



## Public Document Pack

**Jeff Hughes**  
*Head of Democratic and Legal  
Support Services*

**MEETING** : COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
**VENUE** : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD  
**DATE** : TUESDAY 24 SEPTEMBER, 2013  
**TIME** : 7.00 PM

**PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE**

### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Councillor Mrs D Hollebon (Chairman)  
Councillors R Beeching, S Bull, Mrs D Hone, J Jones, J Mayes, P Moore  
(Vice-Chairman), N Symonds, M Wood and C Woodward

Conservative Group Substitutes: Councillors T Herbert and C Rowley  
Liberal Democrat Group Substitutes: Councillor J Wing  
Independent Group Substitute:

*(Note: Substitution arrangements must be notified by the absent Member to Democratic Services 24 hours before the meeting)*

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Lorraine Blackburn  
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## DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
  - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
  - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
  - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
  - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
  - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.

4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

## AGENDA

1. Police Crime Commissioner - Guest Presentation (Pages 7 - 14)

2. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence

3. Minutes (Pages 15 - 26)

To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2013

4. Chairman's Announcements

5. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Member's Declaration of Interest and Party Whip arrangements.

6. Health and Wellbeing Panel (Pages 27 - 32)

To receive:-

(A) the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2013 and

(B) a verbal update from the Health and Wellbeing Panel Chairman

7. Community Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 33 - 38)

8. Hertford Theatre End of Financial Year Report (Pages 39 - 58)

9. Annual Performance Report of South Anglia and Riversmead Housing Associations (Pages 59 - 64)

10. East Herts Homeless Strategy 2013-2018 (Pages 65 - 90)

11. Community Scrutiny Corporate Healthcheck May to July 2013 (Pages 91 - 108)

12. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF COMMUNITY SCRUTINY

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER VISIT

WARD(S) AFFECTED:

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## **Purpose/Summary of Report**

- An opportunity to meet the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and discuss the Police and Crime Plan for Hertfordshire, the implementation of these plans locally and examine ways of working together in the future to get the best outcomes for residents in East Herts.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION:</u></b>

### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 This visit has been arranged in response to the Committee's request to meet the PCC.

### 2.0 Report

- 2.1 All members of the committee have been sent a paper copy of Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Plan 'Everyone's Business'
- 2.2 A copy can also be found on the PCC website at [http://www.hertscommissioner.org/my\\_plan/my\\_police\\_and\\_crime\\_plan.aspx](http://www.hertscommissioner.org/my_plan/my_police_and_crime_plan.aspx)
- 2.3 The Plan has three main, strategic themes:

- The **public focus** theme is about greater customer care across the criminal justice system, about greater support for victims of crime and about more active citizens.
- The **offender pays** theme is about making offenders pay for the costs they create as well as setting up paid rehabilitation schemes. And it is about a concerted attack on criminal assets to recover the proceeds of crime.
- The **business sense** theme is about working more closely with local businesses, about efficiency and about taking a more business-like approach to Constabulary and partnership use of resources and assets.

2.4 In consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, a number of questions have been prepared and sent to the PCC in advance to indicate the key areas of interest to members and this council. These questions are included here as **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

2.5 Members are reminded that the PCC role is very distinct from that of the Chief Constable. The public accountability for the delivery and performance of the police service is placed in the hands of the PCC on behalf of their electorate. The Chief Constable has direction and control over the force's officers and staff. The Chief Constable is accountable to the law for the exercise of police powers, and to the PCC for the delivery of efficient and effective policing, management of resources and expenditure by the police force.

2.6 Members are asked to focus their discussions on areas of responsibility held by the PCC and avoid operational issues and raising specific cases which might be under investigation.

2.7 Members are invited to pass any comments or concerns to the Executive Member for community safety and environment for consideration and further discussion.

### 3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.



## Background Papers

None

Contact Member: Cllr Diane Hollebon – Chairman Community  
Scrutiny Committee  
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## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

### IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives</p> <p><i>(updated to 2013/14 wording)</i></p>	<p><b>People</b> This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services</p> <p><b>Place</b> This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p><b>Prosperity</b> This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p> <p>Effective use of the scrutiny process contributes to the Council's ability to meet one or more of its corporate objectives:</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>PCC briefing prepared with Scrutiny Chairmen and Head of Service. Sent to Executive Member and Chief Executive before sending to PCC.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>none</p>

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**Community Scrutiny Committee 24 Sept 2013**

7:00pm start in Council Chamber, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

There are a few issues which Members would like to focus on during your visit to the Committee. You are invited to open the session with your introductory response to the points below, which can then open up to a wider discussion with Members.

- What are the key principles underpinning your Policing Plan for Hertfordshire – with particular reference to the balance between crime prevention vs solving crime? We have some concerns, for example, you only mention the word ‘prevention’ three times in the entire 44 pages of the document *‘Everybody’s Business – The Police and Crime Plan for Hertfordshire 2013-2018’*.
- We recognise the reality of limited funding and the need to target spending on areas of high reported crime but, with the ‘Broken Windows’ theory in mind, what commitment is there for invest-to-save preventative work in East Herts to avoid crime and neglect developing and undoing previous good work?
- Thinking about reducing/keeping crime low in East Herts, what investment is being made in:
  - ‘new’ technology for crime and disorder
  - Drug and alcohol intervention/treatment
  - Thriving (troubled) families
- What partnership opportunities do you see ahead for cost savings and better joined-up working between agencies?
- East Herts greatly values its PCSOs and we continue to contribute towards the costs. What assurances can you give Members regarding your support for future funding being available for PCSOs and continuation of the ‘BOGOF’ arrangements which currently exist?

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY  
25 JUNE 2013, AT 7.00 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor Mrs D Hollebon (Chairman).  
Councillors R Beeching, S Bull, Mrs D Hone,  
J Jones, J Mayes, P Moore, C Rowley,  
N Symonds and M Wood.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors M Alexander, P Ruffles and  
S Rutland-Barsby.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Claire Pullen	- Engagement and Partnerships Officer (Grants)
Mekhola Ray	- Community Projects Team Manager
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Brian Simmonds	- Head of Community Safety and Health Services

77 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor N Symonds and seconded by  
Councillor S Bull that Councillor P Moore be appointed as  
Vice-Chairman for the 2013/14 Civic Year.

RESOLVED – that Councillor P Moore be appointed Vice–Chairman for the 2013/14 Civic Year.

78 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor C Woodward. It was noted that Councillor C Rowley was in attendance as substitute for Councillor C Woodward.

79 MINUTES – 12 MARCH 2013

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

80 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Members and Officers and welcomed Councillor J Jones to his first meeting of Community Scrutiny Committee.

81 DISCUSSION WITH PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT ON ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN RESPECT OF ADDITIONALLY FUNDED PCSOS

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment initiated a discussion on the issues, challenges and opportunities in respect of additionally funded Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in East Herts.

He stated that the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner had not indicated any intention to not continue funding PCSOs. He commented that it would be prudent to examine the future of PCSOs in East Herts.

Members were reminded of the service level agreement whereby East Herts was funding 3 PCSOs at a cost of



£28,625 each. Although PCSOs had no powers of arrest, they continued to undertake very valuable work across East Herts, particularly in Ware Trinity and Hertford Sele wards.

Members were advised that consideration had to be given to whether PCSOs should continue to be managed by the police and also whether PCSOs should be given the same powers as Special Constables.

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment concluded that PCSOs were a highly visible and highly valued resource that was vital in intelligence gathering and reducing the fear of crime in East Herts.

Councillor S Bull stated that he would not be supportive of the connection between the police and PCSOs being lost. The continued attachment to the police gave PCSOs crucial support in the work they carried out in East Herts.

Councillor R Beeching stated that PCSOs were extremely important and had a very high profile in terms of reducing the fear of crime in East Herts. He expressed concerns that no reference had been made to PCSOs in the 2013 – 2018 Police and Crime Plan for Hertfordshire.

In response to a query from Councillor Beeching, the Head of Community Safety and Health Services advised that Special PCSOs operated in the same manner as Special Constables, i.e. working on a voluntary unpaid basis.

In response to a query from Councillor P Moore, Members were advised that when a PCSO progressed onto being a police officer, it was up to the local police commander as to whether the PCSO vacancy was filled. Any replacement would have to come from an existing PCSO being transferred in, as there were no new recruits being taken on by Hertfordshire Constabulary at this time. Members were also advised that, where a dedicated schools' PCSO had been withdrawn, the workload was passed onto a Neighbourhood Team PCSO.

Councillor N Symonds stated that PCSOs in Bishop's Stortford Central ward were invaluable and worked very hard in a variety of highly valuable activities, such as preventing more serious problems escalating from what were relatively minor issues.

Members asked the Head of Community Safety and Health Services a number of detailed queries regarding East Herts PCSOs. The Committee was assured that a full and detailed written response to all of the queries would be sent to Members after the meeting.

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment stated that the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner was very supportive of volunteers backing up the regular police. Members were reminded that PCSOs were not volunteers and were recruited to work on a full time basis within set hours.

Councillor J Mayes stated that it was imperative that Members were made aware of how many PCSOs were available in East Herts and also the range of organisations which were responsible for funding the East Herts PCSOs.

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment thanked Members for their views and feedback. He stated that he would feedback to the Police and Crime Commissioner just how highly East Herts valued PCSOs and the Authority would continue to explore options for supporting PCSO provision. The Chairman thanked the Community Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Member for a very useful debate.

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments of Community Scrutiny Committee be noted;

(B) the Head of Community Safety and Health Services formally write to Hertfordshire Constabulary to seek answers to a number of queries from Community Scrutiny Committee

regarding PCSO provision in East Herts; and

(C) an update in respect of PCSOs be submitted to Community Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting.

## 82 WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

The Scrutiny Officer submitted a report outlining the future work programme for the Community Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Officer referred to the work programme being considered early on the agenda in line with the new approach being adopted by all three Scrutiny Committees.

The Committee was invited to approve two Members to contribute to a working group to work with Officers in reviewing the performance indicators relevant to Community Scrutiny Committee.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services reminded Members that all of the Scrutiny Committees had been challenged by the Executive to think more proactively in respect of what was included on the Scrutiny Work Programmes.

The Scrutiny Officer referred to a recent Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) briefing in respect of anti social behaviour and environmental crime. Members were advised that this might be the subject for a future task and finish group, as any changes to the law would require the Authority to fully review its policies relating to these matters.

The Chairman stated that the issue of farmers/general market provision would be initially considered by Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee as part of a wider consideration on economic development, so she thought it best to not initiate a separate report to Community Scrutiny at this time.

Members had a lengthy discussion in respect of the

invitation that had been extended to the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner to attend a meeting of Community Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor N Symonds strongly welcomed the inclusion of this visit on the work programme. This was supported and Members requested that an invite be extended to the Commissioner for the September 2013 meeting with the November 2013 meeting as a fall back option.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services urged Members not to be daunted by the number of items on the work programme. He further suggested that 3 dates could be suggested to the Commissioner with a degree of flexibility being introduced to the work programme to facilitate his visit. Members supported the necessary flexibility in respect of the work programme to accommodate this visit.

Members also agreed that Councillors J Mayes and N Symonds should join the working group to assist the Performance Team in examining whether the performance indicators for Community Scrutiny Committee remained useful and relevant.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the findings of the Performance Indicator working group would be reported to all three Scrutiny Committees in November 2013 and a final report would be submitted to a joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees in 2014.

Members received the report and supported the amendments now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the work programme as amended, be agreed, subject to further amendments as necessary to facilitate the visit by the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner;

(B) three dates be offered as part of an invite to be extended to the Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, to include the September and

November 2013 meetings of the Committee; and

(C) Councillors J Mayes and N Symonds join the working group to assist the Performance Team in examining whether the performance indicators for Community Scrutiny Committee were useful and relevant.

### 83 UPDATE ON COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMME

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support submitted a report that reviewed the grant allocations for the period 1/10/12 to 31/3/13. Members were advised of a number of minor changes in wording in respect of the recommendations.

The Engagement and Partnerships Officer (Grants) advised that community grants supported the aims of the Authority in respect of people, place and prosperity. Members were advised that, in respect of the Council's competitive grants programme, the total allocation for the 2012/13 financial year was £135,269, which had been distributed to 193 groups for a wide range of projects and services.

Members were advised that community grants were generally not awarded where an organisation intended to pass on a grant to another organisation. A strict adherence to this policy meant that, in future, certain applicants (e.g. service organisations) would be ineligible to apply for the new Small Community Grants, thereby unintentionally discouraging an important voluntary effort.

The Engagement and Partnerships Officer (Grants) also pointed out that, in practice, the Authority was more likely to fund projects where the Council's grant completed or almost completed an applicant's fundraising target. Officers considered this approach was necessary to avoid grant money being tied up unused just waiting for projects that took a long time to complete due to the significant amount of money still to be raised.

Members were further advised that Officers considered that organisations should now be advised to apply later in their fundraising process.

In respect of a query from Councillor R Beeching, Members were advised that the total community capital budget for 2012/13 had been £198,600. Members were reminded that this figure included slippage from previous years' budgets.

Councillor S Bull referred to paragraph 2.19 of the report now submitted. He stated that some of the awards made to Councillors were for public meetings or events that could have been funded by Town or Parish Councils.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services summarised the kind of projects that the Community Grants Programme had been set up to support. A number of Members commented that they valued the Community Grants fund.

The Chairman stated that Members very much valued the work carried out by the Council's Officers responsible for community grants. The Committee received the report and supported the amended recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the progress being made by Officers when allocating grants according to agreed policies be noted;

(B) Community Scrutiny Committee agrees to the proposal that service organisations continue to be eligible to apply for a Christmas Party grant as long as they, if reasonably possibly, apply in partnership with the beneficiary organisation;

(C) Community Scrutiny Committee confirms that grants continue to be awarded as a priority to capital projects that can be completed within the year; and

(D) Community Scrutiny Committee confirms that the Hertfordshire Community Foundation should present information on “dormant funds” in East Herts.

