



AGENDA

CABINET

MONDAY, 9 MAY 2005

10.30 AM

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, ST PETERS HILL,
GRANTHAM**

Duncan Kerr, Chief Executive

CABINET MEMBERS:	Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal (Leader), Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew (Deputy Leader/Portfolio: Housing), Councillor Teri Bryant (Portfolio: Community Affairs), Councillor Ray Auger (Portfolio: Environmental), Councillor Paul Carpenter (Portfolio: Technology), Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright (Portfolio: Cultural) and Councillor John Smith (Portfolio: Economic)
Cabinet Support Officer:	Lena Shuttlewood tel: 01476 406119 e-mail: l.shuttlewood@southkesteven.gov.uk

Members of the public are entitled to attend the meeting of the Cabinet at which key decisions will be taken on the issues listed on the following page. Key decisions are marked *.

1. Apologies

2. Minutes

To approve the records of the Cabinet meetings held on 4th and 11th April 2005.
(attached)

3. Declarations of Interest (if any)

CATEGORY A PRIORITY ISSUES:

4. Town Centre Management Partnership Structures

Report number DCS22 by the Director of Community Services. **(attached)**

CATEGORY B PRIORITY ISSUES:

5. *Multi-storey Car Park, Wharf Road, Grantham

Report number PRO443 by the Head of Property Services (Design).
(attached)

6. *Supporting People: 5 Year Strategy

Report number DCS21 by the Director of Community Services. **(attached)**

7. * Housing Stock Option Appraisal

Report number DRS14 by the Director of Regulatory Services. **(attached)**

8. Consultation and Engagement with Young People: Progress Report

Report number DCS23 by the director of Community Services. **(attached)**

9. Local Development Scheme (March 2005)

Report number PLA498 by the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Regeneration.
(attached)

CHANGE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN ISSUES:

10. *Draft Best Value Performance Plan and Best Value Review Programme 2005/06

Report number DOS280 by the Director of Operational Services. **(attached)**

11. Member Development Forum on 23rd June 2005

Report number CEX290 by the Chief Executive. **(attached)**

12. Land at High Street, Market Deeping

Report number PLA492 by the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Regeneration.
(attached)

OTHER ISSUES:

- 13. Matters Referred to Cabinet by the Council or the Development & Scrutiny Panels**
- 14. Items raised by Cabinet Members including reports on Key and Non Key Decisions taken under Delegated Powers.**
- 15. Representations Received from Members of the Public on Matters within the Forward Plan (if any)**
- 16. Representations received from Non Cabinet Members**
- 17. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**



MEETING OF THE CABINET
4 APRIL 2005 - 10.30 AM – 11.44 AM

PRESENT:

**Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew
Councillor Terl Bryant
Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor John Smith**

Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal – Leader / Chairman

**Chief Executive
Corporate Director, Community Services
Corporate Director, Regulatory Services
Head of Housing Services
Head of Planning Policy & Economic Regeneration
Development Control Services Manager
Member Services Manager
Community Safety Manager
Public Relations Manager
Scrutiny Officer**

**Non Cabinet Members present : Councillors Kerr ;
G. Taylor ; G. Wheat ; Wilks**

CO118. MINUTES

Subject to deleting the last sentence of Consideration (5) at minute CO115 as there was no discussion or decision to move Affordable Housing from Category B to Category A priority, the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on

7th March 2005 were confirmed as a correct record.

CO119. SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

DECISION:

- (1) To recommend to Council the adoption of the South Kesteven District Council Anti-Social Behaviour and Enforcement Policy;**
- (2) To note that this document is subject to amendment and review in line with changes in Government legislation and that any amendments will be referred to the Cabinet for approval;**
- (3) To note that the document is subject to development, amendment and review following ongoing consultation with the Council's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership partners, the community and other statutory and non-statutory agencies; any amendments being subject to a report back to the Cabinet for approval.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number DCS20 by the Corporate Director of Community Services outlining the obligations upon the Council, the Police, other key agencies and the community under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2004 to develop and implement strategies for reducing crime and disorder and to increase community safety;**
- (2) Anti-social behaviour is a Category A priority for SKDC;**
- (3) The proposed anti-social behaviour and enforcement policy aims to bring the remit of community safety issues directly into each service and encourage lateral corporate thinking of a subject that should overlap and weave throughout the entire work of the Council. The document's purpose is to increase the awareness and acceptance of established strategies. Once adopted, more detailed action plans can be brought forward to address specific issues within the district;**
- (4) Responses from officers to questions put by the relevant Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bryant in relation to the summary of the applicable legislation; the District Council's proactive role in relation to the Children's Act and the County Council's Children's Services; definitions of the terms "locality" and "untidy sites" as referred to on pages 8 and 9 of the draft policy document.**

CO120. SUPPORTING PEOPLE: CONSTITUTION AND MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

DECISION: To approve the Constitution and to enter into the Memorandum of Understanding for the Lincolnshire Supporting People Commissioning Body.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number DCS19 setting out the background to the transference of local decision making on housing related support services to the partnership called the Supporting People Commissioning Body. All agencies represented on the Supporting People Commissioning Body are being asked to adopt the Constitution and enter into the Memorandum of Understanding pursuant to Clause 4 of the Supporting People (England) Directions 2003. This is to ensure that the work required of them in the Directions will be accomplished;
- (2) Noting the way in which functions and responsibilities have been arranged within these documents which are subject to national guidance and direction.

CO121. SECURING AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH PLANNING - HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY 2002

DECISION: To adopt the following procedure for negotiating the delivery of affordable housing through the planning system:

- (1) The provision of affordable housing should be made in accordance with the requirements of Policy H9 of the South Kesteven Local Plan (Adopted April 1995) on all housing developments which meet the thresholds set out in Circular 6/98 Affordable Housing and the updated housing needs survey (2002);
- (2) Provision should be made in accordance with the conclusions of the Housing Need Survey (2002) produced by Fordhams. This document will be used as evidence to support the Council's negotiations with applicants and in drawing up any necessary conditions or S106 obligations.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number PLA488 by the Head of Planning Policy & Economic Regeneration which gives consideration to the most appropriate ways of achieving the provision of affordable housing through the planning system over the next two years before the adoption of new planning policies included within the new Local Development Framework;

- (2) Recommendations about the provision of affordable housing from the recent inspection of the Council's Housing Service;
- (3) The affordable housing policies (H8 and H9) of the South Kesteven Local Plan adopted 1998 – will be the saved policy base for delivering affordable housing through planning over the next 3 years. Ideally, these policies would be expanded through Supplementary Planning Guidance. However the changes to the new planning system means that this is not possible at this moment in time. The timetable for the preparation of the Local Development Framework together with the availability in the latter part of this year of a new housing need survey, means that the most resource effective approach at this moment is to endorse the current housing need survey as the evidence base for negotiating affordable housing provision on development sites through policy H9 of the adopted Local Plan;
- (4) The Cabinet is asked to endorse this formal position statement in order to provide officers with a more structured approach to negotiations with developers for the provision of affordable housing.

CO122. PRIVATE SECTOR ACCREDITATION SCHEME

DECISION: To defer the establishment of the South Kesteven Private Sector Accreditation Scheme pending further information to be submitted to the next open Cabinet meeting on 9th May concerning the cost implications of delivery of the scheme and the compatibility of this proposal with the Housing Inspection Report when received.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number HSG158 by the Head of Housing Services explaining how a voluntary accreditation scheme has been developed from a Landlords Forum for private sector landlords and managing agents and what the key features of the scheme are. This group was originally formed to improve standards in the private sector. Accreditation of private landlords is supported by central government as a way of promoting self-regulation and the improvement of standards in the private rented sector;
- (2) The willingness of the landlords and agents to work with the District Council on this scheme presents an ideal opportunity to promote partnership working;
- (3) Although the Head of Housing Services' report stated there was no requirement for additional resources to administer the proposed scheme, the Cabinet requested a breakdown of the cost of officers' time involved in the whole scheme. Whilst acknowledging that the scheme would be operated within existing resources, the Cabinet wanted more detail on the section's prioritising of work to enable the

scheme to be undertaken.

CO123. LOCAL AREA ASSEMBLIES

DECISION:

- (1) The Cabinet is of the view that it is too soon to assess the current operating arrangements, although it is considered that the LAAs should adhere to the original concept behind their purpose as agreed by the full Council. The Council must be focused as to the intention behind the LAAs and, as yet, this focus has not fully materialised;**
- (2) To leave the procedure and arrangements for the Local Area Assemblies as they are for the time being and to re-visit this issue in 6 to 9 months time once they have become more established.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number DLS33 by the Scrutiny Officer following the first two rounds of Local Area Assembly meetings which included comments from a member and the Communications and Engagement DSP on their future operation;**
- (2) There is some discretion afforded to the Chairmen of the meetings in how the agenda is dealt with.**

CO124. ITEMS RAISED BY CABINET MEMBERS INCLUDING REPORTS ON KEY AND NON KEY DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS.

NON KEY DECISIONS:

(1) Councillor Ray Auger: Portfolio - Environment

Decision: That reduced pest control charges for the year 2005/6 be set as follows:

Fee for rats£33 plus VAT
Fee for mice and insect pests£43 plus VAT

[Decision made 04.04.05]

Decision: To accept the tender submitted by Trent Valley Construction Ltd of North Hykeham, Lincoln, in the sum of £54,950.85 for the repair and refurbishment of the following car parks within South Kesteven:

- 1) Guildhall Street, Grantham
- 2) Watergate, Grantham

- 3) Council Offices, Grantham
- 4) Welham Street, Grantham
- 5) Conduit Lane, Grantham
- 6) Wyndham Park, Grantham
- 7) Trent Road, (Stadium) Grantham
- 8) Trent Road, (Leisure Centre), Grantham
- 9) Bath Row, Stamford
- 10) North Street, Stamford
- 11) Scotgate, Stamford
- 12) St. Leonard's St, Stamford
- 13) Drift Road, (Leisure Centre), Stamford
- 14) Broad Street, (Market Store Yard), Stamford
- 15) South Street, Bourne
- 16) Queens Road, (Leisure Centre), Bourne
- 17) Douglas Road, (community Centre), Market Deeping

[Decision taken on 29.03.05]

(2) Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew: Portfolio – Housing Services

Decision: That following negotiations between J. Tomlinson Ltd and the Council's Property Services Section, J. Tomlinson Ltd's partnering agreement for the provision of Solid Fuel Servicing Maintenance and Repair work be extended for a further three years with an uplift of 5% per annum on the base tender. This extends the agreement until 31st March 2008.

[Decision taken on 29.03.05]

The following two decisions were taken under delegated authority from the Leader in her absence:

Decision:

- (1) That the Co-op be declared a special purchaser of the car park situated at Godsey Lane, Market Deeping;
- (2) The car park be sold to the Co-op as a special purchaser on the following terms and to be negotiated subject to the District Valuer's approval:-
 - (i) Continuation as a shoppers' car park for the Deepings Centre with a covenant not to carry out any commercial or other development on any part of the identified land for a period of 15 years from the completion of the purchase;
 - (ii) Continuation of the existing arrangement with Deepings Traders Association to allow a weekly market to be held. This is subject to the terms of the licence so long as it remains in force.
- (3) The land be sold subject to all existing public and other rights of way.

[Decision taken on 29.03.05]

Decision: To approve the award of a grant in the sum of £5,000 to the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to support the purchase of land at the Deepings Lakes.

[Decision taken on 29.03.05]

Report of decision following call-in by the Environment DSP:

Decision: After consideration of the issues raised by the Environment DSP call-in meeting held on 21st March 2005, the portfolio holder, Councillor Martin-Mayhew is minded to re-affirm the decision made on 7th March 2005 (Cabinet minute CO110) to approve the Grantham Bus Station as the most suitable site for the provision of attended toilets in Grantham. This decision is subject to the satisfactory conclusion of current negotiations with WM Morrisons.

(3) Councillor John Smith: Portfolio - Economic

Decision: To approve the submission of the following recommendations concerning revisions to the Draft Lincolnshire Structure Plan:

SPATIAL STRATEGY

POLICY S2: LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

POLICY S3: DEVELOPMENT IN THE MAJOR SETTLEMENTS

Table 4.1: Major Settlements:

Comment:

This Table sets out the hierarchy of settlements in the County and has included Bourne within the list of Main Towns.

Recommendation:

This Council supports the reassignment of Bourne from the Small Towns category to the Main Towns category.

HOUSING

Comment:

This Council objected to Policy H1 in the deposit version. The Proposed Changes make no changes in relation to the Strategic Housing Requirement of SKDC.

Recommendation:

That this Council re-iterates its objections to Housing Provision provided in Policy H1.

POLICY E2: EMPLOYMENT LAND AND BUILDINGS

Comment:

This Policy is concerned with the allocation of land for employment purposes. The Policy gives guidance on the criteria to be adopted when allocating and reviewing allocations of land for employment purposes.

Recommendation:

The Council welcomes the revision of this Policy, particularly the following paragraphs:

6.19 which acknowledges the importance of office space with good IT infrastructure for start-up and professional businesses, and recognizes its contribution to the economy of the County.

6.24 which now emphasises the role of Grantham as a sub-regional centre.

Table 6.2: Lincolnshire Shopping Hierarchy

Comment:

This hierarchy is stated to reflect the relative importance of the settlements. It places Bourne in the Rural/Other Service Centres category (the lowest level). However Table 4.1 (Major Settlements) has been revised and Bourne has been removed from the Small Towns category and placed within the Main Towns category. It is felt that this approach is inconsistent.

Recommendation:

That Bourne be removed from the Rural/Other Service Centres category and placed in the Main District Centres category.

POLICY E5: TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Comment:

This policy recognises the contribution of tourism to the whole County.

Recommendation:

This Council supports the revised policy.

POLICY M1: STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK

Comment:

This policy states that major highway improvements will be concentrated on the strategic road network. It lists (in alphabetical order) schemes which the County Council will seek to pursue. "Grantham East-West Traffic Relief" has been replaced with "Grantham Traffic Relief and Access (dependent upon the outcome of transport studies)". This is seen as relegating the status and importance of a by-pass based solution for the town's traffic problems.

Paragraph 7.10 acknowledges that RPG8 recognises the need to consolidate and strengthen the sub-regional roles of Boston and Grantham. However, in the revised policy all reference to Grantham has been deleted.

This is seen as a diminution of Grantham's role as a Sub-Regional Centre, and the aspiration of enhancing that role.

Recommendation:

This Council expresses concern that Grantham's position is being undermined by the revised terms of this policy. The previous terminology and wording should be re-instated.

POLICY NE8: RENEWABLE ENERGY

Comment:

This Policy relates to the potential to exploit a variety of sources of energy, and sets out criteria to be considered when assessing proposals.

Recommendation:

This Council supports this revised policy.

POLICY WM2: WASTE TRANSFER STATIONS/RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING FACILITIES/AND HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES

POLICY WM3: RESIDUAL WASTE TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL

Comment:

These policies provide the framework to be used for the assessment of a range of facilities to deal with waste streams and the criteria to be used when assessing proposals for the final treatment of waste.

Recommendation:

This Council supports the changes made to these policies.

In addition to the comments made above, this Council supports the revisions to the following policies:

H7: PROVISION FOR GYPSIES
E4: OFFICE DEVELOPMENT
M5: MOVEMENT IN, TO AND FROM THE DEFINED SETTLEMENTS
BE6: PROTECTING HISTORIC LANDSCAPES
T8: NOISY SPORTS
T9: WATER BASED RECREATION
MRI 2 (now renumbered MIC 2): COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE
and supports the deletion of policy MRI 5.

[Decision taken on 29.03.05]

CO125. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANELS

The Leader reported that the Cabinet had received a recommendation from a DSP on which it was being asked to respond today. However, the Cabinet was not happy with the format in which DSP recommendations were being presented.

The Cabinet would not therefore be responding until such time as discussion had taken place with Scrutiny Officers on changing the format.

DATE DECISIONS EFFECTIVE:

The decision at minute CO119 is a Policy Framework Proposal and therefore stands referred to full Council for adoption. Key Decisions at minutes CO120 and CO121 and other non key decisions made on 4th April 2005 can be implemented on 13th April 2005 unless subject to call-in by the relevant Development and Scrutiny Panel.

**South Kesteven District Council, Council Offices, St. Peter's Hill, Grantham,
Lincolnshire NG31 6PZ**

Contact: Cabinet Support Officer- Tel: 01476 406119
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MEETING OF THE CABINET
11 APRIL 2005 - 10.30 AM – 11.20 AM

PRESENT:

**Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew
Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor John Smith**

Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal – Leader / Chairman

**Chief Executive
Director of Finance and Strategic Resources
Director of Community Services
Director of Regulatory Services
Development Control Services Manager
Member Services Manager
Public Relations Manager**

**Non-Cabinet Members : Councillor Kerr ;
Turner ; Wilks**

CO126. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Terl Bryant.

