

# **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **HOUSING COMMITTEE – 17 MAY 2006**

### **HOUSING BUSINESS PLAN 2006/2009**

#### **Report by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services**

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To seek members approval for the Housing Service Business Plan for the period 2006/2009.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** Following the completion of the Housing Stock Options Appraisal in Spring 2005, members agreed to introduce a major capital investment programme to improve the Council housing stock to the new Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015, based on a strategy of continued Council ownership of the housing stock. In coming to this decision, members accepted the advice of its external advisors, DTZ Pida, that such a strategy could be sustained only where a rigorous approach to business planning was adopted particularly to ensure that service costs were aligned with the forecast reduction in income as right to buy sales to sitting tenants continued over the life-time of the investment strategy.
- 2.2** The Council submitted its initial Standard Delivery Plan to Communities Scotland in 2005. An updated Standard Delivery Plan requires to be re-submitted. This will set out details of the Housing Improvement Programme up to 2015 to ensure compliance with the new Housing Quality Standard by that date.

## **3. HOUSING BUSINESS PLAN**

- 3.1** The Business Plan document is appended to this report. The plan was produced by a short life work group established within the service with input from other key partners and stakeholders. DTZ Pida have been engaged to update and provide external validation to the Standard Delivery Plan and its attendant investment framework. They have also provided assistance and support to produce a business planning model for use by Housing and Finance staff in updating the Standard Delivery Plan over coming years.
- 3.2** The planned document is sub-divided into the following sections:
- National Context and Local Vision
  - Functions, Resources and Structures
  - Community Engagement
  - People Development
  - Partnership Working

- Performance Information
- Monitoring and Review Framework
- Performance Targets
- Service Standards
- Strategic Risk Analysis
- Summary of Key Points
- Improvement Plan

**3.3** The plan is supported by a series of financial and technical appendices.

#### **4. FINANCIAL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** The financial elements of the Business Plan reflect the agreed outcomes of the 2006/2007 Budget Estimates process and the reappraised Housing Investment Plan which has been designed to deliver the Scottish Housing Quality Standard in East Ayrshire by 2015. The plan sets out service performance targets and Quality Standards for members consideration and approval.

#### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

**5.1** Adoption of robust business planning approaches will help focus the service on meeting its statutory obligations whilst balancing the demand for new and existing services against available resources without prejudice to the Council's adopted strategy of improving the housing stock to meet the new Scottish Housing Quality Standard. The Business Plan supports delivery of the East Ayrshire Community Plan and the Local Housing Strategy together with the subordinate strategies and plans detailed therein.

#### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**6.1** Members are recommended to:

- (i) Approve the contents of the Housing Service Business Plan 2006/2009 as appended to this report;
- (ii) Approve the terms of the updated Standard Delivery Plan and authorise submission to Communities Scotland; and
- (iii) Authorise the Head of Housing to implement the plan and report outcomes to elected members on an annual basis.

**William Stafford**  
**Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services**

**CMCA/LA**

**26 April 2006**

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

Members wishing further information should contact Chris McAleavey, Head of Housing on 01563 554876

Implementation Officer – [chris.mcaleavey@east-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:chris.mcaleavey@east-ayrshire.gov.uk)

***(10/05/06)***

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HOUSING BUSINESS PLAN**

**2006 – 2009**

# Housing Business Plan

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## Glossary of Abbreviations

ASB	Antisocial Behaviour
ASBO	Antisocial Behaviour Order
BV	Best Value
BVSR	Best Value Service Review
CIP	Continuous Improvement Plan
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
CP	Community Plan
DiGS	Deposit Guarantee Scheme
EAC	East Ayrshire Council
EAGER	East Ayrshire General Employee Review
EARS	East Ayrshire Residents Syndicate
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
HERF	Housing Estate Regeneration Fund
HIP	Housing Improvement Programme
HQN	Housing Quality Network
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
IIP	Investors in People
IPF	Institute of Public Finance
LHS	Local Housing Strategy
LHSA	Local Housing Systems Analysis
LLS	Landlord Leasing Scheme
LOA	Local Outcome Agreement
PI	Performance Indicator
PSHCS	Private Sector House Condition Survey
PSHG	Private Sector Housing Grant
SDP	Standard Delivery Plan
SFHA	Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
SHBVN	Scottish Housing Best Value Network
SHQS	Scottish Housing Quality Standard
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SOR	Schedule of Rates
SRF	Single Regulatory Framework

T&D	Training and Development
TCLI	Town Centre Living Initiative
TARA	Tenant and Residents Association
TP	Tenant Participation
TPSG	Tenant Participation Steering Groups
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
RTO	Registered Tenant Organisation

### **Useful Web Links**

East Ayrshire Council  
[www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/](http://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/)

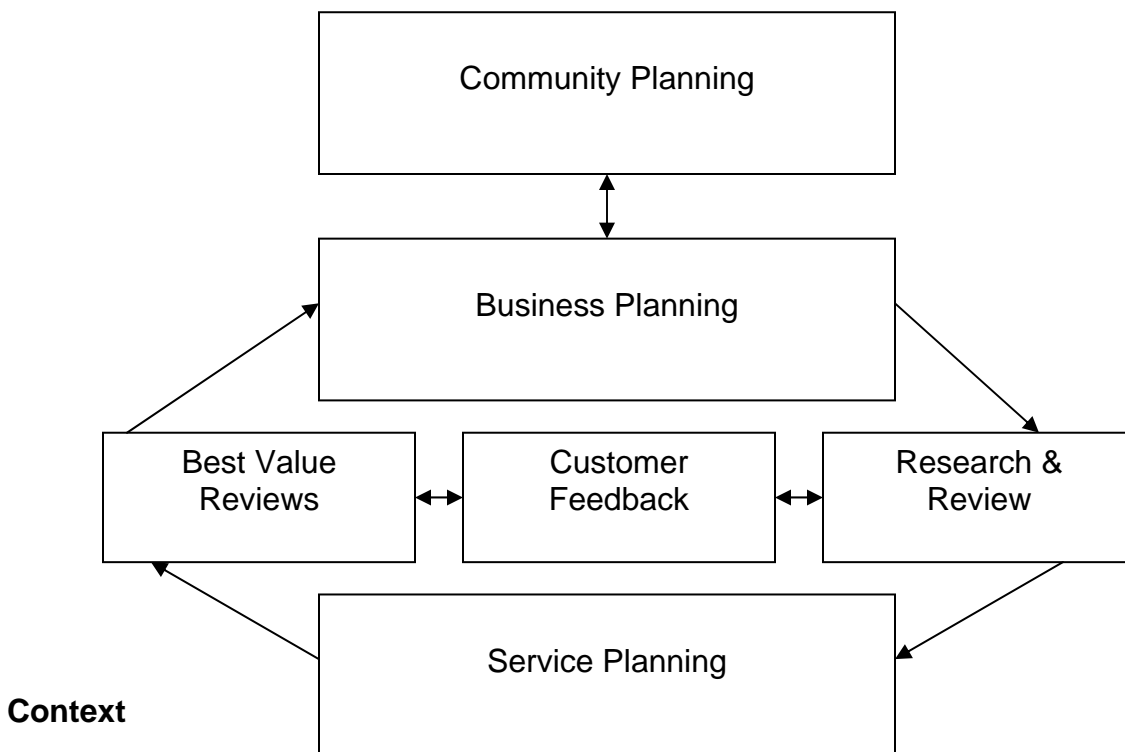
Audit Scotland  
[www.audit-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk)

Communities Scotland  
[www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk](http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk)

Scottish Executive  
[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

## Chapter 1 – Introduction

- 1.1 The Business Plan sets out a strategic analysis of short and medium term issues affecting management of the Council's Housing Services in East Ayrshire.
- 1.2 It sets out the national policy agenda and compares this against the local context. This allows the identification of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Housing Service. The plan also sets out long-term financial forecast for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 1.3 The Business Plan is a cornerstone of the strategic planning process and sets out the rationale for the future direction of the Housing Service. This enables the service to develop detailed plans through its service planning process, which in turn enables specific work plans and projects to be taken forward on an annual basis. The business and service planning process involves a continual process of research, review and financial planning. Diagram 1 below summarises the business planning and service planning process.
- 1.4 Diagram 1 - The Strategic Planning Process



1.5 East Ayrshire Council is a semi-urban / rural local authority in the west of Scotland. The majority of the population of East Ayrshire is based in Kilmarnock (the biggest town in the Council area) with the rest living in smaller towns and villages.

1.6 Housing is part of the Neighbourhood Services Department which includes:

- Cleansing Services
- Outdoor Amenities
- Dean Castle Country Park
- Arts & Museums
- Trading Standards
- Environmental Health
- Licensing & Community Safety
- Emergency Planning
- Libraries, Registration & Information Services (including Local Offices)
- Leisure development
- Community Recreation
- Central Services
- Building & Works (the Council's in-house property maintenance service)

1.7 The department of Neighbourhood Services was formed in 2004 following a Council wide restructuring which integrated the Housing and Building & Works services with Protective and Community Services under one Executive Director.

In preparation for submission of the Standard Delivery Plan, East Ayrshire Council undertook a housing stock option appraisal in March 2005, which examined the three strategic options for ownership and management of the Council's housing stock – stock retention, partial stock transfer and full stock transfer.

1.8 Housing then carried out a Best Value Service Review and a Stock Options Appraisal which had the following main outcomes:

- The decision to retain ownership of the housing stock within East Ayrshire Council and not to recommend housing stock transfer
- The reconfiguration and restructure of the Housing Service to deliver efficiencies
- The development of a Standard Delivery Plan to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015
- The development of this Housing Business Plan to assist with long term planning, continuous improvement and best value.

- 1.9 The Housing Service is committed to performance improvement through benchmarking and is a long-standing and active member of the Scottish Housing Quality Network (a benchmarking group consisting of 30 Scottish Local Authorities). East Ayrshire Council participates in the performance benchmarking framework and is represented on all of the thematic sub groups.
- 1.10 Housing is also committed to obtaining Best Value and follows the corporate guidance by conducting an annual EFQM pathway review.
- 1.11 This is the first comprehensive business plan for the Housing Service. The Business Plan will identify what we will do in the course of the next 3 years. It will also set out our review framework (Chapter 8), performance targets (Chapter 9) and service standards (Chapter 10). Our planned actions are set out in the Continuous Improvement Plan (Chapter 13)

## Chapter 2 – National Context and Local Vision

- 2.1 The Scottish Executive set out its vision for housing in Scotland for the next three years through its policy statement 'Homes for Scotland's People' (March 2005).
- 2.2 The key themes in this statement are summarized as:
- Ensuring that plans are in place so that everyone living in the social rented sector lives in a home that meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015.
  - Considering whether change is required to the approach for rent setting.
  - Extending the homelessness provisions to ensure that local authorities are able to offer all unintentionally homeless people the right to permanent accommodation by 2012.
  - Continuing the Supporting People programme to enable vulnerable people to live independently in the community.
  - Eradicating fuel poverty by 2016.
  - Investing £318m through the Community Regeneration Fund to help revitalise Scotland's most deprived communities.
  - Investment in affordable home to be expanded.
  - Promotion of low cost ownership schemes.
  - Modernising the planning system.
  - Raising the standard of housing in the private sector.
- 2.3 The Council vision is that East Ayrshire will be a place with strong, vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs. This vision encapsulates the 4 core values of the Council - Quality, Equality, Access and Partnership, which have influenced the 5 guiding principles of local community planning.
- 2.4 With the adoption of the Community Planning process the Council aims to promote social justice & inclusion, build sustainability, succeed in joint working & involving people, ensure quality & accessibility and deliver continuous improvement & best value. The Housing Service plays a vital part in helping the Council move the agenda associated with these principles forward and has a key role to play in achieving the targets set out within the Community Plan thematic action plans:
- Promoting Community Learning
  - Improving Opportunities
  - Improving Community Safety
  - Improving Health

- Eliminating Poverty
  - Improving the Environment
- 2.5 Housing Service goals and objectives are focused on supporting achievement of the Community Planning objectives.
- 2.6 The Housing Service contributes to other Council policies such as the Local Plan and is a partner in various Social Work led initiatives that are designed to tackle poverty and social exclusion. A wide range of legislation influences the service including the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003, the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Anti-social Behaviour, etc (Scotland) Act 2004.
- 2.7 The actions detailed in the Housing Continuous Improvement Plan are linked to the themes of the East Ayrshire Community Plan (Chapter 13)

### Housing Vision

- 2.8 The Housing Service aims to provide good quality affordable housing to those in need, and a value for money housing service to the people of East Ayrshire. Supporting this are key aims to continually improve the quality of service in East Ayrshire by:
- Ensuring that the Council's core values of quality, equality, access and partnership are central to all activities.
  - Improving standards of service delivery to meet the requirements of our customers.
  - Focusing on communication, consultation, participation and training.
- 2.9 Housing objectives are set within the Community Plan, the Local Housing Strategy and the Housing Business Plan. Progress towards these objectives are regularly monitored, analysed and reviewed.

### Housing Service Objectives

- 2.10 As a housing provider we seek to:
- Achieve excellent quality services which represent value for money
  - Reduce homelessness whilst providing a range of housing options for homeless people
  - Make our communities safe, secure and attractive
  - Have motivated staff who are committed to excellent customer service
  - Promote a culture of partnership working and continuous improvement

## Local Housing Strategy

2.11 The current Local Housing Strategy (LHS) was adopted by the Council in April 2004 and is the major strategy document for Housing in East Ayrshire. This strategy sets out how the Council and its partners aim to meet identified housing needs across the area from 2004 to 2009. It sets out the key issues affecting the housing system in East Ayrshire and includes detailed plans setting out how the aims will be delivered. The LHS aims to help people:

- Live in a safe, attractive & sustainable community
- Access quality housing
- Afford a property that meets their needs and aspirations
- Achieve independent living

2.12 The LHS is guided by four aims that were developed, with our tenants and partners, to help the realisation of the vision and to tackle the key housing issues in East Ayrshire. These aims are:

- Support the Community Planning Partnership to regenerate disadvantaged areas and develop sustainable communities.
- Improve residents' satisfaction with their homes and surrounding environment
- Ensure equal access to an adequate supply of good quality, affordable accommodation
- Ensure individuals requiring support to live independently in the community are enabled to do so

## **Chapter 3 – Service & Structure**

- 3.1 East Ayrshire Council Housing Service is the main provider of social rented housing accommodation within the authority area. Housing is one of four services within the Department of Neighbourhood Services
- 3.2 East Ayrshire Council has developed a Community Plan with its wider strategic partners and the activities undertaken by Housing support the objectives and themes of this Community Planning Process. The Housing Service is committed to ensuring equal opportunities in the delivery of its service.
- 3.3 The Council have a statutory obligation to deal with homeless applicants and to produce and maintain a Local Housing Strategy for the area. The Council have an “enabling” development role and work closely with local RSLs to provide suitable and affordable housing and to address the requirements of people with special needs. The Council also has a statutory obligation to produce and maintain an Antisocial Behaviour Strategy and have responded to this locally through the development of an Antisocial Behaviour Team and a Community Warden Service.
- 3.4 Following a recent Best Value Service Review and Housing Stock Options Appraisal the Housing Committee, in April 2005, decided to retain ownership of the housing stock. Housing has a close working relationship with Building & Works, the in-house provider of the housing repairs and maintenance service, and has close partnering arrangements to improve and maintain the high quality and standard of our stock, ensuring that the Scottish Housing Quality Standard is met by 2015 through the Standard Delivery Plan.

### **Housing Services**

#### Allocations and Void Management

- 3.5 There are statutory rules governing housing registers and the allocation of houses by local authorities and anyone aged 16 years or over is entitled to be admitted to the housing list. This service is provided on a decentralised basis by six area teams. The Allocations Policy is regularly reviewed to ensure it responds to legislative changes, demographic trends and the principles of supply and demand. The Allocations System is a groups plus points system with a quota attached to each group. A Common Housing Register is being developed in conjunction with partner Registered Social Landlords operating in East Ayrshire.
- 3.6 It is the objective of Void Management to ensure that houses which become vacant are re-let at the earliest opportunity. In order that houses

are in a fit and proper condition for re-let, a set of lettable standards are in place. Void management also features in the Regeneration and Development Strategies, which may include demolition where there is no prospect of any demand being established.

### Homelessness and Housing Support

- 3.7 The Scottish Executive established its national Homelessness Task Force in August 1999 to make recommendations on how homelessness in Scotland can best be prevented and where it occurs, tackled effectively. The Task Force's first set of recommendations were incorporated into the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and serve to:
- enhance the legal rights of homeless and potentially homeless people;
  - place additional duties on local authorities to undertake homelessness assessments and draw up homelessness strategies;
  - ensure that advice on housing and related services is provided free of charge to anyone at risk of homelessness;
  - bring in new arrangements where Communities Scotland will inspect and regulate local authority homeless services;
  - introduce specific provision to ensure that the homeless or potentially homeless are not disadvantaged where local authority housing stock is transferred to an alternative landlord.
- 3.8 The Scottish Executive made it clear that the homelessness legislation would continue to be refined and expanded with the final recommendations of the Task Force incorporated into the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003. Combined with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, this is arguably one of the most progressive pieces of housing legislation in Europe. The Act aims to introduce a change of culture, concentrating available resources on re-housing homeless people successfully, rather than investigating whether they can be rationed out of the system.
- 3.9 To do this, the Act will phase out 'priority need' within ten years, update the law surrounding 'intentionality', suspend the 'local connection' provision and provide a right to a permanent home by 2012. The Act also places duties on private-sector landlords to inform local authorities if they are evicting a tenant. Finally, the Act also enables the courts to take into account where rent arrears are the result of a delay in housing benefit payment and therefore, avoid unnecessary evictions.
- 3.10 Funding has been provided for local authorities to develop Homelessness Strategies and to deliver their objectives. The East Ayrshire Homelessness Strategy has been produced in partnership with other agencies and voluntary bodies who contribute to the care of homeless

people, including their health needs and through-care to take account of their long-term accommodation needs. The Scottish Executive provides grant funding for furnished tenancies as well as Homelessness Strategy Funding. The East Ayrshire Homelessness Strategy also provides for a comprehensive information and advice service and is endeavouring to provide close liaison with the private rented sector.

- 3.11 The Homeless Team is based in the Housing Options Office in Kilmarnock. Homeless Services is also provided from the Cumnock Housing Office. There are two hostels providing temporary accommodation in Kilmarnock and Cumnock. Staff are present at these facilities 24 hours per day. There are also furnished flats available throughout the district to provide temporary accommodation, mainly for families.
- 3.12 Housing Support is funded from Supporting People Grant. Housing Support is designed to assist vulnerable individuals, generally in the early stages of tenancy, who require varying degrees of support to assist them to maintain their tenancy. The Housing Support Teams are based in the Housing Options office in Kilmarnock and Netherthird, Cumnock.