84 SERVICE PLAN MONITORING (OCTOBER 2012 – MARCH 2013)

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The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services submitted a report that formed part of the Council’s performance management framework. The report summarised the Council’s achievements against its priorities for 2012/13 and also monitored the outstanding 20 service plan actions from 2011/12.

Members were referred to paragraph 2.1 of the report for an analysis of the 45 actions contained within the 2012/13 service plans. The Chief Executive stated that Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ gave Members an idea of what the service plan actions had delivered for East Herts residents. Essential Reference Paper ‘Ci’ contained information regarding which service plan actions were on target and also where completion dates had been revised.

The Chairman congratulated Officers on the performance in respect of the 2012/13 service plan actions. The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the progress against the Council’s priorities and the status of the 2012/13 Service Plan actions and the 20 outstanding 2011/12 Service Plan actions be received.

85 COMMUNITY SCRUTINY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK (JANUARY – MARCH 2013) AND PERFORMANCE OUTTURNS

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The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services submitted a report on the performance of key indications relating to Community Scrutiny Committee for the period January to March 2013 and the performance outturns for 2012/13.

The Chief Executive apologised to Members for the missing data on page 85 in respect of East Herts Performance Indicator (EHPI) 181 – time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events. This was due to a data quality issue that had been picked up late in the 2012/13 civic year, which showed a mis-match in reporting periods. This had now been corrected.

In response to a query from Councillor M Wood in respect of EHPI 64, in respect of the 10 dwellings that had been brought back into use where 3 had been empty for more than 10 years, the Chief Executive undertook to provide a written response after the meeting in terms of whether these dwellings were privately owned or were owned by a Housing Association.

In respect of EHPI 154, Councillor R Beeching commended the estimated net additional provision of 440 homes in East Herts in 2013/14. The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the performance in respect of key indicators relevant to Community Scrutiny Committee for the period January to March 2013 be received; and

(B) performance outturns for 2012/13, as detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'C' of the report now submitted, be received.

## 86 HEALTH AND WELLBEING PANEL REPORT

Councillor N Symonds, as Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Panel, provided a verbal update in respect of the recent work of the Panel. The Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Panel held on 4 February 2013 were also submitted for information. These were noted by the Committee.

Councillor Symonds advised that Jim McManus, Director



of Public Health, Nicky Williams, GP for Hertford and a representative from East and North Herts NHS Trust had all attended the meeting on 4 February 2013. Members were advised that a special meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Panel was being arranged to determine the direction of the Panel for the 2013/14 Civic Year.

Councillor Symonds stated that she would be attending a meeting of the Hertfordshire Health Scrutiny Committee in the next few days. The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services advised that Jim McManus had been very complimentary in respect of the work of the Health and Wellbeing Panel in maintaining lines of communication in East Herts.

The Chairman thanked Councillor N Symonds for updating Members of Community Scrutiny Committee. The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be received; and  
(B) the Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 4 February 2013, be noted.

The meeting closed at 9.04 pm

Chairman .....
Date .....

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HEALTH AND WELLBEING PANEL HELD  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY  
18 JUNE 2013, AT 7.00 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor N Symonds (Chairman)  
Councillors P Ballam, R Beeching, S Bull,  
E Buckmaster and P Moore.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors L Haysey, Mrs D Hollebon and  
S Rutland-Barsby.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Barfoot	- Environmental Health Promotion Officer
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
Paul Thomas	- Environmental Health Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr David Brewer	- Head of Engagement, East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust
Mr Jim McManus	- Director of Public Health, Hertfordshire County Council
Dr Nicky Williams	- Deputy chair, East and North Herts Clinical

## Commissioning Group

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor P Moore and seconded by Councillor S Bull, that Councillor E Buckmaster be appointed Vice Chairman for the 2013/14 Civic Year.

RESOLVED – that Councillor E Buckmaster be appointed Vice Chairman for the 2013/14 Civic Year.

2 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was later received from Marc Davis, Director of Development (The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust).

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Members, Panel guests and Students from the University of Hertfordshire to the meeting.

5 YEAR END REVIEW OF PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2012 – 2013

The Environmental Health Promotion Officer gave a presentation summarising what had been achieved locally from a public health viewpoint via a number of health promotion initiatives. He summarised the Council's partnership role and its projected future focus. Local demographics provided a profile of residents' health and a focus for the future.

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support referred to "time banking" and the need to expand on

the possibilities.

In response to a query from Councillor R Beeching, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer referred to the difficulties in obtaining feedback from schools. Councillor R Beeching suggested that an approach to School Governors might prove more successful. He referred to the difficulties in securing school nurses and the important roles they played. Mr Jim McManus, the Director of Public Health gave an update on this issue.

In response to a query from Councillor P Ballam, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer explained the various sources of data used in preparing reports. In response to a query from Councillor S Bull, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer explained Circle Anglia's role in helping residents attend a recent cooking project event, "Meet and Eat". In response to a query from Councillor P Moore regarding the Sele Children's Centre, the Environmental Health Promotion Officer explained that there was a good link with them and other East Herts Children's Centres. A recent project merited positive feedback from the Centre and further work with the Centre would be explored.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services asked how else the Council could help in furthering health initiatives. Mr McManus stated that what the Council was currently doing health-wise was an excellent model, adding that partnership working was the key to success.

The Panel confirmed and endorsed the East Herts Public Health Strategy Action Plan 2012/13 and was pleased with the progress made.

RESOLVED – that the East Herts Public Health Strategy Action Plan 2012/13 be endorsed.

6 HCC HEALTH SCRUTINY - FEEDBACK FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman provided an update in relation to Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee. It was noted that the Ambulance Service was taking on more paramedics and there were concerns relating to insufficient ambulances. The Chairman further advised that Mark Jordan was reviewing rural deprivation and the health and wellbeing of elderly people. It was noted that Hertfordshire was seeing an increase in the number of sexually transmitted diseases.

Councillor E Buckmaster provided an update following a tour of the Princess Alexandra Hospital on 20 March 2013. Of particular concern, was the hospital's need to find £17million in savings in order to achieve trust status.

Councillor P Ballam referred to the need for planning officers to liaise with hospitals when large developments for an area were proposed.

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support provided an update on the "Ageing Well Conference". She was pleased to report that transportation to hospitals had been considered and explained what new service provision had been agreed by the various bus operators and that this had been helped by providing evidentiary data.

Members received the update.

RESOLVED – that the update be received.

## 7 ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION WITH HEALTH AND PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERS

The Chairman thanked guest speakers, Dr Nicky Willaims, David Brewer and Jim McManus for attending. The Chairman referred to a number of questions which had been circulated earlier to panel guests which set out Members concerns:

- What does Public Health mean to you and how is this demonstrated in the organisation you work for?
- Bering in mind the majority of Clinical Commission

Group (CCG) budgets are spent on acute care, of the remaining spend priorities, what proportion of these funds would you say are directly spent on public health prevention measures?

- In view of the spend on other priorities, which is the smallest amount for both CCGs, what scope is there for targeting this at preventative interventions such as obesity with local partners like East Herts?
- What aspects of your Acute Trust work would you define as preventative as opposed to reactive secondary care?
- How do you see your role in championing Public Health prevention and practice influencing CCG and Acute Trust priorities?
- With the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Hertfordshire priorities linking across all the Health and Social Care, CCG and Acute trust influences, how do you see the East Herts Local Authority role playing its Part?

A detailed debate took place setting out the panel guests' views, professional priorities and Members' areas of concerns.

In response to a query from the Chairman regarding a comment she had heard regarding the working arrangement between the County Council and the District Council, Mr McManus reassured the Panel that the County Council would be unable to carry on its public health work without the help of the District Council.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, thanked the Panel guests and representatives from the University of Hertfordshire for attending and the full discussion which had taken place.

RESOLVED – that the discussion be noted.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services explained that there had been discussions at each scrutiny committee, around the perception that the work programme of each committee often previewed items to be submitted to the Executive. He added that this used time and attention which might better be employed to challenge and investigate matters which might be considered priorities for their own Committees. He asked Panel Members to consider what their own priorities were and suggested that there might be one or two areas which could be reviewed via a Task and Finish or working Group.

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support suggested that the Panel might wish to consider some issues raised by Dr Nicky Williams relating to cancer treatment and diagnosis, the frail and vulnerable and obesity.

It was suggested that a meeting be arranged to consider what the Panel might wish to review.

RESOLVED – that (A) the work programme be approved; and

(B) an informal meeting be arranged to consider work plan priorities for review.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Chairman .....
Date .....



EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF COMMUNITY SCRUTINY

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

WARD(S) AFFECTED: *none*

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**Purpose/Summary of Report**

- To review and determine the Community Scrutiny Committee's future work programme

**RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION:**

**That:**

**(A) that the work programme detailed in this report be agreed.**

1.0 Background

1.1 Items previously required, identified or suggested for the Community Scrutiny work programme are set out in **Essential Reference Paper "B"**.

2.0 Report

2.1 An article explaining the role of scrutiny and inviting suggestions from residents was published in the spring 2013 'council tax' edition of LINK magazine. No new topics for scrutiny have been received from the public to date.

2.2 The agenda for the March 2014 meeting of Community Scrutiny Committee is shown in **Essential Reference Paper "B"**. Members are asked whether there is any additional topic they wish to put forward for inclusion on this, or any future agenda.

### 3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

#### Background Papers

None

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## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

### IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives</p> <p><i>(updated to 2013/14 wording)</i></p>	<p><b>People</b> This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services</p> <p><b>Place</b> This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p><b>Prosperity</b> This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p> <p>Effective use of the scrutiny process contributes to the Council's ability to meet one or more of its corporate objectives:</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Potential topics for scrutiny are always invited from members of the public, the Executive and all Members.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>According to the Council's constitution, the scrutiny committees are responsible for the setting of their own work programme in consultation with the Executive and in doing so they shall take into account wishes of members on that committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>Any additional meetings and every task and finish group has resource needs linked to officer support activity and time for officers from the services to make the required input.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>Matters which may benefit from scrutiny may be overlooked. The selection of inappropriate topics for review would risk inefficient use of resources. Where this involved partners, it could risk damaging the reputation of the council and relations with partners.</p>

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**Scrutiny Work Programme  
Essential Reference Paper B**

Community Scrutiny\*\* Committee work programme (provisional) 2013/14

\*\* This committee has a duty to receive a Crime and Disorder report at least once per year.

meeting	date	topic	Contact officer/lead	Next Exec
<b>2013/14</b>	<b>CIVIC YEAR</b>			
Meeting 3/4 in 2013/14	19 Nov 2013  Report deadline 6 Nov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report from Health and Well B Panel</li> <li>Community Grants review of applications and Q1/Q2 allocation – <i>including a presentation from Herts Community Foundation re external sources of funding</i></li> <li>Work programme</li> <li>6 month point - Review of the revised Housing Register and Allocations Policy (starts 1 May 2013)</li> <li>Service Plans monitoring Apr 2013 – Sept 2013 (Community only)</li> <li>Healthcheck through to Sept 2013 including testing the new 'dashboard'</li> <li>Feedback from PI working group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chairman of the Panel</li> <li>Community Engagement Manager/Grants officer (with external visitors from Herts Comm Foundation)</li> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> <li>Housing Services Manager</li> <li>Lead Officer - Performance</li> <li>Lead Officer - Performance</li> <li>Members + Lead Officer</li> </ul>	3 Dec 2013 7 Jan 2013 4 Feb 2013
<b>JOINT SCRUTINY</b>	14 Jan 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2014/15 Budget items</b></li> </ul>		
<b>JOINT SCRUTINY</b>	11 Feb 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Residents' Survey: analysis and action plan</b></li> <li><b>2014/15 Service Plans</b></li> <li><b>2013/14 Estimates and 2014/15 Future targets</b></li> </ul>		
Meeting 4/4 in 2013/14	11 Mar 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report from Health and Well B Panel</li> <li>Leisure Contract – year 5</li> <li>Update on actions under Ageing Well agenda</li> <li>Healthcheck through to Dec 2013</li> <li>Work programme 2014/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chairman of the Panel</li> <li>HoS (+ invite SLM)</li> <li>Head of Service and Community Team</li> <li>Lead Officer - Performance</li> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>	8 April 2013 6 May 2013 3 June 2013

## The four principles of good public scrutiny:

- ***provides ‘critical friend’ challenge*** to executive policy-makers and decision-makers
- ***enables the voice and concerns of the public*** and its communities
- ***is carried out by ‘independent-minded governors’*** who lead and own the scrutiny role
- ***drives improvement*** in public services

Community  
Scrutiny

1. To develop policy options and to review performance and scrutinise the policies of the Council relating to Licensing, Environmental Health, Crime and Disorder Reduction, Emergency Planning, Community Development, young people, Leisure, sport, arts, markets, diversity, grants, frontline Councillor engagement, valuing people, housing strategy, private sector housing, disabled facility grants, houses in multiple occupation, housing options, community meals, citizens’ advice, benefits, Local Strategic Partnership and health scrutiny.
2. To make recommendations to the Executive on matters within the remit of the Committee.
3. To take evidence from interested groups and individuals and make recommendations to the Executive and Council for policy change and review the performance of outside bodies on matters within the remit of the Committee.
4. To consider issues referred by the Executive, or members of the Committee and where the views of outsiders may contribute, take evidence and report to the Executive and Council on matters within the remit of the Committee.
5. To consider any item referred to the Committee by any Member of the Council who is not a member of this Committee and decide whether that item should be pursued on matters within the remit of the Committee.
6. To appoint annually Standing Panels as may be determined which shall be given a brief to consider a specified service area relating to matters within the remit of the Committee and report back to the Committee on a regular basis as determined by the Committee.

## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

#### REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

#### HERTFORD THEATRE ANNUAL REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2012/13

#### WARD(S) AFFECTED:

all

#### **Purpose/Summary of Report**

- To present the annual report for 2012/13

#### **RECOMMENDATION FOR COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**

**That:**

<b>(A)</b>	<b>the annual report on Hertford Theatre for the year 2012/13 be reviewed; and</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>the cohort of volunteers be congratulated and thanked for their contribution to the success of the venue.</b>

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 The Council's Executive Committee of 11 May 2010 approved an invest to save development and business plan to transform Castle Hall into Hertford Theatre. Subsequently, following refurbishment and re-modelling works, Hertford Theatre opened in December 2010.

1.2 The community scrutiny committee has previously received and approved two annual reports covering the financial years 2010/11 (committee 14/5/11) and 2011/12 (committee 28/8/12).

## 2.0 Report

2.1 This is the third annual report, covering the financial year 2012/13, and as with the previous year's report, it is structured around the following main elements of the theatre's business:

- Footfall
- Feedback, complaints and compliments
- Theatre shows
- Cinema
- Panto
- Hire
- Café/bar
- Gallery
- Staffing, apprentice and volunteers
- Marketing
- Financial summary including performance against business plan
- Future developments and vision

## 3.0 Footfall

3.1 The estimated footfall for 2012/13 was 127,250. This is up from the 111,104 reported for the previous year. The footfall is made up of, the following:

Ticket Sales	59,000 (up from 50,000 in 2011/12)
Regular Classes	23,500*
Functions	13,500**
Day Trade Café	31,250***

**Total Footfall            127,250**

\*Space hired for classes including : Fun with Drum, Fun With Dance, Hertford School of Dance, Expressions Dance, Graham School of Dance, Zumba, Yoga Shala, Hartbeeps, Busybees, Lazy Daisy, Dinky Dancers – calculated on average number of attendees over 37 weeks (average number of weeks per year hirers are in attendance). Some organisations run more than one class per week.

\*\*Non-ticketed events. Calculated on the events held over the year including Big Drawer Exhibition, HRC, Sports Awards, Barratts, Employment Service, HCC, Dance Festival, EHDC Staff Awards, Harlow College, Private Business Meetings, Auditions, U3A, National Trust, Christenings, Wakes, Wedding Anniversaries, Serco, Unison, European Study Tours, Conferences, Play Readings, Herts Regional College, Children's Party, Art Previews, Hertford Library.



\*\*\* calculated on an average of 125 customers per day over 5 days per week, 50 weeks per year.

#### 4.0 Feedback, complaints and compliments

4.1 The feedback received at the theatre continues to be extremely positive. This is monitored via the feedback cards at the box office and via the website. A selection of recent feedback is presented at **Essential Reference Paper “B”**.

4.2 Negative feedback this year has centred around two issues in the main: 1. the quality of the technical equipment in the main auditorium and 2. the ‘creakiness’ of the seating. Both these issues are referred to in paragraphs 14.1 and 14.2 respectively below, that address future development.

#### 5.0 Theatre shows

5.1 The Theatre’s mission as a community based venue is to create a balanced programme of arts and entertainment. As a still relatively new venue, this means trying out new products for new audiences; a development process that inevitably results in a range of commercial success from sell-outs to shows that sometimes do not achieve the desired box office return.

5.2 There were 45 different live events (excluding Panto) in 2012/13 compared with a business plan target of 50 and 65 actual in 2011/12. 11,966 tickets were sold with an average attendance of 240 per event in 2012/13, compared with 12,936 at an average of 199 in 2011/12.

5.3 Best selling shows in 2012/13 included: Jack Dee, Harry Hill, Steeleye Span, Tiddler, Jungle Book, Counterfeit Stones, Marcus Brigstocke and Jon Richardson.

5.4 Less well performing shows included: Verve, Mari Wilson and Canterbury Tales.

5.5 Income from live shows in 2012/13 was £144,339 against an original business plan target of £140,700 and an outturn of £173,494 in 2011/12. The difference in outturn figures between 2011/12 and 2012/13 is attributed largely to the increased use of the auditorium for cinema (ref. increased income from cinema in paragraph 6.4 below).

5.6 The committee is invited to consider whether it feels the right balance is being achieved in Hertford Theatre's programme of drama and live shows. A full list of shows broken down by category is presented at **Essential Reference Paper "C"**.

## 6.0 Cinema

6.1 Cinema continues to be a very popular part of Hertford Theatre's offer. There were 250 screenings in 2012/13 with 20,073 tickets sold at an average attendance of 80 per screening. This compares with 223 screenings, 12,711 tickets and an average of 57 per screening in 2011/12.

6.2 There were sell-out screenings of: The Artist, The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, Skyfall, Les Miserables and Quartet. Films that did less were Rust and Bone, Jackpot, Liberal Arts and L'Appartement.

6.3 Screenings of live and recorded live broadcasts continued to be popular with 8 events in total up from 4 in 2011/12. *Rigoletto* live from the Royal Opera House proved to be a highlight. The average attendance was 100.

6.4 Income from the cinema in 2012/13 was up to £92,670 compared with £65,654 in 2011/12. This increase in income was despite the cancellation of several films in prime time at the end of January and February due to a problem with the projector and severe weather.

6.5 The committee is invited to consider whether it feels the right balance is being achieved in Hertford Theatre's programme of film, live and recorded screenings. The full list of screenings is presented at **Essential Reference Paper "D"**.

## 7.0 Pantomime

7.1 The audience for our pantomime has been steadily increasing. Cinderella was Hertford Theatre's very first pantomime in December/January 2010/11 and it sold 5,000 tickets. Sales for Aladdin in 2011/12 increased to 7,500. Last year Dick Wittington sold 8,500. The Panto for this coming Christmas and New Year is Beauty and The Beast and advance bookings primarily to the schools are going very well; at the time of writing the report six performances have already sold out.

7.2 Income from the Pantomime in 2012/13 was £81,111 up from £68,777 in 2011/12.

## 8.0 Hire

### *Main auditorium*

8.1 The main auditorium was hired for 113 days in 2012/13 compared with 108 days in 2011/12. Hirers included key associate users such as Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society (HDOS), Ware Operatic Society, Hertford Symphony Orchestra, Mayhem and Rare; as well as regional and national organisations such as U3A, National Trust, Army Engagement and NHS.

### *Studio*

8.2 The studio was hired for 1082 hours in 2013/14 compared with 949 hours in 2011/12. This represents an average of 4.8 hours per day over 37 weeks (average number of weeks per year hirers are in attendance). Regular hirers include: Hertford Yoga, Little Bees, Graham School of Dance, Hertford School of Dance and Expressions.

### *River Room*

8.3 The River Room was hired for 450 hours in 2012/13 compared with 570 hours in 2011/12. This represents an average of 2.1 hours per day over 37 weeks (average number of weeks per year hirers are in attendance). The River Room is a popular hire during the day with regular music sessions for the under 5's with Fun with Drum/Dance and Lazy Daisy. It is also a meeting place for local and regional businesses including: SERCO, Unison, HCC, East Herts Council, Tesco and Barratts.

8.4 The lower number of River Room hours hired in 2012/13 compared with 2011/12 was in large part due to shifting some hires from the River Room to the studio in order free up the River Room for other markets e.g. business meetings, which we want to develop in the future.

8.5 There is a service plan target to increase sales by at least ten percent in 2013/14 (ref. paragraph 14.4 below on future developments).

## *Combined hire*

8.6 The combined hire income for 2012/13 was £112,655 compared with an original business plan target of £82,950 and £120,507 outturn in 2011/12. The difference in outturn figures between 2011/12 and 2012/13 is attributed to the increased use of the auditorium for cinema (ref increased income from cinema in paragraph 6.4 above).

## 9.0 Café/bar

9.1 The café/bar continued to be run in house throughout 2012/13. The total income for 2012/13 was £141,000 against £69,965 for the previous year 2011/12 (note: the 2011/12 year ran only from November 2011 to end of March 2012 i.e. from when the bar/café was re-opened as an in-house operation).

9.2 The volume of trade and the products sold vary greatly depending on the time of day and the type of activity, event and or show. During the day time the trade is often light with a feature being the popularity with mothers' with babies and toddlers who enjoy the space and the relaxed atmosphere. By contrast, and as would be expected, the largest volumes of trade occur for live evening shows, with the highest selling show being Counterfeit Stones and Marcus Brigstocke on 16/17<sup>th</sup> Nov taking £3,690 and £1,958 at the bar respectively; a total of £5648 over two evenings.

9.3 The food offer continues to be reviewed. At the moment the offer, other than crisps and confectionary etc. extends only to fresh sandwiches, cakes and scones.

9.4 As referenced in paragraph 14.5 below, there is an acknowledgement that the food and wine offer needs to be reviewed and refreshed in the context of an expanding programme and footfall. This review is already underway and will be completed by mid October. The main objectives will be to: a) offer greater choice of food and better quality of wines before evening shows, and b) reduce staffing costs during lower turnover day time periods.

## 10 Gallery

10.1 The Gallery continues to have a different exhibition every month under a franchise agreement with Courtyard arts. This provides a

regular refresh to the foyer and bar/café area attracting customers and adding interest.

10.2 The commission received from sales in 2012/13 was £1,545 compared with £2,070 for 2011/12.

## 11 Staffing, apprentice and volunteers

11.1 The staffing cohort was added to in 2011/12 in order to meet the demands of the business that has been expanding at a faster rate than the original business plan anticipated. Three new part-time posts have been recruited to: an assistant front of house manager, an additional box office assistant and a technical assistant. The technical assistant post was filled by the apprentice from Hertford Regional College who successfully completed his apprenticeship and we were pleased to be able to make the post permanent.

11.2 The volunteers' scheme which was launched in July 2011 is now established as a key element of the successful front of house operation. There are currently 70 registered volunteers and a waiting list. The cohort of volunteers is a great asset to the theatre and has made a huge contribution to the welcome and ambience of the venue.

11.3 The salary cost for 2012/13 was £273,421 compared with £318,778 in 2011/12. This reduction in costs is attributable to management successfully focusing on reducing casual staff costs.

## 12 Marketing

12.1 The main seasonal cinema and live performance brochure have now been redesigned and the cost reduced by using the council's in-house print and design unit rather than outsourcing it.

12.2 Repeated 'Contra' deals have been negotiated with Paradise Wildlife Park, Van Hage, with a new partner Café Rouge in Hertford to utilise mutually beneficial opportunities at a no cost partnership advertising.

12.3 Hertford Theatre now has over 850 Facebook friends (double last year) with activity taking place every day including competitions, promotions and photos. Twitter is now up and running and we already have over 800 followers.

- 12.4 A 'lapsed attender' direct mail campaign was successfully completed in 2012/2103. 5,000 people were contacted who had been to Castle Hall but had not attended Hertford Theatre since the refurbishment. These people were given the opportunity to be introduced to the new venue and the chance to sign up to the theatre's mailing list, there was a 45% response to sign up to the mailing list with 23% of those people purchasing tickets in the first 3 months of the campaign.
- 12.5 In 2012/13, 1,720 customers signed up to an emailing list and received regular updates about shows, films and forthcoming activity. The mailing list has increased to 12,000 names. The seasonal brochure is mailed to this list which is frequently revised and updated in line with requirements of Data Protection.
- 12.6 A press database has been compiled with twenty two organisations receiving regular press updates. The Hertfordshire Mercury and the Welwyn and Hatfield Times feature articles relating to shows and films at Hertford Theatre on a weekly basis, equating to over £15,000 worth of free advertising. Articles and interviews have been secured on 3 Counties Radio and Jack FM, equating to the 15 hours of air time worth £5,000 worth of free advertising.
- 12.7 There has been much development work with secondary and primary schools: 23 schools came to see the Panto in 2012/13 including 12 schools from the East Herts area and others from Goffs Oak, Harlow and Welwyn Garden City. Three schools brought their entire school, selling out the performances. Twenty two schools have already pre booked for the Panto this year; 15 of those schools being repeats from last year. The number of schools that receive information about relevant forthcoming productions on a termly basis has increased. As well as the regular schools that book for Panto the number of 'core' schools who regularly attend shows at Hertford Theatre has increased. The theatre offers free 'added value' tours and discussions groups to all interested schools.
- 12.8 This year as well as working in partnership with Paradise Wild Life Park and Van Hage Garden centre to heighten Panto-awareness; they are working with Café Rouge. Marketing activity will include the launch of the Panto at Café Rouge, the opportunity for every school child who attends the Panto to eat at Café Rough for free during the Panto season.

- 13 Financial summary including performance against business plan
- 13.1 The annual final account position for 2012/13 showed an overall net outturn expenditure of £381,710. The net expenditure in the original estimate budget for 2012/13 was £445,040. The outturn performance therefore represents a favourable variance of £63,330, subject to audited accounts.
- 13.2 The business plan as approved by the Executive in May 2010 showed a target net expenditure for 2012/13 of £451,100. The outturn for 2012/13 of £381,710 compared against the business plan therefore represents a favourable variance of £69,390.
- 14 Future development, vision and governance
- 14.1 The council's Executive of 23 July 2013 approved an upgrade to the audio, lighting and technical equipment in the main auditorium of £64,000 in response to the failing and outdated equipment. This investment will considerably enhance the customer's experience and will also serve to attract high quality producers and performers.
- 14.2 The Executive asked officers to investigate the costs of new or refurbished seating for the auditorium, subject to an appropriate specification and price to be determined by a tender process. The ambition is to upgrade the seating in the summer of 2014.
- 14.3 In September 2013 a new partnership will be launched with Hertford Regional College which will offer one year drama diplomas based at Hertford Theatre.
- 14.4 One of the targets for 2013/14 financial year is to improve the number of hires for the River Room by at least ten percent and this target is well on the way to being achieved with new bookings being made for business meetings and parties.
- 14.5 The management team acknowledges that still more needs to be done on improving the bar/café offer and there are a number of plans that will be implemented in 2013/14 including a better food/snack offer before evening performance and shows, a better quality of beverages and a move to more efficient control of expenditures during less busy daytime periods.

