

SERVICE DELIVERY PLANS - METHODOLOGY

Committee: Corporate Governance and Finance Committee

Date: 21 July 2014

Author: Chief Executive and Strategic Advisor to the Chief Executive

[P46]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 Approval of the format and methodology of the Council's proposed Service Delivery Plans.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 Members are requested to approve the format and methodology of Service Delivery Plans as stated in Appendices 1 and 2 and illustrated in Appendix 3.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Council has implemented a radical restructuring of management and departments and agreed a revised Committee structure including the establishment of Service Delivery Champions.

3.2 Service Delivery Plans will be the single most important documents to define the purpose and ambitions of the new Council and establish the accountability of elected members and officers to the local community. Appendix 1 provides the rationale for the introduction of Service Delivery Plans and their basic purpose.

4.0 **IMPLEMENTATION**

4.1 Appendix 2 details the methodology underpinning each Service Delivery Plan and will be utilised by officers and Service Delivery Champions to inform individual Service Delivery Plans.

4.2 Appendix 3 is a worked up example covering Housing Services which illustrates the format of the completed Service Delivery Plan and is being utilised in the one to one training with the lead officers. In addition, there will also be opportunities for Service Delivery Champions to participate in team briefings designed to finalise Service Delivery Plans.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

5.1 There are no financial implications or any requirement for an Equality Impact Assessment at this stage.

6.0 **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Briefing Note – Service Delivery Plans

Appendix 2 East Cambridgeshire Service Delivery Plans 2014-2015
Appendix 3 Draft Housing Services Service Delivery Plan (for illustrative purposes)

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Special Council Meeting 15 April 2014 Agenda Item 6	Room 119 Location: The Grange, Ely	John Hill Chief Executive Jo Brooks Strategic Advisor to the CE (01353) 616271/616498 E-mail: john.hill@eastcambs.gov.uk jo.brooks@eastcambs.gov.uk

BRIEFING NOTE - SERVICE DELIVERY PLANS

Service Delivery Plans will be the single most important documents to define the purpose and ambitions of the new Council and establish the accountability of elected members and officers to the local community.

The scope of this brief is to set out the context and drivers for and the purpose of these delivery plans within the revised organisational and governance structures of the Council.

Service Delivery Plans are essential because:

- Ineffective existing service planning process as evidenced by Improvement East.
- Revised organisational arrangements to deliver a more flexible and flatter structure.
- Proposals to rationalise current Committee arrangements effective from May 2014; fewer and smaller Committees with closer alignment to the new organisation.
- Decision to reduce the size of Council in the medium term.
- Requirement to achieve radical and significant cultural change in the Council with greater emphasis on service delivery, commercial acumen, open for business, 'can do' and "how" we deliver services to the local community.
- Requirement to deliver ambitions and the critical corporate priorities.

Service Delivery Plans should be:

- Concise and understandable by the local community, elected members and all officers of the Council.
- Consistent across all service areas.
- Linked to the Council's corporate objectives and priorities
- Able to define the following requirements, specifically:
 - Council's vision, priorities and outcomes.
 - Overview of the service.
 - Forward plan of key decisions for Members (specific to each service).
 - How the service can demonstrate a 'can do' and 'open for business' approach.
 - Performance measurement and reporting arrangements.
 - Sets out commercial opportunities for the service, where appropriate.
- Able to allow elected members to effectively monitor the performance of the service and the management in the widest sense.

Implementation

- Within the following timetable:

By end April	Draft Service Delivery Plan format.
June-July	First stage lead officer training.
July	Corporate Governance and Finance Committee – approval of format and methodology.
October	Service Delivery Plans to Committees for adoption.

The Council is utilising in-house resources to introduce Service Delivery Plans in accordance with the above timetable. Jo Brooks, Strategic Advisor to the Chief Executive and Principal Housing Services Officer, is leading on this work including training for officers and members.

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE SERVICE DELIVERY PLANS 2014 – 2015 – INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this Service Delivery Plan is to describe what we will be doing to deliver on our duty to secure continuous improvement. It sets out the areas of improvement we will be focussing on during the coming year and explains our rationale for doing so.

The Plan is the public facing expression of our approach to performance management. Our performance management framework describes the annual cycle we follow in planning, monitoring and reviewing everything we do. Broadly speaking, there are four steps in our framework. Each year we focus on **identifying objectives** for improvement. We finalise our objectives and set out our **plans for delivery** during the forthcoming year. We **monitor performance** throughout the whole year and seek to identify what impact our service delivery has had on the community. Finally we begin to review our progress so that we are in a position to refine our objectives for the following year.

Our principles

In our quest to promote East Cambridgeshire as a great place to live, work, invest and visit we have adopted three cross cutting principles:

CUSTOMER FOCUS

VALUE FOR MONEY

ONE TEAM

Treating customers courteously and fairly is a principle that is fundamental to our service. We will continue to take note of and monitor the basics; issues such as how quickly phone calls and letters are responded to, as well as a robust complaints policy which considers how complaints are handled and what lessons might be learned.

We aim to administer simple and straightforward opportunities for customers to access our services. As information technology has developed, we have been able to broaden the channels through which customers are able to contact us. For example, we offer a range of opportunities for customers to access services and information via the internet. We will be developing work in this area further over the coming year which will include the introduction of a super fast broadband to the District by 2015.

Achieving good value for money has always been important to us and will continue to be so. As a result of prudent budgetary control we have been able to keep Council Tax for the Council at the same rate as last year. However we are not immune to the pressures on public expenditure and will therefore continue to adopt savings where possible to deliver the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. We know that achieving value does not always mean limiting our expenditure. There are occasions when investing in services will help us to deliver savings in the longer term.