CO127. GRANTHAM TOWN CENTRE: WATERGATE/EAST STREET CAR PARKS

DECISION:

(1) To identify Option Two – Retention of Watergate Car Park, Sale of

East Street and Development of Welham Street Car Park – as the preferred option at this moment in time;

- (2) **To authorise officers to undertake further work to establish the feasibility of constructing a multi-storey car park on the Welham Street site. This work to include the commissioning of a Traffic Impact Assessment site examination and, if favourable, the submission of a planning application for the scheme;**
- (3) **To await a further report to the July meeting of the Cabinet to consider the results of the feasibility study;**
- (4) **To note that if option two cannot be delivered, reconsideration would have to be given to Option One or any alternative project that may come forward.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number DCS14 by the Director of Community Services summarising the two options currently available to address the future car parking needs of the town, the costings and financing of each option, and the contributions each option would make to the development of Grantham as a sub-regional centre;
- (2) The issues of uncertainty surrounding Option Two which are currently based on preliminary designs and would be subject to planning permission involving a traffic impact assessment. Such a study, together with a fully worked up design and costings could be prepared for the Cabinet to consider in July;
- (3) Option Two was the favoured option of the Environment DSP during the pre-decision scrutiny process;
- (4) The Cabinet agrees that Option Two has the potential to deliver more outcomes that support Grantham as a sub-regional centre, particularly in that part of the town and could be linked in with the development of the Grantham Canal Basin. Option Two also addresses some of the concerns expressed by the public over the use of the Watergate site;
- (5) The Cabinet acknowledges the support from Henry Boot Developments who are willing to work with the council on whichever scheme is finally selected.

CO128. REVIEW OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

DECISION: That the Council be requested to endorse that:

- (1) **That Affordable Housing be retained as a Category B Priority for the time being but subject to review when considered appropriate;**
- (2) **New targets for Affordable Housing as set out below be adopted:**

Year	New Affordable Homes
2004/05	60
2005/06	80
2006/07	100

2007/08	150
(3) The new targets for Recycling as set out below be adopted:	

Year	Current Target	Proposed New Target
2005/06	18%	18%
2006/07	18%	21%
2007/08	18%	24%

Considerations/Reasons for Decision::

- (1) Report number CEX287 by the Chief Executive (with appended report CEX283) setting out the views and recommendations of the five DSPs on the proposed revision to the Council's priorities;
- (2) To move Affordable Housing from Priority B to Priority A at this time would pose a danger of pre-empting the outcome of the Stock Option Appraisal. The Cabinet is not prepared to make a decision based upon what, at this moment in time, is an assumption. The Council's performance in this area demonstrates that it is committed to pursuing this important issue;
- (3) The initial results of the General Satisfaction Survey demonstrate strong support for the Council's priorities as adopted;
- (4) The Cabinet supports the reasoning behind increasing the targets for recycling as set out in report CEX283) but is mindful of the implications upon other services should the authority not be able to secure DEFRA grants and/or additional Council Tax income.

CO129. PLANNING DELIVERY GRANT ALLOCATION 2005/06

DECISION:

- (1) To note the ODPM's award of planning delivery grant of £569,559 to South Kesteven District Council for achieving Best Value performance Indicator Targets and for improvement in performance up to September 2004;
- (2) That the Cabinet's congratulations be conveyed to the staff of Development Control Services and the Development Control Committee for the hard work and effort put in to this achievement;
- (3) To endorse the development of a strategy for the investment of planning delivery grant into planning services and planning related projects based around the following key issues:
 - Back scanning archived planning files
 - IT initiatives
 - External consultancy of service (particularly administrative function)
 - Replace existing furniture and improve accommodation
 - Input into LDF project to help ensure that an up to date plan

is available

- **Staffing issues (additional hours/use of short term consultants)**
- **Future projects**
- **Financing a district wide housing needs survey**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number PLA491 by the Development Control Services Manager following the announcement from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister regarding the annual award of planning delivery grant. Explanation of the basis of previous years' grants and why the authority had failed to meet the required targets; the basis for the award of the 2005/06 grant and other factors which are taken into account relative to SKDC;
- (2) The current award (the second highest in the East Midlands) reflects a significant and marked improvement in development control performance resulting in national targets being exceeded. This has been due to outstanding effort from staff and regulatory committee members to bring about the cultural change which was needed;
- (3) The Government has made clear that future awards of PDG are dependent on authorities' performance across planning activities. On this basis it is necessary for officers to develop a strategy for investing the grant award into planning services and planned related projects.

CO130. ITEMS RAISED BY CABINET MEMBERS INCLUDING REPORTS ON KEY AND NON KEY DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS.

(1) Councillor Ray Auger: Portfolio - Environment

Councillor Auger reported that the first training sessions with Police Community Support Officers had been held in relation to the issue of fixed penalties for dog fouling and litter, demonstrating the commitment of the Council's partnership working with the police to the priority A categories of street scene and anti-social behaviour. Consideration was currently being given to revising the format of the standard forms used by the police to make this process more efficient.

(2) Councillor Paul Carpenter: Portfolio - Technology

NON KEY DECISION:

Decision: That a contract for the provision of a 6 megabyte Dedicated Internet Access Plus service for the Council for 3 years be awarded to ntl.

[Decision made 11.04.05]

CO131. ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT 2005/06

The following item was considered as a matter of urgency as the guidance from the Government on the Gershon efficiency savings was received at a late stage. The deadline for the submission of the 2005/06 annual efficiency statement was brought forward to 15th April 2005 which was earlier than the Government had previously indicated.

DECISION: To accept the draft Annual Efficiency Statement as appended to report FIN234 and that the Leader, Chief Executive, and Chief Finance Officer delegated to endorse this statement for submission by the required deadline of 15th April 2005.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number FIN234 by the Director of Finance and Strategic Resources explaining that the Council is required to produce an annual efficiency statement which enables a brief overview of the key strategies and actions that will be undertaken to deliver the savings. The savings for 2005/06 have been allocated across the main cross-cutting areas of activity;
- (2) The savings were assessed in advance of the guidance in order that this could be built into the budget process;
- (3) The calculation of required Gershon efficiency savings has been completed using the guidance from the ODPM (appendix to report FIN234). Overall, the Council's target is £505,000 for each of the years 2006/07, 2007/08 and with a 50:50 split for cashable: non-cashable means £252,500 is the relevant individual target for these elements.

DATE DECISIONS EFFECTIVE:

The decisions taken at minute numbers CO127 and CO128 are Policy Framework Proposals and therefore stand referred to the Full Council. The Key Decision at minute CO131 and other non key decisions made on 11th April 2005 can be implemented on 20th April 2005 unless subject to call-in by the relevant Development and Scrutiny Panel.

**South Kesteven District Council, Council Offices, St. Peter's Hill, Grantham,
Lincolnshire NG31 6PZ**

Contact: Cabinet Support Officer- Tel: 01476 406119
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REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (COMMUNITY SERVICES)

REPORT NO: DCS22

DATE: 9TH May 2005

TITLE:	TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	N/A
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	N/A
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	N/A

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Town Centres Cllr J Smith Economic
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	Town Centre Regeneration and Grantham as a Sub Regional Centre
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	None
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	None
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	None (Trust Deed 2001)

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND SUMMARY

As Town Centre Management Partnerships (TCMP's) mature, so their organisational structures need to respond to changing circumstances. A case in point relates to Stamford Vision, who have secured considerable funding for the delivery (inter alia) of the Stamford Gateway project in Sheepmarket / Red Lion Square. The establishment of Charitable Companies Limited by Guarantee behind the established TCMP structures creates an appropriate framework to deliver projects, secure and manage funding from external organisations, invest (and carry over from one financial year to the next) funds, and own assets.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. That the Cabinet endorses the exercise to explore the creation of a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee associated with Stamford Vision, and that subject to a satisfactory outcome to those discussions, that District Council representatives be invited to become members or Directors (as appropriate) of any company so formed.**
- B. That as and when circumstances arise that similar arrangements be deployed in relation to the other TCMP's**

3.0 DETAILS OF REPORT

Stamford Vision has been successful in securing considerable funding (£300,000+) through the Welland SSP to deliver a major public realm enhancement project in the middle of Stamford. The District Council intends to support the regeneration of town centres through its Capital Programme. Stamford Vision have received considerable technical support and advice for project implementation from CABE Space, an advisory arm of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. The advice stemming from that organisation recommends the establishment of a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee as an appropriate vehicle to deliver the project.

- 3.1** Formalising the status of Town Centre Management Partnerships has been a matter under consideration for some time. TCMP's are increasingly becoming the originators and sponsors of bids to funding bodies such as Sub Regional Strategic Partnerships. As presently constituted, the Partnerships have no specific legal status or powers. Funding is generally channelled through the District Council. The District Council provides financial support to TCMP's, and delegates a prescribed level of expenditure to them, above which Cabinet Member approval is required. Underspend in any one financial year is not generally carried forward to the following year.
- 3.2** The establishment of Charitable Companies Limited by Guarantee potentially represents a mechanism to support and underpin the work of TCMP's, without diminishing or undermining the Partnership principles upon which they are

founded. It enables partnerships to bid and secure funding for and to deliver projects. It also provides a more effective and flexible framework for the management of resources.

- 3.3 Company members (for example Partnership members) are able to minimise their liabilities up to a guarantee value that has been agreed. Such companies are also sustainable and able to respond to change, such as for example through changes to organisational representatives.
- 3.4 From its inception, Stamford Vision has differed from the other three partnerships, largely because of a strong private sector involvement. At its inception a Trust was formed, and to date this has been used to administer funding from non-district Council sources (for example the Welland SSP). This approach is not considered to be entirely suitable for future purposes and a new company structure is being explored. Through CABE Space, Stamford Vision have sought advice from a specialist law firm.
- 3.5 As a major stakeholder in the Partnership, it is important that the District Council is involved and contributes to any debate surrounding company formation, and also, if appropriate, takes a role in the membership of the company. The law firm have suggested a five stage process to the development of the company:
 - Initial workshop setting out governance options and possible legal models
 - Establish governance model
 - Presentation of governance document to Shadow Board and process of incorporation
 - Charitable registration
 - Asset transfer into new organisation
- 3.6 The need to deliver the Gateway Project in a prescribed timescale points towards the need to resolve this issue. Stamford Vision are minded to fund the exercise from the funds allocated to Stamford Vision by the District Council. However, insofar as any model developed may have a relevance to the other TCMP's it would be appropriate to part fund the exercise from general TCMP budgets.
- 3.7 It is recommended that the Cabinet endorses the exercise to explore the creation of a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee, and that subject to a satisfactory outcome to those discussions, that District Council representatives be invited to become members or Directors (as appropriate) of any company so formed. It is also recommended that as and when circumstances arise that similar frameworks be deployed in relation to the other TCMP's.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND ASSESSED

It seems likely that without District Council participation in this exercise, steps will be taken to establish a company as a delivery vehicle for the Gateway project. It is considered desirable and beneficial to be involved in this exercise

from its inception, and to contribute to the identification of an appropriate governance model.

5.0 COMMENTS OF CORPORATE MANAGER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER) AND COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

5.1 Stamford Vision is currently a Charitable Trust and has operated on this basis since December 2001. It is therefore a separate legal entity and is subject to a Trust Deed that sets out governance of its operations. Essentially, Stamford Vision is administered and managed by Trustees who are appointed in accordance with the provisions in its Trust Deed. The Trust has been registered with the Charity Commissioners and is therefore required to comply with charity law and register trustees with the Charity Commissioner and submit reports as required.

5.2 Generally, the creation of a Charitable Company limited by Guarantee is not particularly dissimilar to a Charitable Trust. It is a separate legal entity that still comes within the overall remit of the Charity Commissioners and is subject to charity law.

5.3 Charitable Companies limited by Guarantee are considered a particular useful vehicle for delivery projects and managing resources. Essentially they are a tried and tested delivery vehicle for partnership type organisations.

5.4 The devil is often in the detail in these type of arrangements and careful attention will be needed in relation to the key documents that create the Company. If it is decided to proceed with the creation of the Company it is recommended that Legal and Financial Services be instructed to review and comment upon the documentation throughout the formation process. Further reports to members will be required.

5.5 Finally as regards District Council representation on the Board, if members are likely to be appointed they will need to bear in mind that they will be in a controlling position on an outside or separate body to the District Council and will therefore need to be fully aware of their specific responsibilities and duties that such an appointment would entail. Legal Services have already prepared an information booklet for members about this situation and it may also be necessary to ensure that the personal liability and insurance situation is clarified and resolved before a formal appointment occurs. Legal Services will be able to provide advise in this respect.

5.6 The Corporate Manager has been involved in the preparation of this report and endorses the comments contained herein.

6.0 CONTACT OFFICERS

John Pell, Corporate Director of Community Services (01476 406510)

Mike Sibthorp, Head of Planning Policy & Economic Regeneration

(01476 406472)

25th April 2005

Agenda Item 5

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: TREVOR BURDON
HEAD OF PROPERTY SERVICES (DESIGN)

REPORT NO. PRO.443

DATE: 9 MAY 2005

TITLE:	MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK, WHARF ROAD, GRANTHAM
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	YES
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	15 TH April 2005
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	POLICY FRAMEWORK - BUDGETARY PROVISION

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	COUNCILLOR RAY AUGER ENVIRONMENT (CAR PARKS)
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	ASSET MANAGEMENT
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	MINIMAL
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	MINIMAL
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	PRO.312 (18 APRIL 2004)

1. INTRODUCTION OR SUMMARY

The Council's Capital Programme for 2005/06 includes the sum of £140,000 for the provision of a new waterproof protective coating to the upper two levels of the Wharf Road Car Park, Grantham.

Report No. PRO.312 (18 August 2004) described the problems resulting from failure of the existing protective coating and established the need for the work.

Tenders received which include for other works associated with the introduction of movement joints, testing of parapet walls and the provision of crash barriers, confirm that a budget provision of £215,000 will now be required.

Approval is sought for the increased budget and as a result, approval to accept the lowest tender received for carrying out the works.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) That the Capital Programme budget provision be increased from £140,000 to £215,000.
- b) That the lowest tender received from Matrix Solutions Ltd of Bristol in the sum of £205,865.00 be accepted.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Non-Key Decision Report No. PRO.312 dated 18 August 2004 reported the deteriorating condition of the waterproof surfacing to the upper two decks of the multi-storey car park at Wharf Road, Grantham. At that time the budget approved for repairs of £140,000 was thought to be sufficient based upon preliminary investigation and advice from contractors licensed to install the specialist waterproof membrane proposed.

Subsequent work has identified a number of additional repairs and improvements that are now recommended for inclusion in the project and the cost of these together with the inflationary effects on tender prices during the last year or so has increased the total project cost to £215,000 as follows:-

Basic resurfacing work	£140,000
Crack Inducement in concrete decks	£23,000
Edge Protection Kerbs	£3,500
Edge Barriers	£25,000
Load Testing	£3,000
Wall Painting	£3,000
Cost Increase	£7,500
Administration/Supervision	£10,000
	£215,000

Tenders were invited from three specialist contractors licensed to install the proposed TRIFLEX surfacing system and the lowest received is from Matrix Solutions Ltd of Bristol in the sum of £205,865.00.

The additional works include for the introduction of movement joints between each of the structural deck elements and for substantial reinforcement of the surfacing material above. This will ensure that the movement in the deck can be controlled and will not result in excessive localised expansion and tearing of the deck surfacing as has occurred with the existing surfacing material.

The additional costs also include for load testing of perimeter walls and the introduction of crash barriers to prevent accidental damage by vehicles. There have been some incidences of vehicles bursting through perimeter walls at car parks around the country and a report produced by The National Steering Committee for Inspection of Multi-Storey Car Parks recommends testing of perimeter walls and installation of barriers where necessary as part of maintenance work. It should be noted that if the load testing indicates that barriers are required then it is essential that they are installed as part of the proposed resurfacing work. This will avoid the unnecessary damage to the surfacing membrane and consequent problems with the surface guarantee caused by retrospective fixing of barriers at a later date.

Completion of the entire works should be possible within a four to six week period depending upon the weather, and during this time it will be necessary for both top deck levels to be closed for public access.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND ASSESSED

Further delays in providing a new waterproof deck coating will accelerate the possibility of long term deterioration of the concrete deck due to the ingress of water and aggressive road salts.

There are various proprietary surfacing systems available but many rely entirely upon the elasticity of the deck coating to accommodate movement in the structure. This has been shown to be insufficient by the failure of the current surfacing applied in the late 1990's. The TRIFLEX system now proposed includes for a substantial reinforcing layer bonded into the material and has an established track record of performance at similar sites across the country.

5. COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

The Council approved its budget for 2005/2006 in February 2005. This contained a specific provision relating to the multi-storey car park and a general provision of £800,000 relating to existing assets.

Further deterioration could result in closure of the car park with a subsequent loss of income to the Council, in addition to increasing remediation costs.

The additional financing requirement could come from the existing assets general provision but this would leave less available for other assets.

6. COMMENTS OF CORPORATE MANAGER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER)

No comments.

7. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

No comments.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Replacement of the car park deck waterproof membrane must be carried out in order to prevent further water ingress and potential damage to the main concrete structure.

In addition, it is appropriate to introduce movement joints to control further movement and to check parapet walls and install crash barriers in accordance with guidelines published by The National Steering Committee for the Inspection of Multi-Storey Car Parks.