- 14.6 The Theatre's management team has made good strategic development alliances with the Arts Council, evidenced by:

a) financial sponsorship for the director of Hertford Theatre to attend the Edinburgh Fringe festival for the second year running with a view to securing innovative shows for regional theatres such as Hertford Theatre. Last year this sponsored reconnaissance resulted in the sell-out show The Trench and new theatre company Rhum and Clay being brought back to Hertford for our local audience to enjoy.

b) the Arts Council offering its collaborative support for a marketing campaign aimed at attracting new family audiences in areas that are presenting appropriate demographic characteristics but are, as yet, under-represented in our ticket sales profiles.

14.7 Future governance options remain under longer term consideration. An informal member officer group met on 17/1/13 to consider short to medium term options and concluded that as the Theatre was still in early development and expansion mode and performing well against the business plan, the best option would be to continue with existing 'in-house' arrangements for at least another year or so before further review.

#### 15.0 Implications/Consultations

15.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

#### Background Papers

Executive 11/5/10 Castle Hall investment proposals.

[http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/moderngov/Data/Executive/20100511/Agenda/Item 6 - Castle Hall Investment Proposals.pdf](http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/moderngov/Data/Executive/20100511/Agenda/Item%206%20-%20Castle%20Hall%20Investment%20Proposals.pdf)

Executive 23/7/13 Investment Proposals

<http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s20354/Hertford%20Theatre%20Capital.pdf>

Contact Member: Councillor Linda Haysey – executive member for health, housing and community support  
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## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

### IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives <i>(delete as appropriate):</i>	<b>People</b> This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services  <b>Prosperity</b> This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.
Consultation:	<i>none</i>
Legal:	<i>none</i>
Financial:	<i>Contained within the report.</i>
Human Resource:	<i>Contained within the report.</i>
Risk Management:	<i>Contained within the report.</i>

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## Customer Feedback.

*"I am so happy that you are showing the filmed performances of various operas and ballets. This is a real treat for me because as a pensioner I can't afford West end prices. This way it is possible for me to see wonderful shows. Thank you."*

*"Royal Opera House by electronic link – quite amazing and one we shall repeat again! Many thanks."*

*"The Trench was the best piece of new theatre I have ever seen."*

*"Most enjoyable, fantastic evening entertainment. Good service at bar – evening flowed – great fun had – staff were very helpful and much welcoming."*

*"Why don't you guys do simple hot meals like toasted sandwiches and panini's."*

*"Lovely service and pleasant seating area. Disappointing range of foods available – need some simple hot snacks."*

*"The show went well although Barry Cryer was a little disgruntled about the sound quality during the first half. Your tech crew know they have to address a fault on the board."*

*"I think the patchy sound from the mic during the first half did spoil the enjoyment a wee bit."*

*"Please stop the seating from wobbling and creaking. How about carpet?"*

*"The only disturbance during what was a wonderfully quiet show was the metal rattles coming from the seating. Pity the poor person who has to go to the loo during the show."*

"I have to admit, I felt quite offended when the [Daily Mail described our beloved Hertford Theatre as a "small village theatre"](#) in their article which reported Victoria Beckham's visit. My irritation with the article was for numerous reasons BUT possibly the main one was that I felt that by using this definition, [Hertford Theatre](#) wasn't seen in the shining light that it should be. *Our Hertford Theatre* that effortlessly transforms from a hub where mums and babies meet for coffee by day to a bustling Cinema venue where you can meet your adult friends by night. *Our Hertford Theatre*, the place that showcases local talent through regular Art Exhibitions. AND... *Our Hertford Theatre* that was kind enough to offer Tiddler tickets through our recent familyfun@hertford competition – showing yet again their desire to be part of our local community."

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LIVE SHOWS 2012-13		ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER C			
SHOW	Tickets	Genre			
<b>APR</b>					
Little Big Club	383	Childrens			
Jon Richardson	390	Comedy			
The Owl who was afraid of the dark	201	Childrens			
Verve	80	Dance			
Callas	74	Drama			
The Real Thing	175	Music			
<b>MAY</b>					
I, Elizabeth	101	Drama			
The Snail and the Whale	469	Childrens			
Georgie Fame	334	Music			
Jack Dee	398	Comedy			
Mari Wilson	66	Music			
<b>JUNE</b>					
Swan Lake	344	Family			
Big Bananas	229	Childrens			
Let the Good Times Roll	165	Music			
Gervaise Phinn	281	Comedy			
Nicholas Nickleby	77	Drama			
<b>JULY</b>					
UK Pink Floyd	247	Music			
Alan Titchmarsh	269	Book			
Richard Digance	197	Comedy			
Motown	160	Music			
Josephine Tewson	95	Drama			
<b>SEPT</b>					
D-Day Darlings	139	Music			
Tiny Mites	234	Childrens			
Dr Phil Hammond	243	Comedy			
Josh and Seann	387	Comedy			
Abba Mania	374	Family			
Coppelia	325	Family			
Canterbury Tales	96	Drama			
<b>OCT</b>					
Nocturne	289	Music			
Henry Blofeld	189	Talk			
Lee Hurst	360	Comedy			
Sean Hughes	269	Comedy			
Jungle Book	664	Family			
<b>NOV</b>					
Counterfeit Stones	500	Music			
Marcus Brigstocke	398	Comedy			

<b>JAN</b>					
Back to Broadway	195	Musical			
RIP Comedy Night	324	Comedy			
Harry Hill	396	Comedy			
<b>FEB</b>					
Magic	152	Music			
Mark Thomas	255	Comedy			
John Shuttleworth	285	Comedy			
<b>MAR</b>					
Barry Cryer/Ronnie Golden	210	Comedy			
Steeleye Span	398	Music			
The Gospel of Matthew	165	Drama			
Tiddler	384	Childrens			
<b>Total tickets</b>	<b>11966</b>				

TITLE	TICKETS
<b>APRIL</b>	
The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	1378
A Monster in Paris	85
Carnage	80
The Descendants	269
War Horse	720
 The Artist	925
In Darkness	23
ROH LIVE: Rigoletto	247
The Woman in Black	362
The Muppets	253
<b>MAY</b>	
The Iron Lady	182
French Cancan	26
The Woman in Black	127
Marley	124
The Kid with a Bike	135
Once Upon a Time in Anatolia	92
The Iron Lady	71
Headhunters	77
The Artist	101
<b>JUNE</b>	
Albert Nobbs	108
The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists 2D	81
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## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

#### REPORT BY REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

#### ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR RIVERSMEAD AND SOUTH ANGLIA HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS 2012/13

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

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### **Purpose/Summary of Report**

- The report advises the committee on the progress made by the two large scale voluntary transfer housing associations on the three undertakings that remain following the end of the Delivery of Promises Programme in 2007.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Community Scrutiny Committee:**

**That:**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>(A)</b> | the Committee review performance by both Riversmead and South Anglia Housing Associations on the three remaining stock transfer undertakings for the year 2012/13 and pass any recommendations onto the Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support for consideration. |
|            |   |

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 In March 2002 the Council sold its stock of some 6,500 dwellings to Riversmead and Stort Valley (now South Anglia) housing associations in return for a capital receipt, 75% nomination rights and a five year programme of improvements to the stock, which has been termed the 'Delivery of Promises'.

1.2 The undertakings were of two types. The majority concerned improvements to the housing stock transferred and had targets for

either minimum spend or number of improvements. The five year Delivery of Promises programme came to an end in March 2007 and a report was presented to the Performance Scrutiny Committee in July 2007. Additionally there were other conditions attached to the sale of the stock which had a much longer time frame for example nomination rights to their empty properties.

1.3 At the Community Scrutiny Committee meeting in July 2008 it was agreed that officers should report annually on the remaining stock transfer undertakings.

## 2.0 Report

2.1 The majority of the promises following stock transfer ended after five years but three of the promises have a much longer life span. These remaining promises are monitored by the Housing Service.

2.2 Nomination percentages. The Stock Transfer Nomination Agreement states that the two housing associations give the Council 3 out of every 4 of their vacant homes (of the homes that were transferred) for the Council to nominate to households on its Housing Register. This agreement is in perpetuity.

2.3 Aids and Adaptations. The agreement states the amount that each housing association is expected to spend on aids and adaptations for their own tenants before the Council can be requested to financially contribute to adaptations to their own stock. The figure set for the first year, £185,000 per annum, is subject to an agreed annual increase based on RPI. This agreement lasts for 30 years from the sale of the stock.

2.4 Right to Buy Clawback agreement. The agreement entitles the Council to a financial settlement or clawback, from the housing associations, from the sale of each home where the tenant had a 'preserved' right to buy entitlement. The percentage clawback reduces over time to zero percent after 20 years from date of the sale of the stock.

2.5 The performance of the two housing associations is shown below.

<b>2012/13</b>	Target	Riversmead Housing Association	South Anglia Housing Association
Percentage nominations	75%	100%	100%

to vacant homes			
Spend on aids and adaptations	for 12/13 £255,580	£309,527	£244,480
Homes sold under the preserved Right to Buy	40 per annum each	9	4

- 2.6 There are three points to note from the figures presented. South Anglia and Riversmead Housing Associations both belong to the Council's Common Housing Register. Therefore the Council's Housing Register contains all of South Anglia and Rivermead Housing Association tenants, in East Herts, needing to transfer to an alternative home in East Herts. In return for this the Council has nominations rights to all of their vacant homes. Therefore the target percentage nomination to vacant homes under this agreement is 100%.
- 2.7 The type of aids and adaptations works varies from small scale hand rails and grab rails, for which tenants can self refer through the repairs service for both housing associations, to major works recommended by Adult Care Services at Herts County Council.
- 2.8 South Anglia have reported a short-fall against target on the spend on Aids and Adaptations for 2011/12. This is the first time either housing association has not met this target. Tracy White, Managing Director of South Anglia Housing has forwarded the following comment regarding South Anglia's spend on Aids and Adaptations: *'This is obviously a demand led programme and is reflective of the wider demographic as well as the need to re invest in properties which enhance the life chances of residents. SAHA will continue to invest in Aid and Adaptations works on an ad hoc basis as well as significant investment as part of wider stock improvements (for example as part of kitchen or bathroom upgrades within planned investment programmes)'*.
- 2.9 The preserved Right to Buy (RTB) claw back agreement was based on a target of the housing associations selling 40 properties each per year, based on the previous ten years performance. However sales have experienced a significant down turn since the stock transfer agreement with a total of 247 properties having been sold in the eleven years since stock transfer; an average of 22 per annum. This is significantly less than the target of 40 per annum.

This is in the main due to significant capping of the eligible discount and high valuations of the properties therefore making them generally unaffordable. In addition the number of tenants eligible for the preserved Right to Buy is reducing each year.

2.10 The low level of sales through the RTB is a national trend and prompted the government to double the discount levels in 2012 to try to promote an increase in sales nationally. This brought the maximum discount cap to £75,000 in East Herts. This may have prompted the small increase in RTB sales this financial year from 5 in 2011/12 to 13 in 2012/13.

### 3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

### Background Papers

Stock Transfer Agreements 2002

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## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

### IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives <i>(delete as appropriate):</i>	<b>People</b> This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.  <b>Prosperity</b> This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic and social opportunities.
Consultation:	<i>Both Riversmead and South Anglia Housing Associations.</i>
Legal:	<i>There is a contractual duty for both housing associations to meet the delivery of promises targets.</i>
Financial:	<i>If the Housing Associations had met the annual target of 40 sales each this would have resulted in the Council receiving substantially more funds in clawback receipts since the transfer.</i>
Human Resource:	<i>None</i>
Risk Management:	<i>None</i>

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## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY SCRUTINY – 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

### EXECUTIVE – 1 OCTOBER 2013

## REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

### THE EAST HERTS HOMELESS STRATEGY 2013-2018

WARD(S) AFFECTED:     ALL

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#### Purpose/Summary of Report

- To present to Community Scrutiny and the Executive, for consideration and comment and recommend for consultation, the Council's new Homeless Review and Strategy 2013-18.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY SCRUTINY: That:</u></b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>the draft Homeless Strategy be considered and recommendations made to the Executive so that officers can consult on the document with external partners and stakeholders; and</b>
<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE</u></b>	
<b>(B)</b>	<b>the East Herts Homeless Strategy 2013-2018 be approved for the purposes of consultation.</b>

#### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 Under the Homelessness Act 2002 all local authorities are required to carry out a homeless review and to develop and publish a strategy based on the review every five years. East Herts published its first Homeless Strategy in July 2003, it's second in 2008 and is therefore due to publish the next review and strategy before the end of 2013.