#### Repairs & Maintenance

- 3.13 There is a statutory obligation on landlords to ensure all tenanted properties are wind and watertight. The repairs service is, in the main, carried out by Housing's in-house partner Building and Works. Building and Works became the sole provider of the maintenance and repairs service after the mixed economy was dissolved in June 2004. Repairs are mainly reported through the Housing Offices and the Council Local Offices, although out of hours repairs can be reported through the Council helpline facility. Housing operates a system of quality control and audit to ensure best value in this service activity.
- 3.14 Following a Best Value Service Review in early 2005, a Repairs Improvement Partnership was set up to investigate areas for repairs improvement and formulate recommendations that will enhance the service provided. This group will report its recommendations to Housing Committee in mid 2006.

#### Rents and Arrears Management

- 3.15 The rent accounting and collection functions are carried out by the Finance and Leisure Services, however, arrears management is carried out on a decentralised basis by Housing staff. Our objective is to maximise income received to pay for the full range of housing services.

This service works closely with Housing Benefits Administration staff in order to maximise the income of Council tenants.

### Estate Management

- 3.16 Estate management describes the function of looking after housing estates to maintain the amenity of the area, entailing the provision of regular maintenance protocols with regards to grounds maintenance, graffiti and refuse disposal.

### Tenancy Management and Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)

- 3.17 To ensure that tenants recognise their obligations with regards to their conditions of tenancy, the service will ensure periodic inspection and enforce conditions as necessary. Low-level neighbour disputes are also dealt with under tenancy management.
- 3.18 One of the Scottish Executive's key aims is to emphasise rights and responsibilities of all householders, across tenures, so that people may enjoy their homes free from fear or harassment.
- 3.19 A framework for countering anti-social behaviour (ASB) has been developed. This includes legal measures, partnership working, mediation, acceptable behaviour contracts and Antisocial Behaviour Strategies.
- 3.20 Housing manages the Community Wardens Service which is funded by the Scottish Executive for these areas which have been designated for priority in accordance with the BSSAC initiative. The areas are:
- Shortlees, Kilmarnock
  - North West Kilmarnock
  - New Farm Loch, Kilmarnock
  - Auchinleck / Barshare
- 3.21 Funding for this service has been confirmed for 2006/07. Funding for the following year will be dependant on achievement of the outcomes on the Local Outcome Agreement. The Community Wardens are managed by the Antisocial Behaviour Co-ordinator. The Antisocial Behaviour Investigation Team is also funded by the Scottish Executive through the Building Strong Safe and Attractive Communities Initiative (BSSAC). This service is provided to all residents of East Ayrshire regardless of tenure and is managed by the Antisocial Behaviour Co-ordinator within the Housing Service. Antisocial Behaviour Investigators are based in area offices.

An Antisocial Behaviour Strategy has been developed with Community Planning Partners to deliver a comprehensive service available to all East Ayrshire residents. The strategy has four key themes:

- Prevention
- Diversion
- Enforcement
- Rehabilitation

3.22 The Antisocial Behaviour Team works closely with community safety partners, including Strathclyde Police, Social Services, Leisure Services and Children's Reporter to meet its objectives. There are also arrangements in place with SACRO to provide mediation services and with Victims Support to support witnesses and victims of antisocial behaviour.

#### Customer Liaison and Tenant Participation (TP)

3.23 There is a statutory duty in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 for Councils to put in place arrangements to support and encourage Tenant Participation and to produce a strategy to implement this. The Housing Service recognises that Tenant Participation is an integral part of the housing management process. The EAC Tenant Participation Strategy was initially approved in 2004 and this will be reviewed and updated during 2006. We have been concentrating on capacity building to generate more customer involvement and constitute more Tenants & Residents Associations (TARAs). We have been assisted in this by the Tenants Information Service (TIS) but as our experience in this area has developed, we have strengthened our own role by the introduction of a Customer Liaison Team. As well as liaising with tenant groups and providing administrative support, the Customer Liaison Team produce and analyse a range of customer feedback surveys which inform policy, management and investment decisions.

#### Information Technology Team

3.24 The Scottish Executive 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government vision envisages a Scotland where the delivery of public services and public information is characterised by citizen focus, a choice of means of access, convenience, effectiveness and continuous improvement. It incorporates the undernoted agendas:

- E-government
- Digital inclusion
- Local Government implementation
- Modernising Government

- 3.25 The Housing Service has a dedicated IT support service that oversees and maintains the Housing Management Information Systems. They provide technical support to the service, assisting with the resolution of software and hardware issues, provide a conduit for the procurement of integrated technological solutions and update and maintain our web based information.

## **Development and Strategy**

### Local Housing Strategy

- 3.26 The Development and Strategy team focuses on a services enabling role and is responsible for the production of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) which identifies projected housing needs in East Ayrshire and details actions agreed by the Council to meet those needs. The Council are also committed to the minimisation of Fuel Poverty and have set out their local response to this national priority within the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

### Regeneration and Development

- 3.27 A key principle is the development of affordable housing within our communities. To this end, we work closely with Communities Scotland and RSL partners as well as colleagues within the Council to promote regeneration activities which encourage sustainable communities.

### Performance Management and Best Value

- 3.28 There is a strong commitment within the Council and within Housing to the delivery of Best Value and the adoption of a continuous improvement culture. Housing have introduced an extensive performance management framework which delivers performance information allowing the service to oversee high level trend analysis but also to fine tune specific aspects of the operation through direct micro management data.
- 3.29 The Housing Service is fully committed to the improvement agenda and have encouraged staff involvement in this process through participation in SRF Improvement Groups, adoption of better feedback and communication mechanisms and promotion through the team briefing structure.
- 3.30 The Council's main vehicle for Best Value action planning is the use of the EFQM Pathway model and Housing have embedded this process in the development of its service improvement plans.

### Housing Investment Programme (HIP)

- 3.31 The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) has defined the levels to which houses should be improved and maintained. Albeit, there has been significant investment in improving the housing stock over a number of years, the challenge posed by the SHQS and the concomitant Standard Delivery Plan (SDP) requires an increased level in investment during the period up to 2015 to meet the Council's objective of reaching the Standard while retaining ownership of the stock.
- 3.32 The HIP has a dedicated team which is responsible for surveying properties, assessing improvement requirements and collating the improvement programme. A detailed five year investment programme will be produced with annual reviews and updates on a rolling basis.
- 3.33 The HIP team work closely with colleagues in Technical Services who procure and administer the major works contracts and with colleagues in Building and Works who carry out a significant proportion of the improvement programme. Progress reports are submitted to each Housing Committee and to the Capital Programme Monitoring Group (CPMG) throughout the course of the year.

### Private Sector Housing

- 3.34 The Council recognises the need for improvement in the private housing sector and plans to innovatively and judiciously use the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 to improve the condition and quality of private sector housing.
- 3.35 Developing links with the private sector is a key feature in the Council's Homelessness Strategy. Our Private Sector Liaison Team has established strong links with the private landlords in East Ayrshire and has set up a Private Landlords' Forum which meets regularly to discuss emerging issues. Registration of private landlords will be administered by the Housing Service. Housing have introduced a Deposit Guarantee Scheme (DiGS) which is currently managed by CHAP on a term contract basis.
- 3.36 The Housing Service administers Repairs Improvement Grants, funded by the Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG). This enables owner-occupiers to access funding for major repairs to their property.
- 3.37 There is a Care and Repair scheme, also funded through PSHG, which is currently administered by Shire Housing Association.

## **Support Services**

3.38 The Housing Service is assisted in the smooth running of its operations through support delivered through corporate structures. The Housing Service, therefore, benefits from the internal support mechanisms including:

- Personnel Services
- Health & Safety
- Training & Development
- Finance (Benefits, FTA Collection, Payroll, Rent Accounting)
- Procurement
- ICT
- Legal Services (conveyancing, litigation, house sales)
- Social Services (manage sheltered housing, public sector aids & adaptations)
- Leisure (Rent Collection through Local Offices)

## **Chapter 4 – Community Engagement**

- 4.1 Housing has many customers and stakeholders who rely on, expect and deserve a professional, robust and well delivered service. However, the most important customers are our tenants who, over the past few years, have increasingly been involved and included in the decision making and improvement processes.

### **Tenant Inclusion**

- 4.2 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 made it a statutory duty for social landlords to become more fully involved in the tenant participation process. Housing has embraced this philosophy and has contracted with the Tenants Information Service (TIS) to assist our tenants in becoming more involved in our business. By February 2006, the number of active Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs) had increased to 17, of which 7 have become Registered Tenants Organisations (RTOs). The Tenant Participation Steering Group (TPSG) has become the main vehicle for strategic consultations and continuous improvement involvement by tenants.
- 4.3 Representatives from the TPSG have been heavily involved in the 2006 Allocations Policy review and the Repairs Improvement Partnership (an improvement group with representatives from Housing, Building and Works and tenants from the TPSG supported by TIS). Tenants' views are significant in establishing priorities for the service and tenants' representatives have become increasingly involved in our SRF improvement groups. A comprehensive Tenants Satisfaction Survey was completed in 2004 and the results of that were used to determine priorities for the service and were incorporated into the Housing Best Value Service Review 2005. A framework of regular feedback measures and functional surveys has been developed to routinely and systematically inform service direction.
- 4.4 Recommendations from the Housing Best Value Service Review 2005 saw a dedicated Customer Liaison team established to: be more closely involved with the current TARAs and RTOs; establish stronger links with the TPSG; in conjunction with TIS assist in the establishment of new tenants groups; and encourage tenant involvement throughout the service. This team is the conduit for tenant communication, production and distribution of the Tenant's Calendar and is responsible for production and analysis of tenant surveys and feedback systems.

## **Tenant Participation Strategy**

- 4.5 In 2004, a Tenant Participation Strategy was drafted in conjunction with TIS and tenants' representatives prior to submission and approval by elected members. This strategy identified the need for increased tenant involvement through their participation in an increasing number of TARAs. The strategy sought to support and encourage local involvement by tenants along with a culture change within the service to incorporate tenants' views in all recommendations for policy and procedural change. In 2006 an updated three year strategy will be published. In consultation with tenant representatives a Communications Code has been developed with a view to ensuring the accurate and timeous dissemination of information and arrangements for the various consultation processes. The strategy will be drafted in accordance with the National Standards for Tenant Participation.
- 4.6 With a view to making tenant participation more meaningful at a neighbourhood level, Estate Action Plans are being developed with tenants groups who are being consulted on local priorities for estate management projects.

## **Tenant's Conference**

- 4.7 The Housing Service has also established an annual Tenants Conference where tenants are informed of developments pertaining to Housing and invited to participate in the prioritisation and planning agenda in respect of new initiatives and legislative changes.

## **Tenants Federation**

- 4.8 The Housing Service is promoting and encouraging the formation of a constituted Tenants Federation which will formalise the joint working arrangements between the Council as a landlord, tenants and tenant groups.

## **National Standards for Community Engagement**

- 4.9 National Standards for Community Engagement have been developed and published by Communities Scotland. They were developed to help public bodies and community groups to better understand and act upon the needs and issues pertinent to their community. The standards are based on the principles of the National Standards highlight the importance of equality and recognise the diversity of people and communities. Through the adoption of these standards in our community engagement activities we seek to promote and support better and stronger inclusion by our tenants and service users. We will monitor and evaluate and ensure

our engagement regime meets its purpose and the National Standards for Community Engagement.

## **Chapter 5 - Employee Development**

- 5.1 The primary resource of the Housing Service is our workforce. It is through the knowledge, skills, innovation and dedication of our people that we are able to deliver a high quality of service to our customers. We are committed to ensuring that our people have the requisite skills and knowledge to deliver an excellent service. We ensure that our staff are well equipped, work in a safe and healthy environment and are able to access new development opportunities to enhance their skills base.

### **EAGER**

- 5.2 The Councils prime staff development tool is the utilisation of the East Ayrshire General Employee Review (EAGER) process. Through EAGER staff progress is monitored and future development opportunities identified and timetabled. EAGER is central to ensuring that all our staff have the ability to meet the current and emerging business needs through developing their skills and competencies via training and other developmental means.
- 5.3 EAGER provides the framework for a training needs analysis which forms the foundation of the Housing Training and Development Plan.
- 5.4 We further show our commitment to progressing the EAGER system and staff development through a dedicated Training and Development Officer who monitors the ongoing progress of EAGER returns, formulates and implements the Housing training plan and assists in the development and delivery of service specific in-house training.

### **Training & Development**

- 5.5 As part of the Council we also take advantage of the corporate commitment to training and development. The Council operate a dedicated training facility, including an ICT training suite, at the Lugar offices. They also have a team of training and development professionals who deliver and develop new training programmes tailored to meet the needs of Council employees.
- 5.6 All new staff are given corporate induction training to ensure that they are aware of they corporate ethos and core values of the council and understand our personnel and health & safety procedures. Housing are committed to developing and nurturing school leavers through our support of the Skillseeker programme, where trainees engage in vocational qualification along side structured work experience.

- 5.7 Housing also recognise the importance of succession planning at all levels and encourage our staff to engage in continuous professional development and training which will enable them to have the appropriate skills for advancement when opportunities arise. We also encourage staff to be central to our continuous improvement agenda through involvement in SRF improvement groups, participation in the EFQM process and through giving their views and opinions through various surveys and feedback opportunities.

### **Communication**

- 5.8 The Service recognises the importance of keeping staff informed at all times. This is achieved by a cascade system of meetings, provision of PC's with e-mail and intranet access to staff, staff newsletters and notice boards and our annual staff conference. 2005 saw the first Housing Staff Conference, which culminated in a motivational presentation from an internationally renowned speaker. It is intended to hold the 2006 Housing Staff Conference in October with all staff in attendance. To facilitate this, the housing offices will be closed for one day but arrangements will be made to ensure that key services continue to be delivered.
- 5.9 Housing aim to reinforce our ongoing commitment the development of our employees through the attainment of, and accreditation to, the Investors in People (IIP) standard.

## **Chapter 6 - Partnership Working**

- 6.1 The Housing Service recognises that the delivery of excellent services very often entails the development of close working relationships with colleague services in the Council and other agencies, especially Community Planning Partners. Housing are committed to ensuring that our partners are fully informed and consulted on any policy or system changes under consideration and that all dealings are open and transparent. The core landlord functions of repairs, homelessness, allocations, rent collection and tenancy management all entail significant input from key partners.

### **Homelessness and Housing Support**

- 6.2 The Homeless Strategy seeks to deliver long term housing solutions to those in need of the service and also to address other client needs to try to ensure that tenancies are sustainable and that the needs of vulnerable people are being addressed at a difficult time in their lives. To this end, close working relationships have been developed with colleagues in the Health Board and Social Services along with the assistance of the voluntary sector whose practical, material and emotional support can be invaluable.
- 6.3 The Citizens Advice Bureau is the nominated provider of independent advice for homeless clients. The Housing Service also works with other Ayrshire councils to achieve best value solutions in areas of common interest e.g. the Rough Sleepers Initiative.
- 6.4 Housing also works in close partnership with local RSLs with whom there are nomination agreements for house allocations. The Service is also currently developing a Common Housing Register in conjunction with our partner RSLs. The RSLs assist in housing homeless people in accordance with homeless legislation.
- 6.5 Ayrshire & Arran Health Board assesses medical applications for council housing and Social Services assess and prioritise sheltered housing applicants. Housing work closely with Social Services and Ayrshire and Arran Health Board to find suitable accommodation for clients subject to the hospital retraction programme

### **Repairs and Maintenance**

- 6.6 Our key strategic partner in the delivery of the repairs service is Building and Works whose business interests are very closely aligned to those of Housing. Housing and Building and Works are in a close relationship where each depends on the other for sound financial management and a

managed throughout of work. The performance of both partners can affect the business results of the other. For this reason, strong links with Building and Works are being further developed to ensure that collectively we are focusing on the same strategic aims continuing to improve the service to customers, not only in day-to-day repairs but also in the delivery of the Housing Quality Standard. The Technical Services division of Development and Property Services also play a key role in this area.

- 6.7 The Council sponsor a Care and Repair service utilising Private Sector Housing Grant and managed on our behalf by Shire Housing Association.

### **Rents and Arrears Management**

- 6.8 Rent accounting is managed by colleagues in the Finance Service as is the administration of Housing Benefit. Regular liaison meetings and performance level transparency have contributed to improvements in recent years. Housing currently funds three Out-posted Benefits Assistants who are managed by Finance staff to foster closer inter departmental links and boost process efficiency. Rents are collected through the network of local Council offices.

### **Estate Management**

- 6.9 Housing are assisted in the management of our estates by the Cleansing Service who provide an environmental hit squad to assist with graffiti and fly tipping removal as part of the CRF, HRA and Quality of Life funding initiatives.
- 6.10 The Service also has a Service Level Agreement with the Grounds Maintenance service to upkeep and to maintain void gardens and open spaces to a specified standard.

### **Anti-social Behaviour**

- 6.11 Antisocial Behaviour has become a topical subject in recent years. Housing has the leading role for the Council in this area but acknowledge that this is very much reliant on close partnership working with the police and the Children's Reporter, as well as with colleagues in Social Services and Leisure Services.
- 6.12 Housing work closely with Criminal Justice and the Police to manage sex offenders in the community including identification of suitable accommodation where tripartite risk assessments are carried out.
- 6.13 The service is fully committed to assisting our partners in identifying child protection issues and alleviating potential problems through the provision

of accommodation or by any other means at our disposal. A training plan has been agreed with our staff to promote awareness of this issue.

### **Local Housing Strategy**

- 6.14 The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) is the key strategic document for housing provision in East Ayrshire. The strategy was devised in full consultation with a wide range of partners including RSLs, Planning Service, Community Education, Social Services, Technical Services and Economic Development. Progress against targets and key deliverables is monitored by the LHS Steering Group, which in turn communicates directly with partner organisations. Communities Scotland, as well as being a funding agency, is also regarded as a key partner to promote area regeneration and specialist housing provision, working alongside our RSL partners.
- 6.15 Housing recognise that an integrated approach to the delivery of services is crucial to achieve the Community Planning objectives and to the sustainability of our housing estates. To this end, our approach is one of openness, transparency and accountability in all our dealings with our partners.