The cost of the works proposed exceeds the current Capital Budget provision of £140,000 by £75,000 and, therefore, it is recommended that approval be given for the additional funding so that the lowest tender received from Matrix Solutions Ltd in the sum of £205,865.00 can be accepted.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (COMMUNITY SERVICES)

REPORT NO: DCS21

DATE: 9th May 2005

TITLE:	SUPPORTING PEOPLE – 5 YEAR STRATEGY
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	NO
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	N/A

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	CATEGORY B VUNERABLE PEOPLE
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	Minor
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	This report and its appendix is publicly available via the "Local Democracy" link on the Council's website: www.southkesteven.gov.uk
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Supporting People (England) Directions 2003

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 Supporting People is a partnership between service users, service providers and service commissioners. The Partnership comprises representatives from housing, health, probation and social care services. All these stakeholders have been involved in developing the Constitution and Memorandum of Understanding.
- 1.2 In accordance with Section 5 paragraph (1) (a) of the Memorandum of Understanding one of the functions of the Commissioning Body is to prepare and agree a strategy for Supporting People.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

Members are requested to endorse the Supporting People 5-Year Strategy.

3.0 DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 All Supporting People Schemes within the country must submit strategies to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This is a condition of the Supporting People Grant. Following extensive consultation the Supporting People team have prepared the attached 5 Year Strategy (Appendix A).
- 3.2 The Strategy identifies six user groups where investment should be focused. Priorities between the groups have not been established because it is felt that services need to be developed in all areas.
 - Older people.
 - Young people.
 - Homeless people.
 - Women fleeing domestic violence.
 - People with mental health problems.
 - People with physical and sensory disability.
- 3.3 The Strategy proposes that all activity covered by Supporting People should:
 - Adopt a more joined-up approach linking with priorities established by Crime and Disorder Partnerships and by the Primary Care Trusts.
 - Develop more flexible services responsive to the needs of individual service users.
 - Meet the needs of the diverse community including minority groups not currently catered for. Specifically those vulnerable people coming from minority ethnic backgrounds.
 - Ensure quality, choice and value for money in service delivery across Lincolnshire.
- 3.4 The Strategy does give overarching priority to people with complex needs and multiple vulnerabilities. For example; this could be service users with mental health problems who also misuse substances. These groups of people are particularly challenging for service providers and would benefit from access to specialist support services. It has been recognised that people who misuse substances and abuse alcohol impact significantly on service providers. The strategy provides a focus to address this area in the understanding that there are only a few service units in Lincolnshire capable of supporting these people. Many intensive frontline service providers report that their work is restricted by

lack of suitable accommodation for service users to move onto. The Strategy gives priority to the development of move-on accommodation. This is particularly the case when a service user has developed more independence and no longer needs intensive support services but neither are they ready for complete independence. The lack of less intensive support services that enable the service users to move to half-way house provision is resulting in slower throughput in frontline services.

- 3.5 In relation to future funding the Office of The Deputy Prime Minister (O.D.P.M.) announced that the national level of funding for supporting people would be reduced from its 2004/2005 level of £1.8 billion to £1.72 Billion in 2005/2006 and then to £1.7 billion in each of 2006/2007 and 2007/2008. Lincolnshire's allocation for 2005/2006 will be £21.75 million, which represents a reduction of 4.7% on the previous years grant. The Financial strategy has been developed on the expectation of a year on year reduction in grant allocation of 5% per annum for the years 2006/2007 to 2009/2010.
- 3.6 Although the financial forecast suggests that budgets will be reducing there is an expectation of improved service quality. A service quality and review programme has been implemented. The national quality assurance framework (QAF) which has been implemented at a local level, indicates that many services do not meet the required national standards. The strategy reflects the need to support development and training to enable them to be better informed.

4.0 COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

It is recognised that the 5 year strategy will have an impact on the Provider Service provided by South Kesteven. We need to ensure a robust service can be delivered within the resources available by working closely with those developing the Strategic Vision for Supporting People.

5.0 COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE MANAGER DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER)

Under the Supporting People (England) Directions 2003 the Commissioning Body is required to produce a strategy for supporting people.

6.0 COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR REGULATORY SERVICES

The Supporting People Strategy and Financial Strategy are integral to the delivery of Housing support services for vulnerable people, and the strategy identifies the following specific service user priorities:-

- Young People
- Homeless People
- Women fleeing domestic violence
- Older people
- People with Mental Health problems
- People with physical and sensory disability

The Council is currently reviewing its Housing Strategy and will need to ensure that there are good linkages with the Lincolnshire Supporting People Strategy 2005 – 2010 to facilitate a joined up service partnership approach, particularly as funding for those support services will be dependent on the financial strategies of the Commissioning Body.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Administering Body and Commissioning Body have adopted both the Constitution and Memorandum of Understanding on an interim basis while the constituent organisations on the Commissioning Body consider whether or not to approve and adopt the documents. It appears that the arrangements are working satisfactorily.

8.0 CONTACT OFFICER

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25th April 2005

Lincolnshire Supporting People Strategy 2005 – 2010

**Planning for Housing Related
Support in Lincolnshire**

**Final Draft:
March 2005**

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Section 1:

Introduction and Overview of the Strategy

Foreword by the Chairman of the Commissioning Body

The Supporting People 5-year Strategy for Lincolnshire is an important document. It will define the commissioning intentions for housing related support in the county for the next five years. As such, service developments planned and funded through the Strategy, will have an impact much longer than that period.

The Commissioning Body has determined that one key theme of the Strategy will be the development of Strategic Commissioning, bringing together opportunities and developments across health, housing and social care agendas. As part of this, all stakeholders, especially service users, are invited to engage, support and drive forward the Supporting People programme. In this way, housing support services in Lincolnshire will reach their full potential and truly provide support for vulnerable members of the community.

Andy Statham
Chairman of the Supporting People Commissioning Body

1.2: Introduction

The 5-year Strategy

The 5-Year Strategy for the Supporting People programme in Lincolnshire includes the long-term vision for supported housing services in the county as well as the detailed commissioning intentions for the period 2005 – 2010.

The Supporting People Commissioning Body is determined to consistently improve the quality of supported housing services in Lincolnshire, and so help a wide range of vulnerable people to retain their tenancies and to remain independent in the community.

The 5-Year Strategy sets out the level and quality of services that will be achieved during this period. The Commissioning Body will reinforce these standards through a rigorous Monitoring and Review programme, reviewing how services are delivered in Lincolnshire.

At the heart of the Supporting People programme is a partnership of service users, service providers and service commissioners. This partnership includes representatives from housing, health, probation and social care services. All these stakeholders have been involved in developing the 5-Year Strategy. A key theme underpinning the Strategy is to ensure that the partners work together at a strategic level to provide ‘joined-up’ services that are effective and better able to meet the multiple needs of service users.

How did we get to here?

The Supporting People programme “went live” on the 1st April 2003. From this date responsibility for the funding, commissioning and review of housing-related support services in Lincolnshire has transferred from national government to a local decision-making partnership, the Supporting People Commissioning Body.

Lincolnshire’s Supporting People budget for 2003/04 was £22.8 million. This funded more than 356 services providing housing-related support services to over 11,000 Lincolnshire residents.

A Shadow Strategy outlining immediate priorities and plans for the Supporting People programme was agreed in October 2002. This document has provided the strategic framework for the Supporting People programme to date. The Shadow Strategy had a very strong focus on managing the transition from the old funding and commissioning arrangements to the new and was constrained by the limited level of knowledge about local services. Since then, the Monitoring and Review programme has provided a great deal of information about services and how they compare with each other. In addition, research has been commissioned and undertaken, providing more information about service gaps.

In the light of this increased knowledge, this document, the 5-year Strategy, is able to provide a clear sense of direction for the future. Annual Action Plans will provide more detailed information about specific service developments and commissioning intentions.

1.3: Executive Summary

1.4: Lincolnshire Supporting People Vision

The Lincolnshire Supporting People Vision was developed for the Shadow Strategy in 2002. The Commissioning Body has agreed that it continues to be relevant, and should lead the Strategy for 2005 – 2010.

“Working in partnership to provide high quality supported accommodation services to vulnerable people that promote social inclusion, help prevent deterioration and, so, help them to remain independent”

Lincolnshire Shadow Strategy: Service Priorities

The Lincolnshire Supporting People Programme was required to submit a Shadow Strategy to the Office of Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) in October 2002.

Within the Shadow Strategy, seven key priorities were identified. These were:

- Develop provision for vulnerable adults who have a dual diagnosis, i.e. both substance misuse and mental disorder
- Increase provision for women fleeing domestic violence, in line with Lincolnshire's Domestic Violence Strategy, by the development of another refuge
- Ensure identified 'pipeline' services come into commission on target
- Develop consistent access to a Home Improvement Service across the county
- Further extend provision for young people which is able to cope with a wide range of vulnerability including substance misuse, low level mental disorder or learning disability and may include previous convictions
- Continue to develop independent supported living in the community for people with disabilities
- Review existing provision for older people and develop an effective, alternative range of support services to enable older people to exercise genuine choice in how they wish to be supported

1.5: Progress Towards Achieving the Priorities

Since submitting the Shadow Strategy in 2002 work has continued to develop services in line with the identified service priorities.

The following examples show progress so far:

- A number of pieces of research have been commissioned to improve information about local services. These include:
 - Research into the extent and impact of homelessness in Lincolnshire. This provided important information about 'hidden' homelessness in the county as well as improving our knowledge about effective services for young people, women fleeing domestic violence and older people at risk of homelessness.
 - A survey of the needs of young people in the county. The extent of their difficulties and gaps in service provision.
 - A recently commissioned research project focussing on the needs of teenage parents and how they can best be helped.
- Services for women fleeing domestic violence have expanded with the development of refuge places and a floating support service in the Gainsborough area. Provision still remains low however.
- All identified 'pipeline' services have come into operation. These include services for young people, people with learning disability in the east of the county and the development of a specialist unit for teenage mothers in Lincoln.
- The development of a countywide Home Improvement Agency, in line with Government policy, has been a key priority. Lincolnshire took advantage of an opportunity to bid for extra Government funding, and successfully secured an extra £80,000. Work is still continuing to overcome local hurdles to establishing the countywide service.
- Provision for young people expanded considerably in the period following the Shadow Strategy, particularly in the Lincoln area. Service reviews are in the process of establishing best practice, and this will inform future developments.
- Services for people with learning disabilities also expanded during this period. Further work is required to establish effective funding processes for this service area.
- Two new extra-care sheltered housing schemes successfully applied to the Housing Corporation for capital funding. This resulted in a total of several million pounds of capital investment being attracted into the

county. Both services are nearing completion and will both expand the range of service provision for older people in Lincolnshire and increase choice. Further extra-care services are planned.

1.6: County Description – Issues to be Resolved

Lincolnshire

Lincolnshire is the fourth largest county in England covering a total area of 5921 square kilometres or 2286 square miles. It borders North East Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk.

The population of Lincolnshire is 657,800 of which 3% are from minority ethnic communities. The majority of the population is concentrated around the city of Lincoln and the market towns of Boston, Gainsborough, Grantham, Louth, Sleaford, Skegness, Spalding and Stamford.

Lincolnshire is an area of great diversity having distinct coastal, rural and urban areas, each presenting clearly discrete characteristics and issues. The county is made up of 7 district councils, each with a singular makeup and tradition.

The Coastal Area

The eastern coastal region of the county (primarily the district of East Lindsey) is a significant factor in the development of the Supporting People Strategy. It is well acknowledged that coastal and holiday areas act as a magnet for surrounding populations. Of vulnerable groups, older people in particular are drawn to holiday centres on retirement, but other vulnerable groups are similarly attracted. For example, recent research shows that holiday centres also attract some high-risk groups of ex-offenders. Young people with multiple vulnerabilities and chaotic lifestyles are also drawn to the coastal area

Rural Areas

A large proportion of Lincolnshire is essentially rural, with the agricultural industry being a major employer. Agricultural workers make up 5.5% of the working population in the county compared to a regional average of 1.5%.¹ Similarly the county has low levels of unemployment compared to both the regional and national averages, but also with much lower average weekly earnings compared to elsewhere in the region.

Another characteristic of these areas is the very low population density of only 109 people per square kilometre compared to the national average of 378.²

The rurality and largely, sparse population of Lincolnshire have a major bearing on the type of service and service costs of both existing services and those likely to be developed as part of the local Supporting People Strategy.

¹ 2001 Figures, ONS – East Midlands

² Audit Commission Inspection Report, August 2004

Urban Areas

Urban areas, particularly around Lincoln City, also pose a challenge. Because most of Lincolnshire is made up of very small, but distinct, villages or settlements, siting cost-effective supported accommodation in most places would be very visible. The effect on the local community could potentially be disproportionate and unsustainable. As a result a large proportion of existing supported accommodation, particularly for vulnerable people of working age, has been developed within the urban areas.

This has two effects:

- Service Users often have to leave their home environment, and any support network that exists there, and move into the urban area to receive help. This leaves them more vulnerable in the first instance, and divorces them from any potential network on leaving the supported accommodation. Furthermore, for some vulnerable groups, moving to find support is often not an option.
- Urban areas, particularly Lincoln, have a concentration of service provision. Helping a vulnerable person become more independent by, for example, supporting their withdrawal from substance misuse potentially becomes more difficult because of the convergence of other people with similar problems.

1.7: Strategic Partnership Working

Strategic Links

- ◆ Lincolnshire Health and Social Care Community Strategic Framework 2004 - 2010
- ◆ Regional Housing Strategy and Sub-Regional Action Plan

Although people who use Supporting People services are usually described by their primary client group such as older people, young people, women fleeing domestic violence, in reality most service users have multiple vulnerabilities. For example, an older person in sheltered housing may also be an ex-offender and have mental health problems. As another example, a homeless young person may also have poor life skills bordering upon learning disability, may have a substance misuse problem and also be a youth offender.

As such, the services supporting these vulnerable people need to be flexible enough to provide help for a number of problems.

At the same time, many of the people using Supporting People are also known to other services such as health or Connexions or the Drug and Alcohol Action Team. A key theme of the 5-year Strategy will be to develop a 'whole-system' approach to commissioning services. This means the Commissioning Body will not view services in isolation but will attempt to develop a 'joined-up' approach. The intention being to provide packages of support that bring together a range of appropriate services to meet the individual service users' complex mix of vulnerabilities.

At the heart of the Supporting People Programme is the partnership between Lincolnshire County Council and Social Services Department, the seven District Councils and Housing Departments, the three Primary Care Trusts and the Probation Service. Through the 5-year Strategy, the partnership will be working closely together to commission services that will help meet targets across a number of organisations. In this way, the supported housing service will be seen as integral in the delivery of, for example, health and social care support.

Key Health and Social Care priorities in Lincolnshire include 'Caring for people with chronic disease or illness' and 'Maintaining the independence of older people'.³ Similarly, key Housing priorities include "Assisting people to maintain their independence for as long as they wish" and "Ensuring that in rural areas and market towns there is both an appropriate provision of quality housing to meet a range of needs, and access to related services for vulnerable people of all ages"⁴ The Supporting People programme provides a real opportunity for 'joined-up' thinking.

³ Lincolnshire Health and Social Care Community Strategic Framework 2004 - 2010

⁴ Regional Housing Strategy 2004 - 2010

A further key element will be the links between the Supporting People programme and the various Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategies. There is clear evidence that good quality supported accommodation and support services are effective in helping to prevent a vulnerable person from committing crime or re-offending.

The Commissioning Body have identified closer working between the Supporting People programme and the district Crime and Disorder Reduction partnerships as a priority. In this way, these close links will be strengthened and the community as a whole will benefit. This also fits with the strategic intentions of the County Council.

Section 2:

Development of the Strategy

2.1: Overview of the Strategy Development

The 5-year Supporting People Strategy for Lincolnshire developed in a variety of ways:

- Through the development of other key strategies in related topics. For example, this Strategy draws upon the conclusions of other local strategies such as:
 - Homelessness Strategy for Lincolnshire 2003 - 2008
 - Lincolnshire Housing Strategy for Older People 2004 – 2007
 - Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Strategy, 2004
- Through an analysis of existing service provision to identify gaps in provision
- Using the results of the Monitoring and Review programme to identify best practice, strategic relevance and Value for Money
- Identifying gaps in local information and commissioning research to provide that intelligence. To further enhance partnership working, the research was commissioned jointly with other groups. Of particular note are:
 - Research into the nature and causes of homelessness within the county undertaken by the University of Lincoln and was jointly commissioned with the County Homelessness Group
 - Research into the needs of young people was commissioned through the Youth Housing Strategy Group, set up under the Lincolnshire Housing Forum
- Similarly, this Strategy has drawn upon other local research where available. For example:
 - Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing Services, South Kesteven District Council, 2002/3
- To help shape the focus, style and contents of the Strategy, a Strategy Reference Group was established. This consisted of two elements:
 - Key members of the Commissioning Body, including the Chair, to comment on draft sections as they were developing and advise on local and county wide issues, and how best to address them. This group essentially provided a 'critical friend' contribution
 - Other key figures involved in the development of cross-cutting, health, housing and social care strategies and policies. This group provided both a factual steer, giving access to specialist information, and provided a sounding board as the document developed

- A number of service user focus groups were established to help shape the Strategy. Because of the importance of their contribution, this aspect is described in detail as a separate heading in this section
- A Consultation Draft of the Strategy was launched in October 2004. There followed a 3 month period of widespread consultation which included:
 - Both a hard copy and electronic copy of the Consultation Draft being sent to every service provider and other interested parties
 - The Consultation Draft document being posted on the local Supporting People website, with publicity explaining how to access it
 - Local Newsletters describing the key elements of the draft Strategy and explaining how to comment on the document
 - Presentation to a countywide Service Provider Conference
 - Presentations to and discussions with two Local Inclusive Forums which included service providers and service users
 - Presentations to and discussions with a wide variety of service user and advocate groups including the County Tenants Forum, a Better Government for Older People forum
 - Presentations to Elected Member forums in both the County Council and District Councils
 - Formal responses from Commissioning Body members
 - Formal responses from a wide variety of service providers and interested organisations
 - Formal responses from individuals
 - Informal discussions with interested parties
- The results of the consultation process were presented to a special joint meeting of the Commissioning Body and Elected Member Panel in January 2005. As a result, the commissioning priorities and intentions were agreed

2.2: Service User Involvement

This section describes the involvement of service users and potential service users in the development of the 5-year Strategy.