## 2.0 Report

- 2.1 The Homeless Act 2002 places stronger duties on local authorities to assist homeless and potentially homeless people. One of the key aims of the Act is to ensure that housing authorities take a comprehensive and strategic approach to managing and preventing all forms of homelessness in their district.
- 2.2 The Council's last Homeless Strategy was adopted and published in July 2008 and the Council and its partners have made significant progress on providing and improving services to those people that are homeless or potentially homeless. The Strategy includes a section on the achievements, by the Council and its partners to improve the Homeless Services provided, since the last Strategy was adopted.
- 2.3 A lot has changed both locally and nationally since the last Homeless Strategy was adopted. The most significant recent changes that have an impact on homelessness have been as a result of the Localism Act 2012 and the significant Welfare Reform changes primarily affecting benefit eligibility. The Strategy provides more detail on the actual changes resulting from these two pieces of legislation which are likely to have a direct and indirect effect on homelessness.
- 2.4 A draft Strategy has been developed which is at **Essential Reference Paper "B"**. The Strategy has four Strategic Themes around which the Action Plan will be developed. The Action Plan will shape the emphasis of the Housing Options Team's work for the next five years. These are:
1. Prevent Homelessness through early intervention and targeted Housing Advice including mitigating the impact of welfare reform so that the risk of homelessness is reduced;
  2. Increase the role of the private rented sector for those in housing need, with better sustained tenancies;
  3. Increase the supply of appropriate, good quality affordable housing including the provision of supported accommodation;

4. Continue to develop and strengthen partnership working to maximise the benefits to homeless households.
- 2.5 This draft Strategy will be updated following recommendations from this Committee and discussed at the Executive on 1 October 2013. The attached draft Strategy will be further updated with the recommendations from Executive and will then be published for consultation for four weeks. The document will be sent to our close partners, for example Registered Providers and CAB and will be published on our website.
- 2.6 Following the consultation the Strategy will be amended to take into account the responses from our partners and a revised Homeless Strategy 2013-2018 will be drafted. At this time an Action Plan will also be developed and included with the Homeless Strategy.
- 2.7 A report is then due to be brought back to Executive on 11 December for recommendation that the Homeless Strategy 2013-18 be adopted by the Council.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

### Background Papers

None

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## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

### IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives <i>(delete as appropriate):</i>	<b>People</b> This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.  <b>Prosperity</b> This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic and social opportunities.
Consultation:	<i>To be undertaken once comments from Community Scrutiny incorporated into the Strategy and Strategy is agreed by Executive for consultation.</i>
Legal:	<i>There is a legal duty to publish a Homeless Review and Strategy every 5 years.</i>
Financial:	<i>None</i>
Human Resource:	<i>None</i>
Risk Management:	<i>None</i>

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# East Herts Council Homelessness Review and Strategy

2013-18

*Draft 27/8/2013*

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## **Foreword**

**By Councillor Linda Haysey, Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support.**

At East Herts we recognise how important it is that everyone has a decent settled home and the devastating impact the lack of a home can have on every part of a person's life. Homelessness is a harmful and risky lifestyle and it is linked to wider social and health issues.

The development of our new Homelessness Strategy comes at a time of great change in housing, welfare and social policy.

Our Homelessness Strategy is part of a suite of integrated housing documents and its main objective is to meet housing needs and prevent homelessness. It is evidence based and has been developed in consultation with stakeholders. It sets out the causes of homelessness, wider housing needs, where we are now and considers the challenges and opportunities that will come forward in the next five years.

The strategy also outlines some significant achievements that we have been able to make since our last Homelessness Strategy was published.

The Council cannot tackle homelessness on its own and joint working is fundamental to the prevention of homelessness. It is recognised that the success of this Strategy depends on the skills, knowledge and expertise of a wide range of partner agencies from the public, Registered Providers (RPs), voluntary and private sectors. This Strategy has been developed with the assistance of our partner agencies. The Council would like to thank everyone who gave their time and contributed to this Strategy.

**Executive Summary – To be completed**

# **1. Introduction**

The overall purpose of the Homeless Strategy (Strategy) is to ensure that as a Council we address homelessness strategically by ensuring suitable accommodation, support and advice is available and accessible to all client groups and to encourage a multi-agency approach to preventing homelessness.

East Herts Council has a statutory duty to address the needs of homeless households. This includes the provision of advice, prevention of homelessness and provision of alternative accommodation.

The key outcomes for the Council are:

- Preventing homelessness, wherever possible
- Providing skilled help at the point of homelessness
- Providing an accessible, modern and effective Housing Options response
- Developing effective partnerships, to respond successfully to housing need and homelessness.

Being homeless is epitomised by the rough sleeper who is living on the streets, but this group of people forms a relatively small proportion of all homeless households. Many homeless households are “hidden” as they may have access to some form of shelter some of the time, but lack a stable, long term, settled home. For others, there are frequent moves from one temporary accommodation or shelter to another (e.g. emergency accommodation, refuges, friend’s homes, ‘sofa surfing’) – people with no settled home.

## **What have we achieved since the 2008-2013 Strategy?**

The Council is pleased to report on a number of really important successes as a result of the previous Homelessness Strategy which was published in 2008. These include:

- A comprehensive review of the Allocations Policy to take advantage of the freedoms offered by the Localism Act. This has enabled us to re-think the priority awards that are made to homeless households and to ensure that the Council takes the opportunities presented by the Localism Act.
- Minimal use of B&B, and only in an absolute emergency. This is against the picture of rising homelessness both nationally and locally.
- Re-development of our temporary accommodation into 11 units of self-contained, high quality accommodation.
- Increased efficiencies from development of an online housing register application process.
- Significant numbers of homelessness preventions achieved by a small dedicated team.
- Introduction of effective and integrated triage, meaning that good housing advice is provided on drop-in at the council offices, followed by case working those that threatened are with homelessness at both our Hertford and Bishop’s Stortford offices.

- Extension of our debt and money advice service in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Bringing Empty Homes back to use through Place Scheme Rent and Bond Deposit Scheme.
- In partnership with the County Council and Aldwyck Housing Association the development, in Hertford, of a 24 x 1 bed supported accommodation for young people from the ages of 16-25 including 4 mother and baby flats.
- Working in partnership with Herts Credit Savers to develop a more robust Rent Deposit Scheme to assist residents in housing need to access accommodation in the private sector.

## **2. National policy context**

Since our last strategy, the national policy and financial context has changed dramatically. The environment in which we need to deliver homelessness prevention is now very challenging, partly as a result of the economic downturn post 2008 and partly as a result of government reforms to a range of key policies relating to welfare and housing.

### **a) Localism Act 2011**

The Localism Act was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. The Localism Act lets councils decide:

- the types and lengths of tenancy that can be offered in social housing by introducing the fixed term tenancy which can be used instead of life time tenancies,
- how duties under the relevant Homelessness Act can be discharged, in particular the use of the private rented sector to discharge a Homelessness Duty where suitable,
- how to manage their housing registers by enabling councils to establish their own qualification criteria for who can be registered and therefore offered social housing.

### **b) Welfare Reform**

The Government states that the aim of its welfare reform programme is to reduce the budget deficit, slow down growing benefit expenditure, increase fairness, increase work incentives and end benefit dependency. From April 2011 to date, the following changes have been introduced:

- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) calculated using 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of rents in the area. This means rents were previously calculated on the median (50<sup>th</sup> percentile) of rents in Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA). From April 2011 this changed to be calculated on 30<sup>th</sup> percentile of the BRMA. This will only be updated by CPI from April 2013.
- Removal of 5-bedroom LHA rate. This was effective from April 2011 on new claims and changes of address.
- Introduction of caps for 1 to 4 bedroom rates. The national weekly caps currently stand at
  - £250 one bedroom
  - £290 two bedroom

- £340 three bedroom
  - £400 four bedroom
- Single people under 35 have, as from January 2012, only been able to claim LHA at shared accommodation rates. This was previously the rate allowed for under 25 year olds.
- From April 2013, property size restrictions for working-age people in social housing came into effect, bringing the same rules in that apply to private sector lettings. This requires under-occupiers of social housing properties to pay a charge for each bedroom in excess of their needs, taken as a reduction in benefit payable. This has affected over 700 households in social housing in East Herts.
- The introduction of the overall benefits cap, from July 2013 in East Herts, of £26,000 per annum for families.

Other significant changes that will come into force as a result of the reform to the welfare system include:

- Increase in non-dependant deduction charges (phased in between 2011 to 2014)
- Moving towards Universal Credit (2013 to 2017)

#### c) Supporting People

The Supporting People programme began on 1 April 2003, bringing together seven housing-related funding streams from across central government. The Supporting People provides funding for housing related-support services for vulnerable adults, including homeless people. Most hostels, supported housing projects and floating support services for homeless people receive funding from Supporting People.

From 2010 the government made it a wholly decentralised programme, administered through 152 top-tier authorities (Herts County Council for East Herts), who have complete discretion over where to direct their funds to best meet local needs.

#### d) Government Strategy

Tackling homelessness is a key priority outlined in the Government's Housing Strategy, 'Laying the Foundations, A Housing Strategy for England' (2011). The national strategy outlines the Government's commitment to homelessness prevention, meeting the needs of the vulnerable, managing the consequences of those made homeless and addressing rough sleeping.

In August 2012 CLG published "Making every contact count : A joint approach to tackling homelessness" with a view to ensuring wider responsibility for preventing homelessness. The document sets out 10 challenges for Local Authorities which are designed to ensure that homelessness prevention and support to vulnerable households is as effective as possible.

#### e) Public Health

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 contains various changes to the National Health Service, including the transfer of the majority of public health functions from Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to local authorities. Public health is about helping people to stay healthy and avoiding ill health which improved housing can alleviate.

### **3. Local strategic links and policy context**

Key documents have been taken into account in the development of this Strategy to ensure consistency across the Council and with our partners in other agencies. All the East Herts documents can be accessed from the Council's website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk) or by contacting the Strategic Housing Service on 01279 655261.

#### **a) East Herts' Corporate Vision**

This Homeless Strategy reflects the Council's Corporate vision:

**To improve the quality of people's lives and preserve all that is best in East Herts.**

The Council has developed six corporate priorities that it intends to achieve with its partners. The priority most relevant to this strategy is:

*Promoting prosperity and well being: providing access and opportunities.*

*Priority: Enhance the quality of life, health and well being of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.*

The Council's Service Plans are the mechanism by which each service in the Council contributes to the Corporate Priorities.

#### **b) Housing Strategy 2013-2016**

The East Herts Housing Strategy has identified the following three strategic priorities:

- 1. Maximise the delivery of a range of new affordable homes, whilst ensuring the best use of existing housing.** There is a significant affordability problem in the District. This is a result of many factors but predominantly due to high prices in comparison to income levels. This in turn is placing greater pressure on the existing affordable housing in the District. There is simply not enough affordable housing to meet the increasing need of the District's residents.
- 2. Meeting the needs of a growing elderly population.** East Herts has an ageing population and it is projected that two thirds of the population growth anticipated in East Herts between 2006 and 2021 will be people aged over 65 years. This will have a significant impact on the provision of both housing and services, with accessibility and the suitability of houses being key factors
- 3. Meeting the needs of vulnerable people and stronger communities.** Strong communities require effective approaches in terms of policies to promote inclusiveness, assist the vulnerable, increase safety and the perception of safety, and in ensuring the built environment and public space meet people's needs and aspirations. The County Council has specific duties with regard to vulnerable adults and children. However as one of their key strategic partners, we seek to work with them to develop future priorities for all the people in our local communities whether that be by directly providing accommodation or services, enabling or 'donating' an asset.

The Homelessness Strategy will complement and be consistent with the East Herts Housing Strategy and although the Homelessness Strategy will operate as a stand-alone document, both policies share a number of key objectives.

#### c) Tenancy Strategy

The Localism Act required Councils to develop and publish a Tenancy Strategy by January 2013. The strategy is to guide Registered Providers of social housing in the relevant area in formulating policies relating to:

- (a) the kinds of tenancies they grant,
- (b) the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind,
- (c) where they grant tenancies for a term, the lengths of the terms, and
- (d) the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.

Registered Providers are obliged to have 'due regard to' the strategy when developing their own tenancy policies. In East Herts, Registered Providers are currently looking at fixed / flexible tenancies lasting usually no more than 5 years.

#### d) East Herts Housing Register and Allocations policy

In May 2013 the Council implemented a new Allocations Policy which we believe provides a fairer and more transparent way of letting local social housing, which again is focused on mitigating the impact of welfare reform (particularly the bedroom subsidy) and promoting social inclusion.

## **4. Review of homelessness in East Herts**

The first contact with the Council, for the majority of households in housing need, is a Housing Options interview with the emphasis on preventing homelessness and saving, if appropriate, the current home. Where prevention of homelessness is not possible, the emphasis is on providing the most effective and appropriate homeless service.

#### a) Homelessness

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002 place statutory duties on local housing authorities to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Authorities must consider all applications from people seeking accommodation or assistance in obtaining accommodation. A main homelessness duty (see below) is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group.

Where a main duty is owed, the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and his or her household until a settled home becomes available for them. Where households are found to be intentionally homeless or not in priority need, the authority must make an assessment of their housing needs and provide advice and assistance to help them find accommodation for themselves.

Where the applicant is found to be intentionally homeless but falls in a priority need category the authority must also ensure that accommodation is available for long enough to give the applicant a reasonable opportunity to find a home.

The table below shows the number of homelessness presentations and acceptances over the last 3 years for East Herts.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Homeless applications	93	99	79
Homeless Acceptances	39	40	35
Percentage of acceptances against applications	42%	40%	44%

One of the ways that central government measures homelessness levels is looking at homeless acceptances per 1,000 head of population. The figure for Hertfordshire for 2012/13 was 2.40 acceptances per thousand population. Data for East Herts shows:

Year	Per 1000 head of pop <sub>n</sub>
2011/12	0.71
2012/13	0.59

The main causes of homelessness locally, in order, are:

Cause of homelessness	Number during 2012/13	Percentage
Termination of assured shorthold tenancy	14	40%
Parents no longer willing or able to accommodate	5	14%
Non violent relationship breakdown	4	11%
Mortgage/rent arrears	3	9%
<i>Other reasons</i>	9	26%

As at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, there were a total of 12 households in temporary accommodation. The breakdown of this as is follows:

Type of accommodation	Number
Bed & breakfast	0
Hostel inc women's refuge	7
Housing association stock	5
Private lease scheme	3
Other	12

#### b) Housing Advice

The Council's Housing Options approach is prevention focussed and that relies heavily on the residents of East Herts being able to access timely, high quality advice

and assistance to help them resolve their housing problems well before their situation reaches crisis point. The provision of advice, by the Council, is from both our Hertford and Bishop's Stortford offices by booked appointments and also via a drop-in service provided on a Monday in Hertford and Friday in Bishop's Stortford. In addition a number of our partner agencies provide advice across the district for example East Herts has a CAB in Hertford, Bishop's Stortford and Buntingford.