Our final principle is that of working as one team for the benefit of all people in East Cambridgeshire. Local authorities are large and complicated organisations and we will therefore try to minimise internal divisions for the benefit of our customers. We will structure the governance of our services

in such a way that it cuts across departmental boundaries. This will enable Elected Councillors to look beyond parochial issues and retain a broad strategic perspective.

Our vision, priorities and outcomes

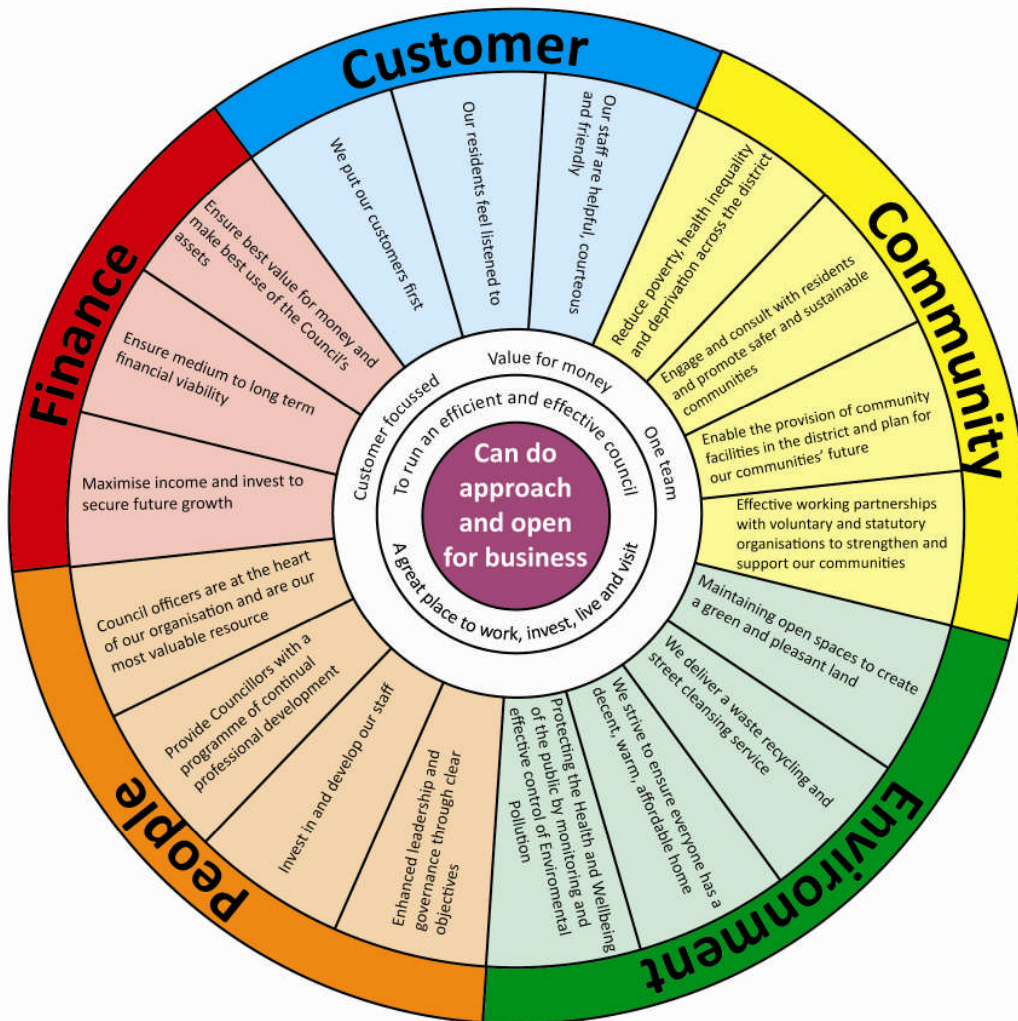
We share a vision with our partners that East Cambridgeshire is a thriving, successful and sustainable District in which all forms of deprivation and inequality are reduced. We want East Cambridgeshire to be a District that benefits every individual and community. Furthermore we want to develop community capacity. That means giving local people, voluntary organisations and businesses greater scope to work together to find local solutions to local problems.

We will be innovative in our approach by improving processes, making better use of technology, improving how we buy goods and services and providing the right support to managers and front line services. To do this we must work in partnership with others to deliver this plan and provide more cost effective services that deliver better outcomes. We have identified **five strategic outcomes** outlined in the diagram below which reflect the priorities across all our services and will deliver on the Council's priorities to:

- Facilitate the commencement of the Southern Link road by 2015
- Use Community Land Trusts as a preferred mechanism to enable people to live and work locally
- Facilitate the opening of a cinema at Downham Road/A10 by 2015
- Deliver a new District Leisure facility
- Keep council tax as low as possible through prudent budgetary control
- Develop an exceptional Station Gateway for Ely
- Develop an Eastern Gateway for Soham
- Facilitate the re-opening of Soham Railway Station, including the Newmarket link
- Facilitate economic growth within the District, including jobs growth and Apprenticeships and the introduction of super fast broadband
- Develop the opportunities for infrastructure improvement to encourage alternative means of transport
- Adopt a “can do” attitude in everything we do
- Ensure appropriate development throughout the District by planning well for infrastructure, employment and high quality design
- Embrace Localism throughout the district



Within each theme there are specific criteria which we will focus on to ensure that we deliver our outcomes.