Monitoring and Review Programme

Service users are a key component of the Monitoring and Review Programme. They contribute in a variety of ways:

- Prior to a Service Review taking place, a service user questionnaire is forwarded to all service users. Through this, confidential views of the quality and effectiveness of services provided are obtained. Part of this questionnaire invites service users to be involved directly in the review visit, either through group discussions or by individual interviews. Again, this information forms an integral part of the review information.
- A fundamental part of the service review is group discussions with service users. These are seen as informal, confidential discussions allowing service users to comment on the services they receive.

Service User Forums

As part of the consultation process, a number of specific Service User Forums took place where the contents of the Consultation Draft Strategy were discussed and comments invited.

Of particular note were:

- An Older People service user group hosted by Boston Mayflower, involving 29 service users
- An Older People service user group hosted by City of Lincoln involving 27 users from Linx Homes and City of Lincoln tenants
- A forum representing homeless people with 35 service users from the East Lindsey Floating Support service and users of the Salvation Army service
- A forum representing Young People hosted by Lincoln YMCA but involving service users from Rainer and LEAP as well

These forums have contributed a great deal to the development of the 5-year Strategy. Because of the value of their contribution, a key element of the implementation of the 5-year Strategy will be to continue and extend this dialogue. A Service User Consultation Strategy will be developed early in the implementation process to ensure that service users are integral to the development and implementation of the local Supporting People programme.

Potential Service Users and Advocates

Again, as part of the consultation process, a number of key groups received a presentation about the relevant elements of the Consultation Draft Strategy and were invited to comment.

Of particular note here were:

- The Lincolnshire Tenants Forum, which made comments about access to support services and, specifically, access to information about services
- Lincolnshire Older Peoples' Forums, through a presentation to a regional Better Government for Older People (BGOP) meeting and subsequent discussions. This group also commented about the need to provide accessible and good quality information about services available and how to access them. The provision of such information ensured they had both choice of the service that best suited their needs and empowered them in discussions with professional workers and others. Further comments included agreement that the community alarm service should be rationalised and support for more flexible services

Local Inclusive Forums

The consultation process included two Local Inclusive Forums, in the north and south of the county. These forums are held twice a year and are an important element in local organisations and service providers commenting on the progress and direction of the Supporting People programme in Lincolnshire, as well as being a vehicle to provide the most up to date information about changes to procedures and issues.

These local Inclusive Forums include service users and advocates and are, as such, an important contribution to the local programme.

Service User Newsletters

The Supporting People programme in Lincolnshire produces two Newsletters each year specifically focused upon service users. In these newsletters, comments are invited about how services should develop and specific issues about current services.

2.3: Development of Local Strategic Relevance

Section 3:

Key Themes and Commissioning Priorities

3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy

Strategic Links

- ◆ Robson Rhodes Review of the Supporting People Programme, January 2004
- ◆ Audit Commission Inspection Report of Lincolnshire
- ◆ Office of Deputy Prime Minister Announcement of Funding Levels for the National Supporting People Programme, August 2004
- ◆ Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategies

Context

In the development of the 5-year Strategy a number of broad, cross-cutting themes have emerged from the research and early consultation. These themes cut across a number of primary service user groups and have an important impact upon local services.

The Commissioning Body agreed that four broad themes should underpin the development of the 5-Year Strategy and these were included in the Consultation Draft Strategy. They were:

- The need to undertake fundamental Strategic Reviews in some service sectors, in line with the Robson Rhodes Review
- A significant shortage of Move-on Accommodation for a wide range of service user groups from teenage parents to ex-offenders to refugees
- An urgent need to increase the diversity of provision across the county to develop services for service user groups not currently provided for, such as people suffering with HIV/AIDS
- There is an underlying theme of substance misuse and alcohol abuse that currently runs through a wide range of services but which hasn't been directly addressed so far

There were two further messages that the Commissioning Body agreed should be emphasised in the Consultation Draft Strategy:

- With the introduction of the Monitoring and Review programme, as part of the implementation of Supporting People, service standards in Lincolnshire have improved and are continuing to do so. However, services should focus upon continuous improvement, not just achieving minimum standards, and will need to learn from models of best practice.
- The Supporting People programme in Lincolnshire has a longer-term intention to develop a greater understanding of the need for more

consistent services, both in terms of quality and accessibility across the county, in line with local need.

The consultation process confirmed the importance of each of these statements, particularly supporting the four broad themes. In addition, the consultation process strongly supported the need to develop more flexible services across the board. Services need to be developed using a 'whole-system approach which takes account of the valuable contribution Supporting People services can make to community, health and social care agendas. Similarly, evidence demonstrates the value supported housing services can have in helping to prevent crime in a community so that local services need to establish closer working links to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategies.

At their meeting in January, the Commissioning Body firmly endorsed all these key themes as fundamental, cross-cutting principles that will underpin a number of specific elements of the 5-year Strategy.

The following section describes in more detail how these themes will impact upon the commissioning intentions for the 5-year period in Lincolnshire.

Fundamental Strategic Reviews

The Robson Rhodes Review recommended that Supporting People authorities should undertake fundamental strategic reviews in four key service areas:

- Older peoples services
- Learning Disability services
- Mental Health services
- Homelessness services

The Commissioning Body has agreed that these reviews will consider housing related support services alongside other health and social care services to ensure a 'whole system' approach is taken.

The Commissioning Body has also agreed that the reviews will take place across two years. Older peoples services and services for people with learning disabilities will be reviewed in 2005/06; services for people with mental health problems and homelessness services will be reviewed in the following year.

Move-on Accommodation

Many service providers report problems because of a lack of suitable supported accommodation for vulnerable people to move on to as their independence improves. The lack of 'move-on' accommodation seriously inhibits the ability of those services to encourage service users to achieve greater independence at the appropriate time. As a result some individual service users who do leave their supported environment fail to sustain their independence. On the other hand, if service users don't leave, 'silt-up' of the service occurs resulting in reduced accessibility for people in need of

intensive support. Examples of this are reported in a wide range of service areas including ex-offenders, women's refuges, and provision for teenage parents, for refugees and for young people. This is confirmed by research undertaken by the University of Lincoln.⁵

It is proposed that, as part of the 5-year Strategy, the Supporting People programme will encourage housing providers and Supporting People service providers to work closely together to identify ways and develop protocols to enable service users to access more independent, general purpose housing more easily. At the same time work will be undertaken to develop outreach support services that can enable people to cope with their increased independence.

Increased Diversity

The Supporting People Shadow Strategy confirmed some significant gaps in supported accommodation in Lincolnshire; particularly for some 'hard to reach' groups. The Audit Commission Report also criticised the lack of service diversity in some service areas.

"There is not an embedded approach to diversity in the Supporting People programme in Lincolnshire."

The Commissioning Body is particularly keen to ensure that local services focus clearly upon the needs of service users and potential service users from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. The Monitoring and Review process will focus on this to ensure services are fully aware of the potential needs of service users from a BME background. As part of this, there will be a stronger emphasis upon requiring service providers to complete the relevant BME sections on their quarterly Client Information returns. This will help establish a knowledge base in the Lincolnshire Supporting People programme of the extent to which people from a BME background access local services and their potential needs.

To further establish a factual knowledge base, the Commissioning Body has agreed to commission research into the local needs of the BME population and their likely future use of supported housing services. Furthermore, the Commissioning Body has agreed that all new service proposals must include statements of how the service will accommodate BME needs in delivering support. In these ways it is believed the Lincolnshire programme will ensure much greater focus on and understanding of the needs of the BME community.

The Commissioning Body has agreed that the 5-year Strategy should also include the development of new services for people suffering from HIV/AIDS and for people with newly acquired sensory deprivation. Section 4.12 of this document describes these specific proposals in more detail.

⁵ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Research, University of Lincoln

Substance Misuse

Many services report that substance misuse and alcohol abuse, whilst not the primary focus of their support, is a significant factor in the profile of their service users. This underlying issue creates significant difficulties for the providers of these services.

The Commissioning Body has agreed that the 5-year Strategy should recommend closer working with specialist services including the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) and alcohol support services to develop services that are more focussed upon effectively dealing with this issue. As a result, some services may be re-focused to identify people who misuse substances as the primary service user group. Sections 3.2, 4.5 and 4.6 describe in more detail how this focus will impact upon existing and future local services.

Increased Quality and Service Flexibility

As described above, there is clear evidence that the Monitoring and Review Programme has already improved the quality of local services. The Commissioning Body is determined that this improvement will continue. Service providers must strive for continuous improvement rather than accepting delivering services that just meet the national minimum standards.

The Monitoring and Review Programme will continue to drive up service quality and will provide evidence of both local and national best practice to help service providers identify ways to improve service delivery.

Fundamental to improving service quality will be the provision of services that clearly demonstrate Value for Money. The Supporting People Grant represents a limited resource. The Commissioning Body is keen to ensure that the Commissioning Programme for the next 5 years will provide firm evidence that local services are cost effective and provide good value for the wider community in Lincolnshire.

The Supporting People programme will help service providers to become more cost effective through the Monitoring and Review Programme. The Programme will compare local services against each other and will rate their performance accordingly. In addition, the local website will publish Value for Money benchmarking information to help service providers to measure their own costs and performance against county averages.

The consultation process strongly endorsed the need for a wide range of local service provision to become more flexible. Supporting People provides an important opportunity to achieve this because the support service is now separated from specific buildings. This enables services to potentially provide support to where the vulnerable person is, rather than requiring them to move to obtain support. In this way service providers in the future will be offered much greater choice.

Another aspect of developing more flexible services is that they will need to become more focussed upon outcomes for service users. Services will be able to demonstrate their effectiveness much more clearly by being able to show to what extent the needs of their service users have been met. In this way, the commissioning process will build up a body of information about the most effective style of service within the context of quality and Value for Money. This will inform future service commissioning.

More Equitable Distribution of Resources

Section 3.3 contains tables showing the current distribution of resources between primary service user groups and between districts.

That information clearly shows that resources are not currently distributed equitably. This is particularly apparent when assessing current provision per thousand population.

The Commissioning Body has agreed that this will change over time, so that resources will be commissioned more in line with the needs of the population in each district. This will have an impact in a number of service areas.

For example, current emergency provision for homeless people is concentrated in the City of Lincoln. There is direct service user evidence that, because of the geographical size of the county, homeless people on the east coast would prefer to sleep rough rather than risk the bus fare into the city, only to find there is no available accommodation.

3.2: Commissioning Priorities

Section 3.1, above, described the key principles and underlying themes that underpin the 5-year Strategy. This section describes the six specific service user groups that the Commissioning Body has identified as having highest priority. It also describes three cross-cutting service developments that have been endorsed by the Commissioning Body as having priority.

Specific Service User Priorities

The Consultation Draft Strategy identified a wide range of issues regarding the needs of vulnerable people in Lincolnshire but without specifying any particular priority to any specific service user group. The consultation process was asked to put forward likely priority needs on the basis of local and specific experience.

Although the responses to the consultation process were diverse, with respondents coming from a wide range of viewpoints, there was largely a comprehensive agreement around those vulnerable groups that were in priority need.

The Commissioning Body considered these responses in January 2005, and has confirmed the following six service user groups as having the highest priority for the next five years. They are:

- Young people
- People who are homeless
- Women fleeing domestic violence*
- Older people
- People with mental health problems
- People with physical and sensory disability

*There was considerable discussion within the Commissioning Body about whether the primary client group should be widened to include all people (that is men and women) fleeing domestic violence. It was acknowledged that the ODPM primary client group category was specifically focussed upon women. It was further acknowledged that the County Domestic Violence Strategy had similarly focussed upon women as being, by far, the largest group to be affected by domestic violence.

Whilst the Commissioning Body strongly feels the needs of men fleeing domestic violence should figure in commissioning plans for Supporting People, it does accept that many men in this situation do access other supported housing services and have their needs met in other ways. For the

purpose of the 5-year Strategy, the focus of attention will be on women fleeing domestic violence.

Priority Cross-cutting Service Developments

The consultation process also had a general consensus about the need to develop particular services to meet the needs of a wide range of vulnerable service user groups. These services are broadly described as being cross-cutting and are described in more detail in Section 3.1, above.

The Commissioning Body, at the January meeting, also endorsed this approach and highlighted three specific service developments as priority. They are:

- The need to develop 'move-on' accommodation for a variety of vulnerable groups. The Commissioning Body accepts that a number of frontline services do face difficulty in moving-on service users who no longer intensive services but, nevertheless, are not yet ready for full independence. Without access to outreach or 'move-on' accommodation it is likely these frontline services will increasingly become 'silted-up'.
- The need to focus upon people with multiple vulnerabilities and complex needs. In many service user groups, particularly around homeless people, young people and ex-offenders, there are individuals who demonstrate multiple vulnerabilities such as being homeless, a substance misuse problem and having mental health difficulties. This means their needs are complex and more difficult to support. Sometimes people in this category are referred to as having a 'dual diagnosis'.
- In many service areas, the vulnerable person needing support also has substance misuse problems. Service providers report this as a growing problem. As a result, service providers find they are having to provide support for a problem they do not necessarily have sufficient knowledge or competence to deal with. Because of the extent of this problem and the potential impact on service provision in the county, the Commissioning body have agreed there will be a focus upon this issue during the 5-year period of the Strategy.

Section 4 describes in more detail how each of these priorities will be translated into service provision.

3.3: Current Distribution of Resources between Service User Groups and Between Districts

Section 4:

Information on Needs and Services, Including Supply Analysis

4.1 Older People With Support Needs

Strategic Links

- ◆ The National Service Framework for Older People
- ◆ 'Quality and Choice for Older Peoples Housing' – national guidance
- ◆ 'Our Healthier Nation'
- ◆ Lincolnshire Health and Social Care Community Strategic Framework 2004 - 2010
- ◆ The East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 – 2010
- ◆ Lincolnshire Housing Strategy for Older People 2004 – 2007
- ◆ Robson Rhodes Review of Supporting People Implementation

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy
- ◆ Section 3.2: Commissioning Priorities
- ◆ Section 4.2: People with Mental Health Problems
- ◆ Section 4.10: People with a Physical or Sensory Disability

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

Local Context

Older People are, by far, the largest Supporting People service user group both nationally and in Lincolnshire. They currently make up more than 90% of service users in the county. However, their share of the Supporting People grant is only 31%.

Furthermore, Lincolnshire has a higher than average, and growing, older population. The 2001 Census showed people aged 60 and over made up

nearly 25% of the total population in the county and projections show an expected increase to over 31% by 2020. This is a higher rate of growth than both the national and East Midlands regional projections. Continuing population growth is likely to be a particular issue in the east and south of the county.

Sheltered Housing across the county is a mixture of different types and ages of properties, including a proportion of 'bedsit' type dwellings. However, all sheltered housing across the county is experiencing much higher levels of frailty and dependency amongst its tenants than was previously the case.

The very rural nature of the county means that, in some areas, vulnerable older people live in communities with a poor social infrastructure, without shops or access to public transport. The cost of providing support services in such areas is also more expensive as support workers need to travel significant distances to reach service users. In addition, the tourist coastline attracts many older people in retirement.⁶

On the other hand, there have been major advances in the effectiveness and availability of assistive technology, 'smart' products linked to Emergency Call Centres that potentially minimise the impact of crisis events such as falls and make the individual person feel more secure.

Central Government Strategic Context

In response to the growing elderly population nationally, improved services for older people is a focus of central government strategy.

The National Service Framework for Older People provides a clear structure to take forward health and social care services.

