

APPENDIX

HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Ref	Corporate Aims/Objectives	Strategy Aims/Objectives	Action Required	Resources	Target for Completion	Desired Outcome
1	To develop alternatives to the use of bed and breakfast for homeless people.	To provide a customer focussed approach and meet Government targets.	Options for provision of alternative accommodation explored with private sector landlords and RSL's. Costed options reported to Members for decision.	Within existing staff resources. May require budget provision for 2004/5.	September 2003 November 2003	Alternative accommodation secured so that: (i) Corporate/BVPP objective is met. (ii) Government target is met.
2	To improve the quality of life of people in the district. To work towards a safer, more caring community.	To meet Government targets by establishing the true extent of rough sleeping in the district.	Liaison with the Police and voluntary agencies to agree best way of assessing the number of rough sleepers. Rough sleepers count carried out Policy for reducing the number of rough sleepers developed as necessary	Within existing staff resources. Within existing staff resources. Within existing staff resources.	March 2004 May 2004 July 2004	Extent of rough sleeping in district established and policy for reduction to meet Government target agreed
3	To provide quality cost-effective services.	To prevent homelessness arising or recurring by providing housing advice services in the most cost-effective way	Options for provision of housing advice services reviewed External agencies invited to tender for provision of housing advice services Outcomes evaluated and reported to Members for decision on way forward	Within existing staff resources. Within existing staff resources. May require budget provision for 2005/6	March 2004 June 2004 September 2004	Decision made on most appropriate way for Council to provide housing advice services.

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4	To improve the quality of life of people in the district. To work towards a safer more caring community.	To provide customer focused services by consulting more widely with service users.	Decision on most appropriate stages and methods of consultation Necessary documentation produced Consultation commenced Results summarised and reported	Within existing staff resources. Within existing staff resources. Within existing staff resources Within existing staff resources	October 2003 December 2003 April 2004 June 2004 and ongoing	Consultation process established. Results analysed and responses taken into account in developing homelessness services.
5	To improve the quality of life of people in the district. To work towards a safer more caring community.	To prevent homelessness arising or recurring by improving the availability of private rented housing.	Discussion with private landlords on schemes needed. Costed options reported to Members for decision. Implement scheme. Evaluate scheme	Within existing staff resources. May require budget provision for 2004/5.	September 2003 November 2003 April 2004 October 2004	Schemes agreed with Private Sector Landlords. Schemes implemented and evaluated.
6	To improve the quality of life of people in the district. To work towards a safer more caring community.	To prevent homelessness arising or recurring by: (i) increasing the number of vacancies in social housing. (ii) increasing the percentage of lettings to homeless people.	To consider extending the cash incentive scheme and transfer incentive scheme. Costed options reported to Members for decision Review of allocation policy and monitoring effect	May require budget provision for 2004/5 Within existing staff resources	October 2003 November 2003 September 2003 and subsequently as necessary	Extended cash incentive and transfer incentive schemes in place resulting in increased number of vacancies Revised allocation scheme agreed

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7	To improve the quality of life of people in the district. To work towards a safer more caring community.	To provide a customer focussed approach and meet Government requirements people by improving the standard of the Council's hostel.	Assessment of existing accommodation in relation to Government guidance Costed schedule of improvements prepared and reported to Members Programme of works implemented	Within existing staff resources May require budget provision for 2004/5	October 2003 November 2003 September 2004	Hostel meets standards required by Government
8	To improve the quality of life of people in the district. To work towards a safer more caring community.	To provide a customer focussed approach by improving the fixtures and fittings in temporary accommodation.	Assessment of improvements required Cost of improvements reported to Members. Programme of works implemented	Within existing staff resources May require budget provision for 2005/6	June 2004 September 2004 July 2005	Standard of fixtures and fittings in temporary accommodation improved.
9	To provide quality cost-effective services	To provide a customer focussed approach by improving the process for reviewing adverse homelessness decisions.	Options for change reported to Members for discussion	Within existing staff resources	December 2003	Process revised so that homelessness reviews are completed more speedily
10	To provide quality cost-effective services and to work towards a safer more caring community.	To provide a customer focussed approach and prevent homelessness arising or recurring by ensuring that protocols are agreed with all key service providers.	Further development and modification of existing protocols Additional protocols agreed as required	Within existing staff resources Within existing resources.	October 2004 October 2004	Written protocols agreed with all key service providers