Levels and progress of reporting

We are improving our planning arrangements to focus on the delivery of outcomes and key priorities. The Service Delivery Plans will be the single most important documents to define the purpose and ambitions of the Council and establish the accountability of elected Members and Officers to the local community. They will help to prioritise services and refine the future vision and direction for the Council and protect and invest in priority services.

The role of elected councillors, as part of the governing body of a council, is spelt out in section 59 of the Local Government Act. It is to:

- Take an active part in reviewing matters before their council and debating issues and in councils' decision making processes;
- Review councils' objectives and policies to ensure that they are appropriate for the local area; and to
- Review councils' resource allocation, expenditure and activities, and the efficiency and effectiveness of its service delivery.

Councillors play a very important policy-making role, requiring the identification of community needs, setting objectives to meet those needs, establishing priorities between competing demands and allocating resources. They are responsible for making key decisions that will determine the Council's priorities, goals and achievements. The policy framework and the strategic management plans endorsed by councils provide the direction for the ongoing management and operation of council activities.

The Council has recently adopted smaller Committees to ensure closer alignment with departments. Consequently Principal Officers will report to Committee Members on **key corporate priorities** for their consideration. It has been agreed that other decisions are delegated to officers so that they can deal with the day-to-day running of the service without the need to constantly refer matters back to councillors. Delegations to officers are defined for this service in the relevant sections of the Council's Constitution, specifically:-

Part 3 Responsibility for Functions Section 1 "Council Committees and other Member bodies, Objectives, Terms of Reference and Delegation to Officers."

The Council now has a number of Service Delivery Champions who specialise in a particular service area. Their role is to encourage communication and positive action and periodically report to the Council on their activities and respond to questions and enquiries.

Each Service Delivery Champion keeps a focus on their area of responsibility by:

- Raising the profile of the service area and showing the communities of East Cambridgeshire the Council's commitment to the provision of a high quality service that meets their needs.
- Fostering the engagement of a wider range of Members in the review and development of the service area.

- Promoting effective communication and positive working relationships both within the Council and amongst partners, stakeholders and community groups.
- Promoting the positive work that is being undertaken within the District, both at a regional and national level.
- Providing positive support, and on occasions constructive challenge, to officers in driving forward the Council's agenda on the issue.

Once the Service Delivery Plans are drafted, the Manager will meet with the Assistant Director and Service Delivery Champion quarterly to review the indicators and targets and consider whether:

- The indicator should be changed to become “SMARTER”
- New indicators could be usefully introduced
- Existing indicators should be deleted as their usefulness has passed

Managers will be required to produce a Quarterly Performance Report showing performance against targets. The relevant Assistant Director will receive a report of all indicators for their service.

Progress against the Corporate Priorities will be reported to Committee on a quarterly basis at which time any risks will be considered, together with any identified remedial action required to manage areas of high risk to ensure activities or targets are achieved.

Performance reporting will enable the Committee and Assistant Director to plan ahead to consider those high risk activities or measures where targets are not being achieved, or to agree revised targets, or set up action plans to address poor performance.

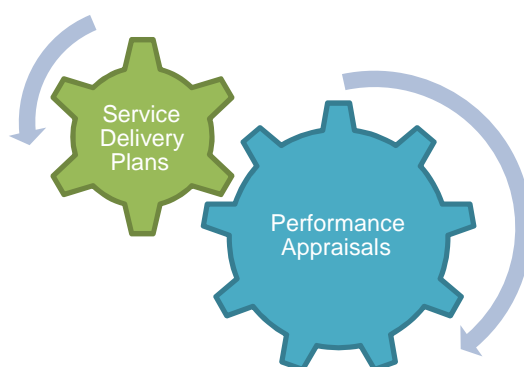
Forward Planning for Councillors

The Service Delivery Plan will identify key issues over the forthcoming year that requires Committee approval and/or Councillor involvement. An example is listed below:

Proposed date of decision	Item	Service Area	Service Delivery Champion	Committee
January 2015	Update on existing rent deposit scheme and cost effectiveness of recruiting an Income Recovery Officer	Housing	Cllr Rouse	Regulatory and Support Services Committee
November 2014	Agree to lease 2 Sanctuary properties for young people	Housing	Cllr Rouse	Regulatory and Support Services Committee
January 2015	Agree amendments to Homelessness Strategy	Housing	Cllr Rouse	Regulatory and Support Services Committee

How our plans fit together

This Service Delivery Plan fits within a hierarchy of plans, all of which play a significant role in our service delivery arrangements. It is good practice to be able to draw a 'golden thread' between the plans and identify how individual members of staff, teams, service departments and Councillors will work towards the Council's key priorities.



Reporting Back

Improvement planning does not stop with the implementation of actions. As was indicated in the introduction to this Service Delivery Plan, it is a cyclical process during which we constantly revisit and revise our plans in light of the changing circumstances in which we work.

In 2015 we will publish an **Improvement Review**. This document will discuss, in broad terms, whether or not we have achieved the Objectives we have set. It will include evidence such as performance statistics and progress reports on the completion of projects. It is an opportunity for us to assess our own performance and to share that evaluation with our customers and regulators.

The Improvement Review will also help plan our activity for future years and will help us to establish whether or not we are tackling the right issues and whether we are going about this in the right way.

Finally the review process will provide us with a further opportunity to reflect on the comments we have received from our customers and partner organisations.

As stated we will not publish the Improvement Review until 2015. However the actions and performance measures set out in the Service Delivery Plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis by Senior Officers and Councillors.