Other related strategic drives include:

- A key health and social care priority is the provision of local services to help in the 'management of chronic illness' which includes older people
- The Department of Health proposal to significantly increase the availability of Extra-care Sheltered Housing with extra funding available
- Both the Office of Deputy Prime Minister and the Department of Health are keen to see Home Improvement Agency services expand to provide national coverage by 2006⁷

Robson Rhodes Review

The Robson Rhodes Review investigated the implementation of the Supporting People Programme. As part of a wide range of recommendations,

⁶ Lincolnshire Housing Strategy for Older People, 2004 – 2007

⁷ House of Commons Select Committee Report, 'Supporting Vulnerable and Older People: The Supporting People Programme', July 2004

the review recommended that Supporting People Administering Authorities should undertake high-level, strategic reviews of services in the four main service user groups, including older peoples' services.

Regional Housing Strategy 2004 – 2010

Out of 16 priority policy proposals described in the Regional Housing Strategy, three relate directly to older people. These are:

- Policy 4: "Providing options for unpopular or unsuitable sheltered housing stock"
- Policy 10: "Assisting people to maintain their independence for as long as they wish"
- Policy 12: "Ensuring that in rural areas and market towns there is both an appropriate provision of quality housing to meet a range of needs, and access to related services for vulnerable people of all ages"

Other areas of the strategy also relate to older people, but less directly.

In addition, Home Improvement Agencies are seen to have a key role in delivering Policy 5: 'Renewing and re-vitalising the private sector' and will be involved in delivering Policy 11: 'Promoting healthy, safe and eco-efficient homes'.

Lincolnshire Housing Strategy for Older People 2004 –2007

The Lincolnshire Housing Strategy for Older People identified the following priorities:

The main priority for this Housing Strategy for Older People, is to ensure that there is diversity and choice in the provision of housing and services, which promote independence and that are responsive to all older people's needs and preferences, which are addressed as follows:-

- Information and advice is easily accessible to older people and to professionals on the variety of housing and support options available.
- Registered Social Landlords, Local Authorities and Service Providers should review housing and services to ensure that they are flexible enough to support a variety of housing choices and meet changing needs.
- Housing for older people should be of a decent standard and support/care services should be of a high quality.
- There should be joint working between housing, health and social care, in order to ensure integrated services.

This Strategy reflects the above.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

A number of services for older people have been reviewed, and more reviews are scheduled.

Early results particularly demonstrated the impact of implementing a consistent performance and quality assessment framework for the first time. Many early reviews showed significant gaps in some service providers' policy framework and support practices. Through training and the implementation of action plans, agreed between the Monitoring and Review Programme and individual service providers, later results show a marked improvement. Older Peoples services have made major steps forward, however there is still considerable inconsistency between different service providers and this needs to be worked upon.

On a more positive note, the work of developing individual support plans for all service providers is a significant achievement, particularly for the larger service providers. This should not be a one-off exercise however and future service reviews will continue to ensure plans are in place for new service users, and that existing plans are regularly reviewed and acted upon.

South Kesteven District Council Best Value Review

Another source of relevant and up to date information comes from the South Kesteven District Council Best Value Review of sheltered housing completed in 2002/3. The review allowed existing tenants to fundamentally question existing support services and gave the opportunity to radically re-evaluate the basis of sheltered housing in the district.

As part of the review, the results of an in-depth questionnaire to existing tenants, whilst confirming how valued the sheltered housing service was, also demonstrated a number of significant weaknesses in existing provision.

- Having a sense of security, "knowing someone is there", was of paramount importance to most older people
- Many respondents reported that there needed to be more information about the range of services available, and that this needed to be easily accessible
- Nearly 85% of tenants felt very or fairly satisfied with existing services, although 'lack of choice' was a frequent complaint
- There was slightly greater satisfaction with the mobile community warden service than with a resident warden (92.1% to 87.9% respectively)
- Daily contact was seen as important by only 15.3% of respondents

- Three visits per week was the most frequently requested support with 55.7% respondents in favour
- Many tenants reported that they would welcome an expansion of services to include lifts to hospital, odd jobs around the home and help with gardening

A relatively high number of respondents (11.4%) stated that they do not need 'help or support from anyone to remain at home and retain an independent lifestyle'. Anecdotal evidence from elsewhere in the county would suggest this is common and, if anything, higher elsewhere. One district reports that the proportion could be as high as 30% of tenants who feel they do not need a support service and would refuse one if asked to pay. This begs the question of why a finite budget such as Supporting People, is paying for this group of tenants.

The implementation of Supporting People provides a real opportunity to re-think the nature of housing-related support provided to older people. The separation of the accommodation from the support service under Supporting People allows a fundamental re-think of the way services are provided to ensure they are more in line with the needs and wishes of people using those services. In addition, it is likely to provide a more focussed and cost-effective response to peoples' needs whilst enabling a larger number of people to remain independent.

Assessment of Value for Money

Sheltered Housing

Averaged unit costs for sheltered housing services across the county show a marked variance with average costs ranging from £1.74 per week for one service provider up to £33.61 for another. Some of these unit costs are much higher than both the national and regional averages whilst others are well below.

In addition, by averaging all of the unit costs for each service provider, some of the relatively very high costs are masked. However, unit costs of services for older people are low overall in comparison to other service areas.

Community Alarms

Community Alarm services provide a low cost but effective support service for many older people. However, the way the services are currently provided in Lincolnshire could be made more effective. There are currently 23 service providers. The size of these services range from several hundred service users to, in one instance, four service users. Similarly the scope and quality of these services are not consistent. There is also evidence across the county that service users are being charged at different rates for the same service, and that some service users are excluded from having access to Supporting People funding at all.

A more effective service, both in terms of cost and performance could be provided through the amalgamation of some of these services to provide a larger and more consistent service across a larger geographical area.

The recommended Strategic Review of older peoples services should include a separate exercise to investigate and recommend changes to the existing Community Alarm services.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- Some sheltered housing accommodation across the county will not meet Decent Homes Standard and/or will not meet the identified needs and requirements of current and future service users

Contingency Plan: the fundamental strategic review of older peoples services will identify those properties most at risk

- There is a risk that housing services will not be appropriately engaged in the health and social care modernisation agendas

Contingency Plan: the fundamental strategic review will identify the areas where joint strategic commissioning of integrated services can be achieved

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

Whilst Supporting People services for older people are the largest provision of services in Lincolnshire, there is no certainty that these are:

- The right services?
- The most cost effective services?
- Of the right type or in the right place?
- That they meet the needs or choice of the people using those services?

In fact, there is clear evidence that some current services do not meet the above criteria⁸.

This being so, there is a clear need to undertake a fundamental Strategic Review of all housing support services for older people across Lincolnshire and that this should be seen as a commissioning priority.

In line with the principles laid out for partnership working above, this review should also include a review of associated social care and health services. In doing so, there is an opportunity to look at ways these services can provide a 'joined-up', 'whole systems' approach, in line with the wishes of people using these services. One outcome of the Strategic Review should be the development of a countywide Strategy for Older People in line with national best practice and as recommended by the Older Peoples Housing Strategy group.

⁸ South Kesteven District Council Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing Services

Provision of Information

Older people in Lincolnshire regularly report that they find it difficult to make informed decisions about what services they need because of the lack of information available.⁹ This lack of information limits their choice. In some circumstances the older person may feel unable to make the right choice and hand over the decision to another, thus adding to a sense of vulnerability and insecurity.

A key priority for the Supporting People Programme will be to establish improved information about the full range of services and to ensure this is easily accessible.

Services Being Developed

Bunkers Hill, Lincoln

Extra-care provision of 38 2-bed flats (up to 76 service users) is being developed in the Bunkers Hill development in Lincoln. The Housing Corporation provided part of the capital investment.

Bunkers Hill is due for completion in October 2005.

Elizabeth Court, Louth

Another extra-care development is nearing completion in Louth, replacing an existing sheltered housing unit. Elizabeth Court was also partly funded through capital investment from the Housing Corporation. This will provide services for 40 service users and is likely to be available from April 2005.

Taken together, these two schemes represent a significant investment in services for older people.

Extra-care Provision

In addition to the above schemes and in line with central government policy, work is continuing through the Older Peoples Housing Strategy Group to identify other potential opportunities to develop extra-care schemes. The long-term intention will be to establish services across the county to ensure all older people will have access to this specialist provision relatively locally.

North Kesteven District Council have already converted an existing sheltered housing scheme in Sleaford in partnership with the South West Primary Care Trust and Social Services.

Specific work is underway in the south of the county, Bourne, to re-develop another existing scheme, but this will require capital investment.

⁹ Lincolnshire Housing Strategy for Older People 2004 - 2007

Work has also been undertaken exploring the potential of converting an existing scheme in Boston. This would also require capital investment.

Taken all together, these developments demonstrate a significant and co-ordinated partnership effort. There is potential for funding to be identified from a number of sources. The need for Supporting People revenue funding will be addressed as schemes reach fruition and as resources allow.

Countywide Home Improvement Agency

The development of a countywide Home Improvement Agency was identified as a key priority in the Supporting People Shadow Strategy. Work has continued to identify an appropriate structure and composition to deliver such a service in Lincolnshire. This work included submitting a bid for extra Government funding which successfully resulted in £80,000 increased grant.

Work is still continuing to develop this new independent service which will provide services across at least three districts in the first instance, but with the intention of involving all districts eventually.

Mental Health Services for Older People

The Supported People programme has agreed to commit funding towards the development of a floating support service to meet the needs of older people with mental health problems. Without such services it is likely some service users would need to move to residential care or even long-stay hospital provision, at a much greater overall cost.

These services are currently being piloted to identify the most effective type of support required. It is envisaged that, once the pilot period is complete, these services will continue to expand to meet a growing need.

What will services look like in 2010

The Commissioning Body has identified Older Peoples services as a priority for this Strategy.

The fundamental service review in 2005/6 will provide the factual basis to determine commissioning intentions in to the future. The fundamental service review will also ensure housing support services for older people will be closely linked and aligned with developing health and social care services. As a result, service users in 2010 will have a more holistic and seamless package of support and care, focussed upon their individual needs and identified outcomes.

The Supporting People programme will work closely with service providers to ensure there is easy access to comprehensive, quality information about all services. This could become a requirement on all service providers to produce, or could be commissioned from one appropriate organisation to provide information on services across the county. As a result, service users

and their carers in 2010 will be able to exercise considerably more choice in their required package of support. This will be an enabling change and the service user will feel more in control of the decision making process.

Divorcing the support service from a specific building under Supporting People provides a significant opportunity, particularly in older people's services. This enables services to become more flexible and not confined to a particular tenure. Although many older people prefer to retain an on-site warden or support service, there is equal and growing support¹⁰ for mobile support services, and this is likely to be the pattern of service provided in the future. As a result, service users in 2010 will receive a more flexible service and will have the choice of where that service will be provided without, necessarily having to move to receive it.

Community Alarm services across the county will be rationalised with only a small number of service providers being commissioned to provide a much larger and more consistent service. These are likely to provide a wider range of interventions than is the case for some existing services. For example, the Community Alarm services will be linked to advances in Assistive Technology so that the Alarm Call Centre will provide the focus for a wide range of initiatives, not all of which will be financed directly through Supporting People resources. As a result, service users in 2010 will have access to a range of relatively low cost alarm services that will help them to feel more secure within their home and reassure their carers that support is readily available.

By 2010, there will be greater provision of Extra-care Sheltered Housing with services being available across the county. These services will provide support for a number of people with higher levels of need. As a result, there will be less pressure for older people to opt for residential care and a genuine increase in choice of service available. Similarly, it is likely there will be a substantial increase in Leasehold Sheltered Housing services in the county. This will also increase the number of available options for older people in 2010.

By 2010, the countywide Home Improvement Agency will be well established with most, if not all districts involved. The independent service will have been able to attract resources from a wider range of sources than is currently the case for in-house services and, as a result, the Agency will provide a much wider range of services. This will include low-level preventative services such as a handyperson scheme. An effective Home Improvement Agency will be able to arrange timely adaptations and repairs to enable people to remain in their own homes if that is their choice.

¹⁰ South Kesteven District Council Best Value Review, 2002/3

4.2 People with Mental Health Problems

Strategic Links

- ◆ National Service Framework for Mental Health, 1999
- ◆ Mental Health and Social Exclusion, Office of Deputy Prime Minister, June 2004
- ◆ Lincolnshire Health and Social Care Community Strategic Framework 2004 – 2010
- ◆ East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 - 2010
- ◆ Robson Rhodes Review of Supporting People Implementation

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 1.7: Strategic Partnership Working
- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy
- ◆ Section 3.2: Commissioning Priorities
- ◆ Section 4.1: Older People with Support Needs

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the County	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

The National Service Framework for Mental Health sets out key objectives for the development of Mental Health Strategies. These include:

Agreement between health, social services and housing that services for people with a mental illness are a priority in the medium and long-term

- Development of a defined range of care, support and housing options to provide a wide spectrum of care and support within housing settings

- Maximum use of floating support so that as wide a range of support as is practicable is available within the service user's own home

The National Service Framework further comments:

"Service users themselves believe that adequate housing and income, and assistance with the social and occupational aspects of daily living are among the most important aspects of care and reduce disability."

More recent information has been published by the Social Exclusion Unit¹¹ states that:

"One in four tenants with mental health problems have serious rent arrears and risks losing their home."

This is confirmed by the Regional Housing Strategy which states:

"A significant proportion of homeless people have a mental health problem. NACRO estimate that 25% of their intake is people with mental health problems. In particular, it is important to explore the use of co-ordinated placement in ordinary general needs housing stock as a way of creating conscious networks and communities of mutual support."

An informal piece of research was undertaken earlier this year in Lincolnshire. This work tried to identify the extent of need and type of housing support services to help support local people with mental health problems. Because the response rates were not good, the data collected cannot be seen as truly reflective of the local position, however it remains as good an estimate as is available. As such it provides helpful guidance in the development of the Supporting People 5-year Strategy. It is in the process of being up-dated, and will therefore provide an effective knowledge base on which to base future commissioning intentions.

The findings do show that only a small proportion of vulnerable people currently access Supporting People services in Lincolnshire. There are around 1,500 people with mental health problems, most in the age range 30 – 60 years, who are supported to live in their own accommodation, of which:

- 68% live in rented accommodation
- 32% are owner-occupiers
- 14 individuals (0.9%) were said to be homeless
- A further 52 individuals (3.5%) were said to be in urgent need of rehousing
- Only 8% were reported to be in receipt of Supporting People funded services

The research also reported a number of key issues including:

¹¹ Mental Health and Social Exclusion, June 2004

- A need to increase the range and choice of housing available to people with a mental health problem through partnership with local housing providers
- As part of the above, there is a need to develop protocols with housing providers to ensure housing is available in a timely manner
- Similarly, protocols need to be established to ensure timely access to health and social care support if a person's health deteriorates
- A need to improve 24 hour access to supported accommodation across the county
- There is a need for a county Mental Health Housing Strategy
- More accessible information about housing and support services that are available.

One aspect of the research was a detailed review of long-stay hospital provision in the county. The review identified the average length of hospital stay varied between 3.25 years and 11.75 years. More specifically, the review identified 44 individuals who were assessed as no longer requiring in-patient treatment but could not be discharged because of the shortage of appropriate services.

Not all of the above fits within the Supporting People programme, but the development of that range of provision, jointly funded within the context of Strategic Commissioning, would provide an effective support for this group of vulnerable people. Services of this type would certainly fit current health targets around promoting independence and the management of chronic conditions.

Earlier this year the Commissioning Body recognised the current low-level of Supporting People funding for services for people with mental health problems and, in particular, the results of the review of hospital provision. As a result, three new services were commissioned (detailed below) which are now coming into being. One aspect of these services was to pilot new types of service provision to establish what works well and best practice within these services. As a result of these pilots, it is likely there will be further requests to expand funding.

In addition to the above, a longer-standing service in the east of the county has recently received extra funding to help it meet local demand. Even so, the service continues to report that local needs for that service continue to outstrip service resources.

As described in Section 3.1 on Key Themes, the Robson Rhodes Review recommended Supporting People programmes should undertake fundamental Strategic Reviews of four main types of service including services for people with mental health problems. The Commissioning Body has agreed that that review should not take place until 2006/7 to give chance for these new services to 'bed-in'. Even so, that timescale should not preclude the opportunity for these services to request extra funding if the results of their internal monitoring demonstrates clear need for expansion.

One outcome of the Strategic Review could be the establishment of a Mental Health Housing Strategy for Lincolnshire as identified in the local informal research.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

No specific information to report. Service reviews are planned for some of these services.

Assessment of Value for Money

Most long-standing services in Lincolnshire operate at below both the national and regional average unit cost. In common with other service areas there is a range of average unit costs but, with the exception of one small service, these differences are less noticeable.

Newer services are more intensive and, therefore, more costly. A more detailed analysis of their unit costs will need to be undertaken later in the light of their continuing progress and effectiveness in meeting outcomes.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- Supporting People services for people with mental health problems are currently at a low level, despite being increased earlier this year. Some vulnerable people are at risk of failing in the community, and even requiring hospital admission because of the lack of appropriate support services.