### **Neighbourhood Management**

- 6.16 The Service recognise the added value of an integrated, multi-agency approach with our Community Planning partners to the delivery of front line services and support people in our communities. The introduction of area centres typifies this through a 'one stop shop' approach for customer access and provides a foundation for a unified approach in delivering services.

### **Joint Futures and Single Shared Assessment**

- 6.17 It is recognised that a number of agencies deal with the same clients on a number of interrelated issues, to this end, there is therefore a commitment to the Joint Futures Agenda to ensure the integrated, cohesive and holistic approach to dealing with clients needs. As the lead agency for the Council for Supporting People, Housing will ensure that the available funding is targeted to varying client needs and in order that this is effective will continue to have ongoing consultations with key partners including Ayrshire and Arran Health Board and Social Services.

## Chapter 7 - Performance Information

- 7.1 Housing have introduced a robust performance monitoring framework that makes available to the service accurate performance output measures in real time that are analysed allowing for service to make adjustments ensuring ongoing performance improvement.
- 7.2 The performance information included within this Business Plan will be updated on an annual basis

### Statutory Performance Indicators

- 7.3 Housing monitor and report on Statutory Performance Indicators on a bi-annual basis. The annual figures are approved by internal and external auditors.

*(The figure preceded by the letter Q indicates the quartile into which the indicator fell compared with the other 31 Scottish Local Authorities)*

Table 7A

<b>Housing PI 1: Response Repairs</b>		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Percentage of repairs due to be completed within 24 hours that are completed in target	East Ayrshire	83.3% Q4	88.9% Q3	87.0% Q4
	Scottish Average	92.1%	95.3%	93.5%
<b>Housing PI 2: Void Rent Loss</b>		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Percentage of rent due lost through voids	East Ayrshire	3.9% Q4	3.1% Q3	1.9% Q2
	Scottish Average	2.8%	2.7%	2.5%
<b>Housing PI 3: Managing tenancy Changes</b>		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Percentage of houses re-let in under 4 weeks	East Ayrshire	49.0% Q1	50.4% Q1	58.7% Q1
	Scottish Average	34.8%	41.3%	38.5%
		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Average time to re-let houses	East Ayrshire	69 days Q2	73 days Q3	64 days Q2
	Scottish Average	76 days	73 days	79 days

<b>Housing PI 4: Rent Arrears</b>		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Arrears as a percentage of net rent	East Ayrshire	7.8% Q3	4.9% Q2	4.6% Q1
	Scottish Average	7.4%	7.9%	7.4%

		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Percentage of tenants owing over 13 weeks rent	East Ayrshire	4.8% Q2	1.3% Q1	0.9% Q1
	Scottish Average	4.8%	4.9%	4.5%

<b>Housing PI 5: Council House Sales</b>		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Percentage of sales completed within 26 weeks	East Ayrshire	n/a	36.0% Q4	56.0% Q3
	Scottish Average	n/a	56.6%	72.2%

		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Average time to sell houses	East Ayrshire	25 weeks Q2	31 weeks Q3	28 weeks Q3
	Scottish Average	25 weeks	28 weeks	25 weeks

<b>Housing PI 6: Homelessness</b>		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Average time from presentation to completion of duty	East Ayrshire	n/a	6 weeks Q1	9 weeks Q1
	Scottish Average	n/a	10 weeks	15 weeks

		<b>02/03</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Percentage of cases reassessed in 12 months	East Ayrshire	n/a	23.0% Q4	20.3% Q4
	Scottish Average	n/a	16.3%	12.1%

Source: Audit Scotland Statutory Performance Information 2002 to 2005

## Scottish Housing Best Value Network Benchmarking

7.4 We are committed to performance and process benchmarking to assist with our pursuit of Best Value. We are an active member of the Scottish Housing Best Value Network (SHBVN), a benchmarking group consisting of 30 Scottish local Authorities. Through this network we are able to performance benchmark a full range of housing activities on both a quarterly and an annual basis. The network also support a number of functional sub-groups who share best practice and lobby the Scottish Executive on topics of mutual interest. The Network offers considerable opportunities for process benchmarking with best in class performers which we have utilised as part of our ongoing improvement regime.

### Key Benchmarking Indicators

Table 7B

<b>Indicator 04/05</b>	<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>Benchmark Average</b>
% Council housing stock	27%	20%
Turnover rate	10%	8%
Re-lets as a % of dwellings	10.8%	8.5%
Repairs expenditure per void	£1527	£1582
Voids as a % of stock	4%	2%
Emergency repairs as a % of all repairs	45%	36%
Repair costs per dwelling	£1340	£1408
Number of SOR items	15,000	3,348
Homeless approaches per 1000 households	13.3	10.9
Average length of stay in B&B temporary accommodation	5 days	30 days
Average length of stay in hostel accommodation	21 days	71 days
Council house sales per 1000 dwellings	35	31
Cumulative sales as a % of all sales plus existing stock	45%	46%
Housing benefit gross admin cost per case	£48	£52
Average time to process new claims	27 days	42 days
FTE per 100 dwellings	13.2	14.6

Source: SHBVN Annual benchmark returns 2004/05

## Neighbourhood Services Departmental Quarterly Performance Report

7.5 Since 2004, Housing have provided statistical and performance information on a range of non-statutory indicators feeding into the wider departmental performance monitoring framework. The figures below are a selection of the annual totals reported through this process.

### Non-Statutory Performance Indicators

Table 7C

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>03/04</b>	<b>04/05</b>
Council House Stock	15313	14704
Council House Sales	639	609
Termination where notice given	1461	1184
Termination due to abandonment	240	245
Termination due to Eviction	82	98
Current Tenant Arrears	£999349	£534675
Former Tenant Arrears	£500567	£565377

Source: Housing internal management system statistics

## **Chapter 8 – Monitoring and Review Framework**

- 8.1 The review process seeks to ensure that existing, new and replacement strategies have the appropriate linkages with other strategies within the service and those of other partners. All service strategies have a direct reference to the Community Plan.
- 8.2 A monitoring and review framework detailing the timetable for 2006 to 2009 can be found on Tables 8 A to C.

### **Best Value Regime**

- 8.3 Best Value in local authorities in Scotland has been developing since 1997 when the regime of Compulsory Competitive Tendering was abandoned. The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 introduced a statutory duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements to deliver Best Value.
- 8.4 Since 2004 the Accounts Commission / Audit Scotland have instituted a programme of Best Value and Community Planning Audits to satisfy them that Councils have taken on board the ethos of the Best Value regime and to then publicly report their findings. The audit teams will assess the best value & community planning arrangements against the criteria of:
- Commitment & Leadership
  - Responsiveness & Consultation
  - Sound governance
  - Management of Resources
  - Review & Options Appraisal
  - Competitiveness & Trading
  - Sustainable development
  - Equal Opportunities
  - Joint Working
  - Accountability

### **EFQM**

- 8.5 East Ayrshire Council supports its Best Value approach through programmed annual review and action planning exercises utilising the EFQM Pathway model. The EFQM model reviews progress against criteria in the following areas:
- Leadership
  - Policy & Strategy
  - People
  - Partnership & Resources

- Processes
- Customer Results
- People Results
- Society Results
- Key Performance Results

8.6 The EFQM process enables an annual action plan to be constructed. This action plan is formally reviewed after 6 months.

### **Community Planning**

8.7 The Council introduced its Community Plan and its thematic action plans in 2003. This is the sovereign planning document of the Council which enshrines its joint working approach along with its strategic partners who include:

- Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire
- NHS Ayrshire & Arran
- Strathclyde Fire and Rescue
- Strathclyde Police
- Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority

8.8 The Community Plan sets out the Councils philosophy that through partnership working we are able provide more effective outcomes than the individual agencies and organisations would be able to achieve on their own. The partner organisations agree to work together to:

- Promote social justice and social inclusion
- Build sustainability
- Succeed in joint working and involving people
- Ensure quality and accessibility
- Deliver continuous improvement and best value

8.9 This Business plan recognises the Community Plan as its sovereign document and stays true to its principles and approach throughout.

### **Service Reviews**

8.10 As part of the process of securing Best Value, each service of the Council is required to conduct a Best value Service Review every three years. Housing underwent review in 2005. This exercise involved wide ranging consultations, close analysis of performance, trend and benchmarking information and a review of current organisational structures and systems aligned to future needs and requirements. The Housing Best Value Service Review was approved by the Housing Committee in April 2005

and its structural recommendations and improvement actions have been implemented.

- 8.11 Additionally, specific service areas are subject to periodic review. Supporting People activities are regularly reviewed the outcome of which is reported to Housing and Social Work Committees with the headline outcomes reported to the Scottish Executive on a bi-annual basis.

### **Benchmarking**

- 8.12 Housing is an active member of the Scottish Housing Best Value Network (SHBVN) and utilises this to gain comparative performance information, gain an understanding of current developments in social housing and inform and influence the direction of new developments from Scottish Executive, Communities Scotland and Audit Scotland.

### **Audit & Inspection**

- 8.13 East Ayrshire Council will be subject to a Best Value and Community Planning Audit in March / April 2006 which will report its findings by August 2006.
- 8.14 The Housing Service is scheduled to be inspected by Communities Scotland as part of the Single Regulatory Framework (SRF) programme in 2006/2007. The SRF Regulation and Inspection regime scrutinises the full range of housing services and assesses the performance and governance arrangements of the landlord. The SRF regime covers local authorities and Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations).
- 8.15 Housing reports performance indicators to Audit Scotland on an annual basis. These are subject to Internal and External Audit scrutiny. On a six monthly basis PI information is presented to Housing Committee.
- 8.16 The Internal Audit team within East Ayrshire Council produces an annual schedule of audits. We will work with Internal Audit to facilitate this schedule of audits and utilise their recommendations to improve our service.

### **Care Commission**

- 8.17 The Care Commission annually inspects homeless hostels and the Housing Support Teams, in accordance with the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001.

## Measurement of Customer Feedback

8.18 Housing are committed to the full engagement of our customers and partners to ensure that the service we provide remains relevant to their needs and that the future direction and improvement activities conform to their requirements. We employ numerous and varied feed back mechanisms to ensure opinions, views and ideas are gathered as set out below:

- Anti-social Behaviour survey
- Private Sector Housing Grant survey
- Repairs survey
- Informal complaints feedback
- Formal complaints feedback
- Complainants & appellants survey
- Homeless & Tenancy Support service users survey
- Allocations & Terminations survey
- New tenant feedback

8.19 A series of further surveys, consultations and feedback mechanisms that have been planned and scheduled to compliment our business needs over the life of this business Plan are set out below:

## Monitoring and Review Framework

Table 8A

April 2006 to March 2007

Completed by	Audit / Review	Audit / Review Body
June 2006	Homeless Strategy 06/09	Housing Committee
June 2006	Allocations Policy Review	Housing Committee
June 2006	ASB LOA annual update	Housing Committee
June 2006	Best Value & Community Planning Audit	Audit Scotland
June 2006	SDP 06/15	Communities Scotland / Housing Committee
June 2006	Repairs Improvement Partnership	Housing Committee
June 2006	Performance Indicators	Audit Scotland
June 2006	SHBVN annual benchmarking return	IPF / CIPFA
June 2006	Sheltered Housing Review	Social Services & Housing Committee
June 2006	Customer Survey – Rent payment	Internal Review
September 2006	Partnership working survey	Internal Review

September 2006	LHS annual update	Communities Scotland / Housing Committee
September 2006	Housing EFQM 06 six month Action Plan Review	Internal Review
September 2006	BSSAC survey	Community Planning Partners

December 2006	TP Strategy 06/09	Housing Committee
December 2006	Community Plan Review & Update Process	EAC
December 2006	Community Regeneration Fund Reviews	Community Planning Partners

March 2007	Staff Feedback Survey	Internal Review
March 2007	Housing EFQM Pathway Review 2007	Internal Review
March 2007	ASB LOA annual update	Scottish Executive
March 2007	SRF Inspection	Communities Scotland
March 2007	SRF Self-assessment Audits	Internal Review
March 2007	Supporting People Service Reviews	Communities Scotland
March 2007	IIP accreditation	IIP Scotland

**Table 8B**

**April 2007 to March 2008**

<b>Completed by</b>	<b>Audit / Review</b>	<b>Audit / Review Body</b>
June 2007	Performance Indicators	Audit Scotland
June 2007	SHBVN annual benchmarking return	IPF / CIPFA
September 2007	PSHG Service / Procedural Review	Internal Review
September 2007	Aids & Adaptations Review (with Social Services)	Internal Review
September 2007	Homelessness Strategy evaluation	Internal Review
September 2007	TP Strategy evaluation	Internal Review
September	ASB Strategy 2005 /08 evaluation	Internal Review

2007		
September 2007	LHS annual update	Communities Scotland / Housing Committee
September 2007	Housing EFQM 07 six month Action Plan Review	Internal Review

December 2007	Tenants Satisfaction Survey	Housing Committee
December 2007	Arrears Management Service / Procedural Review	Internal Review
December 2007	Community Plan Review & Update Process	EAC
December 2007	Community Regeneration Fund Reviews	Community Planning Partners

March 2008	Housing EFQM Pathway Review 2008	Internal Review
March 2008	Staff Attitude Survey	Internal Review
March 2008	Elected Member Survey	Internal Review
March 2008	Partner Perception Surveys	Internal Review
March 2008	Housing Best Value Service Review	Housing Committee
March 2008	ASB Strategy Review 08/11	Housing Committee
March 2008	ASB LOA annual update	Scottish Executive / Housing Committee

**Table 8C**

**April 2008 to March 2009**

<b>Completed by</b>	<b>Audit / Review</b>	<b>Audit / Review Body</b>
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June 2008	Performance Indicators	Audit Scotland
June 2008	SHBVN annual benchmarking return	IPF / CIPFA

September 2008	Private Sector Service / Procedural Review	Internal Review
September 2008	Homelessness Strategy evaluation	Internal Review
September 2008	TP Strategy evaluation	Internal Review
September 2008	LHS annual update	Communities Scotland / Housing Committee

September 2008	Housing EFQM 08 six month Action Plan Review	Internal Review
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December 2008	Estate Management Peer Review	SHBVN
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December 2008	Community Plan Review & Update Process	EAC
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December 2008	Community Regeneration Fund Reviews	Community Planning Partners
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March 2009	Housing EFQM Pathway Review 2009	Internal Review
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## Chapter 9 - Service Targets 2006 / 2007

9.1 Housing routinely set targets for all areas for service delivery to encourage improvement activities throughout the service. The targets for the service activity are considered to be fair but challenging and have been formulated in consultation with staff, members of the TPSG and internal partners. We recognise that these will vary as a result of external influences and changing levels of expectation and accordingly will be reviewed on an annual basis. Progress will be measured by senior managers at regular performance review meetings throughout the year.

Table 9A

Target	06/07
<b>Allocations</b>	
Time taken to process an application	5 days
Refusal rate (refusals / offers)	2.5%
Low demand average time to re-let	77 days
Non low demand average time to re-let	49 days
% routine (non low demand) re-lets under 4 weeks	64%
<b>Homelessness</b>	
Av time from presentation to completion of duty	8 weeks
Repeat homeless as a % of total homeless	10%
Average length of stay temporary accommodation	28 days
Average length of stay in Bed & Breakfast temporary accommodation	4 days
Average length of stay in Hostels	28 days
Waiting times for appointments if threatened with homelessness	3 days
Av time from application to decision	28 days
% decisions made in 28 days	90%
Assessment of homeless appeals in 14 days	90%
<b>Void Management</b>	
Void rent loss as a % of total rent	1.5%
Voids as a % of total stock	4.5%
<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b>	
% 24 hour repairs in target	90%
Emergency repairs as a % of total repairs	35%
% urgent repairs in target	80%
% 10 day repairs in target	76%
% programmed repairs in target	90%
% void repairs in target	90%
% new tenant repairs in target	80%
% of gas servicing in statutory timescale (access provided)	100%

Success rate in meeting right to repair timescales	100%
% of unsatisfactory repairs fixed within timescale	80%
% of tenants satisfied with quality of repair (repairs survey)	90%

<b>Rent Management</b>	
Current arrears at year end	£420000
Current arrears as a % of net rent	3.5%
% Tenants owing over 13 weeks rent (excluding those owing less than £250)	0.7%
Proportion of arrears owed by former tenants either written off or collected during year	25%
Former Tenant Arrears (FTA) as % of gross debit at year end	1%

<b>Estate Management</b>	
% of hit squad completions in target	80%
% of void gardens cut within a 4 week timescale	80%
% removal of offensive graffiti within 24 hours	90%
% satisfied with standard of estate (BSSAC areas)	66%

<b>Tenancy Mgt</b>	
% of extreme ASB cases responded to within 24 hours	100%
% of serious ASB cases responded to in 3 days	100%
% of nuisance ASB cases responded to in 10 days	100%
% satisfied with the response of the ASB service	90%
Tenancy changes completed in target timescales	90%
% of council house sales within 26 weeks	66%
Average time to sell council houses	25 weeks

<b>Tenant Participation (TP)</b>	
No of Tenant and Resident Associations	20
No of Registered Tenants Organisations	12
% of staff trained on tenant involvement	100%

<b>Tenancy Support</b>	
Average days awaiting support	6 days
% with no arrears	50%
% with increasing arrears	20%

<b>Private Sector Grants</b>	
% of grants processed in 4 weeks on completion of application pack	75%
Inspections for adaptations 7 weeks	70%

## Chapter 10 - Housing Service Standards

10.1 The Housing Service is committed to the delivery of a high quality service to its tenants and wider stakeholders whilst ensuring value for money. The Housing Service standards have been developed in consultation with staff, our SRF improvement groups, tenant groups and tenant representatives. The standards will be monitored through the established informal and formal customer feedback mechanisms.