DRAFT Housing Services Delivery Plan (Worked Up Example)

Overview of Housing Services

The Housing Options team comprises 1 Principal Housing Officer, 3 full time Options Officers and a full time Housing Assistant. The remit of the team is to deliver the Council's housing advice and homelessness service with the emphasis on preventing homelessness.

The service is also responsible for fulfilling the Council's legal obligation to assist homeless persons, investigate the individual reasons for homelessness and advise the client accordingly and provide temporary accommodation where applicable.

In addition to the above the team is responsible for ensuring illegal evictions and harassment within the district are eradicated, providing a Landlord Resolution Service and Landlord Forum, liaising with partner housing providers, referring Clients to the homeless hostels. They are also the conduit for the Rent Deposit Scheme, Young Persons Project, Private Sector Leasing Scheme, Choice Based Lettings Scheme, Housing Register and Allocations of social housing.

We are regulated by Government and have to have regard of numerous Housing Acts as well as the Council's Homelessness Strategy 2013 – 2016 and the Council's corporate aims of:

- maintaining sound finances by investing wisely, maximising income and providing effective and efficient services, and,
- when delivering our services our customers are at the heart of everything we do

The cost to run the service totals £488,336 per annum. This amount includes staffing costs, homelessness prevention initiatives, deposits for private sector accommodation and staff training. It also funds temporary accommodation for homelessness emergencies alongside hostel charges and voids and removal and storage costs.

Since January 2014 we have increased our income stream by passing the full cost for bed and breakfast and removal and storage onto the client. However we do not currently ask clients to repay or contribute to any costs we incur when providing a deposit. This is something that we could do and would generate income of approx £50,000 per annum for the Council.

Forward Planning for Councillors

Proposed date of decision	Item	Service Area	Service Delivery Champion	Committee
November 2014	Agree to lease 2 Sanctuary properties for young people	Housing	Cllr Rouse	Regulatory and Support Services Committee
January 2015	Agree amendments to Homelessness Strategy	Housing	Cllr Rouse	Regulatory and Support Services Committee

Strategy map



Measuring Performance

TA Reduction Performance Measure	Target	Actual
Homeless decisions made within 33 days	100%	
No families in B&B unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks	0	
Emergency homeless households seen on the day they present	100%	
Recharging policy	100%	

Safer Communities Performance Measure	Target	Actual
Deliver target hardening packages to households at high risk of domestic abuse	5 working days	
Attendance rate at MARAC, MAPPA and Anti Social Behaviour Steering Group meetings	95%	

Partnership Performance Measure	Target	Actual
SLA/protocols in place with partner agencies		
Single households accommodated in the private sector via single homeless service	80%	

Preventing Homelessness Performance Measure	Target	Actual
No of homeless preventions completed each quarter	66	
DHP pot spent quarterly	100%	
Host a Landlord forum	Yearly	
Rough Sleeper estimate	Yearly	
94% collection rate for B&B, storage & removal and deposits		

Staff Performance Measure	Target	Actual
Ensure all Housing Options Officers receive adequate training in adult and children safeguarding, DV awareness and MARAC policy and procedures	100%	
Appraisals completed on time	100%	
Service awareness briefings for Member Champion	100%	

Customer needs Performance Measure	Target	Actual
Update website and ensure plethora of leaflets distributed across the District		
Conduct Customer satisfaction surveys	50%	
Undertake demands analysis to determine future drop in surgeries		
Increase numbers of home visits		

Delivering the service

Name	100% Recharging Policy
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To ensure that every effort is made by the Housing Options Team (HOT) to recoup monies loaned to clients for deposits, storage & removals and full recharge for any time spent in B&B. Thus enabling Options Officers to offer further deposits / loans in the future.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	By working closely with the finance department and the legal team, all recipients of financial assistance from the HOT will be subject to the income recovery procedure and therefore this will maximise the chances of all monies being returned to the Housing Budget to be recycled for future clients.
Source of Data	Agresso
Frequency	Daily or as required
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Loss of income for the Council
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and Housing Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Affordability calculation completed between HOO and client to determine weekly repayment. 2. Repayment agreement signed by client. 3. Copy of agreement and repayment plan sent to finance. 4. HOO monitors payments received. 5. Client contacted if payments stop or not paid in full. 6. HOO sends request to legal to commence court action of client fails to pay.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance Report, monthly budget statement
Notes	Currently the HOO completes this however with more loans being made available the Council should consider the cost effectiveness of employing an Income Recovery Officer

Name	No families in B&B unless in an emergency and then for no longer than 6 weeks.
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To avoid the use of B&B accommodation where possible unless in an absolute emergency and there is no other accommodation available to the client.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	Focus on homeless prevention and early intervention to assist families into alternative accommodation before crisis point. Therefore reducing the numbers needing temporary accommodation.
Source of Data	Locata
Frequency	Daily
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Judicial review, Fines imposed from Government for acting unlawfully.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make timely appointments for clients who are threatened with homelessness 2. Deal with emergency situations on the day of approach 3. Negotiations with landlords/ agencies / family members to prevent evictions 4. Make proper use of hostel accommodation 5. Make timely homelessness decisions (within 33 working days) 6. Monitor and actively encourage bidding to ensure best outcome.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance Report
Notes	