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11	To provide quality cost-effective services	To provide a customer focussed approach by improving the interview facilities at Rochford Offices and Rayleigh Civic Suite.	Costed options currently being considered.	Budget provision likely to be required	October 2004	Improved reception facilities provided at Rochford Offices and Rayleigh Civic Suite
12	To work towards a safer, more caring community. To improve the quality of life of people in the district.	To provide a customer focussed approach and prevent homelessness arising or recurring by extending the floating support schemes.	Discussions with floating support providers regarding options for additional schemes. Options evaluated. Bid to Essex County Council for Supporting People funding.	Within existing staff resources Within existing staff resources Supporting People funding	September 2004 October 2004 November 2004	Additional floating support services provided
13	To provide quality cost-effective services	To provide a customer focussed approach and comply with legal requirements by improving the provision for removal and storage of homeless applicants' possessions	Invite tenders from contractors for the provision of services and facilities Tenders evaluated and costed options reported to Members for decision.	Within existing staff resources May require additional budget provision for 2005/6	June 2004 September 2004	Satisfactory cost effective services provided for the removal and storage of homeless applicants' possessions
14	To provide quality cost-effective services. To work towards a safer more caring community.	To provide a customer focused approach by monitoring people housed in temporary accommodation.	Liaison with accommodation providers. Review procedures and assess resource requirements Report to Members as necessary	Within existing staff resources Within existing staff resources May require budget provision for 2005/6	February 2004 April 2004 June 2004	Procedures established for regular monitoring of people in temporary accommodation

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15	To provide quality cost-effective services	To provide a customer focussed approach by providing an out of hours homelessness service	Costed options for ensuring response to homelessness out of normal office hours reported to Members	Will require budget provision for 2005/6	October 2004	Service provided to ensure response to homelessness out of normal office hours
16	To improve the quality of life of people of the district	To provide a customer focussed approach by ensuring that health services fully engage with homelessness	Review current arrangements and identify any weakness Produce improvement plan for PCT/health service providers Implement plan	Within existing staff resources Within existing staff resources	April 2005 June 2005 November 2005	Health services fully engage with homelessness
17	To provide quality cost-effective services. To improve the quality of life of people in the district.	To prevent homelessness arising or recurring and to meet Government targets by improving the scope of the homelessness review and modifying the homelessness strategy accordingly	Identify areas of weakness. Liaise with agencies and service providers Identify resources required to achieve improvement and report to Members Further review carried out Homelessness Strategy modified	Within existing staff resources Will require budget provision for 2006/7	September 2005 November 2005 March 2006 July 2006	Comprehensive review of homelessness in Rochford District completed Homelessness Strategy modified accordingly
18	To provide quality cost-effective services	To prevent homelessness arising or recurring and to meet Government targets by improving the quality of data available on homelessness needs	Review method of data gathering by all agencies and service providers Agree proposals for future data gathering and analysis Proposals implemented	Within existing staff resources Within existing staff resources Within existing resources	July 2004 October 2004 March 2005	Systems for data gathering and analysis agreed and implemented across all relevant agencies and services providers

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19	To increase the proportion of homelessness applications on which the authority makes a written decision within 33 days	To provide a customer focussed approach by ensuring decisions are made as quickly as possible	To continue reviewing procedures and practices with the homelessness and housing advice unit	Within existing staff resources	April 2004 and subsequently	Corporate/BVPP target is met.
20	To provide quality cost-effective services	To prevent homelessness arising or recurring by supporting couple and family relationships	To develop initiatives with partner agencies To assess the need for engaging specialist mediation and counselling services, evaluate costs and report to Members.	Within existing staff resources May require budget provision for 2005/6	April 2004 August 2004	Services in place to support relationships. Reduction in number of cases of homelessness caused by relationship breakdown.