### Allocations and Void Management

10.2 The general term 'Allocations' is used here to describe the way in which the housing waiting lists are maintained and housing applicants are selected and matched to available properties. Our objective is to provide an efficient and effective service for the allocation of Council housing which is responsive to a wide range of needs and circumstances and that reflects the legal framework and ensures equal opportunities. It is important that we process applications for housing quickly and accurately and that we are able to advise everyone on the waiting list accurately and honestly on their application, including their areas of choice and chances of obtaining housing. We will also ensure that vacant properties are prepared for re-let and that new tenancies are created as quickly as possible to minimise rent loss

### 10.3 Allocations and Void Management Standards

- *Notify all applicants of the outcome of their application within 28 days of receipt*
- *Advise all applicants of their points total and current waiting list position on request*
- *Allocate houses by group on agreed quota*
- *We will carry out / complete repairs required to void houses within agreed timescales, according to the amount of work required*
  - o *Minor repairs – 3 days*
  - o *Medium repairs – 10 days*
  - o *Major repairs – 4 weeks*
- *Provide accompanied viewings for all re-lets*
- *Re-let empty houses timeously*
  - o *10% in 2 wks*
  - o *60 % within 4 weeks*
- *All vacant houses will conform to the Lettable Standards agreed with our stakeholders prior to being let.*
- *All houses will have had a safety check carried out when vacant*
- *All houses will be thirdly cleaned prior to being let*
- *All new tenants will be provided with a starter pack of cleaning materials*

- *All new tenants will receive a tenants handbook*
- *We will arrange for power facilities by a nominated utilities supplier*

## **Homeless Service**

10.4 The Council has a duty to prevent, alleviate and resolve homelessness. As a landlord we must ensure that we give reasonable preference to homeless people and families in allocating houses. Our objective is to fulfil the Council's legal duties and provide an efficient and responsive service to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

10.5 Homeless Service Standards:

- *Provision of good quality information & advice to all people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness*
- *Treat all people seeking advice or assistance with courtesy and sensitivity and respect their confidentiality*
- *Assess all homeless applicants within 28 days*
- *Notify all homeless applicants of the decision made on their case and the appeals process within 31 days*
- *We will carry out any appeal hearings within 14 days*
- *Secure temporary accommodation for a reasonable period for all homeless people*
- *Secure permanent housing for qualifying homeless people*
- *Provide all homeless applicants with a housing option*

## **Housing Support**

10.6 Housing Support assists vulnerable tenants to sustain a tenancy, particularly within the early stages of the tenancy, ensure they can access all appropriate support facilities and are signposted towards specialist agencies where this is required. Housing Support will also seek to minimise the potential for lifestyle clashes and thereby promote balance and harmony in the communities.

10.7 Housing Support Standards:

- *We will assess new applicants for housing for any requirement for tenancy support*
- *We will arrange housing support for new tenants prior to them taking up a tenancy*
- *To ensure that support is active within 7 working days*
- *To ensure that any specialist support requirements are identified and directed to the appropriate agencies*

## **Repairs & Maintenance**

10.8 Our objective is to provide a prompt and responsive repairs service which is cost effective.

10.9 Repair and Maintenance Standards:

- *We will ensure that the houses we let are maintained to a high standard and we will carry out repairs when they are required*
- *We will carry out repairs for which we are responsible within agreed timescales*
  - o *Emergency Repairs 24hours*
  - o *Urgent Repairs 5 days*
  - o *Routine Repairs 30 days*
- *Ensure that any work we carry out is done to a high standard*
- *Inspect annually any gas installations provided or authorised by us*
- *Complete repairs at a single visit where possible*
- *Arrange an appointment where appropriate*
- *Recharge tenants for repairs that are their responsibility*
- *Recharge owner occupiers for communal repairs*
- *Clear up following repairs*
- *Provide a range of contact facilities to report repairs*
- *Ensure Council staff carry appropriate identification*
- *Provide a report receipt on request*
- *Ensure any complaints regarding the quality of repairs carried out are investigated within 7 days*
- *Post inspect 10% of all repair jobs*
- *Ensure external contracts meet the requirements of European procurement legislation*

## **Rents and Arrears Management**

10.10 Housing landlord services and stock maintenance are funded through rent income. Our objective is to maximise the collection of rent income to secure the provision of services to tenants while ensuring that tenants receive the assistance they require in cases of financial hardship.

10.11 Rent Management Standards:

- *We will ensure that rent accounts are accurate and up to date*
- *Provide payment cards for ease of payment*
- *Provide a range of methods to pay rent*
- *Advise on rent account balance on request*
- *Send biannual rent statements to tenants*
- *Inform tenants of rent balance in arrears after 2 weeks*

- *Make early personal contact with tenants in arrears*
- *Assist with advice on welfare benefits and debt counselling*
- *Negotiate reasonable payment arrangements with tenants in arrears*
- *Take appropriate legal remedies where there is continued non payment of rent*
- *Seek to recover former tenant arrears at the earliest opportunity*

## **Estate Management**

10.12 Estate Management describes the function whereby any environmental, maintenance, and management issues within housing areas are identified and resolved.

10.13 Estate Management Standards:

- *We will inspect our estates every week*
- *We will work with our partners to provide an environmental 'hit squad' facility to deal promptly with issues of littering, fly-tipping, graffiti, etc.*
- *We will work with our partners to ensure that open space areas are maintained to specified standard set out in the SLA*
- *Ensure that vacant house gardens are maintained and grass cut at least 4 weekly in the growing season*
- *Ensure that gardens of Council tenants are maintained to an adequate standard or take appropriate action where this is not being observed*

## **Tenancy Management**

10.14 Tenancy management refers to issues relating to the tenancy agreement and any actions which the Council takes in its role as landlord in this regard

10.15 Tenancy Management Standards:

- *All new tenants will be visited by a housing officer within 6 weeks of the allocation of the house*
- *All new tenants will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities when they sign their tenancy agreement*
- *Respond to requests from tenants to carry out alterations, etc within 14 days*
- *Provide a decision on any request for tenancy changes within 28 days of all relevant information being available*

## **Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)**

10.16 The Council is committed to working with its community planning partners to deal with ASB promptly and effectively, utilising all available means at their disposal, including Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBOS), Anti-social Behaviour Contracts (ABCs), Unacceptable Behaviour Notices (UBNs), and eviction if necessary. The service provides an ASB investigation team and is responsible for the management of the community warden service.

10.17 Anti-social Behaviour Standards:

- *We will respond to complaints of extreme ASB, including racial harassment, within 1 day*
- *We will respond to other forms of ASB complaints within 3 days*
- *We will respond to complaints of neighbour nuisance within 5 days*
- *We will offer mediation to all appropriate cases*
- *We will provide feedback to complainants on progress of cases*
- *We will work with our partners to promote diversionary activities to young people*
- *We will advise clients on the availability of victim support services, in appropriate cases*
- *We will provide an ASB helpline for all East Ayrshire residents*

## **Community Engagement & Tenant Participation (TP)**

10.18 Tenant consultation is a requirement for landlords in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. We are fully committed to the development of meaningful participation of our tenants and will include them in all policy & strategic development and in the regeneration and improvement of our communities.

10.19 Community Engagement and Tenant Participation Standards:

- *We will hold an annual Tenants Conference*
- *We will encourage the development of tenant groups in the communities*
- *We will encourage groups to achieve RTO status*
- *We will constitute and support a tenants federation*
- *We will actively involve tenant representatives in our improvement activities*
- *We will actively involve tenant representatives in the direction of the Service*
- *We will produce biannual tenants newsletters and an annual tenants calendar*

- *We will provide tenants representatives with training opportunities and administrative support*
- *We will provide and administer grants for qualified and constituted RTOs*
- *We will adhere to the National Standards for Community Engagement*
- *We will identify and involve people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of engagement*
- *We will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement*
- *We will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken*
- *We will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose*
- *We will agree and use clear procedures to enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently*
- *We will ensure that necessary information is communicated between participants*
- *We will work effectively with others with an interest in engagement*
- *We will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants*
- *We will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected*
- *We will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes and meets the national standards for community engagement*

### **Housing Investment Programme (HIP)**

10.20 The HIP is designed to allow substantial investment, through a variety of funding sources, to ensure that our properties are maintained to a high standard and improved to reflect modern expectations. The funding sources for the HIP come from capital receipts, council house sales, prudential borrowing and a contribution from the Revenue Account

10.21 Housing Investment Programme Standards:

- *To meet the SHQS by 2015*
- *To achieve the milestones towards the SHQS as set out in the SDP*
- *To ensure value for money by tendering appropriate contracts*
- *To ensure a framework for replacement components through a series of supply chain contracts*
- *To maximise customer satisfaction through by way of on-site & post inspection regimes*
- *To regularly review the approved contractors list*

## **Private Sector Housing Grants (PSHG)**

10.22 PSHG provides financial assistance to owner occupiers to carry out repairs, improvements & adaptations to their properties in specific circumstances.

10.23 Private Sector Housing Grant Standards:

- *We will assess all applications for PSHG within 28 days*
- *We will arrange for an assessment by occupational therapy for any requested adaptations*
- *We will sponsor a Care and Repair scheme for older or vulnerable owner occupiers in East Ayrshire*

## **Private Sector Housing**

10.24 In our strategic role we recognise the vital role that the private sector plays in meeting the accommodation needs of the citizens of East Ayrshire. The role of the private sector features prominently in the LHS.

10.25 Private Sector Housing Standards:

- *We will continue to administer the Private Landlords Forum and provide information and advice to its members*
- *We will administer the private landlord registration scheme*
- *We will develop through the Private Landlords Forum, a local landlord accreditation scheme*
- *We will provide through the ,Private Landlords Forum, regular updates on the changes to housing benefits system*
- *We will work with our partners to continue to provide a deposit guarantee scheme*
- *We will continue to develop a landlord leasing scheme*

## **Customer Care**

10.26 Housing values its customers and has embraced the corporate customer service commitment to ensure that all our customers receive the high standard of service that they deserve. We are committed to the ease of access to and effective dissemination of information and to the systematic gathering of feedback from our tenants and other service users.

10.27 Customer Care Standards:

- *Implement the Corporate Customer Service Commitment guidance*
- *We will ensure all staff are fully conversant with and trained in customer care principles*

- *Utilise systematic and varied feedback mechanisms to ensure that the opinions of our customers are understood*
- *Develop a low level complaints system to monitor instances of informal feedback*
- *Ensure all information is accessible to the end user*
- *Ensure our comprehensive range of information leaflets are available at local housing offices, local council offices and other selected outlets*
- *We will ensure that the statutory guidelines governing Freedom of Information and Data Protection are adhered to*

## **Partnership**

10.28 We view partnership working as crucial to the objectives we seek to achieve within our communities. Our key areas for joint working are defined within the Community Plan and its thematic action plans. The LHS is a core planning document for the service and relies heavily on close partnership working to ensure its objectives are met.

10.29 Partnership Standards:

- *We will provide annual updates on those elements of the Community plan in which we are directly involved*
- *We will work with Community Safety partners to tackle ASB promptly and effectively*
- *We will consult relevant partners on strategic development and policy changes which will have an impact on them*
- *We will work with Communities Scotland and local RSLs in regeneration and development strategies to ensure the long-term sustainability of our communities.*
- *We will benchmark with other Local Authorities to improve our processes, identify best practice and improve our performance*
- *We will work with local RSLs to develop and implement a CHR*
- *Through close working relationships with internal stakeholders we will strive to improve service delivery and ensure best value*
- *We will work closely with statutory and voluntary bodies to help vulnerable service users*
- *We will develop long-term partnering arrangements to ensure a supply chain of key components*
- *We will seek to achieve commonality in our business planning objectives with our key strategic partner, Building & Works*
- *We will continue to explore and identify new partnering arrangements to further improve service delivery and best value*
- *We will seek to develop pan-Ayrshire approaches on areas where commonality of approach has been recognised*

## **Employees**

10.30 We recognise that our people are critical to the service we provide and that in order for our staff to deliver services in the best possible manner they need to be fully informed and receive appropriate training to develop the requisite skills and knowledge base

10.31 Employee Standards:

- *We will ensure that all new staff are provided with comprehensive induction packages*
- *We will ensure that information is cascaded vertically and horizontally within the service, promptly and effectively*
- *We will hold an annual staff conference for all members of staff*
- *We will produce a quarterly staff newsletter*
- *We will conduct regular staff surveys to assess satisfaction levels and seek views on perceptions*
- *We will provide opportunities for staff to become involved in service development and continuous improvement activities*
- *We will introduce an on-line suggestion box for staff viewpoints to be expressed and deal with these through meetings of senior management*
- *We will carry out East Ayrshire General Employee Review (EAGER) interviews on an annual basis with all members of staff*
- *We will establish competency levels and design training opportunities to ensure these are met*
- *We will respond to requests for specific training and / or the attainment of professional qualifications*
- *We will develop opportunities for work shadowing, coaching and mentoring*

## **Legislation, Regulation & Governance**

10.32 The legislative requirement pertaining to social rented housing are extensive which, taken with the regulatory framework, compel social housing providers to have policies, procedures and processes in place, which will conform to those requirements. Accordingly, we will ensure that our policies and procedures are regularly tested against the legislation and best practice guidance. We will seek to keep the Housing Committee fully informed of any legislative changes which will affect the service and request approval for any policy changes required to conform to legislation as well as to improve the service and make it more efficient and effective.

### 10.33 Legislation, Regulation & Governance Standards:

- *We will ensure that all our policies and procedures are fully compliant with existing and new legislative requirements*
- *We will develop strategies to meet legislative requirements and ensure that consultation with stakeholders takes place prior to submitting those for committee approval*
- *We will regularly review our strategies to ensure that they remain relevant and that outcomes are being achieved*
- *We will assess our service inputs, outputs and outcomes by means of 3 year Best Value Service Review, functional reviews on a rotating periodic cycle*
- *We will ensure that our strategies conform with the Community Plan*
- *We will conduct an annual EFQM Pathway review*
- *We will utilise formal audit processes (internal & external) and benchmarking activities to improve the service*
- *We will regularly provide performance information to committee*
- *We will routinely provide information on service development to committee*
- *We will seek to involve Elected Members, at every stage, in any areas where a policy change is recommended*
- *We will provide Elected Members with information & responses to their enquiries at the earliest opportunity, but no later than 7 days*
- *We will actively pursue new innovations and opportunities made available through changing national agenda and priorities*
- *We will actively engage with our corporate and departmental colleagues to share best practice, develop holistic approaches to tackling neighbourhood / community issues and engage in wider continuous improvement and performance monitoring activities*
- *We will prepare and align the service for the SRF inspection which is scheduled for 2006 / 07*

## **Chapter 11 - Strategic Risk Analysis**

- 11.1 In forecasting the organisational and service needs and developments within this Housing Business Plan for the next 3 years we have, so far, assumed stability in the business and economic environment. However it is essential to the continued success and forward momentum of our performance that we analyse and assess potential obstacles that could, if not addressed, prove to be significant factors in our ability to continue to provide service excellence to our customers.
- 11.2 As with any public sector organisation we are at risk of a moving political agenda. The service is committed to engaging with the relevant regulatory bodies and will continue to put in place local procedures and policies to meet required changes. Housing do this through forward planning to ensure any new initiatives or directional shifts to existing systems are embedded within the organisation prior to the deadline for the implementation of any imposed change.

### **Single Status**

- 11.3 All local authorities in Scotland potentially face some degree of industrial disharmony in the foreseeable future due to the implementation of new pension arrangements, revised pay and conditions settlements following the Single Status process and through addressing the equal pay agenda.

### **Audit & Inspection**

- 11.4 East Ayrshire Council will undergo a Best Value and Community Planning Audit in March 2006 with the results being published in the summer of 2006. A good report will reinforce the valuable work that we are doing in supporting and delivering services for our customers, however a poor report could lead to a knock on effect on staff morale and public perceptions of the service.
- 11.5 Housing is scheduled to undergo a Single Regulatory Framework (SRF) inspection by Communities Scotland in 2006/07.

### **Political Dimension**

- 11.6 As with all other Scottish local authorities, the political landscape is subject to increased uncertainty due to the introduction of a Single Transferable Vote electoral system for the 2007 Local Government elections.
- 11.7 An issue of wider potential impact in the long-term is the possibility that a Pan-Ayrshire Local Authority may be established.

## **Efficiencies Agenda**

- 11.8 There is an ongoing challenge to the long-term sustainability of the service with regard to the current alignment of resources due to reduction of stock through council house sales. The right to buy agenda has seen the stock level reduce by 55% since 1981 and has impacted on the internal resource allocation for service delivery. On the whole, Right to Buy has impacted to a greater extent on the more popular house types in the areas of higher demand. As a result the Council's stock has become increasingly residualised.
- 11.9 The growth in Right to Buy reflects the shift away from public sector housing as a preferred tenure. This has led to a change in our tenant profile which was previously a general cross section of society to what is now, more and more, becoming focussed on people on low or fixed incomes or a tenure for individuals or families with various support needs. This has led to a re-definition of the role of our people resources. We now provide greater support mechanisms for tenants with specific needs resulting in an increased staff to stock ratio.
- 11.10 We are committed to driving down costs wherever this is possible and to this end we will review all staff vacancies as they arise to ensure that the post is still relevant to the needs of the service. We will also review Central Service Recharges and internal third party partnerships to ensure that value for money is being achieved and that the services provided remain relevant.
- 11.11 A current situation facing local government is the real terms reduction in central funding from the Scottish Executive. This will result in the need for the local authority to find efficiency gains from service provision elsewhere within the Council which could in turn adversely affect front line Housing services.

## **Fuel Poverty**

- 11.12 A risk to the fulfilment of our Fuel Poverty Strategy is the ongoing macro-economic pressures that affect the stability of utility prices. Ongoing rises in fuel costs will challenge people on low and fixed incomes to respond by continuing to adequately heat properties. A programme of energy reduction advice and insulation upgrades will assist in offsetting rises however in our drive and commitment to eliminate fuel poverty we must remain responsive to any significant rises of gas and electricity prices and remain open to exploring new ways of reducing the burden of high fuel costs on tenants.

## **Community Ownership**

11.13 A significant challenge to the organisation is the current political and legislative priority towards the increase in Community Ownership. In recent years the pressure on Councils to explore the possibility of stock transfer has become greater and local authorities have been positively encouraged by the Scottish Executive to democratically engage with tenants on this issue.

11.14 Following the EA Stock Options Appraisal exercise in 2005 and subsequent development of our SDP members decided that stock retention was the preferred option. However, the retention vs. transfer debate is likely to continue over the lifetime of this plan.

## **Specific Funding Initiatives**

11.15 A further risk is the current trend by central government to increasingly fund local government programmes through fixed term ring fenced funding aligned to national priorities. This has led to a range of non HRA funded initiatives which directly benefit our communities. The future sustainability of these initiatives is likely to depend on support funding generated by HRA or General Services.

## **Skills Retention**

11.16 As stated previously, Building and Works are our strategic partners, and as such any impact to their business will, in all probability, have a knock on effect to our service delivery. Building and Works are reliant on the retention of quality trades people to carry out their service commitments. This could be affected by any expansion of a building and maintenance programme in the West / Central Scotland area (notably Glasgow Housing Association) or potentially through the large expansion in construction programmes related to the staging of the Olympic Games in London in 2012 resulting in a greater demand for individuals with skills in specific trades. Given that Building and Works are our sole contractors any external influences directly affecting them will have a consequent impact on our service delivery.