Contingency Plans: Internal monitoring of existing and new services will identify shortfalls in provision. Service expansion is possible within given resources. At the same time a fundamental Strategic Review of these services in 2006/7 will both establish the effectiveness of housing support services in helping this vulnerable group, but will help define the links with other health and social care services to establish a 'whole-system' service.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

As described above, services for this vulnerable group are at a low level and does not meet identified need. Even with the expansion of existing provision earlier this year service levels are poor. Lincolnshire has the second lowest spend of Supporting People grant on mental health services in the region.¹²

This low level of provision has been confirmed through the Strategy consultation process and, as a result, has been identified by the Commissioning Body as a priority specific service user group. As further local research develops and following the fundamental service review in 2006/7, it

¹² Based upon Grant allocation on implementation, April '03

is likely there will be more clarity about the gaps in service provision to inform commissioning intentions. In the same way, a focus upon service users with multiple vulnerabilities will highlight the interrelationship between support services for people with mental health needs and other service user groups, in particular homeless people.

Vulnerable Adults

One specific group has been identified where no specific services currently exist. This group are vulnerable adults who demonstrate a range of low-level conditions which fall outside of the eligibility criteria of the statutory agencies but which, nevertheless, prove to be a significant barrier to them living successfully in the community. Such people often find themselves ricocheting off a number of agencies, including housing, without really receiving the support that they need. As a result they continue to pose a problem for many years.

Work is underway to develop a range of multi-agency support services to cater for this group. The Commissioning Body has agreed that the establishment of appropriate supported housing services should form part of this development.

Move-on Accommodation

People with mental health problems are another group severely affected by the lack of move-on accommodation. This is reflected in the Social Exclusion Unit report.¹³

Services Being Developed

As a result of the findings of a detailed review of long-stay mental hospital provision in Lincolnshire, three new services were commissioned this year and are on the point of coming into being. They are:

- A scheme to provide an intensive floating support service to enable early discharge for people being discharged from rehabilitation and acute wards
- A longer-term floating support service for older people with mental health problems
- A shorter-term floating support service operating in the Sleaford, Spalding and Stamford areas

These services will support a total of 130 service users at any one time.

¹³ Mental Health and Social Exclusion, June 2004

What will services look like in 2010

As a result of being identified as a priority service user group, service provision for people with mental health problems will have increased by 2010. The fundamental service review and on-going research of local need will have highlighted those gaps in service that were in greatest need.

This continuing focus will have resulted in a Mental Health Housing Strategy for Lincolnshire. As a result, housing support services will be closely linked to health and social care agendas for people with mental health problems. Service users are likely to experience a more joined-up, 'whole-system' style of service which focuses more closely on their individual needs. This will ensure that fewer people will remain within inappropriate, long-stay hospital provision because of being unable to access supported housing services.

By 2010 there will be services for 'vulnerable adults' with clear signposts for service users and professional workers alike to ensure this specific service user group can access appropriate services. In addition, there will be a range of services available to meet a variety of levels of need, including 'move-on' services to enable people to access greater independence, whilst still being supported.

There will be protocols in place between service providers and specialist mental health services. These protocols will ensure vulnerable service users are not abandoned without access to mental health services. These protocols will increase the confidence of private landlords in offering properties to people with mental health problems and, therefore, increase the number of properties available.

There will also be working protocols in place between service providers for other vulnerable groups, in particular homeless people, and specialist mental health services. These will similarly improve the overall service these vulnerable people receive and ensure they have access to appropriate supports.

4.3 People with Learning Disabilities

Strategic Links

- ◆ Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century
- ◆ Lincolnshire Learning Disability Partnership Board Housing Plan
- ◆ Lincolnshire Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disability Services: 2004 – 2007
- ◆ Robson Rhodes Review of Supporting People Implementation

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 1.7: Strategic Partnership Working
- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

The style and approach to the provision of support to people with learning disabilities has changed radically over the last few years both nationally and within Lincolnshire.

The driving force nationally since 2001 has been Valuing People:

“Expanding the range and choice of housing, care and support services is key to giving individuals more choice and control over their lives.”

In Lincolnshire, a major review of health and social care services in 1997 heralded a period of major change and the development of an agreed joint strategy in partnership with the then Lincolnshire Health Authority. This

strategy was based upon the principles that people with learning disabilities would:

- Be included in mainstream communities, not excluded from them
- Have choices, rights and entitlements
- Be listened to and have their wishes acted upon
- Achieve greater independence if they were allowed to

With the introduction of the Supporting People programme, and the preparation leading up to its implementation, it became clear that this was an opportunity to achieve the above principles. Lincolnshire had a particular advantage in that, following the 1997 review, 200 people had been discharged from inappropriate hospital care and five large institutional hostels had closed so that there were already people based in the community ready to access Housing Benefit. As a result, packages of care and support could be reviewed and higher claims for benefit submitted to provide more appropriate packages of care and support. Lincolnshire was not alone in taking that opportunity.

The Robson Rhodes Review criticised central government for their lack of advice and guidance on the dividing line between 'care' and 'support' in the run up to implementation of Supporting People. In the absence of central guidance, local judgements had to be made. But as a result, and because of the relatively large number of people locally who were in a position to take advantage, Lincolnshire had, by far, the highest level of Supporting People grant in the region being paid to learning disability services at April 2003. In addition there were a number of very high cost packages of support locally, which skewed the overall Supporting People spend in the county.

The Commissioning Body acted quickly. As a result of a detailed review of service users accessing Supporting People funding it was agreed to introduce a 'banding' system of payments – high, medium and low – based upon likely housing support needs. In addition, cost ceilings were imposed for each payment band. This was implemented in December 2003. However, more recent information has shown that this decision has had a severely negative impact upon Social Services Learning Disability resources, and the bandings have been reviewed again to ensure greater service sustainability. The Commissioning Body has agreed to support increased funding until March 2006, and following the fundamental strategic review.

Overall though, the picture for services for people with a learning disability remains confused. As a result of legacy funding there is still inconsistency around this service area:

- Some people who have high personal care needs but need little housing support receive Supporting People funding, often at the highest band
- Other people who need little personal care and have significant housing support needs are excluded from Supporting People funding because they weren't able to claim Transitional Housing Benefit prior to April 2003

Not surprisingly, both service providers and social care practitioners assessing packages of support are confused. This is not a satisfactory position for either Learning Disability services or the Supporting People programme.

There is a need to rationalise the situation and, as described in Section 3.1: Key Themes, it has been agreed that a fundamental Strategic Review of these services will be undertaken in the next financial year.

Further Context

The family placement service in Lincolnshire, Adults Supporting Adults, whose clients are primarily people with a learning disability, is in the process of becoming an independent charity. Under Transitional Housing Benefit this service had been able to grow at a rate of about 10% each year. Such growth has not been able to be sustained under Supporting People because of uncertainty about future available resources.

An independent service provider operating in the east of the county, Linkage Community Trust, provides education and support services to young people with learning disabilities has found that some service users would be able to achieve greater levels of independence, moving out of residential care into tenanted accommodation, if revenue funding were available. The service provider did apply for 'pipeline' funding prior to the implementation of Supporting People, but was unsuccessful. These services, if developed, should qualify for Supporting People funding.

The Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disability Services in Lincolnshire sets a target to reduce the number of residential care placements by 10% by 2007. People leaving residential care will need to have access to Supporting People services. The strategy also identifies priority concerns about future services for people with learning disability living with older carers and young people in transition from children's services. Both groups will need to be considered in both the Supporting People 5-year Strategy and the fundamental Strategic Review.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

Initial results from the Monitoring and Review programme demonstrate a number of issues:

- It confirms the confusion amongst practitioners, described above, about the dividing line between care and housing related support
- Similarly, results show that some service providers have still not made the transition from being a 'care provider' to providing a housing related support service. In some cases support staff still don't understand the difference

- Some service users clearly need very high levels of personal care so that the housing related support service has little impact on their level of independence
- In some situations, some aspects of the housing support service have been contracted to another service provider. This is a result of the way that these services were established in the first place. There are concerns whether these arrangements create more confusion and whether there are examples of service duplication

Assessment of Value for Money

At the point of implementation of Supporting People many of these services did not represent value for money. The initial allocation of Supporting People grant to services for people with a learning disability in Lincolnshire represented 32% of the total allocation to this service in the East Midlands. Within in the county, funding for these services accounted for 51% of the total grant available. Lincolnshire had some of the highest-cost packages of support in the region.

The introduction of a service banding payment system artificially provided better value for money but, as has been seen subsequently, had a seriously negative impact upon the sustainability of all these services and has had to be reviewed. A much more radical review of the total funding mechanism, as part of the Strategic Review is needed.

In addition, where some aspects of the support service have been subcontracted to another service provider, there is concern that this unnecessarily increases costs. Although a much lower rate of funding has now been negotiated, the Monitoring and Review process will review whether expenditure here is appropriate.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- Some high-cost packages of support identified at implementation were unsustainable. However the introduction of a banded payment system seriously affected the resources available in this sector, to the extent that some services were at risk.

Contingency Plans: Undertaking a Strategic Review will provide a more rational and sustainable funding structure.

- There is considerable confusion about this service area as to entitlement and eligibility to funding. Some service providers are unclear about the distinction between 'care' and 'support'.

Contingency Plans: Again, the Strategic Review will provide a clearer and more rational service.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

- Some potential service users whose needs should be being funded through Supporting People are currently excluded
- Similarly, some service providers, for example Keyring, do not currently access Supporting People funding, although their low level housing support services clearly should fit within the programme
- Because of the confusion surrounding this service area, it is unclear how these services can expand to meet growing needs, particularly for young people in transition. The Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy states that there are over 290 young people aged over 14 years who will need some service in the next few years.
- People in services provided by Linkage, who should be able to move out of residential care into more independent supported accommodation, are being prevented from doing so because of lack of funding

Services Being Developed

None using Supporting People funding at present. Undertaking a Strategic Review as recommended will provide more clarity about future likely needs.

What will services look like in 2010

It is likely that the style and focus of services for people with a learning disability will look very similar in 2010. It is likely the same drivers that have shaped current support and care services will continue and that more people with learning disabilities will be supported in smaller, more appropriate accommodation. However, the funding streams for these services will be considerably different.

In 2010, and following the results of the fundamental Strategic Review, Supporting People will fund a range of low-level support services focussed upon individuals being able to attain higher levels of independence. Service users will be able to access more community services and make a more active contribution to the wider community. Service users with greater support and care needs will have their package of support funded through Community Care budgets.

The introduction of the Supporting People Funding Formula, V.2, will significantly reduce available resources for this service user group bringing Lincolnshire more in line with neighbouring authorities. This will release resources in Lincolnshire to fund service developments in the identified priority service areas.

As a result of these changes, access to funding will be more transparent. The current confusion for workers, service users and the wider community will become much clearer.

4.4 People who are Homeless

Strategic Links

- ◆ The East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 - 2010
- ◆ Lincolnshire County Homelessness Strategy 2003 – 2008
- ◆ Robson Rhodes Review of Supporting People Implementation

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes
- ◆ Section 3.2: Commissioning Priorities
- ◆ Section 4.2: People with Mental Health Problems
- ◆ Section 4.5: Ex-Offenders and People at Risk of Offending
- ◆ Section 4.7: Young People
- ◆ Section 4.8: Teenage Parents
- ◆ Section 4.9: Women at Risk of Domestic Violence

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

The Homelessness Act, 2002 required that all Housing Authorities develop and publish a strategy detailing how homelessness would be tackled locally. In Lincolnshire, six of the local Housing Authorities¹⁴ joined together as a sub-group of the Lincolnshire Housing Forum to produce a County Homelessness Strategy, with each specific local strategy contained within.

The process involved undertaking a fundamental review of homelessness in each area to inform the Strategy. The County Homelessness Group was a

¹⁴ South Kesteven District Council, as a member of the Welland Local Strategic Partnership, chose not to be part of this process

partnership of not just the six district councils but included representatives of NACRO, Shelter, Lincolnshire Social Services, East Lincs Primary Care Trust, as well as a representative of the Supporting People Team.

The contents of this section of the Supporting People Strategy are largely drawn from the work of that group. As a result of the partnership, the County Homelessness Group and the Supporting People programme jointly commissioned research by the University of Lincoln to identify the scope and causes of homelessness in Lincolnshire¹⁵. The research was published in October 2004, and has provided a factual basis for the 5-year Strategy.

In addition to requiring Housing Authorities to publish a Homelessness Strategy, the Homelessness Act widened the categories of priority need for local authorities to include:

- 16 and 17 years old
- Care leavers aged 18 to 20 years
- People who are vulnerable because of time spent in care, the armed forces, prison or in custody
- People who are vulnerable because of violence

The research has confirmed that homelessness is a growing problem across the county. Boston Borough Council recorded an increase in incidents from 63 in 1997/8 to 284 incidents in 2001/2. Similarly, South Holland district Council reported a significant rise in vulnerable homeless households (where the council accepts a duty to assist) from 46 incidents in 2000/01, to 118 in 2001/02 and 164 in 2002/03. Lincoln reported the number of homeless presentations increasing from 206 in 2001/02 to 529 in 2003/04. East Lindsey District Council reports the highest level of homelessness where there were 1,406 applications in 2002/03, of which 385 were identified as being in statutory need of assistance.

The research states:

“All councils record increasing levels of homelessness, especially amongst young people (who were cited....as comprising the largest group of ‘hidden homeless’).”

“Council statistics underestimate the extent of homelessness within the county....”

The East Midlands Housing Strategy recognises the problem as a regional one. One of its key policies (Policy 9) is ‘Tackling the Causes of Homelessness’.

In response to the increase in demand across the county, and using the potential opportunity of clearer access to Transitional Housing Benefit,

¹⁵ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Research, University of Lincoln

services in the county increased significantly in the period just prior to Supporting People implementation.

Of particular note is the growth of floating support services which were originally developed in East Lindsey, but which acted as a model for other districts. In addition, South Kesteven were involved in the development of a service operating across the Welland Partnership. Early evidence suggests that these new services are very effective. These service developments are exciting in that they potentially provide a model for the development of other services and for other service user groups. One priority for development in the future might be to either extend existing services, or develop new services of this type for areas of the county not currently covered.

Further to Section 3.1: Key Themes, homelessness services are one of the four priority service groups which the Robson Rhodes Review recommended should be the subject of a fundamental Strategic Review. Given the relative newness of many of these services, the Commissioning body has agreed this review should not take place until 2006/07.

The Commissioning Body has identified services for people who are homeless as a priority in this Strategy.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

Not all services have been reviewed yet. Early indications from those services that have, suggest the new style of floating support service is effective in tackling homelessness. East Lindsey District Council have reported that, taken together with other preventative measures, there has been a 70% reduction in homelessness presentations since introducing the new style of services.¹⁶

Boston Mayflower's floating support service has also reported reductions in homelessness since the introduction of the service.

There are wide variations in costs and in service quality. There is a correlation between the two that warrants further investigation.

Assessment of Value for Money

An assessment of unit costs of services for both homeless families and single homeless people raise some interesting questions:

- Average unit costs for homeless families have a range from over £200 per week down to under £20 per week. The highest unit cost is a hostel based service whilst the lowest is floating support

¹⁶ Report to East Lindsey District Council Community Issues Review Group, 3rd November 2004

- Similarly, average unit costs for services for single homeless people range from nearly £300 per week down to nearly £70 per week.
- In this instance, the highest costs were for a service provider who has been assessed as providing a high quality service. The question that needs to be assessed by the Commissioning Body is to define the level of service quality in relation to service costs.
- Most services in both service categories operating in the county have average unit costs close to or below both the national and regional averages
- In all of the above, the data used have been averaged. Whilst this provides interesting comparator data, it can also be misleading. Work is underway through the Monitoring and Review process to better understand the raw information and to ensure the programme compares like with like.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- There is only one Emergency Night Shelter operating in the county. This is sited in Lincoln. Research by Shelter¹⁷ demonstrated the wide range of vulnerabilities service users of the shelter demonstrate. The research confirmed that the majority of service users are from Lincolnshire. Without this provision, there would be no direct access emergency provision in the county for this group of very vulnerable people.
Contingency Plans: The work of the Lincoln Night Shelter needs to ensure that it forms part of the overall county strategy for homelessness.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

- The recommendations of the County Homelessness Strategy are not yet fully implemented. The Sub-regional Housing Strategy Group, in developing a local Action Plan to begin to implement the Regional Housing Strategy, has recommended that the other elements of the Homelessness Strategy should be developed.
- Feedback from service user consultation confirms the concerns described above about there only being one Emergency Night Shelter in the county. Potential service users in parts of the county prefer to sleep rough rather than risk the cost of travelling to Lincoln, especially as there is no guarantee of a place being available.
- Young people are consistently highlighted across the county as the homeless group in priority need. Section 4.7 describes their needs in

¹⁷ 'Does it have to be like this? – a report about the people who stay at the Nomad Trust in Lincoln', September 2002

more detail. The development of specific emergency accommodation for young people across the county has been agreed as a commissioning priority.

Services Being Developed

In recognition of the growing problem in Lincoln, the Commissioning Body agreed earlier this year to increase funding for homelessness services in the City. As a result a range of new services are being developed with the City of Lincoln working in partnership with a number of service providers and organisations to meet local need.

A floating support service is being considered, along the lines of, and using best practice from the service developed by East Lindsey. The proposal is to ensure adequate move-on accommodation is an integral part of the new service. It is likely that around 100 households will be supported at any one time.