Name	Emergency homeless households seen on the day they present.
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	To prioritise emergency homeless presentations and where possible deal with the situation on the day of presentation to the council. (except weekends/bank holidays)
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To act swiftly when dealing with emergency situations to avoid crisis situations, street homelessness and to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. Making use of hostel resources and accessing the hostel out of hours service if necessary.
Source of Data	CRM
Frequency	Daily / as required
Target	100% (disregarding weekends / bank holidays except out of hours calls)
Rewards/Penalties	If emergency presentations are not dealt with on the day of approach there is a possibility that the numbers of street homeless would increase. Housing options officers would be fire fighting at crisis point, the emphasis on prevention would shift as officer's time would be taken up dealing with crisis issues rather than preventing and avoiding homelessness. Could lead to judicial review.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See applicant in reception to conduct housing options / homelessness interview 2. Speak to current landlord/family member to try to rectify situation where possible, offering to rectify benefit problems, provide floating support or negotiating payment plans for arrears etc. 3. If needed that day arrange hostel placement or book in advance for when due to be homeless 4. Take homeless application if appropriate 5. Look at alternative solutions to homelessness, i.e private rented sector, utilising DHP, RDS and CCCLAS.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	

Name	Homeless decisions made in 33 working days
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	To keep waiting times to a minimum and to reduce the time needed in temporary/interim accommodation. Maintaining a constant throughput in the hostels.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To make timely enquiries and decisions on all homeless applications
Source of Data	Locata
Frequency	Daily
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Without a robust income recovery procedure and the assistance from Finance and Legal depts the HOT would be reliant upon the client to make payments with no incentive to pay back what they have used/borrowed. If clients did not make their payments the budget for these schemes would dwindle and thus limiting the amount of help that is available to offer. This would then mean that homeless prevention initiatives would struggle due to lack of funds and use of B&B may be required once more. With the assistance of finance and legal there is a chasing payments procedure leading to legal action for debt recovery ensuring that clients make the payments required.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start enquiries on homeless applications on the day of approach. 2. If any inconsistencies with the application, make an emergency appointment to discuss with the applicant. 3. Give deadlines for information to be supplied by the applicant, if not supplied within this time decision to be made on information already gathered. 4. Timely minded to interviews 5. Decision made, signed off by principal housing officer and decision letter written within the 33 day guidelines.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	

Name	Single households accommodated in the private sector via single homeless service
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers, Sub regional homelessness managers
Purpose	To provide accommodation for single non priority clients in shared properties, quickly and affordably with ongoing tenancy support.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To reduce the number of homeless, single, non priority clients and to avoid street homelessness. Providing a more accessible source of accommodation where the client has struggled with the general private rented sector.
Source of Data	Locata, Cambridge City Council
Frequency	As required
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Increase in street homelessness, 'knock on' effect in ASB, crime and disorder and substance misuse on the streets of the local area.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing options meeting with the individual 2. Housing benefit calculation 3. Referral to the SHS completed 4. Client chooses preferred areas to be housed into 5. Details of night shelters or other available options to be given to cover interim assessment period 6. SHS contact client and arrange for rapid response team to liaise with client to arrange move in date.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	The effectiveness of the SHS will be governed by how many properties are made available to the service and how many other authorities are making use of the scheme.

Name	SLA/protocols in place with partner agencies
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To ensure that excellent working relationships are maintained between partnering organisations and agencies allowing the housing department to discharge homeless duty effectively and swiftly, to be able to have access to information to assist with making homeless decisions i.e. police records. To be able to access services such as the Sanctuary Scheme.
Links	16/17 year old / Young Parents Project / YPP / Homelessness Managers Group/ home-link / Sanctuary Scheme / Floating Support / Sanctuary Housing / Police – ASB Steering Group / Lighthouse / Experian / KSHS PSL's
Formula	To ensure that all SLA's are up to date and relevant to the current climate. To produce new SLA's protocols to coincide with developments within the housing service and to include new services and contacts.
Source of Data	Jo Brooks
Frequency	As required
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Without SLA's and protocol's relationships between the housing service and other organisations/agencies may become tenuous as difference of opinion could cause issues. This would then affect the service that the housing options department can deliver and may reduce the amount of homeless preventions due to lack of resources.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principal housing officer to discuss protocol with agency in question 2. Mutually agree protocol and liaise with each other over content of SLA 3. Draft SLA / protocol 4. Meet to discuss amendments and agree alternatives 5. Both parties agree on final draft and sign. 6. Both agencies work within the guidelines of the SLA
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	

Name	Deliver target hardening packages to households at high risk of domestic abuse within 5 working days
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	To allow certain domestic abuse applicants to remain in their current property and to be safe in the knowledge that their property is secure.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	When an applicant approaches the HOT suffering from domestic abuse and a risk to the client and their family is identified it may be possible to refer for target hardening depending on the property in which they reside and the owner of that property. If the landlord is in agreement or the client is a home owner then the referral will be done for the target hardening within 5 working days to minimise the ongoing risk to the client and their family.
Source of Data	CAADA, MARAC
Frequency	As and when required
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Accessing this scheme will allow the HOT to prevent homelessness by making safe the clients existing property and negating the need to move the family. This is ideal in cases where the perpetrator has vacated the property but still poses a threat or where they are in custody and/or have bail conditions or restraining orders. Without this option the family would either have to move to refuge or be re-housed by the Authority.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk identified 2. Property suitable for target hardening? Or landlord in agreement for works to be done? 3. If yes, referral for inspection and assessment for works needed. 4. Workmen attend property on agreed date and time to assess what works would suit the house and the situation. 5. Permission given for workmen to carry out what is needed up to the cost of £1000 if works are likely to exceed this the permission is to be sought from Jo Brooks. 6. If all ok, work completed that day if possible.
Feedback	Quarterly performance report
Notes	