11.17 We recognise that in order for us to be an excellent service we need to attract and retain high calibre of appropriately qualified staff. We therefore need to be conscious of current market forces ensuring that the terms and conditions we offer are comparable with those of our competitors.

## **Chapter 12 – Summary of Key Points**

12.1 This first 3 year Business Plan produced for the Housing Service of East Ayrshire Council is a comprehensive document which details financial projections, service standards, targets, improvement actions and monitoring and review arrangements.

The key points for the service that have been identified through the Business Planning Process are as follows:

- To use the financial model to ensure the SHQS is delivered by 2015
- To continue to develop our robust performance monitoring regime.
- To monitor the delivery of Housing Service Standards
- To promote tenant participation and community engagement in accordance with national standards
- To review and update this Business Plan on an annual basis

## Chapter 13 – Continuous Improvement Plan

13.1 This Continuous Improvement Plan sets out the main objectives for the service over the next three years. The plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to take account of any emerging priorities as they arise. This plan will refer to other strategies which will have their own action plans and outcomes incorporated. Actions in other strategies will not be re-stated in this plan.

13.2 The key strategies for the service are the:

- Community Plan 2003 to 2015
- Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2004 to 2009
- Standard Delivery Plan 2005 to 2015
- Fuel Poverty Strategy 2004 to 2009
- Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) Strategy 2005 to 2008
- Tenant Participation (TP) Strategy 2006 to 2009
- Homeless Strategy 2006 to 2009
- Supporting People Strategic Plan 2003 to 2008

Table 13A

<b>April 2006 to March 2007</b>			
<b>Action</b>		<b>Completed By</b>	<b>C.P. Theme</b>
<b>Local Housing Strategy</b>			
1	Review the progress of the Local Housing Strategy	June 2006	IO / ICS / IH / IE
<b>Allocation &amp; Void Management</b>			
1	Review the Allocations Policy	June 2006	IO
2	Develop a Void Management Policy	June 2006	IO / IE
3	Develop a Mutual Exchange Forum within the CCG	June 2006	IO
4	Review Sheltered Housing Allocations Policy	June 2006	IO/ IH
5	Develop a comprehensive allocations procedural guide	June 2006	IO
6	Develop Local Low Demand Management Strategies	September 2006	IO / IE
7	Develop comprehensive void procedure guide	September 2006	IO
<b>Homelessness &amp; Housing Support</b>			
1	Produce a Homeless Strategy 2006 / 2009	June 2006	IO / IH
2	Review allocations audit framework	June 2006	IO

3	Complete a sheltered housing service review	June 2006	IO / IH
4	Introduce programme of temporary accommodation stock rotation	September 2006	IO / IE
5	Review progress of the information & advice action plan	September 2006	IO
6	Update Housing Options Guide	September 2006	IO
7	Review progress of the Homeless Strategy Action Plan	March 2007	IO / ICS / IH
8	Review progress of the Housing Support Action Plan	March 2007	IO / IH / EP

<b>Repairs, Maintenance and the Housing Investment Programme</b>			
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1	Report Repairs Improvement Partnership recommendations with action plan to Housing Committee	June 2006	IO / IE
2	Submission of updated Standard Delivery Plan to Communities Scotland	June 2006	IO / ICS / IH / EP / IE
3	Produce a detailed 5 year Housing investment Programme	June 2006	IO / ICS / IH / EP / IE
4	Update asbestos register for council house stock	December 2006	IH
5	Review partnering arrangements to ensure delivery of SDP	March 2007	IO

<b>Rents &amp; Arrears Management</b>			
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1	Produce management information measurement to meet Former Tenant Arrears SPI requirements	September 2006	n/a
2	Introduce sub-accounts in arrears management system	September 2006	EP
3	Review arrangements for methods of payment of rent	March 2007	EP

<b>Estate Management</b>			
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1	Develop an Estate Action Plan Framework	June 2006	IE
2	Introduce an Estate Management Fund	June 2006	IE
3	Review sustainability arrangements for 'Hit Squad'	December 2006	IE

<b>Tenancy Management and Anti-social Behaviour</b>			
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1	Review scope of SSTs	September	IO
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		2006	
2	Review options to extend Community Wardens project	September 2006	ICS
3	Develop Junior Warden Scheme	December 2006	ICS
4	Review the implementation of the recommendations of BSSAC consultants report	September 2006	ICS
5	Review impact of mediation service	March 2007	ICS
6	Investigate expansion of diversionary activities	March 2007	ICS
7	Review LOA for ASB Strategy	March 2007	ICS

#### **Regeneration and Development**

1	Gain approval for 100 affordable housing units across East Ayrshire	March 2007	IO
2	Attract grant funding of £4.5m	March 2007	IO
3	Develop a protocol for engaging the community in regeneration plans	March 2007	IO

#### **Performance Management and Best Value**

1	Conduct SRF self assessments in preparation for inspection	September 2006	n/a
2	Half year review of annual EFQM action plan	September 2006	n/a
3	Co-ordinate preparations for External SRF inspection	March 2007	n/a
4	Carry out annual Housing EFQM pathway exercise	March 2007	n/a
5	Review effectiveness of local performance indicators	March 2007	n/a
6	Identify suitable process benchmarking partners from SHBVN	March 2007	n/a
7	Agree service standards and targets with internal service providers	March 2007	n/a

#### **Customer Liaison and Tenant Participation**

1	Review complaints systems (formal and informal)	June 2006	IO
2	Develop comprehensive framework of survey and feedback systems	June 2006	IO
3	Produce an updated Tenant Participation Strategy	December 2006	PCL / IO
4	Arrange & stage annual tenants	December 2006	PCL

	conference		
5	Produce and distribute the annual tenants calendar	December 2006	ICL
6	Develop a structured process to utilise survey and feedback information in improvement activities	December 2006	IO
7	Create and support a tenants federation	March 2007	ICL

#### **Private Sector Housing**

1	Conduct a private sector house condition survey	June 2006	IO / IH / IE
2	Complete first stage private sector landlord registration	December 2006	ICS
3	Review DiGS contract	December 2006	IO
4	Develop an East Ayrshire landlord accreditation scheme	December 2006	IO
5	Review progress of private sector implementation plan	December 2006	IO

#### **People Development**

1	Promote more staff involvement in improvement activities	June 2006	IO
2	Introduce focused staff perception surveys	September 2006	IO
3	Arrange & stage annual staff conference	December 2006	IO
4	Review scope for a competency framework relative to job outlines	December 2006	IO
5	Introduce an on-line suggestion box for staff	December 2006	IO
6	Accreditation to IIP	March 2007	IO

#### **Risk Management and Health & Safety**

1	Roll out lone-worker monitoring schemes	June 2006	ICS
2	Install vehicle tracking systems	June 2006	ICS
3	Review (with partners) the management protocols for sex offenders in the community	December 2006	ICS
4	Develop business continuity planning	March 2007	ICS
5	Install sprinkler systems in houses with 'high risk' occupants	March 2007	ICS

#### **Management of Assets**

1	Develop a land asset register	December 2006	IE
2	Set up a framework to review effectiveness of current ICT arrangements	December 2006	n/a

<b>Sustainability</b>			
1	Review HRA management costs in line with projected stock numbers to ensure service viability	March 2007	IO

<b>Equalities</b>			
1	Conduct an assessment of gypsy/traveller housing needs	March 2007	PCL / IO / ICS / IH / EP / IE
2	Support the development of the corporate strategy on equalities	March 2007	PCL / IO / ICS / IH / EP / IE

Table 13B

<b>April 2007 to March 2008</b>			
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<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed By</b>	<b>C.P. Theme</b>
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<b>Allocation &amp; Void Management</b>			
1	Develop a Common Housing Register with RSL partners	December 2007	IO
2	Review arrangements for the sustainability of the Void Garden Scheme	December 2007	IE
3	Conduct annual reviews of Allocation Quotas	December 2007	IO

<b>Homelessness &amp; Housing Support</b>			
1	Negotiate with Communities Scotland to renew hostel facilities in Cumnock area	March 2008	IO / IH

<b>Repairs, Maintenance and the Housing Investment Programme</b>			
1	Review progress of Repairs Improvement Partnership action plan	December 2007	IO / IE

<b>Rents &amp; Arrears Management</b>			
1	Review contract arrangements for debt recovery agency for FTAs	June 2007	EP
2	Complete review of rent structures consultation with tenants	September 2007	EP
3	Carry out Arrears Service Review	December 2007	EP

<b>Estate Management</b>			
1	Review arrangements for the Garden Award Scheme with a view to increasing more tenant participation	December 2007	IE

<b>Tenancy Management and Anti-social Behaviour</b>			
1	Review sustainability arrangements for the Community Wardens service and ASB investigation team	March 2008	ICS

<b>Regeneration and Development</b>			
1	Complete 95 affordable housing units in Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley	March 2008	IO
2	Develop 30 low cost 'homestake' houses in Galston and Kilmarnock	March 2008	IO / EP
3	Develop community care housing provision	March 2008	IO / ICS / IH
4	Demolition of low demand housing and development of affordable housing utilising HERF	March 2008	IO / IH

<b>Performance Management and Best Value</b>			
1	Conduct a Housing Best Value Service Review	March 2008	n/a
2	Develop a communications strategy	March 2008	n/a
3	Develop a Procurement Strategy	March 2008	n/a

<b>Customer Liaison and Tenant Participation</b>			
1	Review contract arrangements with TIS	June 2007	IO
2	Conduct a Tenant Satisfaction Survey	December 2007	IO

<b>People Development</b>			
1	Introduce half yearly EAGER updates	September 2007	IO
2	Conduct a staff attitude survey	December 2007	IO

<b>Risk Management and Health &amp; Safety</b>			
1	Review implementation of Neighbourhood Services Health & Safety action plan	December 2007	ICS

<b>Management of Assets</b>			
1	Review fleet management arrangements	June 2007	IE
2	Develop a factoring policy	June 2007	IE

3	Review grounds maintenance service level agreement	March 2008	IE
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<b>Sustainability</b>			
1	Develop a sustainability policy for council houses and housing estates with partner involvement	June 2007	IO / IE
2	Review implications of 'Right to Buy' on an area basis to ensure continued provision of affordable housing	September 2007	IO

Table 13C

<b>April 2008 to March 2009</b>			
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<b>Action</b>	<b>Completed By</b>	<b>C.P. Theme</b>
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<b>Allocation &amp; Void Management</b>			
1	Conduct annual reviews of Allocation Quotas	June 2008	IO
2	Review nomination agreements with RSL partners	September 2008	IO

<b>Homelessness &amp; Housing Support</b>			
1	Negotiate with Communities Scotland to develop a new facility for the accommodation of young homeless individuals in Kilmarnock area	March 2009	IO / IH
2	Negotiate with Communities Scotland to develop a new Women's Aid refuge in the Cumnock area	March 2009	IO / IH

<b>Repairs, Maintenance and the Housing Investment Programme</b>			
1	Conduct a repairs service satisfaction survey	June 2008	IO

<b>Estate Management</b>			
1	Carry out an Estate Management Peer Review	December 2008	IE

<b>Regeneration and Development</b>			
	Negotiate with Communities Scotland to develop community care housing in Hurlford	March 2009	IO / IH

### **Community Planning (CP) Abbreviations**

PLC	Promoting Community Learning
IO	Improving Opportunities
ICS	Improving Community Safety
IH	Improving Health
EP	Eliminating Poverty
IE	Improving the Environment

## Appendix A - Financial Information

As well as making longer term assumptions which form the basis for 30 year planning, the Business Plan makes detailed financial projections over a 3 year period as outlined in the tables below.

Table A1

### Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2006/07 - 2008/09

	Estimate 2006/07 £	Estimate 2007/08 £	Estimate 2008/09 £
Employee Costs	3,310,765	3,438,905	3,570,885
Premises Costs	15,423,800	15,257,820	15,063,310
Transport Related Costs	166,750	167,380	168,030
Supplies and Services	4,456,805	4,286,375	3,993,795
Third Party Payments	832,823	858,863	885,763
Debt Charges	5,200,000	5,400,000	5,700,000
CFCR/Planned Maintenance	3,561,230	3,561,230	3,561,230
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>32,952,173</b>	<b>32,970,573</b>	<b>32,943,013</b>
House Rents	(31,912,423)	(31,916,983)	(31,874,673)
Other Income	(1,039,750)	(1,053,590)	(1,068,340)
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>(32,952,173)</b>	<b>(32,970,573)</b>	<b>(32,943,013)</b>
Excess of Expenditure on Income	0	0	0

Table A2

### HRA 04/05 Outturn

Employee Costs	2,956,528
Premises Costs	15,805,273
Transport Costs	139,853
Supplies & Services	4,482,539
Third Party Payments	754,347
Debt Charges	5,230,290
CFCR / Planned Maintenance	4,164,000
Homeless Hostels	860,406
Total Expenditure	34,393,236
Income - Rents Etc	(32,628,507)
Income - Other	(1,229,469)
Income Homeless Hostels	(879,225)
Total Income	(34,737,201)
Surplus	(343,965)

Table A3

**HRA 06/07 Income Streams**

Rent	31912423	94.01%
Garages	368020	1.08%
Tenant to Pay	300000	0.88%
Other Accounts	231340	0.68%
Admin Recharges	140390	0.42%
Homeless Persons Income	995153	2.93%

Table A4

**HRA 06/07 Estimates**

Employee Costs	3,310,765
Premises Costs	15,423,800
Transport Costs	166,750
Supplies & Services	4,456,805
Third Party Payments	832,823
Debt Charges	5,200,000
CFCR / Planned Maintenance	3,561,230
Homeless Hostels	995,153
Total Expenditure	33,947,326
Income - Rents Etc	(31,912,423)
Income - Other	(1,039,750)
Income Homeless Hostels	(995,153)
Total Income	(33,947,326)

Table A5

**HRA – Allocation of Average Rent**

	Estimate 06/07	Allocation	Total	Exp per £1 Rent
Employee Costs	3,310,765	-7,766	3,302,999	10p
Premises Costs	15,423,800	-36,182	15,387,618	48p
Transport Costs	166,750	-391	166,359	1p
Supplies & Services	4,456,805	-10,455	4,446,350	13p
Third Party Payments	832,823	-1,954	830,869	3p
Loans / Funds	5,200,000	-12,198	5,187,802	15p
Capital Programme Funded from Rents	3,561,230	-8,354	3,552,876	10p
Total Expenditure	32,952,173	(77,300)	32,874,873	£1
Income - Rents Etc	(32,361,983)			
Income - Other	(77,300)			
Total Income	(32,439,283)			

Table A6  
**Weekly per Tenant**

	Annual Estimate 05/06	% of Gross Budget 05/06	Weekly per Tenant (48 wks) 05/06	Annual Estimate 06/07	% of Gross Budget 06/07	Weekly per Tenant (48 wks) 06/07
Employee Costs	3,174,205	9.5%	4.45	3,310,765	10.0%	4.88
Premises Costs	15,720,810	47.2%	22.10	15,423,800	46.8%	22.73
Transport Related Costs	166,140	0.5%	0.22	166,750	0.5%	0.25
Supplies & Services	4,364,965	13.2%	6.18	4,456,805	13.5%	6.57
Third Party Payments	807,613	2.4%	1.13	832,823	2.5%	1.23
Debt Charges	5,500,000	16.5%	7.72	5,200,000	15.8%	7.67
CFCR Annuity	3,561,230	10.7%	5.00	3,561,230	10.8%	5.25
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>33,294,963</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>46.80</b>	<b>32,952,173</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>48.58</b>
Income - Rents	(32,285,573)	97.0%	(45.38)	(30,746,773)	93.1%	(45.26)
Income - Other	(1,009,390)	3.0%	(1.42)	(1,039,750)	3.1%	(1.54)
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>(33,294,963)</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>(46.80)</b>	<b>(31,786,523)</b>	<b>96.2%</b>	<b>(46.80)</b>
<b>BUDGET SHORTFALL</b>				<b>1,165,650</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>(1.78)</b>

Table A7  
**General Fund Housing Estimates 2006/07 - 2008/09**

	Estimate 2006/07 £	Estimate 2007/08 £	Estimate 2008/09 £
Employee Costs	204,649	210,788	217,112
Premises Costs	20,250	20,250	20,250
Transport Related Costs	7,288	7,288	7,288
Supplies and Services	111,174	111,174	111,174
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>343,361</b>	<b>349,500</b>	<b>355,824</b>
Income	(6,920)	(6,920)	(6,920)
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>336,441</b>	<b>342,580</b>	<b>348,904</b>

Table A9  
**External Funding** Estimates 2006/07 - 2008/09

	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
	£	£	£
Anti Social Behaviour	1,068,000	1,130,000	-
Homelessness Strategy	498,867	-	-
Community Regeneration Fund	377,000	-	-
Supporting People Grant	6,464,000	7,609,000	-
Furniture Grant	247,434	-	-
Private Sector Housing Grant	929,000	929,000 (a)	-

(a) Pending approval by Scottish Ministers

## Efficiency Agenda

The Housing Service is committed to promoting efficiency in its service delivery, procurement strategy and management costs.

Efficiency gains are achieved through reforms that:

- Maintain the same level of service provision while reducing the resources needed or deploying fewer staff;
- Result in additional outputs, such as enhanced quality or quantity of service, for the same resources; or
- Remodel service provision to enable better outcomes.

The Gershon Report identified efficiency gains as Cashable and Non-Cashable.

## Non-Cashable Gains

Non-Cashable gains do not automatically lead to a reduction in costs but lead to an enhancement in output from the resources used. Non-cashable gains can only be achieved through a change in approach. The Housing Service recognises that the limited nature of available resources often makes it difficult to improve services beyond present levels however, improvements will be made through continued review of systems and processes.

## Cashable Gains

Cashable Gains are direct financial savings or benefits, with money released that can be spent elsewhere or recycled within a service to deliver better results. The housing service has identified some key areas for potential improvement within its business plan model.

## **Rent Loss**

Rent loss due to voids and bad debts for the Housing Service stands at 5.31%. This is an area where improvements will be made. The business plan model assumes that this figure will stabilise at 4.78%. The Housing Service will review this on an annual basis to seek further improvements.

## **Average RTB Sale Price**

The Housing Business Plan model assumes an increase of inflation (RPI) for RTB sales. This is currently lower than the actual house price inflation. The Housing Service will review this figure every five years.