What will services look like in 2010

Services for homeless people will operate as part of a wider network of services, having links to a number of other service areas such as services for young people and for people with mental health problems.

As such Homelessness Services will have developed close working relationships with other service providers and with specialist health and social care services to ensure that vulnerable homeless people are able to access an appropriate package of support to meet their individual and multiple needs. These relationships will be underpinned by protocols to ensure a consistent approach across the county.

At a strategic level, the Lincolnshire County Homelessness Strategy will have been revised, but it is likely there will continue to be a focus upon homelessness provision through the work of the County Homelessness Strategy Group. Supporting People will be actively involved in this.

As a priority service user group, homelessness services will have expanded. It is likely that every district in the county will have a floating support service of the type developed in East Lindsey. As a result more potentially homeless people will be supported and aided to maintain their tenancy and fewer people will be declared homeless.

Emergency night shelter accommodation will be fully integrated into other support services to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to homelessness. Additional night shelter provision will be developed, particularly in the east of the county.

Specific emergency accommodation for young people will be developed across the county to reduce the potential damage to young people who become homeless. The intention being to support them in the short-term until

they are able to either return home or access more appropriate, longer-term support services.

4.5 Ex-Offenders and People at Risk of Offending

Strategic Links

- ◆ Criminal Justice Bill will be enacted by March 2005
- ◆ East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 – 2010
- ◆ East Midlands Resettlement Strategy
- ◆ Lincolnshire County Homelessness Strategy 2003 – 2008
- ◆ Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
- ◆ Prolific and Priority Offenders Strategy for Lincolnshire, September 2004

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 1.7: Strategic Partnership Working
- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy
- ◆ Section 4.2: People with Mental Health Problems
- ◆ Section 4.4: People who are Homeless
- ◆ Section 4.6: People who Misuse Substances

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

Lincolnshire contains three major prisons. The Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) undertook research, involving 240 prisoners at Lincoln, earlier in 2004.¹⁸ Results suggest that around 40% intended to remain in Lincolnshire on release and that 35% of respondents expected to have no fixed abode on release and a further 5% to be living with friends.

¹⁸ DAAT informal research of prisoners at Lincoln Prison, 2004

The Probation Service has also begun to collect detailed information using the national database, OASys. The initial data covering 1455 assessments in Lincolnshire, between April 2003 and February 2004 is not as dramatic as the DAAT research. Of those assessed around 4% were said to have 'No Fixed Abode' and a further 13% were in transient or short-term accommodation. Only 4% were in supported accommodation. As part of the consultation process, however, the Probation Service did report that the OASys data was probably under-reporting the extent of accommodation needs amongst ex-offenders in Lincolnshire.

Nevertheless, even these lower figures show a considerable problem, particularly as national research suggests that ex-offenders who receive effective supported accommodation on release are likely to reduce their chances of re-offending by up to 70%.

The OASys data has other messages that cause concern. Despite the lower figure given above in terms of the short-term nature of their accommodation, 17% of assessments stated there was a 'significant problem' in the stability or permanence of the accommodation. The assessments also show 'significant' concern about the suitability of location of the accommodation in some 16% of cases, and 'some' concern' in a further 18%. Finally, the data also shows that, in the opinion of the Probation Officers undertaking the assessments, there was a clear link between the ex-offenders' accommodation and their offending behaviour in 18% of cases.

More detailed analysis of this data in relation to those ex-offenders subject to a Drug Treatment and Testing Order are more disturbing. Of the 148 cases assessed, 21% were homeless with a further 49% said to have a significant problems about the permanence of their accommodation. The analysis also showed that 42% had significant problems on the suitability of accommodation and 38% had significant problems on the suitability of location of their accommodation. These figures are more in line with the information collected by DAAT referred to above.

Taken all together, this information must be concerning. Such information demonstrates the importance of partnership and 'joined-up' thinking in developing strategic commissioning in this service area. There needs to be close cooperation between the Probation Service, the Crime and Disorder Partnerships and the Prolific and Priority Offenders Strategy, DAAT and the Supporting People programme. Mental Health services are also an important stakeholder because of the prevalence of mental health problems amongst the ex-offender population.

This becomes particularly so when it is recognised that ex-offenders who do access supported accommodation are not confined to just specialist services. They can be found in most other types of housing support services, including sheltered housing. The Supporting People programme will need to ensure the needs of ex-offenders are properly identified and supported across a range of services.

In developing the Supporting People Shadow Strategy, Lincolnshire benefited from a unique joint appointment between the Probation Service and the Supporting People Team. Although those arrangements have now ended, it did lead to a clear focus on supported accommodation services locally and a continuing close working relationship.

As a result, services expanded in Lincolnshire prior to the implementation of Supporting People with the intention of ensuring full take-up of the local allocation of Probation Accommodation (PAGs) funding. Since implementation there has been mixed use of these new services, although there has been recent work to clarify and improve the process of service referrals which has increased usage.

In common with a number of service sectors, support for ex-offenders is currently struggling because of a lack of move-on accommodation. The Probation Hostel in Lincoln has reported considerable difficulties in helping service users access more appropriate supported accommodation, thus freeing up a place at the hostel. The knock-on effect is to slow down the release of prisoners who are ready to access community support. However, support services also report difficulties in accessing move-on accommodation and so are hampered in their ability to provide places for the Probation Hostel. In this service area, the need to establish clear protocols between the Probation Service, who assess for services, the support service providers and providers of general purpose housing is particularly important.

One final point, the DAAT research¹⁹ also demonstrated the widespread use of drugs amongst offenders. Some respondents obtained a drug habit in gaol but most misused substances prior to imprisonment. In many instances their offending behaviour was directly linked to their substance misuse.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

Generally services reviewed are seen to be of good quality. The programme has identified difficulties in the arrangements between the services provided and the Probation Service which does lead to support not being easily accessed or utilised. This is described in more detail below.

Assessment of Value for Money

Comparisons with national and regional averages suggest local services operate at or slightly below the regional average unit cost, which is lower than the national average.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- As reported above, a lack of clarity between service providers and those accessing services has resulted in the under-use of some services, despite a significant need for those services.

¹⁹ DAAT informal research of prisoners at Lincoln Prison, 2004

Contingency Plans: To ensure local protocols are developed in the context of partnership

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

There are two primary identified gaps in provision for ex-offenders:

Move-on Accommodation

As described above, there is a significant shortage of opportunities for service users to access more independent living following a period of supported accommodation. The inability to move-on is frustrating for the service user and prevents prisoners who are ready for release and rehabilitation from accessing the services they need.

Under PAGs funding, NACRO developed a floating support service to provide more independent support, but this is still not fully meeting the need in this service area. More work needs to be done to ensure services are available. More work also needs to be done to ensure the Probation Service fully access available services for the benefit of their service users.

Tackling Underlying Substance Misuse

This section has described the links between ex-offenders and substance misuse. Local research has shown that many ex-offenders would like support to help them overcome this problem.

Under the 5-year Strategy, the Supporting People programme will encourage closer working between existing services and the appropriate specialist agencies, such as the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT).

As referred to throughout this section, there is an urgent need for protocols to be developed, and this needs to be seen as a priority. The protocols should cover a number of issues about service providers and the Probation Service working closely together, but in particular:

- Clearly define referral routes and processes
- Establish clarity around specialist services for ex-offenders who pose a greater risk. This will include ensuring appropriate information about the characteristics of the ex-offender is shared; identify the nature of the intensive support required and what greater level of support from the Probation Service can be expected.
- Provide clarity about the nature of support for ex-offenders accessing general purpose accommodation. This may be through the Supporting People programme and will include access to Probation Service help.

Services Being Developed

None at present.

What will services look like in 2010

Services for ex-offenders will benefit considerably from adopting a whole-system approach. As has been described above, ex-offenders are represented in almost all other supported housing services. Service providers of ex-offender services will be able to access specialist advice and support for vulnerable service users through protocols with mental health and DAAT services. In the same way, providers of other types of services will be able to access support from the Probation Service when dealing with ex-offenders. There will be clearer routes and signposts to accessing appropriate services.

There will be a growth of 'move-on' accommodation, relieving pressure on both Probation Hostel services and on specialist services for ex-offenders.

At a strategic level, there will be closer links between the Supporting People programme and the Crime and Disorder Reduction partnerships which will provide greater clarity of how supported housing services can contribute to the reduction of crime in the wider community.

4.6 People Who Misuse Substances

Strategic Links

- ◆ East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 – 2010
- ◆ Lincolnshire County Homelessness Strategy 2003 – 2008
- ◆ Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 1.7: Strategic Partnership Working
- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes
- ◆ Section 3.2: Commissioning Priorities
- ◆ Section 4.2: People with Mental Health Problems
- ◆ Section 4.4: People who are Homeless
- ◆ Section 4.5: Ex-offenders and People at Risk of Offending
- ◆ Section 4.7: Young People at Risk

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

As described in Section 3.1: Key Themes,

“There is an underlying theme of substance misuse and alcohol abuse that currently runs through a wide range of services but which hasn’t been directly addressed so far.”

Problems relating to substance misuse are a common secondary factor in a range of housing support services. The Regional Housing Strategy quotes recent research²⁰ which found:

²⁰ For CRISIS undertaken by Fountain and Howes, 2002

- 83% of homeless people had taken some form of drug (other than alcohol) in the previous month
- 66% of those surveyed said that drug or alcohol use had contributed to their becoming homeless
- 80% said that they had started using at least one new drug since becoming homeless
- there is a close relationship between drug and alcohol misuse and mental health problems.

Local research conducted by the Drug and Alcohol Action Team²¹ involving 240 prisoners in Lincoln found that nearly 94% had used drugs in the 30 days prior to being in custody. More specifically, 60% had injected substances in the 30 days prior to custody.

Heroin was identified as the 'drug of choice' in 75% of cases and 8% identified Crack/Heroin. Of these, 57% spent in excess of £300 per week to fund their drug habit. All of the Crack/Heroin users stated they spent more than £900 per week.

The research asked those surveyed to identify the three main ways they funded their drug use. In response, 54% said they used burglary, 30% said they used shoplifting and 42% said they used selling drugs to others as a means of funding their drug use.

Some of the above information is also replicated in a study of housing services for drug users conducted by NACRO.²² In addition this research identified that people who are dependent on drugs or alcohol are almost twice as likely as non-dependent service users to be banned from homelessness services.

The NACRO study also described the multiple needs many drug users exhibit including physical health problems, mental health problems, unemployment, offending behaviour as well as homelessness:

"These problems interact to reinforce each other and to heighten the risk of both drug use and homelessness."

Taken together, this is disturbing information and has a number of local impacts. Yet housing related support has a proven record in helping to support vulnerable drug users and helping them to greater independence.

The NACRO study did highlight a particular problem that has been raised previously by service providers in Lincolnshire. That is, the lack of Detox

²¹ DAAT informal research of prisoners at Lincoln Prison, 2004

²² NACRO Study of Housing Services for Drug Users in the East Midlands, April 2004

provision locally so that clients have to be referred to Nottingham City currently, so that waiting times to access services can be lengthy. Similarly, local services do experience difficulties in accessing primary care services in a timely manner. Again this means that service users are unable to receive appropriate help at the point when it could do most good.

The study also highlighted a problem where service users access services whose primary client group is not related defined as substance misuse, e.g. young people at risk or single homeless. NACRO found that they may not receive the appropriate focus upon their particular needs.

The NACRO study highlights further difficulty because of the lack of a co-ordinated approach to housing drug users across the seven districts. The same point is identified in the University of Lincoln research²³:

“...the main problem in relation to supporting homeless people with drug issues is that different District Councils have different policies. There is therefore a need to develop a countywide protocol.”

These are clear messages for the Supporting People 5-year Strategy. There is an urgent need to establish closer working between service providers and specialist services such as DAAT and alcohol support services. This can relate to support staff having access to specialist training and that resources are developed that provide guidance and advice to supported housing providers in the management of drugs and alcohol. These points are in line with recommendations of the NACRO study which further recommends that:

- DAAT should ensure that hostels are able to accommodate drug users lawfully and provide harm reduction as well links to other services
- Safeguards need to be developed to ensure service users are receiving adequate standards of support
- Floating Support services have proved to be valuable in this service area and should be considered if new services are to be commissioned
- Specialist services focussing on substance misuse, particularly for young people, should be developed where this is identified as a local priority

The final point corresponds to the University of Lincoln research which identified a particular problem of substance misuse in the east of the county:

“[Providing support to] ...homeless people with drug issues is most difficult in East Lindsey, mainly due to the area’s increase in itinerant population during the summer”

²³ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Research, University of Lincoln

Further work will need to be undertaken to establish if there is a need to develop specialist services on the east coast.

Overall, there is a local need to ensure a whole system, joined-up approach to strategic commissioning in this difficult service area. Co-ordinating services between Connexions, where young people attend for advice and treatment programmes through the DAAT Team is beginning. Linking these developments with housing related support services and with health support would make a significant difference. Developing a countywide strategy with shared and consistent protocols should be the starting point.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

None specific.

Assessment of Value for Money

As with other service areas and despite there being very limited specific provision operating within the county, there is a significant difference in unit costs across the provision. The Monitoring and Review Programme will be assessing reasons for this disparity and reporting back to the Commissioning Body.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- There is not sufficient focus upon this widespread problem with services attempting to 'manage' the issues it raises in a vacuum. The overall cost to the community if these issues are not fully managed and co-ordinated could be significant.

Contingency Plans: The development of a countywide strategy, bringing together the key stakeholders and developing a strategic commissioning plan will ensure the problem of substance misuse is given appropriate attention.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

The problem of substance misuse and alcohol abuse is a common theme running through a range of housing support services. It has a significant impact on a range of parallel strategies including the Homelessness Strategy and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. The Supporting People Commissioning Body has highlighted this issue as a key area to focus upon and to develop a whole systems approach to. As such the Commissioning Body has identified this as a priority service area.

- Current specialist provision in Lincolnshire is very low, although many services provide support to service users who misuse substances as part of their identified secondary service focus. There is a need to

ensure these services have access to the specialist agencies, such as DAAT, to help them to undertake this role.

- Attention should be given for the potential to develop new services if local need requires it. A floating support model should be considered if this is the case.
- Closer working between health services and housing support providers is important. Consideration needs to be given to developing local Detox facilities, as this is a frequently reported concern.
- Closer working relationships between key stakeholder agencies, such as Connexions, and housing support providers would benefit both parties and enable multi-purpose services to develop
- The development of a countywide strategy to provide a whole system approach to the management of substance misuse could be the starting point for much of the above. Part of this process will include developing consistent policies and protocols across all districts so that there is a more consistent approach.

Services Being Developed

None at present. This service area has been identified as a priority under the 5-year Strategy.

What will services look like in 2010

Earlier sections of this document have covered the main points around service development for vulnerable people who misuse substances.

In the first instance, the development of much closer working between a range of service providers and specialist services such as DAAT, Connexions and Mental Health services will establish whether existing services are more able to cope with substance misuse problems or not under the new arrangements. Identifying this as a priority area for Supporting People will have provided an extra focus upon these developments. Vulnerable people who misuse substances will be able to access appropriate support even though not in specialist service provision.

Primary Care Trusts will also have been part of the strategic discussion to establish whether a lack of local detox services does worsen the problem, as has been reported.

By 2010, it is very likely that new services will have developed. Some of these services will be in the form of outreach or move-on provision to enable service users to access greater independence whilst receiving support.

It is likely that, as a result of further research, there will be a growth in specialist services also. At 0.02 units of service per thousand population, specialist services for people who misuse substances in Lincolnshire is less than a third of the national average. Responses to the consultation process would suggest there is a particular need to develop new services in the east of the county.

Although much of this section has focussed upon people who misuse drugs, another important element of support services is for those people who abuse alcohol. An Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for Lincolnshire is being developed by the DAAT Team. The closer working relationships described above will ensure support for vulnerable people who abuse alcohol will be included in service developments.

4.7 Young People at Risk

Strategic Links

- ◆ Young Persons Housing Strategy for Lincolnshire (in preparation)
- ◆ Teenage Pregnancy Strategy for Lincolnshire
- ◆ Lincolnshire Youth Offending Strategy
- ◆ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy 2003/08

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 1.7: Strategic Partnership Working
- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy
- ◆ Section 3.2: Commissioning Priorities
- ◆ Section 4.2: People with Mental Health Problems
- ◆ Section 4.4: People who are Homeless
- ◆ Section 4.6: People who Misuse Substances
- ◆ Section 4.8: Teenage Parents

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

The low provision of housing support services for young people in Lincolnshire is consistently cited as giving the greatest cause for concern. Although the period prior to the implementation of Supporting People saw a significant expansion of support services available, particularly centred around Lincoln, service provision is still not seen to be adequate, in the right place or always achieving the right outcomes.

The shortage of provision is confirmed by research undertaken by the University of Lincoln²⁴:

“By far, the group most likely to be cited as being in need of support was young people.”

Quoting the Sutton Bridge Community Project, it states:

“...’there is a desperate need for more housing provision for young people. In comparison to other counties, Lincolnshire does not have the same number or range of housing provision for young people’...”

One service provider reports that their service covering Boston and South Holland always experiences considerable over-demand for the accommodation. There is a waiting list and vacancies are filled immediately.