In 2012/13 the Council prevented homelessness for 276 households via advice and assistance. This was done through various initiatives including maximising benefits income, liaising with landlords, providing accommodation through our Housing Register or the provision of small loans to access the private sector.

In addition the Council funds a CAB Debt Advice worker who works from each of our offices for a total of 16 hours each week. This service sees applicants with priority debt issues. The majority of the work involves liaising with creditors, making payment arrangements for priority debts and maximising income for clients.

**c) Housing Register**

The Council is part of HomeOption, which provides our housing register and choice based lettings service for 5 local authorities – Broxbourne, Chelmsford, Uttlesford, Brentwood and East Herts. There are currently over 3,400 households registered for accommodation in the East Herts area. This can be broken down by bedroom requirements, as follows:

<b>Bedrooms required</b>	<b>Number of applicants</b>
One	2,021
Two	1,015
Three	322
Four or more	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,438</b>

Each year the Council has a number of lets available through nomination arrangements with housing associations. The number of lets over the last three years are:

- 673 lets during 2012/13
- 588 lets during 2011/12
- 468 lets during 2010/11

**d) Rough Sleepers**

The Communities and Local Government office has issued guidance that says Local Authorities should use local intelligence from partner agencies about the extent of rough sleeping in its area. Where this indicates that there are more than 10 rough sleepers in an area on any one night then they should carry out a full official count. The Council has monitored annually, since 2004, the number of rough sleepers in one particular week in October. The last count was October 2012 and four rough sleepers were identified in one night in one week. They were all single people aged 35 or less and were not in priority need for re-housing under current homeless legislation. The Council recognises that there are not many housing options for this client group other



than the private sector and has therefore consistently targeted its Rent Deposit Scheme at non-priority homeless people to prevent rough sleeping.

## 5. Likely future levels of homelessness

It is likely that the current and future national welfare benefit changes will have an impact on lower income households. Welfare spending is planned to reduce and there are a number of concerns for the future that arise from this; some are being seen already, such as:

- Single room rate extension to the under 35s,
- Difficulty in accessing private rented sector accommodation because of high demand, including demand from people who might have been expecting to access the owner occupation market.

Other concerns are from the likely impact of Universal Credit – due to come in October 2013. For those who rent privately, there is a concern that they may not be able to effectively set aside the rent element from their benefit each month and pay landlords rent due on time. This could lead to increased court action and increased threat of homelessness.

There are a number of other issues that will impact on the workloads of those working locally to tackle homelessness:

- Home ownership being increasingly out of reach for future generations and this will lead to increased demand for social / affordable housing,
- Increasing demands on the rented sector,
- Interest rates are low now but any upward changes will severely impact on owner-occupiers and could impact on buy to let landlords - who may either sell or seek higher rent levels - which could put the properties out of reach for those in receipt of Local Housing Allowance (LHA).

There is a concern that there will be increasing numbers of households making approaches for housing advice, looking to access more affordable housing locally and ultimately an increase in numbers of people threatened with homelessness. The Council needs to respond to this challenge, and the Homelessness Strategy sets out our plans for doing this.

With an expensive private rented market in East Herts there are key concerns around affordability especially in light of welfare changes including the cap on total benefits. The introduction of the affordable rent model has also seen a reduction in the affordable housing grant available from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) with a greater emphasis on housing associations delivering sites using their own resources and borrowing money secured against income from the Affordable Rent model. These changes are likely to have implications for many of our residents. Raising public awareness and helping people to prepare for these changes will be essential in order to prevent homelessness occurring.

## **6. Homeless provision locally**

There are a range of services in place to assist those who are threatened with homelessness. Some of these can be accessed directly by the clients, others are on a referral basis from one of the client facing agencies. The main sources of advice and assistance are:

### **a) East Herts Housing Options Service**

This is the statutory service provided by the council, providing free housing advice, homelessness prevention casework and assessment and provision under the homelessness legislation. The service is primarily based at the council offices in Hertford and also Bishop's Stortford.

A drop-in service is provided Monday mornings in Hertford and Friday mornings in Bishop's Stortford. Other than this the Housing Options staff can be accessed by telephone or via an appointment service. These interviews are used to prevent homelessness, work with clients to discuss other housing options and, where necessary to take formal homelessness applications and make enquiries into homelessness.

### **b) Citizens Advice Bureau**

The CAB has offices in Hertford, Bishop's Stortford and Buntingford in the district. They provide advice and assistance to clients.

### **c) Herts Young Homeless**

This group works with young people aged 16 to 25 who are threatened with homelessness. Staff from the group provide the first point of access to advice services, and carry out needs assessments. The group also has the ability to refer to social services where necessary. The focus of the work is prevention of homelessness, but also to ensure the Council's duty towards young people who are homeless is properly carried out.

## **7. Strategic themes**

Being homeless is a harmful and risky lifestyle. It is linked to wider social and health issues. Anyone can become homeless but we can identify some of those at risk based on past history in East Herts:

- young people leaving care,
- people suffering from domestic violence,
- those with a mental health or substance misuse problem,
- those from troubled families,
- people on low incomes and those who are in debt.

The aim of the homelessness review has been to produce a picture of homelessness demand in East Herts and also of the provision of services and actual accommodation for homeless households. By doing this, we are able to identify areas that need to be tackled by the Homelessness Strategy.

As the national and local policy changes, which they are bound to over the five year life of this Strategy, the Council will continue to adapt and take opportunities as they arise.

The key themes for the 2013-18 Homelessness Strategy for East Herts Council are:

**1. Prevent Homelessness through early intervention and targeted Housing Advice, including mitigating the impact of welfare reform, so that the risk of homelessness is reduced.**

Whilst we have, over recent years, significantly reduced statutory homelessness in East Herts through prevention initiatives, demand for services is expected to increase as a result of welfare benefit reform. It is important to continue to review and improve existing support available to people who are at risk of becoming homeless.

What is happening already?

Wherever possible the Housing Options Team works with a household to prevent homelessness by providing direct advice and support or, where needed by liaising with appropriate external support agencies. The team gives advice on housing options, housing rights, applying for affordable housing, accessing the private rented sector, debt and welfare benefits advice and support and information on advocacy agencies that are available.

- **Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advice Worker:** The Council funds a specialist money advice worker to work within the Housing Options Team for sixteen hours a week.
- **Homeless Prevention Fund:** The Council's Housing Options Officers have access to a fund that they can use to prevent homelessness. They have used this fund to pay for landlord renewal fees or to pay off small arrears thereby enabling a tenancy to be renewed or sustained.
- **Crash Pad and Mediation Service:** The Council has access to a crash pad mediation service for young people provided by the Herts Young Homeless Group (HYHG). The service provides emergency accommodation for young people with a host family whilst mediation is carried out to try to resolve the situation such that the young person can, if appropriate, return back home.
- **Home Visits:** In cases of homelessness the Housing Options Officers, where possible, carry out home visits, especially with family evictions, to ensure that both parties are clear about what homelessness actually means. In this way we can sometimes prevent homelessness. However if the breakdown cannot be reconciled we can negotiate and provide assistance for a planned move so preventing a crisis situation.

What we want to do

We want to continue to develop a range of Housing Options that are homeless prevention focussed. To do this we will continue to monitor the causes of homelessness within East Herts, monitor the effectiveness of our current options and research best practice to develop new options that are appropriate.

We want to improve communication with our residents about the services we and our partners provide, by marketing and the production of additional advice leaflets and online services, to ensure everyone in East Herts can access timely, high quality advice and assistance to help them resolve housing problems well before their housing problems reach crisis point.

We are continually looking to improve local services and are interested in what the CLG sponsored “gold Standard” can contribute in doing this. The Gold Standard is a CLG sponsored programme, focusing on a 10 step continuous improvement approach that starts with the pledge for local authorities to “strive for continuous improvement in front line housing services” and culminates in an application for the Gold Standard Challenge. The standard itself is based around the report from the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness – “Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to the Prevention of Homelessness”. The Standard itself is set out in Appendix 1.

## **2. Increase the role of the private rented sector for those in housing need, with better sustained tenancies.**

The Council recognises the increased demand for appropriate, affordable housing to meet local need, but also acknowledges homelessness in the future will be driven by the continuing changing economic climate and public expenditure changes. Welfare reforms in the private rented sector along with the requirement to meet the housing needs of other priority groups and the understanding that homelessness cannot be an assumed route into a social tenancy for life, means that the private rented sector must be developed as a solution for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

There are households that are either homeless or in housing need but the Council does not have a statutory duty to them or they have a low priority on the Council’s Housing Needs Register for example young single households or couples. With high house prices and high private sector rents these households often struggle to find suitable accommodation and are often effectively hidden homeless.

### What is happening already?

- The Councils Rent Deposit scheme has proved to be an effective and popular Housing Option that allows households to access the private rented sector where they would not financially be able to do so. The rent deposit has allowed people to choose where they want to live thereby maintaining family or schooling networks. In 2011/12 we assisted 41 households with finding accommodation in the private rented sector. The deposit is in the form of a grant and so is recyclable to enable the Council to assist others. In August 2103 the Council set up a partnership agreement with Herts Credit Savers to administer interest free loans for the Council’s Rent Deposit Scheme.

### What we want to do

We want to be able to use the private rented market more effectively to help those in housing need to choose where they want to live in the district and meet their housing need quickly and effectively. The private rented market in East Herts is characterised by high rent levels and high demand. The Council recognises the role of the private sector, particularly with homeless non-priority households and also in its ability to provide a choice of where to live for homeless households. The Council’s Rent Deposit Scheme is very successful but we need to ensure that we are maximising the recycling of the grant money to maximise the number of households that can use the scheme and also monitor the number and reason why tenancies fail.

The Council is also concerned about the high level of homeless acceptances resulting from the loss of assured shorthold tenancies. If we are to use the private rented sector to meet housing need we need to ensure that the tenancies can be sustained and provide a long term solution to housing need.

### **3. Increase the supply of appropriate, good quality affordable housing including the provision of supported accommodation.**

Essential to tackling homelessness is the supply of accommodation. The Council is working with partners to provide more supported accommodation in the district whether that be via dedicated accommodation or accommodation in the general social housing stock. We are also keen to work with the County Council and other partners regarding provision of support to ensure tenancies continue and are successfully renewed.

Preventing homelessness can have a huge influence on a vulnerable person's life chances. Good housing and support means that they are more likely to enter training, get a job, have a better standard of health and be able to take advantage of opportunities that they are offered.

#### What is happening already?

- The Council's threshold at which housing developers in East Herts have to provide affordable housing has been set as up to 40%. The Council regularly achieves this target on eligible sites and in 2010/11 it achieved ??? new affordable homes and in 2011/2012 it achieved ??? .
- Houses in Multiple Occupation are sought after, particularly by young, single, mobile people or those on benefit under the age of 35, as they provide more affordable accommodation. The Environmental Health unit takes a proactive approach to identify such properties and bring them up to standard, in consultation with the landlords, as well as investigating complaints from tenants.
- YMCA: The YMCA in Bishop's Stortford provides supported accommodation for 18-30 year olds for up to two years. The Council provides annually five units of general needs accommodation for young people who are coming to the end of their successful stay at the YMCA.
- The Council is working in partnership with Aldwyck Housing Association to provide 24 x1 bed accommodation for young people between the ages of 16 and 25 in Hertford. The first residents will be moving into the scheme in September 2013.

#### What we want to do

We want to continue to work proactively with developers and RPs to develop appropriate and affordable general needs housing in East Herts. We also want to work with the County Council and other partners to support vulnerable client groups, whether that be through accommodation based services or floating support. We will be working with the County Council on their review of Mental Health Services provision across the County. East Herts has been identified as an area in the County with significantly less accommodation and services than other parts of the Country for residents with mental health issues.

#### **4. Continue to develop and strengthen partnership working to maximise the benefits to homeless households**

Homelessness is complex; both the reasons for homelessness and the solutions. There are links to health, education, offending, income and relationships to name a few. Therefore any work to prevent homelessness or improve the services to homeless households will involve a partnership approach across a number of organisations.

##### What is happening already?

- The Housing Options Service plays a key role in many partnership arrangements including:
  - Community Safety Groups including MAPPA (Multi-Agency Protection Panel)
  - Hertfordshire Supporting People Programme Development Group
  - Herts Heads of Housing and Herts Strategy and Development Group
  - Hertfordshire Homeless Officer Group
  - Hertfordshire Mental Health Services
  - MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

These groups are useful for ensuring best practice, bench marking our services and ensuring good networking to maximise the benefits of the work that we all do.

- Young Persons Joint Housing Protocol: All ten local authorities in Hertfordshire, the County Council and Herts Young Homeless have developed and all signed up to a joint working protocol. The protocol is aimed at the 16 to 25 age group and explicitly defines the roles and responsibilities for each agency when a young person is either threatened with homelessness or is homeless. The protocol is currently being reviewed by Herts County Council and the ten districts to ensure it is up to date and relevant. There will also be a need, for East Herts, to ensure that there is a relevant link to the new Young Person project in Hertford.
- Homeless Prevention and Support Services: The Council part-funds Herts Young Homeless the successful education project on homelessness for young people in schools across the borough.

##### What we want to do

We do work in partnership with colleagues in other departments and other agencies, but we recognise that there is scope to achieve more in this area. We will review the partnerships we have. We will work to develop joint protocols, where appropriate, to ensure partners are aware of the expectations and roles they and the Council have to play in preventing homelessness. Key to this will be making sure that every contact partners make with vulnerable people and families really counts.

We are also keen to ensure that partners are involved in the delivery and the monitoring of this Strategy and will establish a forum to enable effective review to take place.

A Delivery Plan for the Homeless Strategy will be developed around these four themes once consultation has been undertaken with our partners.

## **8. Resources**

The Homelessness Strategy is based on the assumption that all actions and improvements will be delivered within the existing resources. The Council's in-house service consists of a team of 13 staff including a service manager. This team will have responsibility for developing, delivering and monitoring the Homelessness Strategy.