Name	Attend MARAC, MAPPA and Anti Social Behaviour Steering Group meetings
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To attend meetings and conferences for MARAC, MAPPA and ASB Steering Group to make sure that the HOT are aware of any impending homelessness relating to domestic violence/abuse, crime and disorder or anti social behaviour to be able to prevent homelessness where possible or move victims as a priority with the backing of partner agencies.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	Attend meetings regularly to aid in homeless prevention and safeguarding of vulnerable residents of ECDC.
Source of Data	
Frequency	As required
Target	95%
Rewards/Penalties	Without attendance at these groups the HOT would not be aware of potential issues surrounding vulnerable victims / criminal behaviour / risks to staff or the community and would therefore increase the possibility of emergency approaches to the housing department. With prior knowledge of the above the HOT can assess the situation, outreach where necessary, minimise risk and prevent homelessness where possible. Also prevention of serious offences, serious harm or even death of a vulnerable person.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	Attend meetings and feed back to the team. Update policies and procedures to incorporate new legislation and caselaw. Analyze information to determine future need.
Feedback	
Notes	

Name	Preventing Homelessness
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	To ensure that the focus of the HOT is to prevent homelessness where possible.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	Where possible act quickly to prevent the client from losing their home or to find alternative accommodation before they become homeless. Using existing prevention methods and to explore new options and new sources of financial assistance.
Source of Data	P1E's and quarterly performance report
Frequency	Quarterly
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	The less prevention we do results in an increase in the number of homeless applications we take. This in turn would increase the amount of temporary accommodation needed and could have a substantial effect on the budget because we would have to use B&B. This would also slow down the rate at which people would be housed as the number of acceptances would increase.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See client as soon as possible to give options and advice 2. Explore possibility of keeping client in own home, resolve benefit issues / negotiate with landlord / small prevention payments 3. Where the above is not an option, explore alternative arrangements / private renting / prevention banding on home-link 4. Access the rent deposit scheme 5. Benefit entitlement checks 6. Experian checks 7. HOO explains processes to potential landlords to try and persuade to accept benefits / incentives etc. 8. HOO to liaise between landlord and tenant and offer floating support to secure tenancy (for example)
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	Only if all prevention options have been explored and have failed will a homeless application be taken and temporary accommodation offered.

Name	Use of CCCLAS and DHP to prevent homelessness
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	To utilise the Cambridgeshire Local Assistance Scheme and DHP fund wherever possible.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	<p>CCCLAS can provide a variety of items to assist with preventing homelessness as well as to help clients with a priority need to set up in their new homes.</p> <p>CCCLAS provide up to £500 towards a deposit on a privately rented property and up to £500 towards removal costs.</p> <p>They also provide white goods, beds and clothes for vulnerable clients setting up in a new property.</p> <p>DHP can be used to help secure a property by way of a payment for rent in advance, agency fees and in some cases a rent deposit.</p>
Source of Data	CCCLAS, ARP
Frequency	When required
Target	
Rewards/Penalties	<p>Unfortunately the CCCLAS service is only available to clients that have a dependent child or are assessed as being vulnerable in some way by the LA. However where a family have been made intentionally homeless and their allowance for a deposit has dwindled due to the time spent in temporary accommodation, CCCLAS can pay up to £500 towards the cost of a deposit and any further cost can be applied for through ARP as long as the property has been confirmed as available to the applicant, they will be eligible for housing benefit and they have been referred by the HOT.</p>
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applicant assessed as priority need 2. Property in the private rented sector has been applied for and confirmed as available for the applicant 3. Application to CCCLAS made via the HOO. 4. If applicant requires DHP funding for any other aspect of the tenancy and receiving this payment will secure the tenancy and prevent homelessness, the HOO must complete a DHP form, Housing Benefit form and a safeguarding form. This must then be submitted to the managers at ARP via the benefits enquiries email address. 5. Follow up with a call to ARP to clarify the referral and to arrange payments to the landlord/agent.
Feedback	
Notes	

Name	The use of Discretionary Housing Payment
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	To make best use of the DHP pot spending as much as possible to prevent homelessness and to ensure an adequate DHP allowance in the next financial year.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To make use of DHP for HB shortfall / deposits / rent in advance and agency fees
Source of Data	Anglia Revenues Partnership
Frequency	As required
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	DHP money can be used to bridge gaps that our own schemes do not cover or where intentionality decisions create a smaller deposit allowance. Without the use of DHP the numbers of homeless preventions may drop. If the DHP pot is not accessed the result would be a smaller DHP budget for the following financial year.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer, Anglia Revenues Partnership and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During housing options interview establish if the reason for homelessness could be diverted with financial assistance, i.e. by paying HB shortfall. 2. If client has to leave their existing accommodation but cannot afford to pay rent in advance and fees to secure a private rented accommodation, HOO to liaise with ARP to ascertain the likelihood of being accepted for a payment through DHP. 3. If yes then HOO to liaise with landlord of new property to get confirmation that the property will be viable for the applicant 4. Housing benefit calculations to be completed to ascertain affordability 5. If viable then HOO to complete HB form for new property, DHP application form and safeguarding form 6. ARP to liaise with landlord to make one off payment 7. HOO to arrange deposit via in house rent deposit scheme if applicable, if not applicable to client, explore possibility of DHP paying this also.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	

