation	To be determined July 2001	PCG leading on this project. Initial discussions have been held
(b)	Improve research into availability of good quality temporary and permanent accommodation	Medium	Hold private landlords' forum meetings Regular meetings with development partner. Registered Social Landlords	Ongoing Ongoing	Meeting held March 2001. Next meeting anticipated Oct. 2001 Meetings have been held with 3 RSLs during June 2001. Next anticipated meeting Sept. 2001
(c)	Encourage new markets, particularly private rented sector	High	Hold discussions with Letting Agents about buy-to-rent in Rochford	March 2002	Housing Strategy Best Value Review is also considering these issues

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			Review rent and deposit guarantee scheme Encourage availability of accommodation for lodgers	March 2002 July 2002	Linked with 9(a) Dependent on staffing resources Residential Services Unit
			Development and implementation of empty homes strategy	July 2002	As above
	(d) Improve knowledge and understanding of private rented sector	Medium	Discuss local housing market with estate agents/letting agents, through private landlord forum	Ongoing	See 9(b)
	(e) Allocations policy to give appropriate preference to applicants who have been homeless	High	Review pointing system and allocation policy	To be determined	Head of Revenue and Housing Management is Lead Officer – this task dependent on appointment of Housing Manager (Special Projects) Linked with 4(b)
10.	(a) Improve understanding of	Medium	Review data collection	Dependent on	

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	demographic changes in the planning of the service provision		methods and improve analysis of trends Liaison with other Essex Local Authorities	staffing Ongoing	Essex Housing Officers' Group and Essex Homeless Officers Group
(b)	Investigate whether there is a "rough sleepers" problem	Low	Clarify definition of rough sleeper Establish best practice methodology Survey, liaising with other agencies	May 2002 May 2002 July 2002	Dependent on staffing resource within Homelessness and Housing Advice Unit
(c)	Adequately prepare for legislative changes	High	Monitor Government announcements and consider implications Liaison with other Essex Local Authorities Committee reports as necessary	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	See 10(a)

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