## **Management Cost per Unit**

The Housing Service are committed to keeping the management costs per unit down. The Business Plan model shows an increase in this figure higher than the rate of inflation for 2006/07. Housing will review this figure annually and will also review the service recharges to HRA and other third party service agreements ensuring value for money and identifying opportunities for efficiencies through option appraisal and process re-engineering.

## **Responsive, Voids & Cyclical Maintenance**

The 2006/2007 Business Plan model gives a figure of £498.16 per unit for responsive, voids and cyclical maintenance. This figure is assumed to reduce in line with RTB sales. However as more and more of the Council's housing stock is brought up to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard the need for responsive maintenance could reduce. The housing service will review this figure annually.

## **Annual Maintenance Costs Uplift**

The 2006/2007 Business Plan model assumes an increase in the annual maintenance costs as Inflation + 0.5% (Yrs 1-10) and Inflation + 0.25% (Yrs 11-30). The Housing Service will review these costs every year.

## **Investment Costs Uplift**

The 2006/2007 Business Plan model assumes an increase of Inflation + 1% (Yrs 2-4), Inflation + 0.5% (Yrs 5-10) and Inflation only (Yrs 11-30) for investment costs. The Housing Service will develop a procurement strategy to bring these costs in line with inflation.

## **Service Improvement Cashable Gains**

In line with Government recommendations, gains made by increasing efficiency will be utilised by the Housing Service to provide better frontline services such as:

- Improving repairs times
- Investing more in tenant participation
- Other areas identified in consultation with tenants

East Ayrshire Council

# Standard Delivery Plan

May 2006

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**Private and Confidential**

DTZ Consulting & Research  
One Edinburgh Quay  
133 Fountainbridge  
Edinburgh  
EH3 9QG

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## Appendices

Appendix 2 – Baseline Proforma

Appendix 2a – Stock Condition Verification Survey Report

Appendix 3 – Capital Investment Proposed To Meet The Standard

Appendix 4 – Position Statement on Implementation of the Standard

Appendix 5 – Financial Assumptions

Appendix 6 – HIP Details

<b>Quality Assurance Record</b>	
Checked By:	
Date:	
Authorised By:	
Date:	
Ref:	

## **1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 East Ayrshire Council's Standard Delivery Plan is required for re-submission to Communities Scotland by 29<sup>th</sup> April 2006. This report complies with guidance and criteria by including information on the following key areas:
- Local Strategic Context
  - Option Appraisal
  - Standard Delivery Plan
  - Risk Assessment
  - Monitoring Framework
- 1.2 East Ayrshire Council (The Council) recognises not all stock condition information is currently recorded. The Council intends to purchase a tailored data capture system and is considering the options available.
- 1.3 The data will be captured in a format that is compatible with the Council's Orchard Integrated Housing Management System. The Council has arranged for eight of its survey personnel to undertake the Scottish House Condition Survey training in early May.
- 1.4 The Council anticipates that it will take three to four years to complete a 100% stock database. Once all databases have been inputted to the new system, identification of any incomplete data fields will be generated to allow increased information capture by suitably trained technical personnel calling at addresses as part of their normal capital works, routine repairs and pre contract survey duties.
- 1.5 The strategic emphasis of the East Ayrshire Council has remained as stock retention and the Council is now working towards the Standard.
- 1.6 The key objective for the future is to achieve, for all major elements, ongoing life cycle replacement programmes designed to pre-empt element failure and to ensure compliance with the Standard by 2015 and beyond.
- 1.7 The Council will be able to deliver a viable retention strategy by keeping rent increases at RPI + 1% for the remaining nine years up to 2015.
- 1.8 The use of house sale receipts in line with the prudential code and the use of prudential borrowing will provide sufficient resources to deliver the investment programme over the next nine years to achieve the Standard and maintain the properties at that level thereafter.
- 1.9 The Council has recently finished preparing its Business Plan for 2006/07. The Council's Business Plan and SDP have been integrated to increase accountability and streamline its processes.
- 1.10 Careful control of costs is necessary to fulfil the delivery of the proposed housing service and an appropriate control and monitoring framework has been developed and integrated with the Council's Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) to ensure that the objectives are delivered.

## **2 Introduction and Wider Strategic Context**

2.1 East Ayrshire Council's Standard Delivery Plan (SDP) is required for submission to Communities Scotland by 29<sup>th</sup> April 2006. This report complies with guidance and criteria by including information on the following key areas:

- Local Strategic Context
- Option Appraisal
- Standard Delivery Plan
- Risk Assessment
- Monitoring Framework

2.2 East Ayrshire Council's Draft Standard Delivery Plan (SDP) was submitted to Communities Scotland in April 2005. This document recognised the need for additional work in the following areas:

- Increase the robustness of the stock information base.
- Consult tenants specifically regarding the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and the Standard Delivery Plan.

2.3 This document incorporates the outcomes of East Ayrshire Council's own survey spread across the whole council area and the work done with tenants during last year to ensure their input to priorities for the 10-year investment programme.

2.4 This document also details the advances made through the Capital Investment Programme towards achieving compliance with the SHQS by 2015, during last year.

2.5 East Ayrshire Council recognises that further work is required to populate fields in the Stock Database as the EAC survey did not fully assess the SHQS criteria.

2.6 The EAC survey however, provided enough information to reflect a change in data status of a large number of stock attributes since the submission of the April 2005 Standard Delivery Plan.

### **The Local Strategic Context**

2.7 The following section summarises the East Ayrshire Strategic Context, drawing on the Local Housing Strategy<sup>1</sup> (2004) the Council's housing stock option appraisal (2004), and other relevant plans and policies relevant to long term stock investment and delivery of the Standard.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/neighbourservs/housing/localhousingstrategy.asp>

### **Local Housing Strategy**

- 2.8 The requirement to produce a Local Housing Strategy (LHS) was introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The aim of the LHS is to identify the housing issues affecting local communities in East Ayrshire and set out an action plan for tackling these in the future. The strategy, which covers all housing tenures, will provide the Council and its partners the framework for working together to address the key housing issues over the planning period (2004-2009) and beyond.
- 2.9 The Council, through its Community Plan, is committed to ensuring that East Ayrshire will be a place with strong vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services, which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs.
- 2.10 Guided by this vision the Council has two aims relevant to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard:
- Improve resident's satisfaction with their homes and surrounding environment.
  - Ensure equal access to an adequate supply of good quality, affordable accommodation.
- 2.11 These aims are made up of the following objectives relevant to meeting the SHQS;
- People's homes are of a high quality and that no one in East Ayrshire suffers the effects of fuel poverty.
  - People feel safe in their homes and feel happy with their surroundings.
  - People can find a home, which meets their requirements, at a price they can afford.

### **Population**

- 2.12 East Ayrshire is situated approximately 30 miles south of Glasgow. It covers an area of 490 square miles from Lugton in the north to Loch Doon in the south, with a population of 120,235 inhabitants and 53,322 households. Thirty eight per cent of households live in social housing (32% in council housing, 6% in other social housing).
- 2.13 Projections estimate that the number of residents living in East Ayrshire will drop by 7.8% between 2002 and 2018. In addition, the growth of households will be relatively low at 1.2% compared to the Scottish average of 7%. However, the Joint Structure Plan believes that this trend will compromise the ability of Ayrshire as whole to realise its economic potential. A key aim of the Plan is to minimise population loss by setting an aspirational target to arrest decline, followed by growth. Indeed, consultation undertaken as part of the option appraisal suggests that the Council officers believe that the new A77 will assist in arresting decline by encouraging commuter households.

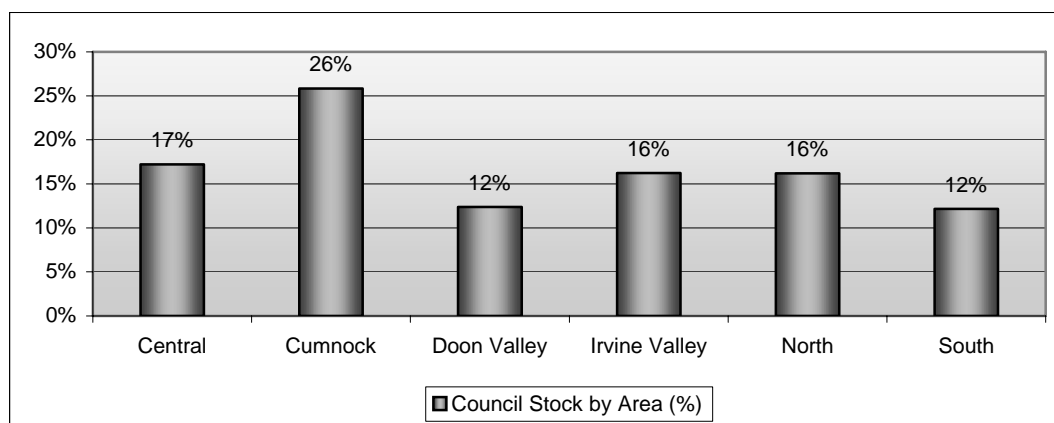
## Economy

- 2.14 East Ayrshire has been fairly dependent on traditional industry, particularly mining, which has been in decline. As a result some specific communities have been in decline and have suffered from depopulation and low housing demand (across tenure).
- 2.15 Over the last five years the Council has embarked upon a fairly substantial demolition programme comprising 534 properties concentrating on the Cumnock and Central Kilmarnock areas. This programme appears to have helped to correct the demand/supply balance particularly in Cumnock and Doon Valley, Irvine Valley and North Kilmarnock. However some further demolitions are under consideration where there continue to be low demand, or stock condition problems.

## Tenure

- 2.16 At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005, East Ayrshire Council owned 14,704 dwellings. The greatest proportion of stock is in Cumnock (26%) while Kilmarnock South and Doon Valley have the smallest proportion.

**Figure 2.1 Percentage Local Authority Stock by Area**



- 2.17 The majority of the Council's stock is terraced (29%), or four-in-a-block flats (29%) as shown in the table below:

**Table 2.1 Local Authority Properties by Type in East Ayrshire, March 31<sup>st</sup> 2004**

Housing Area	4 in block	Bedsit	Bung	Detached / semi detached	Terraced	Maisonette	Sheltered	Tenement	Total
Central	17%	12%	8%	8%	10%	78%	16%	43%	<b>17%</b>
Cumnock	27%	43%	40%	22%	29%	2%	44%	14%	<b>26%</b>
Doon Valley	11%	0%	10%	15%	19%	0%	10%	1%	<b>12%</b>
Irvine Valley	18%	20%	18%	13%	14%	18%	17%	23%	<b>16%</b>
North	13%	25%	15%	22%	20%	3%	11%	7%	<b>16%</b>
South	14%	0%	9%	20%	9%	0%	3%	12%	<b>12%</b>
Total	4,385	118	736	2,931	4,491	316	465	1,856	<b>15,298</b>
% of total	29%	1%	5%	19%	29%	2%	3%	12%	<b>100%</b>

Source: Housing Management Data

2.18 In order to gain an understanding on the level of mixed tenure across the East Ayrshire Council stock, Right to Buy sales have been examined in detail. The impact of mixed tenure on the Council's delivery of its investment programme, and thus achievement of the Standard will vary by house types and by specific areas. The table below shows how blocks are mixed between Council ownership and owner occupation. It can be seen that there are 6,063 blocks where the Council has an interest, and of these nearly two thirds (61%) involve mixed ownership. There are 1,854 blocks where all the properties have been sold. The Council's integrated housing management system can identify individual addresses so that improvement programmes are planned accordingly (including early notification to owners).

**Table 2.2 Block ownership by house type as at 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2005**

Block Type	Council	Mixed	Private	Total
4 in a block	533	858	113	1504
Bedsit	11	1		12
Bungalow	210	127	140	477
Maisonette	5	13		18
Mixed	70	278	27	375
Semi-detached	986	956	1224	3166
Sheltered	100			100
Tenement	69	111	3	183
Terrace	397	1338	347	2082
<b>Total</b>	<b>2381</b>	<b>3682</b>	<b>1854</b>	<b>7917</b>

**Table 2.3 Block ownership by area as at 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2005**

Block Type	Council	Mixed	Private	Total
Cumnock	669	931	397	1997
Doon Valley	313	465	125	903
Irvine Valley	308	612	320	1240
Kilmarnock Central	206	638	381	1225
Kilmarnock North	516	503	219	1238
Kilmarnock South	369	533	412	1314
<b>Total</b>	<b>2381</b>	<b>3682</b>	<b>1854</b>	<b>7917</b>

2.19 The obligations and duties on owners to undertake common repairs and maintenance are outlined within the Council's condition of sale. The Council assists owners through repair grants (as part of the Private Sector Housing Grant). The total budget for assistance is determined through a bid to Communities Scotland, and in 2005/2006 the budget was £300,000.

2.20 The Council's policy in relation to owner-occupiers in adjoining/common properties is as follows:

- All owners are entitled to a minimum of 50% grant (100% if they pass means testing) for roofing (including gutters and down pipes), chimneys, rewiring of common electrical entry lighting, lead water

replacement, structural repairs, installing or renewing door entry systems, works in relation to the Tolerable Standard.

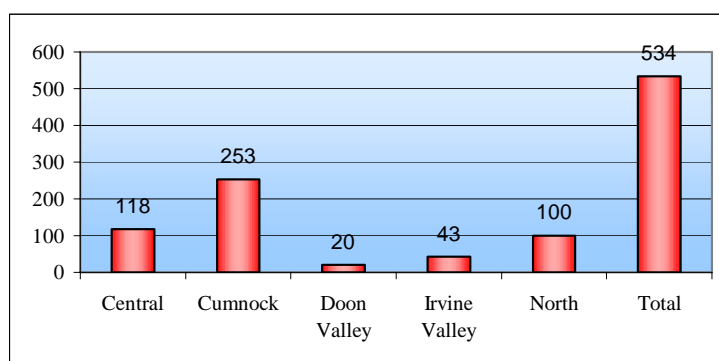
- No grant is available for painting external or common entries, or renewing or repairing external finishes.

### Low Demand and Regeneration

2.21 The Council stock has a mixed demand profile, and as discussed in paragraph 2.15 above, much of the low demand stock caused as a result of depopulation, has been reduced through a programme of demolition over the last five years. The demolition activity has been focused on Cumnock and Kilmarnock Central areas, but all of the area teams have seen some level of demolition.

2.22 These demolition programmes have been accompanied by regeneration activity, working with the local housing associations in providing replacement housing (either for rent or mixed tenure where appropriate).

**Figure 2.2 Demolitions, 1999/2000 to 2003/2004**



2.23 The Council has taken a long term view on other possible demolitions that may be required over the next nine years (over the SHQS planning period). It has identified a number of dwellings which it considers to be 'at risk', and for reasons of poor condition, low demand (caused either by depopulation or stigmatisation) or area regeneration, is considering that it may not be cost effective to bring these properties up to the SHQS. These 'at risk' properties are located across all the area teams, with the exception of Kilmarnock North. Further investigation and feasibility work is required on these 'at risk' properties before final recommendations and decisions are made by the Council. The Council's established regeneration partnership working with local housing associations will also be adopted in these areas.

### Strategic Option Appraisal

- 2.24 The Council completed a strategic housing stock option appraisal<sup>1</sup> during 2004/2005, which unlike the LHS, is focused solely on the future of the Council's housing stock (but with reference to other social housing provision in the area).
- 2.25 A copy of the final report is enclosed with this SDP submission. These documents demonstrate cross-reference and consistency in sources, currency and treatment of data used for the LHS, Option Appraisal and SDP submission.
- 2.26 The option appraisal methodology involved:
- Desktop analysis of population, demographic and social housing trends, and review of the Council's key housing strategies and policies.
  - Review of the housing service performance.
  - Consultation with tenants, staff and elected members on the service, stock condition, investment and future strategic options.
  - Analysis and verification of the housing stock condition survey, undertaken by David Adamson & Partners in 2000.<sup>2</sup>
  - Pricing of the stock based on the Scottish Executive pricing model.
  - Analysis of the HRA and production of 30 year projections.
  - Appraisal of whole stock retention, whole stock transfer and partial transfer options.
- 2.27 The option appraisal considered the financial performance of the housing stock/service through pricing (or valuation), and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30-year projections. Both these analyses were based on 2004/2005 HRA budget, and a stock number of 15,298. This produced an overall valuation of negative £18m as follows:

**Table 2.4 Tenanted Market Valuation, Based on 2004/5 costs and 15,298 stock**

Area	Stock	Valuation	Per Unit
Cumnock	3,949	-£12,826,938	-£3,248
Doon Valley	1,894	-£6,780,855	-£3,580
Irvine Valley	2,481	£4,353,596	£1,755
Kilmarnock North	2,477	-£8,563,170	-£3,457
Kilmarnock Central	2,633	£13,476,510	£5,118
Kilmarnock South	1,864	-£8,046,676	-£4,317-
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,298</b>	<b>-£18,387,533</b>	<b>-£1,202</b>

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to enclosed letter clarifying the robustness of the Option Appraisal in response to Communities Scotland letter dated 21/12/2005

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Section 2 and Appendix 2a for Methodology

- 2.28 The HRA financial analysis and projections were undertaken on the basis of the 2004/2005 HRA budget<sup>3</sup>, the stock condition survey and SHQS costs, rent increases of RPI + 1% per annum, 100% use of capital receipts, and costs reducing in line with stock numbers. Assuming the Council is to spread the investment requirements over the next ten years (rather than have large peaks and troughs in expenditure), the projections demonstrated the following:
- If all recommended expenditure was undertaken, average cash flow deficits of £98,000 per annum in years 1 to 5 would emerge;
  - Average cash flow surpluses of £1m per annum in years 6 to 10 would emerge;
  - Therefore, in order to meet the Standard requirements, small levels of additional borrowing was required over the next ten years at the time of the option appraisal. This situation has now changed and the new business plan model assumes no additional borrowing.
- 2.29 An evaluation framework comprising detailed criteria was agreed to enable a transparent evaluation of the strategic options – whole stock retention, whole stock transfer, and partial transfer.
- 2.30 The result of the option appraisal showed merit in both stock retention and stock transfer. In order for the Council to deliver a viable retention strategy (including the achievement of the SHQS) the Council will continue its recent improvement in performance, increase rents at RPI + 1% per annum and use 100% of house sale receipts in line with the prudential code. This will provide adequate resources to deliver an investment programme over the next ten years to deliver the Standard.

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<sup>3</sup> Detailed financial assumptions are held within the option appraisal report. In summary; management costs £528 per unit per annum, responsive and voids maintenance £600 per unit per annum, cyclical maintenance £76 per unit per annum and major component replacement total of £317m or £20,726 per unit over 30 years including SHQS costs.