Name	Annual Rough Sleeper Count
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To gauge the number of rough sleepers in the ECDC area by way of an estimation using externally collected data with other partner agencies.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To estimate the number of rough sleepers in the ECDC area in order to be able to forward plan, provide outreach services and prevent homelessness where possible.
Source of Data	Data collected from external agencies; ECDC staff, Housing associations, Churches, Support workers, Doctors surgeries, Hostel managers etc
Frequency	Yearly
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	If the housing options team are aware of the number of rough sleepers and are made aware of their location and possible contact details, efforts can be made to undertake some outreach work to try to rectify the individuals housing situation and wherever possible prevent homelessness. The data also flags up if there is need for night shelter accommodation and if so where and how much is needed.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree with neighbouring authorities a date and time for the estimated count. 2. Invite all external agencies to record all known rough sleepers at this time and date. 3. Liaise with these organisations leading up to the count. 4. The day after the estimation send out a request for the information gathered 5. Analyse data collected making sure that there are no duplicate accounts of rough sleeping. 6. Liaise with neighbouring authorities to ensure no overlaps and repeat reports of the same person(s). 7. Final count 8. Send final figure to DCLG.
Feedback Notes	

Name	Annual Landlord Forum
Owner	Jo Brooks / Karen Freya
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To educate and increase awareness for local landlords and offer the landlord resolution service to all. To promote improvement grants and loans. Hazard awareness and standards for privately renting.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To promote services available to landlords in the local community and establish new working relationships to enhance the prevention options available to the Authority. The resolution service will offer landlords free legal advice on tenancy's, floating support, assistance with housing benefit arrangements or home improvement advice and assistance.
Source of Data	Attendance data taken at forum
Frequency	6 monthly
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Without building new relationships with local landlords the possibilities open to the housing options department would be limited and homeless prevention statistics would suffer as a result. By enhancing the service available to landlords more properties become available for use in preventing homelessness and where possible for discharging homelessness duty.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree date for forum 2. Agree theme for forum i.e. landlord resolution service or grants and loans. 3. Invite known landlords and agencies 4. Arrange speakers 5. Produce handouts (landlord information packs) 6. Advertise forum to wider community to attract landlords unknown to the authority. 7. On day of forum, monitor attendance and take details of each landlord so that new landlords are invited to further forums. 8. Ask for feedback for improvement in the future.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	

Name	East Cambs floating support service
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To provide support to clients to help maintain their tenancies, assist in the prevention of homelessness via mediation with landlords and tenants, multi agency working and assisting with debt management, employment, benefits and other entitlements.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	Providing a support worker to assist with motivating clients to achieve their goals in order to either prevent homelessness or find and maintain more affordable housing. With emphasis on income maximisation, tenant and landlord mediation, supporting vulnerable clients and benefit entitlement / budgeting.
Source of Data	Floating Support Officer (Samantha Vaughan)
Frequency	As required
Target	TBC
Rewards/Penalties	Having a support worker maximises the client's chances of sustaining an existing tenancy therefore preventing homelessness. Or supporting homeless clients to access benefits, bid on properties and/or locate a property in the private rented sector. Assistance in setting up in that property will be provided to make sure that the client budgets and sustains their tenancy therefore avoiding homelessness in the future.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks, Samantha Vaughan and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	Clients who are identified as in need of support will be discussed with the FSO and referred for an assessment of their needs. The FSO will then meet with the client to discuss options and plan a course of action. The FSO will then maintain contact with the client until agreed outcomes have been achieved.
Feedback	
Notes	The service costs £20k per annum. That provides 15 hours of floating support per week. We need to monitor waiting times to access the service to determine whether any mileage in bringing the scheme in house which would provide better value for money.

Name	Housing Options Officers receive training in adult and child safeguarding, DV awareness and MARAC policies and procedures
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	Keep vulnerable members of the community safe from harm and to assist other applicants from other authority areas to move from danger into a locality in which they will be safe.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	All Housing Options officers are able to refer to MARAC or social care effectively to ensure that all options are given and that the situation is dealt with quickly, lawfully and in the best interest of the client
Source of Data	CAADA, MARAC, Locata.
Frequency	As required
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Possibility of death or serious harm to the client and or family of the client, prosecution, Government fines
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. See vulnerable client as soon as it is possible/safe to do so. 2. If DV is apparent then complete CAADA dash risk assessment. 3. If client scores over 14 then refer to MARAC as high priority. 4. Source accommodation via refuge or out of district placement. 5. If refuge or moving out of area is not viable then look at possibility of sanctuary project, refer as necessary. 6. If HOO has any concerns about the safety of a vulnerable adult or child then appropriate steps should be taken by referring to social care or to the Authority's safeguarding officers.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	

Name	Appraisals completed annually and on time
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To ensure that all staff appraisals be completed annually and within the time frame set by HR.
Links	HR Policy and Procedure
Formula	To arrange in and complete all staff appraisals within time frame set by HR ensuring that all staff have enough time to complete their comments and for Principal Housing Officer to complete appraisal and agree with staff member before signing. Identify training needs. Opportunity to discuss what has gone well and what needs improving and aspirations for the future.
Source of Data	HR, Principal Housing Officer and Staff member
Frequency	Yearly
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Staff will be unaware of their progress throughout the year, would not know what areas to improve upon therefore not providing the best service possible to the clients. Effect on staff morale.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and HR
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time frame set by HR 2. Principal Housing Officer to book appraisals with staff 3. PHO to issue staff with paperwork to complete (giving enough time in which to do so) 4. HOO to complete apraisee's comments and return to PHO 5. Appraisal conducted by PHO and PHO comments to be added to paperwork 6. Completed paperwork to be passed to HOO for review and final signature. 7. Completed appraisals to be sent to HR.
Feedback	1:1, mid term appraisal
Notes	Any discussion at appraisals should not come as a surprise; issues that arise regarding performance should be dealt with in a timely manner