Partnership working will bring in additional physical resources. There are a range of agencies working in East Herts that provide general advice through to specialised housing and debt advice.

The Council receives an annual Homelessness Grant from Central Government to assist in implementing the Council's Homelessness Strategy and addressing homelessness issues. The amount available to the Housing Options Service for 2013/14 is £50,000. This funding is unlikely to continue after the next Government spending review in March 2015. This primarily funds the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme, through the provision of interest free loans, for households in housing need, to enable them to access private rented accommodation. The Council is working with Herts Credit Savers to ensure we maximise recovery of the loans to enable the scheme to be self-financing in future years.

For private rented tenancies the Council receives Discretionary Housing Benefit payments which can be used to support households affected by Local Housing Allowance changes. Where appropriate the Council will use Discretionary Housing Payments to help prevent vulnerable households in the private rented sector from becoming homeless.

## **9. Monitoring and taking the strategy forward**

Progress against the action plan and performance information will be reported as follows:

- Annually to the Council's Community Scrutiny Committee

## 10. Appendices

### **Appendix 1: Gold Standard: The 10 Local Challenges**

1. To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all local authority services
2. To actively work in partnership with the voluntary sector and other local authority partners to address support, education, employment and training needs
3. To offer a Housing Options and prevention service to all clients including written advice
4. To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective local alternative
5. To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each housing partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support
6. To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord.
7. To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme
8. To have a homelessness strategy which sets out a positive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs
9. To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 into bed and breakfast
10. To not place any families in bed and breakfast unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks

### **Appendix 2**

### **Glossary**

Affordable Rent means rented housing let by a Registered Provider of social housing to households who are eligible for Social Rented housing at a rent of no more than 80% of the Local Market Rent, including service charges where applicable, and upon the approved Financial Terms at a fixed term tenancy for a period not less than that recommended by the social housing regulator currently the Tenant Services Authority (or its successor body) and with regard to any advice set out in the local Strategic Tenancy Policy adopted by the Council

Benefit Cap is a maximum allowance on the total amount of benefit a household is entitled to receive under the proposed new universal credit system to be introduced in April 2013 if they are not in receipt of certain exempt benefits such as Disability Living



Allowance. At the time of publication of this document the benefit cap for single persons is £350 per week and for a family £500 per week.

Social Rent means housing let at a periodical rent due at intervals of a month or less without any fine deposit or premium which is let at or below Target Rent and is let on the Registered Provider's standard form of letting as an Assured Tenancy and upon the approved Financial Terms

Conversion is when a property is let at different terms and conditions to those it previously had i.e.: changed from a social rented property to an affordable rented property.

Fixed term tenancies are a new type of tenancy introduced under the Localism Act 2012 available for registered providers to use from the date of inception of the Act that has a specified term of not less than 5 years or 2 years in exceptional circumstances. Fixed term tenancies can be used for Affordable Rent or Social Rent properties.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) includes any successor body or agent exercising statutory powers for the provision of financial assistance to registered providers for the provision of Affordable Housing

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the maximum amount of Housing Benefit payable by number of bedrooms in a property in a Local Authority Area. It is updated annually and is calculated using the 30th percentile of market rent for each property size in that local authority area.

Mutual Exchange is a facility that enables a tenant to exchange their property and tenancy with another of their own Registered Provider's tenants or with a tenant of a different Registered Provider.

Registered providers is the term used for housing associations or other private sector developers, local Councils etc who have registered to provide social housing with the Homes & Communities Agency.

Universal Credit is a new approach to welfare to be introduced under the Government's welfare reforms in 2013. It will be an integrated benefit in place of income support, income-based job seekers allowance, income related employment and support allowance, housing benefit, child tax credit and working tax credit. Households in receipt of universal credit and not in receipt of specific exempt benefits will be subject to the benefit cap defined above.

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## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

#### REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### COMMUNITY SCRUTINY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK – MAY 2013 - JULY 2013

WARD (S) AFFECTED: All

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#### **Purpose/Summary of Report:**

- To report on the performance of the key indicators that relate to Community Scrutiny for the period May 2013 to July 2013.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATION FOR COMMUNITY SCRUTINY:</u></b>	
<b>That:</b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>The reported performance for the period May 2013 to July 2013 be received; and</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>The Executive be advised of any further recommendations.</b>

---

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 This is a performance report relevant to Community Scrutiny's terms of reference covering the period May 2013 to July 2013.

1.1 The report contains a breakdown of the following information by each Corporate Priority:

- An overview of performance, in particular where there have been issues and remedial actions taken during the period. Should members want more detailed information on a specific month, they should refer to that month's Executive Corporate Healthcheck report available on the council website.
- The indicators where data is collected monthly, with performance for July 2013 presented in detail (the most up to date available)

with previous months summarised in a trend chart.




- The indicators where data is collected quarterly, with performance for Quarter 1 presented in detail (the most up to date available) with previous quarters summarised in a trend chart.



1.2 All Councillors have access to Covalent (the council’s performance management system), should they wish to interrogate the full range of performance indicators. The Performance Team are able to provide support and training on using the Covalent system if required.

1.4 **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’** Shows the full set of performance indicators that are reported on a monthly basis to this committee. Essential Reference Paper B has been sorted by status e.g. all performance indicators that are ‘red’ are listed first etc.

**Essential Reference Paper ‘C’** Guidance notes and definitions for performance indicators relating to Community Scrutiny Committee.

The codes used in relation to performance indicator monitoring are as follows:

Status	
	This PI is 6% or more off target.
	This PI is 1-5% off target.
	This PI is on target.

Short Term Trends	
	The value of this PI has changed in the short term.
	The value of this PI has not changed in the short term.

## 2.0 Report

### People

#### **Performance analysis**

2.2 **EHPI 3b - Usage: number of swims (16 – under 60 year olds).** Performance was ‘Red’ for Quarter 1. Performance was below target, and throughput was down against service expectations. This user group will be monitored by both the Leisure Service Manager and SLM.

2.1 The following indicators were ‘Green’, meaning that the targets were either met or exceeded for July/Quarter 1 2013. They were:

- EHPI 3a - Usage: number of swims (under 16)
- EHPI 3c - Usage: number of swims (60 year old +)
- EHPI 4a - Usage: Gym (16 – under 60 year olds)
- EHPI 4b - Usage: Gym (60 + year olds)
- EHPI 129 – Response time to anti social behaviour (ASB) complaints made to East Herts Council.
- EHPI 181 – Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events.

Please refer to **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’** for full details.

## **CONCLUSION**

2.1 In conclusion Members are asked to note the performance indicator analysis for the period May 2013 to July 2013 in **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’**.

### 3.0 Implications/Consultation

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper ‘A’**.

### Background Papers:

- 2012/13 Estimates and Future Targets Report – Executive 5 March 2013.
- Should members require any guidance notes or Performance Indicator definitions please contact a member of the Performance team in the contacts listed below.

Contact Members: Councillor Linda Haysey - Executive Member for Community Development, Leisure and Culture  
Councillor Malcolm Alexander – Executive member for Community Safety and Protection.

Contact Officer: Ceri Pettit – Corporate Planning and Performance Manager  
Contact Tel Ext No 2240  
[ceri.pettit@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:ceri.pettit@eastherts.gov.uk)

Report Author: Karl Chui – Performance Monitoring Officer  
Contact Tel Ext No 2243  
[karl.chui@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:karl.chui@eastherts.gov.uk)

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:	<b>People</b> <i>This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.</i>
Consultation:	Performance monitoring discussions have taken place between Directors and Heads of Service.
Legal:	There are no legal implications.
Financial:	There are no financial implications.
Human Resource:	There are no Human Resource implications.
Risk Management:	There are no Risk implications.

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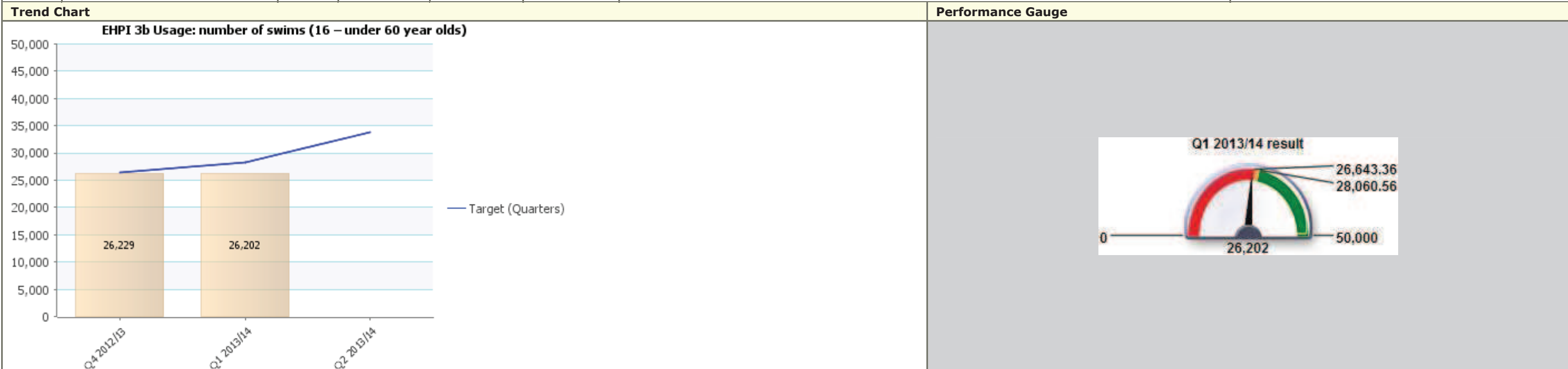


## May to July Community Scrutiny Corporate Healthcheck 2013/14

**Traffic Light Red**  
**Description** People

**Community and Cultural Services**

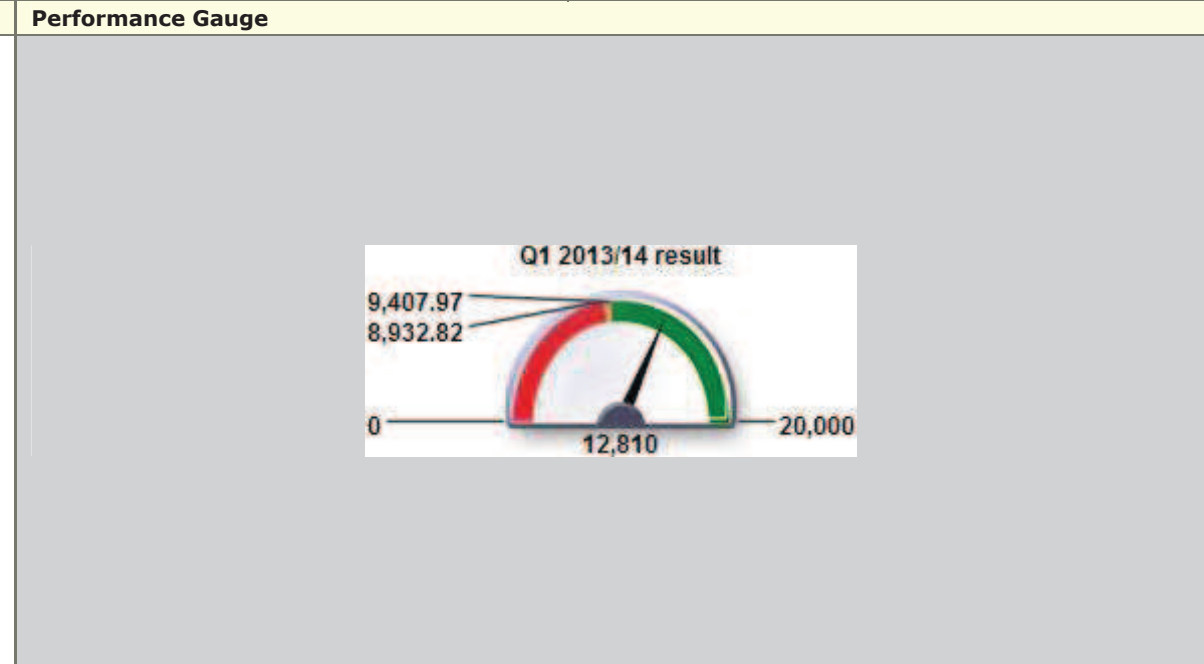
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013.
EHPI 3b	Usage: number of swims (16 &acirc" under 60 year olds)		26,202	28,344		Performance was below target, and throughput was down against service expectations. This user group will be monitored by both the Leisure Service Manager and SLM.	None



**Traffic Light Green**  
**Description People**

**Community and Cultural Services**

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013.
EHPI 3a	Usage: number of swims (under 16)	✓	12,810	9,503	↑	Figures for 2013/14 Quarter 1 shows that there has been an increase in throughput for this period and performance shows a favourable position against target.	None