### 3 Tenant Consultation

3.1 East Ayrshire Council held its' second annual tenants' conference on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2005 in the Park Suite at Park Hotel, Rugby Park, Kilmarnock.

3.2 One of the key aims of the conference was to discuss the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and how this will be financed in East Ayrshire.

3.3 The second half of the conference was dedicated to workshops which focused on:

- Rent Setting – the Development of a New EAC Policy and
- The Scottish Housing Quality Standard – Implementation Issues in the East Ayrshire Context.

3.4 All delegates participated in both workshop discussions, which were facilitated by Council staff and Development Managers from the Tenants Information Service.

3.5 Overall delegates welcome the introduction of the SHQS, which is viewed as an improved housing standard in many areas.

3.6 The delegates highlighted some areas that are not included in the SHQS. These include the following:

- Fencing – both boundary and divisional fences
- Sound proofing
- Surrounding neighbourhood/estates and environment

3.7 In terms of tenant priorities for investment, preferences were indicated as follows:

**Table 3.1: Tenant Priorities for Investment**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Priority</b>
New kitchens with at least 6 double electrical sockets	HIGH
Sound proofing	
New bathrooms, with showers	
Exteriors/structures/walls/paintwork	
Increased Security	
Central heating	
Insulation and draft proofing	
Effective double glazing	
Doors – external and internal	
Lighting (external)	
Internal walls and floors	
Greens for flats, gardens and closes	
Adaptations – including easy access	
Fencing	
Carbon Monoxide Detectors	
Door Entry Systems	
Extractor Fans	
Re-Wiring	LOW

- 3.8 Some concern was expressed over how EAC will enforce good neighbour issues and deliver the SHQS in mixed tenure estates and multi-tenure properties such as cottages and flats.
- 3.9 The Tenant Participation Steering Group (TPSG) requested more detailed information on the stock condition survey, the overall Options Appraisal Outcomes and details of what expenditure/items are required in the different types of properties and areas across East Ayrshire.
- 3.10 East Ayrshire Council is committed to the development of tenant participation. The delegates at the conference were pleased and supportive of the decision to retain housing stock within council ownership and management.
- 3.11 The feedback from the conference has been taken into account in relation to the Standard Delivery Plan and investment priorities.

## **4 Stock Condition Information**

### **The Council Approach to Maintenance, Capital Investment and Compliance with the Standard**

- 4.1 East Ayrshire Council commissioned DTZ Piedad Consulting and John Martin Partnership in October 2005 to help review its stock condition information.
- 4.2 The stock condition information review is based on the stock condition survey completed in 2000 and the new surveys undertaken by the Council with the aid of The Wise Group.
- 4.3 The main aim of this exercise is to move towards a 100% live stock database to provide an up-to-date baseline.
- 4.4 The first stage in the process was to update the data currently held by EAC to cover three basic processes that reflect the changes to the stock<sup>4</sup> in the last 12 months:
- Reduction in stock numbers due to property sales
  - Deterioration of stock condition due to the passage of time
  - Improvement to stock due to capital works carried out
- 4.5 The final update of stock information was carried out by linking the property reference numbers in the following two datasets:
- The desktop update of the stock condition survey of 2000
  - New EAC survey of its stock done with the aid of The Wise Group
- 4.6 This update was carried out on a number of fronts:
- Where the desktop update, suggested that a component currently fails SHQS but the new survey states that it passes, the new survey data was adopted
  - Where the desktop update suggested that a component currently passes SHQS but the new survey states that it fails, the new survey data was adopted
  - Where there was a gap in the data of the desktop update and information was available from the new survey, the new survey was adopted.

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<sup>4</sup> For current stock numbers see Appendix 4 – Projected Position Statement

- 4.7 It is important to note that the original 2000 survey and its subsequent updates is still the principal base data upon which the SHQS analysis is carried out. The only adjustments made to this data are those noted above. It is not yet possible to adopt the new survey in its entirety to the exclusion of the 2000 survey for a number of reasons as stated in Section 4.11.
- 4.8 Table 4.1 lists the data status change since the submission of the interim Standard Delivery Plan in 2005.

**Table 4.1: Data status change since submission of Standard Delivery Plan 2005**

<b>SHQS Criteria</b>	<b>Change In Data Status</b>
<b>Compliant with the Tolerable Standard</b>	
Tolerable Standard	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
<b>Free from serious disrepair</b>	
Wall Structures	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005
Internal Floor Structures	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Foundations	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change form SDP 2005.
Roof Structure	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change form SDP 2005.
Roof Coverings	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey, and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Chimney Stacks	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Flashings	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Rainwater Goods	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
External Wall Finishes	This was not part of the new EAC survey , therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Access Decks/Balustrades	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Common Access Stairs, Paths etc.	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.

Individual Dwelling Balconies	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Attached Garages/Internal Stairs	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
DPC's	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Windows/Doors	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Common Windows/Rooflights	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Underground Drainage	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
<b>Energy Efficient</b>	
Cavity Insulation where appropriate	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey.
100mm Loft Insulation where appropriate	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey.
Insulation of Hot Water Tanks and Pipes	This was not part of EAC's survey therefore, there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Full house, efficient heating system	This was not part of EAC's survey therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
NHER rating 5 or greater	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
<b>Modern Facilities and Services</b>	
Bathroom fittings – good usable condition	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Kitchen fittings – good and usable condition	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Adequate Storage	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey.
Safe working sequences	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey.
Sufficient power outlets	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey.
<b>Healthy, Safe and Secure</b>	
Internal pipework lead free	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP

	2005.
Mechanical ventilation where required	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Adequate noise insulation	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Mains wired smoke detectors	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Safe electrical systems	This was not part of the new EAC survey, therefore there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Safe gas and oil systems	This was not part of the new EAC survey therefore, there will be no change from SDP 2005.
Common stairs, lifts etc. in good and safe order	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Adequate Lighting	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey.
Secure front and rear access doors	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Front door entry systems and secure rear access to common areas	Current condition has been assessed as part of EAC's recent survey and predicted failures will form part of the new Housing Stock Condition Survey.
Source: John Martin Partnership, Data Status Summary, November 2005	

4.9 The Baseline Proforma<sup>5</sup> provides a summary of the current level of compliance. This shows that a total of 10,107 dwellings currently fail the standard, which is 71.4% of the total Council stock. The 2005 submission reported the dwellings failing the standard at 12,546 dwellings which was 82% of the total 2005 EAC stock.

4.10 EAC has carried out the following capital works to its stock during last year:

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 2 for details

**Table 4.2: Capital Works Carried out to EAC Stock In 2005/06**

<b>Contract Type</b>	<b>Number</b>
External fabric repairs/renewal (external insulation)	11
Heating Renewals (gas)	734
Heating Renewals (electric)	23
External Door and Screen Replacement	1671
Kitchen Upgrades	1009
Bathroom Upgrades	995
Re-roofing	140
Chimney Repairs/Removal	140
Replacement of Rainwater Goods, Fascias and Bargeboards	140
Re-wiring to Current IEE Standard	915
Roughcast Repairs and Masonry Paint	197
External Timber Repair and Preservation (Timber Houses)	31
Sheltered Housing Refurbishment	8
Door Entry System Installation/Renewal	215
Common Entry Refurbishment and Rewiring	129
Cavity Wall Insulation	48
Loft Insulation (min 250 mm)	750
<b>Total</b>	<b>7156</b>

Note: These figures reflect capital works only and do not reflect works carried out under ad hoc repairs, which will further augment these figures.

4.11 The John Martin Partnership noted the following deficiencies in the recent EAC complimentary survey:

- The survey does not cover every aspect of the SHQS criteria
- The survey only estimates current compliance/condition status of components and makes no estimation of the potential future failure or replacement dates.
- Although spread across the whole council area and indicative of all house types, selection of properties included within the dataset currently available is based on surveyors access ability and not on a fully stratified stock profile.

- 4.12 The Council accepts that all the required information is not currently recorded and is currently procuring a tailored data capture system to form a new Housing Stock and Condition Database compatible with the Council's Orchard Integrated Housing Management System.
- 4.13 The Council has arranged for eight of its dedicated survey personnel to undertake the Scottish House Condition Survey training in early May and thereafter immediately commence surveying on handheld computers for direct input to the database.
- 4.14 Simultaneously to data capture on site, all other stand alone databases will be transferred to the new system and it is anticipated that it will take four years to complete a 100% database. Once all databases have been inputted to the new system, identification of any incomplete data fields will be generated to allow increased information capture by suitably trained technical personnel calling at addresses as part of their normal capital works, routine repairs and pre contract survey duties.
- 4.15 The survey requirements have been agreed at this stage and will capture all current SHQS requirements, and the new system will be expandable to cater for additional information and report requirements resulting from future developments.
- 4.16 The following table provides the current position in respect to which gaps have been filled, which gaps have not been filled and any further information which will require to be collected in further survey exercises.

**Table 4.3: Stock Condition Information**

SHQS ITEM	CURRENT COMPLIANCE	INCLUDED IN MAJOR COMPONENT RENEWAL PROGRAMME?	"EXTRA" COST TO COMPLY BY 2015	COMMENTS
<b>Compliant with Tolerable Standard</b>				
Tolerable Standard Compliance	Yes	N/A	N/A	No specific data available but it is assumed that there are no BTS properties within the EAC stock. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
<b>Free from serious disrepair</b>				
Wall structures	Yes	N/A	N/A	Specific structural survey information is not available but in order for a property to fail on the basis of structural disrepair the level of disrepair must exceed 20%. It is reasonable to assume that any property exhibiting this level of disrepair would be notified to the Council immediately and appropriate action taken at that time. There is no known backlog of properties exhibiting this level of disrepair. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
Internal Structures Floor	Yes	N/A	N/A	Specific structural survey information is not available but in order for a property to fail on the basis of structural disrepair the level of disrepair must exceed 20%. It is reasonable to assume that any property exhibiting this level of disrepair would be notified to the Council immediately and appropriate action taken at that time. There is no known backlog

SHQS ITEM	CURRENT COMPLIANCE	INCLUDED IN MAJOR COMPONENT RENEWAL PROGRAMME?	“EXTRA” COST TO COMPLY BY 2015	COMMENTS
				of properties exhibiting this level of disrepair. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
Foundations	Yes	N/A	N/A	Specific structural survey information is not available but in order for a property to fail on the basis of structural disrepair the level of disrepair must exceed 20%. It is reasonable to assume that any property exhibiting this level of disrepair would be notified to the Council immediately and appropriate action taken at that time. There is no known backlog of properties exhibiting this level of disrepair. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
Roof Structure	Yes	N/A	N/A	Specific structural survey information is not available but in order for a property to fail on the basis of structural disrepair the level of disrepair must exceed 20%. It is reasonable to assume that any property exhibiting this level of disrepair would be notified to the Council immediately and appropriate action taken at that time. There is no known backlog of properties exhibiting this level of disrepair. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
Roof Coverings	Yes	Yes	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Chimney Stacks	No	Yes	N/A	Actual capital spend since the date of the original survey is less than that predicted by David Adamson & Partners. Current level of non-compliance equates to the estimated investment shortfall. Ongoing major component renewal programme will ensure that no future disrepair reaches this level Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
Flashings	No	Yes	N/A	Actual capital spend since the date of the original survey is less than that predicted by David Adamson & Partners. Current level of non-compliance equates to the estimated investment shortfall. Ongoing major component renewal programme will ensure that no future disrepair reaches this level. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
Rainwater Goods	No	Yes	N/A	Actual capital spend since the date of the original survey is less than that predicted by David Adamson & Partners. Current level of

SHQS ITEM	CURRENT COMPLIANCE	INCLUDED IN MAJOR COMPONENT RENEWAL PROGRAMME?	"EXTRA" COST TO COMPLY BY 2015	COMMENTS
				non-compliance equates to the estimated investment shortfall. Ongoing major component renewal programme will ensure that no future disrepair reaches this level. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
External Wall Finishes	No	Yes	N/A	Actual capital spend since the date of the original survey is less than that predicted by David Adamson & Partners. Current level of non-compliance equates to the estimated investment shortfall. Ongoing major component renewal programme will ensure that no future disrepair reaches this level. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
Access Decks / Balustrades	Yes	N/A	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Common access stairs, paths etc.	Yes	N/A	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Individual dwelling balconies	Yes	N/A	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Attached garages / internal stairs	Yes	N/A	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
DPC's	Assumed	N/A	N/A	No information available although from EAC knowledge of stock there are no know problems. Compliance currently assumed but future surveys will require to specifically address this criteria. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock and Condition Database.
Windows / Doors	Yes	Yes	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Common Windows / Rooflights	Yes	Yes	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide. EAC have also replaced many of the existing common windows with PVC Double glazing.
Underground drainage	Assumed	N/A	N/A	No information available although from EAC knowledge of stock there are no known

SHQS ITEM	CURRENT COMPLIANCE	INCLUDED IN MAJOR COMPONENT RENEWAL PROGRAMME?	“EXTRA” COST TO COMPLY BY 2015	COMMENTS
				problems. Compliance currently assumed but future surveys will require to specifically address this criteria. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock Condition Database.
Underground drainage	Assumed	N/A	N/A	No information available although from EAC knowledge of stock there are no known problems. Compliance currently assumed but future surveys will require to specifically address this criteria. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock Condition Database.
Cavity Insulation where appropriate	Yes	N/A	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide. A vast amount of work has been carried out in this area and should have caught almost all properties requiring this.
100mm loft insulation where appropriate	Yes	Yes	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Insulation of hot water tanks and pipes	Yes	N/A	N/A	Hot water cylinders, where present, will be insulated. If these are replaced during the major component renewal programme, they will be replaced with insulated cylinders. The number of hot water tanks will be relatively small due to the presence of combi-boilers. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock Condition Database.
Full house, efficient heating system	Yes	N/A	N/A	According to the DAP database, there were 236 dwellings with no central heating and 69 with partial heating only. It is known that EAC have completed 2,591 heating renewal contracts since the date of the survey and included within these are the dwellings previously noted as having no or partial heating. Assumptions unlikely to change until superceded by the new Housing Stock Condition Database.
NHER rating 5 or greater	No	Yes	N/A	NHER has been assessed by surveyors on site but only to Level 0. East Ayrshire Council will work towards collecting data to Level 1 as part of its Housing Stock and Condition Survey but any assessment done just now will be based on Level 0 information.
<b>Modern Facilities &amp; Services</b>				
Bathroom fittings in good and usable condition	Yes	N/A	N/A	Actual capital spend since the date of the original survey is greater than that predicted by David Adamson & Partners. Ongoing major component renewal programme will ensure that no future disrepair reaches this level. EAC anticipates replacing every kitchen and bathroom as part of their Capital Investment Programme.

SHQS ITEM	CURRENT COMPLIANCE	INCLUDED IN MAJOR COMPONENT RENEWAL PROGRAMME?	“EXTRA” COST TO COMPLY BY 2015	COMMENTS
Kitchen fittings in good and usable condition	No	Yes	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide. Condition is being assessed by survey however, cooker/provision of workspace/storage/layout being assessed separately. EAC anticipates replacing every kitchen and bathroom as part of their Capital Investment Programme.
Adequate storage	No	Yes	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide. EAC anticipates replacing every kitchen and bathroom as part of their Capital Investment Programme.
Safe working sequences	No	Yes	£152,400	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide. EAC anticipates replacing every kitchen and bathroom as part of their Capital Investment Programme.
Sufficient power outlets	No	Yes	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide. EAC anticipates replacing every kitchen including re-wiring as part of their Capital Investment Programme.
<b>Healthy, Safe &amp; Secure</b>				
Internal pipework lead free	Assumed	N/A	N/A	No information available although from EAC knowledge of stock there are no known problems. Compliance currently assumed but future surveys will require to specifically address this criteria
Mechanical ventilation where required	Assumed	N/A	N/A	No information available although from EAC knowledge of stock there are no known problems. Compliance currently assumed but future surveys will require to specifically address this criteria
Adequate noise insulation	Yes	N/A	N/A	There are 3,138 dwellings with single glazed windows. Assuming that EAC policy will be to replace with double glazed windows at the time of renewal, there will be 2,813 windows still with single glazing after 2015. It is not known whether there are specific noise pollution problems that require to be addressed at so it is assumed that there is sufficient noise insulation currently throughout the stock and that any individual problems will be dealt with on an ad-hoc basis
Mains wired smoke detectors	Yes	N/A	N/A	All dwellings have been supplied with either battery or mains wired smoke detection.
Safe electrical systems	Yes	Yes	Yes	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Safe gas and oil systems	Yes	N/A	N/A	Gas installations would be part of a gas service contract and dangerous or faulty installations are reported and dealt with on an

SHQS ITEM	CURRENT COMPLIANCE	INCLUDED IN MAJOR COMPONENT RENEWAL PROGRAMME?	“EXTRA” COST TO COMPLY BY 2015	COMMENTS
				ad-hoc basis. Replacement of gas boilers at the end of their predicted lifespans ensures that systems are maintained in good order.
Common stairs, lifts etc. in good and safe order	Yes	Yes	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Adequate lighting	Yes	N/A	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Secure front and rear access doors	Yes	N/A	N/A	Assessed by surveyors carrying out the sample survey of 3500 properties East Ayrshire wide and any non-compliance dealt with under ad-hoc repair or included in component renewal.
Front door entry systems and secure rear access to common areas	No	Yes	£60,000	Assessed by surveyors carrying out a survey of all flatted properties in East Ayrshire.
<b>Total</b>			<b>£212,400</b>	<b>“Extra” cost beyond Major Component Renewal Programme to achieve the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015</b>

## 5 Investment Plan and Resources

### The Investment Programme

- 5.1 The Council has updated its investment programme since the interim SDP submission in April 2005. This 30 year investment programme has been prepared as part of EAC's current HRA Business Plan designed to not only ensure that the stock will meet the SHQS by 2015 but also to ensure that other key investment programmes, not necessary to meet the Standard, are maintained. The principal of these are an annual programme of Aids and Adaptations for disabled persons totalling £42.5m over 30 years, the responsive and voids maintenance programme totalling £284m over 30 years, Cyclical maintenance programme totalling £57m over 30 years and environmental maintenance programme totalling £38m.
- 5.2 The investment programme has been refined in consultation with tenants and the following table gives the percentage of Capital Investment to be made over the next nine years in the main categories. This breakdown reflects tenant priorities highlighted in the 2005 conference.