Name	Service awareness briefings for Service Delivery Champion
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To update Service Delivery champions with progress within the housing team, how the service is being operated and budgetary updates. Service Delivery Champion to act as critical friend.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To include Service Delivery Champions in all aspects of the running of the housing options department to promote transparency and good partnership working. Members will be able to understand the everyday running of the department and will be able to offer assistance where required.
Source of Data	Regular feedback from Members and CE.
Frequency	As required
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	Members need to have an awareness of the service in order for it to move forward. They will act as a critical friend to the service and their role is to understand the complexities of housing options and homelessness, see how changes will benefit the effectiveness of the team and the service it provides to the community and report to the Council on their activities and respond to questions and enquiries.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify Member Champion 2. SHO to invite those members to regular meetings 3. Invite Members to shadow the team if they wish 4. Invite members to attend HOT meetings 5. Include Members in the distribution of quarterly performance reports.
Feedback	Quarterly Performance report
Notes	

Name	Customer satisfaction surveys completed and acted upon
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To allow the team to evaluate their performance as housing options officers
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To contact 50% of customers accessing the housing advice service to determine how satisfied they were with the service/information they received
Source of Data	Website / IT
Frequency	Quarterly
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	The information gathered in the customer satisfaction surveys will highlight areas of the service that have either proven to be useful or areas that need improvement therefore creating foundations on which to build a better service all round. Any specific issues raised can be dealt with or further training provided to make sure that a high quality service is provided.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PHO to pick clients at random to invite them to take part in the survey – these will be in addition to those who take the survey directly from the website 2. Every quarter collect the data from the IT department 3. Look at the areas that need improvement and roll out training where appropriate or discuss the issues at HOT meetings. 4. Collectively decide how to use this data to create a superior service for the community of ECDC. 5. Each quarter compare figures and comments to gauge whether the initiatives introduced have improved the outcome of customer satisfaction survey. If not the HOT will discuss way to improve or solve the issues raised
Feedback	
Notes	

Name	Update website and ensure plethora of leaflets distributed across the district
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	To educate and inform the wider community on issues surrounding housing and homelessness.
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	To liaise with the web team and the reprographics department to ensure that all available information is up to date and accurate and covering a wide range of topics from landlord responsibilities to domestic abuse or money worries.
Source of Data	Shelter, Jan Luber, Arden Chambers, Code of Guidance, Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Refuge, Women's Aid, Environmental Services.
Frequency	As required
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	By making as much information as possible available to the wider community, members of the public are more aware of what help is available to them and are aware that they should seek help sooner rather than later. Victims of domestic abuse know what to do and where to go for help. By advertising the service more widely more people are likely to make contact to ask for advice, problems can be tackled earlier and homeless prevention is more successful. It is a highly effective tool in preventing homelessness at the earliest stage.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update existing leaflets with new information or case law 2. Forward to reprographics department for printing 3. Update website through the service desk with any new amendments to law or to advertise new schemes. 4. Keep rack filled in interview room 1 5. Distribute leaflets to secondary outlets such as the hostels, churches, GP surgeries, libraries etc. 6. Make sure that all upcoming events are advertised on the website.

Name	Undertake demands analysis to determine future drop in surgeries
Owner	Jo Brooks
Co owners	Housing Options Officers
Purpose	To assess the numbers of drop in enquiries made to gauge how many sessions are required to provide the best housing service possible for the community at the earliest opportunity and at a time that suits the customer..
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	Via customer services evaluate the number of people attending the housing drop ins and adjust the amount according to demand (currently 3 mornings per week plus one monthly DV specific drop in)
Source of Data	CRM
Frequency	Quarterly
Target	100%
Rewards/Penalties	The data will indicate how effective the drop in sessions are and will flag up if there is a need for further sessions to ensure that the best possible service is provided. This also enables clients to come in sooner rather than having to wait for an appointment when the HOO is free.
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	<p>Every quarter data will be collected from customer services to show how many people have utilised to drop in sessions, this will be compared to the previous quarter and appropriate actions will be taken to reflect this.</p> <p>We also provide a monthly drop in surgery at the food bank. This has proven to be successful but needs to be monitored to ensure we are giving the right advice to the right audience at the right time.</p>
Feedback	
Notes	

Name	Increase number of home visits
Owner	Housing Options Officers
Co owners	Jo Brooks
Purpose	To act quickly on homelessness issues by visiting clients in their own homes as soon as possible
Links	Housing Act 1996 (as amended 2002), Homelessness Strategy 2013-2016 and Corporate Strategic Finance Outcome.
Formula	Where possible arrange visits with clients and conduct housing options interviews in their own home. This will allow the HOO to assess validity of claims of environmental issues / relationship breakdown / asses home environments where hostility between family members is indicated. This would also be valuable when assessing potential fraud cases.
Source of Data	Locata
Frequency	As required
Target	To be confirmed
Rewards/Penalties	Home visits are useful when trying to assess claims of parental eviction, unsuitability of properties, relationship breakdown and affordability. It also helps to identify fraudulent applications. Mediation can be carried out in the home to prevent homelessness (parental evictions).
Who measures?	Principal Housing Officer and Assistant Director
Who acts on the data?	Jo Brooks and the Housing Options Team
What will be done	Where possible a HOO will arrange a home visit, prioritising those whose situation may be seen as contrived / urgent / life threatening or serious risks to health are indicated. HOO's will make sure that the team are aware of their whereabouts and their likely time of return to ensure safety. HOO to carry their work mobile at all times during home-visits – Following the lone working procedure.
Feedback	
Notes	Home visits will be monitored for 3 months to determine need and the PHO will adjust the service accordingly.