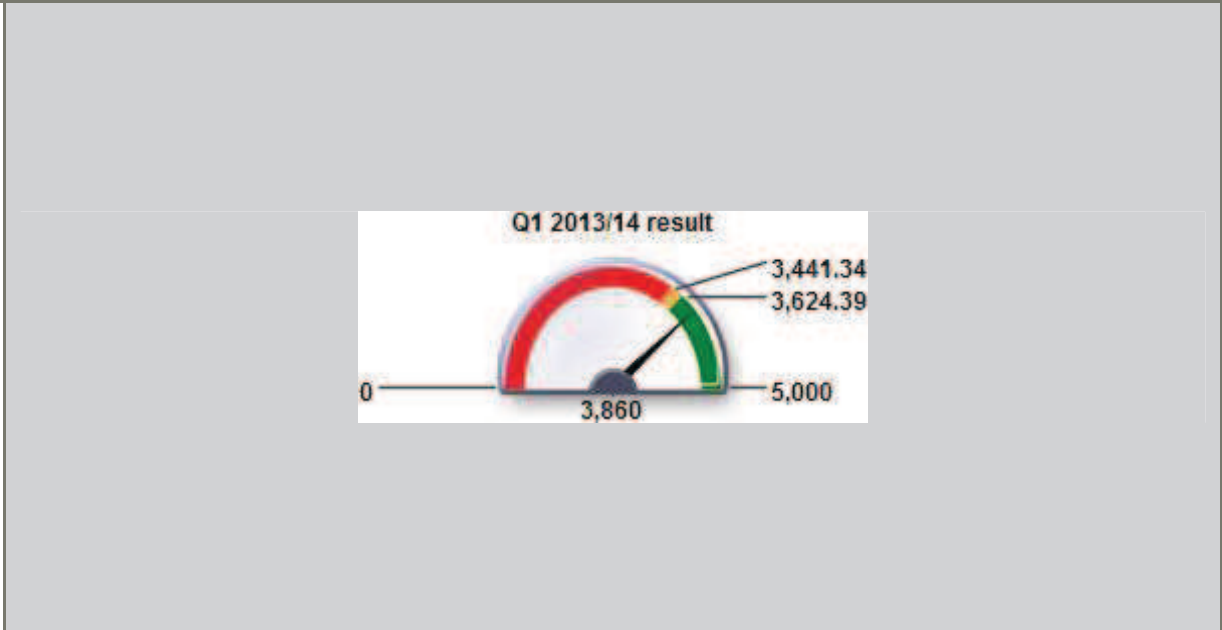
Community and Cultural Services																											
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013.																				
EHPI 3c	Usage: number of swims (60 year old +)		6,551	6,448		Figures for 2013/14 Quarter 1 shows that throughput is in line with normal trends for this period and performance shows a favourable position against target.	None																				
<b>Trend Chart</b>						<b>Performance Gauge</b>																					
<p><b>EHPI 3c Usage: number of swims (60 year old +)</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>EHPI 3c Usage Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Usage</th> <th>Target (Quarters)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q4 2012/13</td> <td>6,914</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2013/14</td> <td>6,551</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2013/14</td> <td>-</td> <td>~8,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Quarter	Usage	Target (Quarters)	Q4 2012/13	6,914	-	Q1 2013/14	6,551	-	Q2 2013/14	-	~8,000	<p>Q1 2013/14 result</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Value</th> <th>Zone</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>6,551</td> <td>Green</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6,383.52</td> <td>Yellow</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6,061.12</td> <td>Red</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Value	Zone	6,551	Green	6,383.52	Yellow	6,061.12	Red
Quarter	Usage	Target (Quarters)																									
Q4 2012/13	6,914	-																									
Q1 2013/14	6,551	-																									
Q2 2013/14	-	~8,000																									
Value	Zone																										
6,551	Green																										
6,383.52	Yellow																										
6,061.12	Red																										

Community and Cultural Services																											
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013.																				
EHPI 4a	Usage: Gym (16 &acirc under 60 year olds)		49,071	44,586		Figures for 2013/14 Quarter 1 shows that throughput is in line with normal trends for this period and performance shows a favourable position against target.	None																				
<b>Trend Chart</b>						<b>Performance Gauge</b>																					
<p><b>EHPI 4a Usage: Gym (16 – under 60 year olds)</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>EHPI 4a Usage Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Usage</th> <th>Target (Quarters)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q4 2012/13</td> <td>55,594</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2013/14</td> <td>49,071</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2 2013/14</td> <td>-</td> <td>~45,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Quarter	Usage	Target (Quarters)	Q4 2012/13	55,594	-	Q1 2013/14	49,071	-	Q2 2013/14	-	~45,000	<p>Q1 2013/14 result</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Value</th> <th>Zone</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>49,071</td> <td>Green</td> </tr> <tr> <td>41,910.84</td> <td>Yellow</td> </tr> <tr> <td>44,140.14</td> <td>Red</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Value	Zone	49,071	Green	41,910.84	Yellow	44,140.14	Red
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**Community and Cultural Services**

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013.
EHPI 4b	Usage: Gym (60 + year olds)		3,860	3,661		Figures for 2013/14 Quarter 1 shows that throughput is in line with normal trends for this period and performance shows a favourable position against target.	None

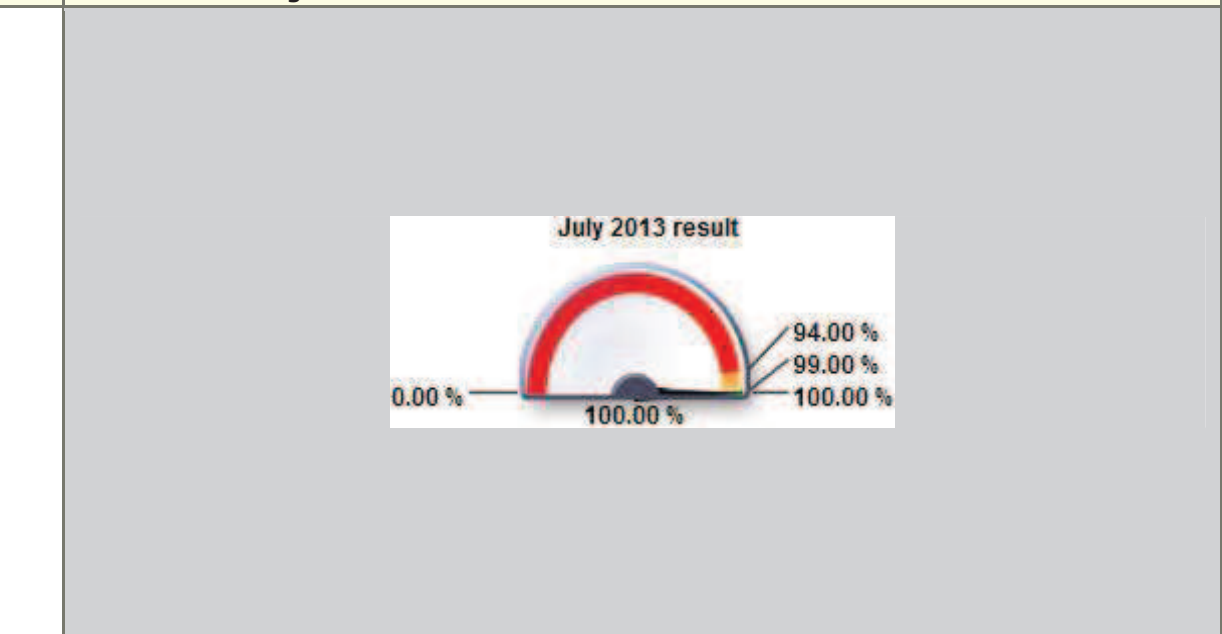
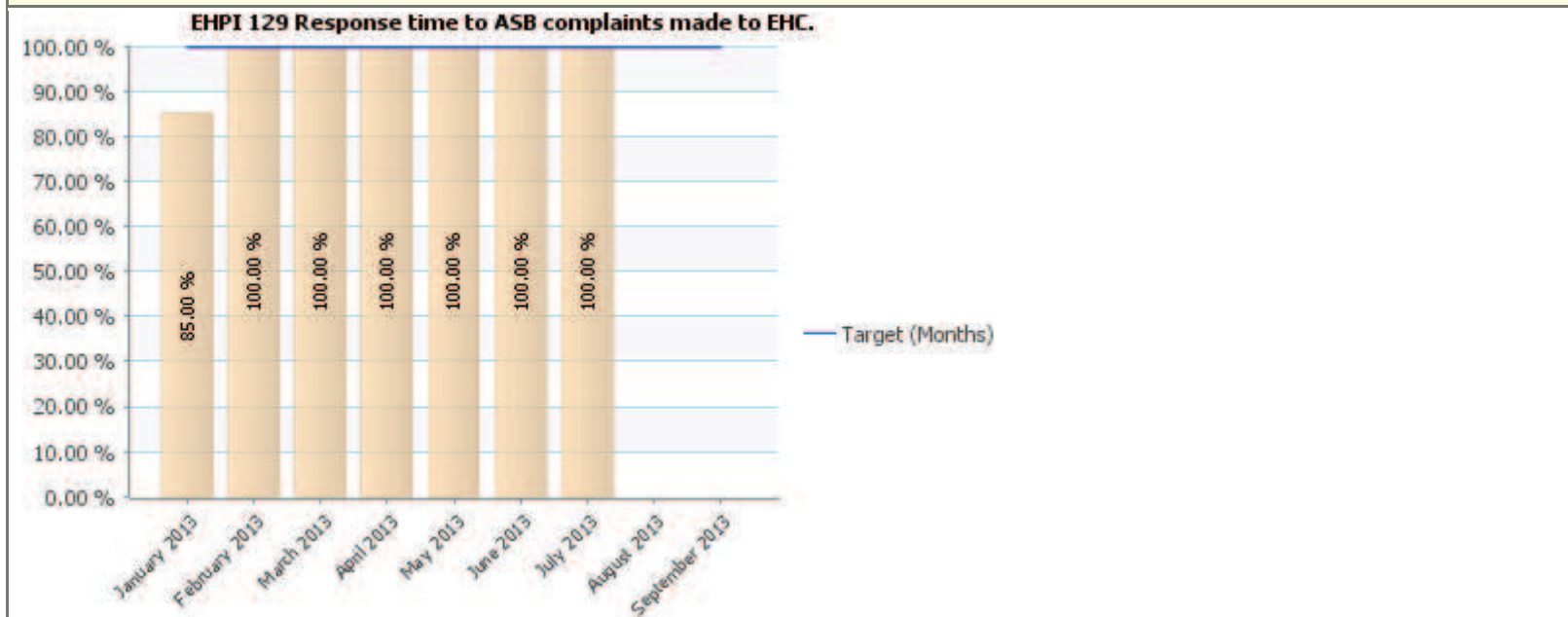
**Trend Chart** **Performance Gauge**



**Licensing and Community Safety**

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013.
EHPI 129	Response time to ASB complaints made to EHC.		100.00 %	100.00 %		There were 11 complaints made to the ASB officer at EHC all of which were responded to within the minimum of two working days.	None

**Trend Chart** **Performance Gauge**



Revenues and Benefits Services																							
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2013.																
EHPI 181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events		10.9 days	15.0 days		Period from 11 June 2013 to 9 July 2013 is 15.73 days. The Cumulative position is 10.88 days.	None																
<b>Trend Chart</b>						<b>Performance Gauge</b>																	
<p><b>EHPI 181 Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Monthly Data for Trend Chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Time taken (days)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>January 2013</td><td>9.8</td></tr> <tr><td>February 2013</td><td>6.0</td></tr> <tr><td>March 2013</td><td>10.0</td></tr> <tr><td>April 2013</td><td>8.1</td></tr> <tr><td>May 2013</td><td>8.5</td></tr> <tr><td>June 2013</td><td>9.4</td></tr> <tr><td>July 2013</td><td>10.9</td></tr> </tbody> </table>						Month	Time taken (days)	January 2013	9.8	February 2013	6.0	March 2013	10.0	April 2013	8.1	May 2013	8.5	June 2013	9.4	July 2013	10.9		
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July 2013	10.9																						

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

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**For information only: Performance Indicator Guidance**

Sorted by PI code.

<b>EHPI 3a</b> - Usage: number of swims (under 16)
<b>PI Definition</b>
Total number at all pools
<b>Data Source</b>
Community and Cultural Services
<b>Other Guidance</b>
SLM – Sport & Leisure Management Ltd – contact made through the Leisure Services Manager.

<b>EHPI 3b</b> - Usage: number of swims (16 – under 60 year olds)
<b>PI Definition</b>
Total number at all pools
<b>Data Source</b>

Community and Cultural Services

**Other Guidance**

SLM – Sport & Leisure Management Ltd – contact made through the Leisure Services Manager.

**EHPI 3c** - Usage: number of swims (60 year old +)

**PI Definition**

Total number at all pools

**Data Source**

Community and Cultural Services

**Other Guidance**

SLM – Sport & Leisure Management Ltd – contact made through the Leisure Services Manager.

**EHPI 4a** - Usage: Gym (16 – under 60 year olds)

**PI Definition**

Total number from; Fanshawe, Grange Paddocks, Hartham & Leventhorpe



<b>Data Source</b>
Community and Cultural Services
<b>Other Guidance</b>
SLM – Sport & Leisure Management Ltd – contact made through the Leisure Services Manager.

<b>EHPI 4b</b> - Usage: Gym (60 + year olds)
<b>PI Definition</b>
Total number from; Fanshawe, Grange Paddocks, Hartham & Leventhorpe
<b>Data Source</b>
Community and Cultural Services
<b>Other Guidance</b>
SLM – Sport & Leisure Management Ltd – contact made through the Leisure Services Manager.

<b>EHPI 129</b> - Response time to Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) complaints made to East Herts Council (EHC).
<b>PI Definition</b>
Number of ASB complaints made or referred to EHC ASB Officer that have response within two

working days (in line with minimum standards) from the total number of complaints received.

#### Data Source

Licensing and Community Safety

#### Other Guidance

Full details of minimum standards for ASB can be found on EHC website.

**EHPI 181** - Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims and change events

#### PI Definition

**The average time taken in calendar days to process all new claims and change events in Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB)**

**New Claims:** Any new claim to HB/CTB

**Change Event:** Notification of a change of circumstances which requires a decision to be made by the local authority but excluding automatic up-rating and annual council tax increases, batch changes to Council Tax liability, and revisions to earlier decisions, e.g. following an accuracy and/or management check or appeal/reconsideration/revision.

**Time taken to process:** The time elapsed between receipt of claim or notification of change event and a decision being recorded. The day on which the claim is received is counted as Day 1.

**Decision:** As defined in HB and CTB regulations

**Date of receipt:** Date that notification of the claim or change event was received by the authority. Either from the customer, Jobcentre Plus or The Pensions, Disability and Carers Service or other third party.

**Good performance**

Good performance is typified by a lower average number of calendar days taken to process new claims and change events

**Data Source**

Revenues and Benefits Services

**Other Guidance**

None.

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