### Investment Breakdown

- 5.3 The proposed Capital Investment is to be divided amongst the following categories:
- Free From Serious Disrepair
  - Energy Efficiency
  - Modern Facilities and Services
  - Healthy, Safe and Secure

- 5.4 The following table shows the percentage of the total investment to be spent on each of these categories over the next nine years.

**Table 5.1: Percentage of Investment by SHQS Categories**

Category	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Free from serious disrepair	35%	26%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	45%	46%
Energy efficiency	22%	21%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	37%	36%
Modern facilities and services	27%	33%	31%	31%	31%	31%	31%	11%	11%
Healthy, safe and secure	16%	20%	19%	19%	19%	19%	19%	7%	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*\*Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

### Financial assumptions

- 5.5 The financial assumptions adopted for the investment plan are based on the 2006/2007 HRA budget. These financial assumptions have been derived through the Council's Financial Services, and reviewed and analysed by DTZ Piedad Consulting as the Council's SDP advisers.
- 5.6 The detailed assumptions are listed in Appendix 5. The key assumptions are as follows:
- Rent Increases of RPI + 1% for houses, garages and other sites
  - Stepped reduction in management costs every five years to tie in with stock numbers
  - Investment costs uplift of Inflation + 1% for years two to four, Inflation + 0.5% for years five to 10 and Inflation only for years 11 to 30.
  - Reduction in RTB sales

### RTB New Assumptions

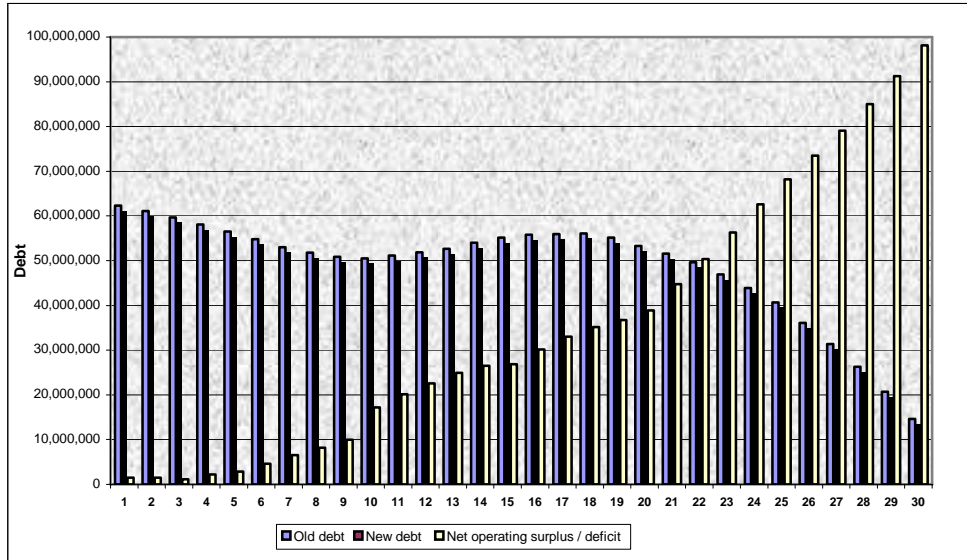
- 5.7 The biggest change in financial assumptions since EAC's initial SDP submission in April 2005 is reduced RTB sales assumptions. The following table lists the change in RTB assumptions from 2004/05 BP Model to 2006/07 Model:

**Table 5.2: New RTB Assumptions**

	<b>2004/05 BP Model (March 2005)</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07 BP Model</b>
Opening Stock	15,298	14,676	13,939
RTB Sales	Yr 1 = 600 Yr 2 = 575 Yr 3 = 550 Reducing by 25 pa (Yrs 4-20) Constant 100 pa (Yrs 21-30)	Yr 1 = 520 Yr 2 = 500 Yr 3 = 500 Reducing by 25 pa (Yrs 4-20) Constant 100 pa (Yrs 21-30)	Yr 1 = 500 Reducing by 25 pa (Yrs 2-16) Constant 100 pa (Yrs 17-30)

5.8 The reduction in RTB sales numbers has been complemented by a revision of RTB average sale price from £16,000 to £23,000. The following graph shows the new debt profile:

**Figure 5.1 Debt Profile**



**HRA Forecast Summary**

5.9 The following table shows the HRA Forecast Summary (£ms) for 2006/07 BP Model:

**Table 5.3: HRA Summary**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 20	Year 30
<b>Total Income</b>	42.2	42.0	41.7	41.3	41.0	40.6	40.3	40.0	39.7	39.4	41.2	51.6
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	35.6	36.8	36.6	35.0	35.1	33.7	33.9	34.1	34.4	29.5	34.0	37.7
<b>Total Income net of expenditure after historical debt payments</b>	1.4	0	-0.3	1.0	0.6	1.7	1.9	1.7	1.7	7.2	2.1	6.8
<b>New debt requirements</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Annual Surplus (deficit) after new debt costs</b>	1.4	0	-0.3	1.0	0.6	1.7	1.9	1.7	1.7	7.2	2.1	6.8
<b>Cumulative Operating surplus/deficit after new debt costs</b>	1.4	1.4	1.1	2.2	2.8	4.5	6.4	8.2	9.9	17.2	38.8	98.1

\*Operating surpluses less than £1,00,000 have been omitted.

## 6 The Standard Delivery Plan

- 6.1 Working with the Steering Group of key officers DTZ Piedad Consulting has sought to provide guidance to the development of a robust Business Plan model that takes cognisance of the SDP guidance as well as working off the back of the earlier option appraisal findings, progression of the Retention Option and the outcomes from the Capital Investment Programme in 2005/06.
- 6.2 The Council has been successful in adopting this model for its own use which situation will serve it well as regards the current SDP submission and as in its current and future planning activities
- 6.3 Appendix 3 provides the investment programme required to meet the SHQS over the next nine years. This equates to a total of £114m over nine years, with a smoothed investment programme of £12.6m per annum.
- 6.4 This figure reflects a marginal change from the 2005 submission as a result of the refinement made to the program due to additional information<sup>6</sup> and consultation with tenants<sup>7</sup>.
- 6.5 Appendix 4 contains the Projected Position Statement which details how East Ayrshire Council proposes to make all its housing stock SHQS compliant by 2015.
- 6.6 71.4% of East Ayrshire Council's housing stock currently fails the SHQS. This figure is expected to rise to 86.1% by 2015 in the absence of a capital investment programme.
- 6.7 Based on the Council's current estimates the number of properties failing the SHQS due to serious disrepair will rise from 2871 dwellings at present to 4328 dwellings by 2015 in the absence of capital investment.
- 6.8 5124 properties currently fail the SHQS due to energy efficiency failures. This number is expected to remain constant until 2015 in absence of capital investment.
- 6.9 In the modern facilities and services category the number of dwellings failing the SHQS is expected to rise from 4411 dwellings to 8081 dwellings.
- 6.10 6821 dwellings currently fail the SHQS in the healthy, safe and secure category. In the absence of a capital investment programme this number is expected to rise to 8081 dwellings.
- 6.11 Over the next nine years East Ayrshire Council intends to invest:
- £38.4m in ensuring its housing stock is free from serious disrepair. The investment programme in this category takes account of the higher investment levels needed in year one, eight and nine.
  - £27.3m in ensuring its housing stock is energy efficient with higher rates of investment in years eight and nine.
  - £5.6m in ensuring that bathrooms are in good condition and £24.8m in ensuring that kitchens are in good condition. This gives a total of £30.4m to be invested in making the Council's housing stock

<sup>6</sup> See Chapter 4 – Stock Condition Information

<sup>7</sup> See Chapter 2 – Tenant Consultation

compliant with Modern Facilities and Services category of the SHQS. This area will see the bulk of investment being made between years one and seven in line with tenant priorities.

- £18m in ensuring its housing stock is healthy, safe and secure with the bulk of investment being made between years one and seven.

6.12 Appendix 6 provides details of EAC's Housing Investment Programme (HIP) for the next nine years.

6.13 The Council has developed a robust SDP over the course of last year with constant feedback from tenants. Last year's Capital Investment Programme has been fed into the development of EAC's new Business Plan. This dynamic approach has enabled the Council not only to take account of tenants' priorities for investments but also to make key changes to its approach to achieving the SHQS by 2015.

## 7 Risk Assessment

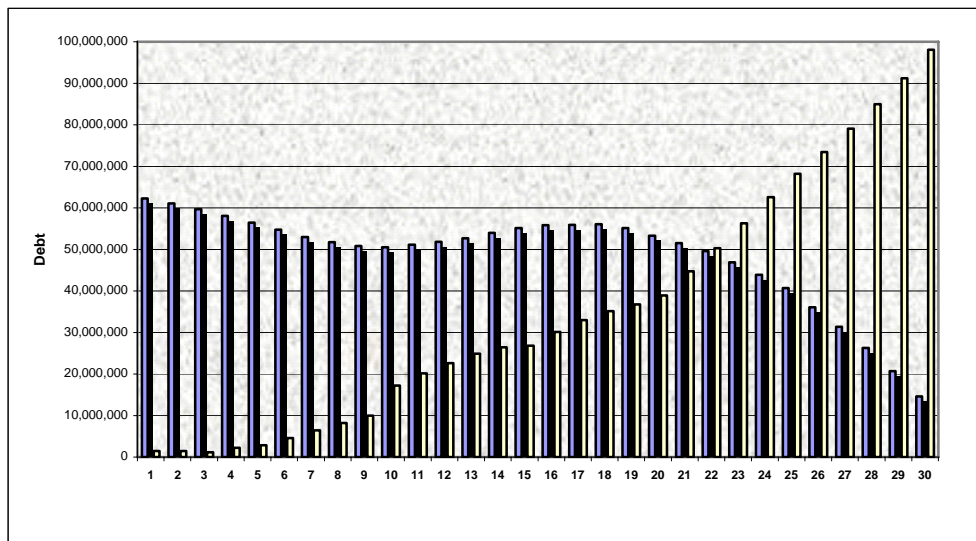
7.1 The following risks have been identified in developing the SDP. Each risk includes a comment on how risks will be minimised.

- Right To Buy – The impact of RTB sales on the financial model is significant. The revision of RTB average sale price from £16,000 in the 2005/06 model to £23,000 in the 2006/07 model has made the retention option look more optimistic than at the time of the option appraisal.

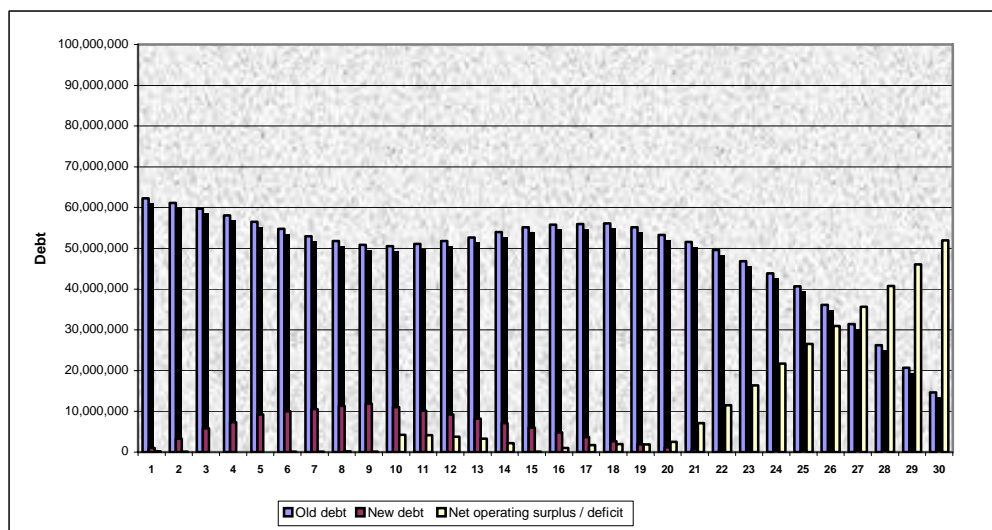
### Effect of Decreasing RTB sale price by 20% on the cash flow

7.2 If the RTB average sale price is reduced by 20% from £23,000 to £18,400 the debt profile shows a substantial change from surpluses of £1,479,163 in the first year of the business plan to a deficit of £820,837. When projected over the 30 year business plan period this 20% decrease in RTB average sale price will create a need for £15m of prudential borrowing. The following graphs show the two scenarios:

**Figure 7.1: Debt profile for current average RTB sale price at £23,000 + Inflation**



**Figure 7.2: Debt profile for a 20% reduction in average RTB sale price at £18,400 + Inflation**



A similar picture emerges for a reduction in RTB sales. These scenarios are highly unlikely considering the recent trends in house price inflation in East Ayrshire and the new motorway between East Ayrshire and Glasgow. Based on recent trends house prices can be assumed to increase at a rate higher than the business plan assumption (Inflation only) over the next five years before stabilising at Inflation only.

**Impact of this risk on SDP- High**

**Likelihood – Low**

**Rent increases are lower than RPI + 1%** - the Council is developing a long-term approach to HRA business planning. This will enable senior staff and council members to see the impact of lower rent increases. The affect of lower rent increases would result in a requirement for higher levels of borrowing, which in medium term may be unaffordable and may put delivery of the SDP at risk.

**Impact of this risk on SDP – Medium**

**Likelihood – Medium**

**The cost of components increase** – the financial assumptions are based on RPI + 1% in years 2-4, RPI + 0.5% in years 5-10 and RPI only in years 11-30. The assumptions reflect that the costs of components and labour are increasing at a greater rate than RPI in the initial years. The Council feels that this is a prudent assumption. However, the inflationary impact of high volumes of construction in the Glasgow area may increase, and put this assumption at risk. The Council's housing service is developing a robust procurement strategy to gain supply chain efficiencies, which will reduce this risk.

**Impact of this risk on SDP – Medium**

**Likelihood - Medium**

**Management and supervision costs do not reduce with stock numbers** – the projections have assumed that there is a reduction in management costs with stock numbers. It is assumed this will be managed in five-year tranches. This often proves a challenging objective due to the complex processes required in re-structuring an organisation.

**Impact of this risk on SDP – Medium**

**Likelihood – Medium**

**Response repairs and maintenance costs do not reduce with stock numbers** – this is a lower risk as historically the Council has reduced repairs and maintenance budgets in line with reducing stock numbers.

**Impact of this risk on SDP – Low**

**Likelihood – Low**

**Increase in 'at risk' properties and low demand** – based on the option appraisal there are approximately 534 at risk properties in East Ayrshire. An increase in this number will result in additional costs and loss of revenue. The Council's housing service is bringing all its stock up to the SHQS standard thus reducing this risk.

**Impact of this risk on SDP – Low**

**Likelihood – Low**

**Increase in homelessness costs due to the new legislation abolishing priority need by 2012** – this new legislation will require increased investment for dealing with homelessness thus increasing costs. The Council’s housing service is working towards an effective and efficient homelessness service enabling it to meet the new legislation without having to make substantial changes.

**Impact of this risk on SDP – Low                      Likelihood - Low**

**Rent Loss to Voids and Bad Debts** – the level of rent loss due to voids and bad debts have reduced from 6.12% in year 2004/05 to 5.31% for year 2006/07. The current business plan model assumes that this figure will stabilise at 4.78% from next year. An increase in this figure will result in an increase in loss of revenue thus putting the SDP. The Council’s housing service intends to constantly review its performance in this area.

**Impact of this risk on SDP – High                      Likelihood – Medium**

**Stock Condition Database** – the current stock condition survey does not cover every aspect of the SHQS criteria. The survey only estimates current compliance/condition status of components and makes no estimation of the potential future failure or replacement dates. Deficiencies in stock condition database may result in costs being higher than anticipated. The Council’s housing service is committed to achieving a 100% stock database in the next four years. The Council’s housing service has arranged for eight of its dedicated survey personnel to undertake the Scottish House Condition Survey training in early May 2006 and thereafter immediately commence surveying on handheld computers for direct input to the database.

**Impact of this risk on SDP – High                      Likelihood - Low**

## **8 Monitoring Framework**

- 8.1 Appendix 4 sets out how the Council aims to move from the current situation to full compliance over the next ten years.

### **Development of 100% Stock Database**

- 8.2 The stock condition survey carried out by EAC during last year helped to update some elements within the stock database.
- 8.3 The Council recognises the need for further surveys to achieve the 100% stock database. As discussed in Chapter Four the Council is taking appropriate steps to achieve this goal.
- 8.4 It is the intention to re-survey one quarter of the stock each year mainly in conjunction with planned maintenance inspections. This will ensure completion of a 100% stock database measured against the details of the Standard within a four year period and regular updating thereafter on a four yearly cycle. This in turn will assist in tracking progress towards compliance with the Standard. Where the survey inspection identifies an element in need of repair it is envisaged that this will be instructed immediately allowing the element to be recorded as a pass. In some cases e.g. individual sanitary ware or kitchen fittings, the same procedure will apply to replacement. The main element replacement data emerging from the ongoing survey will inform the capital investment programme which will continually evolve to reflect the data arising from the survey.

### **Tenant Participation**

- 8.5 To ensure tenant involvement the Council consulted with tenants regarding the SHQS and EAC's Standard Delivery Plan in the Annual Tenants Conference on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2005. The Council intends to make these discussions a part of future conferences to highlight tenant priorities within the continually evolving Capital Investment Programme.
- 8.6 The Council will ensure tenant satisfaction with the works carried out by using feedback forms and informing tenants about the complaints procedures.

### **Milestones towards achieving the Standard**

- 8.7 EAC intends to move to compliance with the Standard evenly over the nine year period to 2015. There are no years in that period, which are more significant than others in that respect. It is proposed therefore, that the milestones are related to progress with re-surveying stock, which in turn may result in adjustments to the Capital Investment Programme.
- 8.8 Accordingly the proposed milestones for the achievement of the Standard are:
- April 2007 – completion of the re-survey of first quarter of stock
  - April 2010 – completion of the re-survey of the whole stock
  - April 2014 – completion of the second round re-survey of the whole stock
  - April 2015 – full compliance

8.9 Other milestones to monitor risks are as follows:

**Financial Assumptions**

- RTBs Ongoing
- Prudential Borrowing Quarterly

**Capital Programme**

- Capacity of Construction Industry Annually
- Partnering Arrangements Annually
- Component Quality and Price Annually

**Responsive, Voids and Cyclical Programme**

- Capacity of Construction Industry Annually
- Partnering Arrangements Annually
- Quality and Price Annually

**Organisational and Staffing**

- Surveying Team Annually
- Capital Works Team Annually
- Housing Service Team Annually

## Appendix C – Organisational Structure

Diagram C