The Youth Housing Strategy Group, set up under the Lincolnshire Housing Forum, has regular attendance from 25 agencies, demonstrating the level of concern that is felt.

Compared to the other authorities in the East Midlands, the total amount of Supporting People Grant allocation spent on young people at risk in Lincolnshire is fairly average. Whilst the spend is well below some authorities, it is certainly not in the bottom quarter. However, the county does not compare favourably when considering the rates of service provision per thousand population. In Lincolnshire, current provision for young people at risk is 0.14 per thousand population. This compares to the regional average of 0.21 and the national average of 0.27 per thousand population.

One particular characteristic of this service user group is the likelihood that users present with multiple and complex problems. Typically, people in this group will be homeless, may misuse substances, may have mental health needs or low life skills bordering upon learning disability and may have been in care or have committed offences.

Members of the Youth Housing Strategy Group have been involved in the development of this Consultation Draft document. In addition to the research undertaken by the University of Lincoln²⁵, two further pieces of local research have added to our understanding of the issues around this service user group and provide some key messages:

- NCH Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service Audit of the Housing Need, June 2003
- Young Persons Housing Survey, August 2004 (draft)

²⁴ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Research, University of Lincoln, October 2004

²⁵ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Research, University of Lincoln, October 2004

The latter document was commissioned through the Youth Housing Strategy Group and undertaken in partnership with Connexions. The Supporting People programme contributed to the funding of this research.

NCH Audit of Housing Need, June 2003

Key findings of the audit:

- Young people leaving care in Lincolnshire experience too many changes of accommodation. In the previous twelve months:
 - Two thirds moved at least once
 - A quarter moved three or more times
 - One person moved 10 times
- 1 in 4 young people had experienced homelessness in the previous year, the majority in the west of the county
- Twice as many of the young people lived in unsupported accommodation as compared to supported accommodation
- 1 in 5 young people live in accommodation that does not meet their needs because of:
 - A lack of available support
 - The temporary nature of the accommodation
- Temporary accommodation throughout the east coast area becomes very scarce during the holiday season when young people are often evicted to make way for holiday makers who will pay higher rents

There were some key recommendations in relation to Supporting People:

- Strengthen links between Lincolnshire Leaving Care Service and housing providers
- Increase the amount of supported accommodation, particularly for young people with multiple and complex needs
- Consider support schemes where the level and type of support can change over time, whilst the young person remains in the same tenancy (Floating Support)
- Increase alternatives to the use of bed and breakfasts, especially in the east

Young Persons Housing Survey, August 2004 (draft)

Some of the same messages are replicated in the recent survey of young persons needs in Lincolnshire.

The questionnaire was distributed by post to 4,000 young people in Year 11 using addresses supplied by Connexions. There were 924 completed questionnaires returned. Although the analysis of the returns is still in the early stages, there are some important, and worrying messages:

- Many respondents (71.1%) would go to their parents or relatives for housing advice. Another sizeable group (31.55%) would also go to Connexions, and only 27.6% would go to Council Offices²⁶
- Asked 'Have you or any of your friends ever been homeless?', 12.6% of respondents said 'Yes'. A higher percentage of female respondents answered 'Yes' (15.1% compared to 10.4% male respondents). This is much higher than would be expected.
- Asked 'Have you ever slept...' with multiple options to answer, most respondents (764) gave no answer, but of the 158 respondents who did answer, 10.6% reported sleeping 'with friends, nowhere else to go'; 6.2% reported sleeping 'with relatives, nowhere else to go'; 4.8% reported 'sleeping in a hostel' and 3.2% reported sleeping 'on the streets'. Considering that the respondents were largely under 17 years of age, this would suggest there is a significant problem.

There is another aspect that needs to be taken into account. The Lincoln University research²⁷ highlights the "one issue that is often overlooked is the number of young people who are victims of domestic violence..." This may be a factor in the number of young people seeking housing related support.

As previously stated, young people at risk often present with multiple problems. The intention described in Section 2.2, to develop strategic partnership working and to bring together the key stakeholder agencies to develop a 'joined-up' approach is particularly relevant for this service user group. In line with that intention, the Supporting People programme will need to work closer with the Youth Offending programme and with Connexions. Both programmes work very closely with young people and have strong links with housing support service providers. Both could make an important contribution to the Supporting People programme at a strategic level and this is reflected in the 5-year Strategy.

Also in line with partnership working, one type of provision that may be under-represented in the county is Foyer provision. Foyers provide supported accommodation for young people alongside providing learning and training opportunities and help towards finding employment. There are currently two foyers operating in Lincolnshire, at Sleaford and at Market Rasen. The Sleaford Foyer reports greater demand for their service than they can meet, and would like to expand their service. Some work has also been undertaken in Boston to explore the potential of developing a further foyer there. The consultation process supported this development and recommended it should

²⁶ These were multiple choice questions, to which respondents could list all their preferences

²⁷ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Research, University of Lincoln, October 2004

be taken forward. There also needs to be a clearer relationship between the Supporting People programme and Connexions to ensure links are in place to developments such as Foyers.

Furthermore, some types of supported housing provision originally designed for another service user group, but now no longer regarded as appropriate, such as bedsit accommodation for older people, could, in some cases, be converted to provide ideal accommodation for young people at risk. This will reduce initial capital costs and could provide a solution to the overall lack of provision for this service user group.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

Not all provision has yet been reviewed. Of those that have, evidence shows that services are largely of a good standard and providing a valuable service. There are inconsistencies though which need to be more thoroughly investigated.

As previously stated, there is a concentration of services in the Lincoln area. Future developments may need to be more widely dispersed to ensure more consistent accessibility across the county.

This service area would benefit from sharing best practice, with service providers working together to develop an effective service overall.

Assessment of Value for Money

There is a wide variation in unit costs in this service area, displaying similar issues to provision for single homeless people. The East Midlands region has a higher average unit cost for these services than the national average and most services in Lincolnshire operate at below the regional average.

However, some services operate at a much higher cost. Whilst these services have been assessed as being of good quality, the Commissioning Body will need to consider its longer-term commissioning intentions in the light of available resources.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- This service area is under considerable, and growing demand. There is a risk that this demand will overwhelm the services available. This is particularly the case in respect of homeless young people where evidence shows there is a significant problem of 'hidden homelessness'.

Contingency Plans: Provision in this service area is in urgent need of expansion.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

To repeat the above, this service area is under considerable pressure and current provision does not meet local demand for services. Priority should be given to develop new service provision, particularly outside of Lincoln. The Youth Housing Strategy Group have identified the east coast and Gainsborough as having particular needs

- The Youth Housing Strategy Group has also identified an urgent need to consider the development of intensive support services, particularly focussed upon young people with multiple problems including substance misuse and mental health problems.
- Expansion of Foyer type services should be considered.
- The research by the University of Lincoln identified a lack of emergency accommodation. City of Lincoln Council is investigating the potential to develop emergency services under their 'Nightstop' initiative.

Services Being Developed

Services have expanded in Grantham to develop a 12-unit scheme using agreed pipeline funding. The Commissioning Body has already allocated more revenue funds because of a shortfall in pipeline funding, without which this service would have been unviable.

More recent information suggests a need for the development of other support services, which would work alongside and compliment the original scheme. Together these would provide an effective and viable service.

Work is also progressing in the City of Lincoln which will result in expanded services for young people, particularly in the provision of emergency accommodation.

What will services look like in 2010

The Commissioning Body has identified services for young people as a priority area. As a result, services will expand across the county to meet the needs of this vulnerable group. Services will particularly develop to help young people with multiple and complex needs such as mental health and substance misuse problems.

Currently support services are more concentrated in the Lincoln City area. Provision will be developed in other parts of the county to ensure a vulnerable young person does not have to leave natural support networks, such as family and friends, in order to receive support.

By 2010 there will be a range of services available including emergency support services to contain a crisis and prevent potential damage to the young person whilst more appropriate, longer-term support is available.

Protocols providing access to specialist services will be an important element of service provision ensuring that the needs of young people with multiple problems and complex needs are better supported.

4.8 Teenage Parents

Strategic Links

- ◆ Teenage Pregnancy Strategy for Lincolnshire
- ◆ Young Persons Housing Strategy for Lincolnshire (in preparation)

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 4.7: Young People

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

In the period prior to the implementation of Supporting People, supported accommodation services specifically focussing upon teenage mothers were developed for the first time in Lincolnshire. Part of this development was the successful bid for Pipeline funding for a new independent living area within Schoeffer House for four teenage mothers. Despite this investment, provision is still very limited and mainly focussed around Lincoln.

The Shadow Strategy did identify Vulnerable Young People as a major priority, with teenage parents being identified as a key component of this group. A specific priority was that teenage parents should have the option of remaining close to their family and natural support networks. This remains a priority.

There is a well-established Tackling Teenage Pregnancy Project in Lincolnshire which, through preventative work and advice has reduced the level of both Under 18 and Under 16 conceptions since the baseline of 1998. The most recent Annual Report, 2003/4, confirms the low level of current supported accommodation provision and highlights the need to work in

partnership to expand existing provision. A key priority for 2004/05 is "to work with housing authorities to establish exact numbers of young parents in housing stock and on the waiting list, including the homelessness list".

Echoing the findings of the Supporting People Shadow Strategy, evidence from national and regional research clearly demonstrates the wish of many young mothers to be supported but to remain close to their local area where there is easier access to their family and friend support networks. This poses a particular problem in Lincolnshire because of the very rural and sparsely populated nature of the county. The Tackling Teenage Pregnancy project, working closely with the Supporting People programme, has identified the urgent need for local research to be undertaken to assess teenage parents' housing need in Lincolnshire. This research has begun, with support from the Regional Teenage Pregnancy Unit and the Government Office East Midlands. The results are due to be announced in March 2005 and will influence the commissioning strategy of the Supporting People Programme.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

No information currently available. Service reviews are timetabled to be completed by the end of 2004 and early 2005. Other generic homelessness services have provided support for teenage parents. Those services are also due to be reviewed during the first half of 2005.

Assessment of Value for Money

No specific regional comparator data is currently available. The service review process will need to establish baseline comparisons.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- Current service provision is focussed upon Lincoln. This requires that teenage mothers from elsewhere in the county need to leave their existing support networks in order to access specialist supported accommodation.

Contingency Plan: Guided by the local research currently underway, the Supporting People programme will need to focus upon the development of floating support services in other areas of the county.

- In common with other vulnerable groups, existing service provision for teenage parents does not include access to 'move-on' accommodation.

Contingency Plan: The commissioning plans for 2005/10 will focus upon the development of 'move-on' services to enable service users to progress to appropriate accommodation with less support as their needs change.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

The local research into assessing the housing needs of Teenage Parents will identify specific gaps in service provision. However, early evidence clearly demonstrates a need to expand provision. The Research project leader will develop an Action Plan identifying strategic objectives to take these developments forward.

Services Being Developed

None at present.

What will services look like in 2010

A key question in this section is whether to develop support services specifically for teenage parents or whether other, more generic services would be able to meet the needs of this vulnerable group.

As has been described above, a primary aim for the Supporting People Strategy should be to provide services close to the teenage mother's natural support network, her family and friends. Similarly teenage fathers often experience difficulties in maintaining links with the mother and child, even if this is the wish of all parties. Such local provision, particularly in a rural county like Lincolnshire, would suggest general services, such as homelessness support, as the better solution. However, there is a question whether these services are able to fully meet the needs of this vulnerable group.

The Research Project will provide some information to help inform this section of the 5-year Strategy.

4.9 Women at Risk of Domestic Violence

Strategic Links

- ◆ The Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Strategy, 2004
- ◆ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy 2003/08
- ◆ East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 - 2010
- ◆ Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy
- ◆ Section 3.2: Commissioning Priorities
- ◆ Section 4.4: People who are Homeless

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

Support services for women fleeing domestic violence have been given national cross-authority status. Decisions made locally, need to take account of any potential impact upon other nearby support services.

Up until 2003 the provision in Lincolnshire for women fleeing domestic violence was made up of refuge and floating support services in Lincoln and Boston. Just prior to March 2003 a single refuge place and floating support service was established in Gainsborough. This was further increased with extra funding from the Supporting People programme in 2004.

Despite this increase, provision for women fleeing domestic violence remains low and needs to be increased. Overall spend on services for this service user group remains the second lowest in the East Midlands region, and well below other administering authorities. Figures of service provision per thousand

population suggest Lincolnshire provision is a quarter of the national average and slightly less than a quarter of the regional average.²⁸

- The Supporting People Shadow Strategy, October 2002, identified increasing provision by the development of a further refuge as a key priority.
- Incidences of domestic violence reported to the Lincolnshire Police show an increase from 2001 to 2002 of 89% (3043 incidences reported in 2001, 5762 incidences reported in 2002). Whilst some of the increase can be explained by more thorough reporting of incidents, the 2002 figure better demonstrates the true extent of the issue.
- The Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Strategy, 2004 includes the statement:

“The Supporting People programme has an important role to play in relation to Domestic Violence.....This strategy has identified a lack of provision for Domestic Violence service users and aims to increase choices for victims and their dependents so that they might plan safer futures.”

The 1997 Government Select Committee on domestic violence recommended a refuge bed space per ten thousand population. On that basis, Lincolnshire should provide around 65 places.

Given the volume of all this evidence, and the results of the consultation process, the Commissioning Body has agreed this should be a priority service area.

It is known that women from Lincolnshire regularly access support services outside of the county, particularly at refuges in Grimsby, Scunthorpe, Newark and Peterborough. This is not ideal, particularly in the north of the county where other support services, such as the Police, are focused upon a different locality and may not effectively refer service users to more local support networks.

Research conducted as part of the Lincolnshire Domestic Violence Strategy monitored the frequency and location of DV (domestic violence) referrals. This demonstrated the highest levels of need in the north of the county and along the eastern coastal region, particularly around Ingoldmells, Skegness and Mablethorpe.

This is echoed by the Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Research which identifies the lack of a refuge service in the east of the county as a weakness and recommends ‘improved support for victims of domestic violence (especially in east of the county)’.

²⁸ Lincolnshire provides 0.03 service units per thousand population, whilst the figures for the national and regional averages are 0.12 and 0.14 respectively

All service providers for this service user group identify the lack of 'move-on' accommodation as a significant problem. Service users become prevented from developing greater independence at the point when they are ready to move into less supported accommodation. However, without any support they are likely to struggle and become more vulnerable. Move-on accommodation could be in the form of 'core and cluster' provision, or by developing an 'outreach' service that enables service users to move into general purpose housing whilst still accessing support.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

Existing services are seen to be providing good quality, valuable support for this vulnerable client group.

Assessment of Value for Money

Average unit costs for services in Lincolnshire are all below both the national and regional averages. However, there are significant differences in cost between the service providers. The Monitoring and Review Programme will consider this issue to try to find an explanation, although the size and age of the service may, in reality, be the defining factors.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- Lincoln Refuge is not able to accommodate disabled people and the accommodation overall is not fully suitable. This has meant that physically disabled women who are experiencing domestic violence are forced to move away from Lincoln, whatever their personal wishes.
Contingency Plans: Work is underway to bid for capital funding from the Housing Corporation to develop a new refuge with access to other 'move-on' accommodation.
- The Housing Related Support Service for victims of domestic violence in North Kesteven is currently funded through the local Crime and Disorder Partnership. This funding comes to an end in March 2005.

Contingency Plans: Plan for the Supporting People programme to take over funding from April 2005.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

As described above, service provision for women fleeing domestic violence in Lincolnshire is well below the national and regional average. All service providers report that demand for their services outstrips what they can provide. This lack of provision is confirmed by the county Domestic Violence Strategy.

Given the Commissioning Body has identified this service area as a priority, work has been undertaken to consider how services could be developed. The following proposals will expand existing provision and create new services to meet the identified need:

- Development of a new refuge

Both the county Domestic Violence Strategy and more recent research²⁹ clearly identify the need for new refuge provision, particularly in the east of the county. The most likely model should provide a low number of intensive refuge places, with further provision of outreach and floating support services. This will give the widest range of appropriate services.

- Expansion of the Lincoln Women's Refuge

The Lincoln Refuge is under intense pressure to meet local and wider demand. The lack of 'move-on' and outreach services has also been identified as a major problem. A bid for extra capital funding through the Housing Corporation was submitted in December 2004 but was unsuccessful. However, the Housing Corporation indicated that it agreed there was an urgent need to develop a new refuge. Work is continuing and a new bid will be submitted in 2005/6 which is likely to be more favourably received.

The potential of developing a new property provides an opportunity to re-think services in Lincoln. This should include transferring services to more appropriate accommodation and the development of outreach services.

- Expansion of services attached to Boston Women's Aid

In common with all other services in this sector, Boston services find they are unable to meet current demand. There is particular pressure around the floating support services which cover not just the Boston area but also provide support in South Holland and the rural areas of East Lindsey.

It is proposed to increase the floating support service by an additional worker.

- Expansion of services in Gainsborough

The services in Gainsborough are the newest in the county having been developed just months prior to the implementation of Supporting People. Inevitably legacy funding for the service was low at its inception. Demand for the service outstripped what could be provided by more than 300% at first.

²⁹ Lincolnshire Homelessness Strategy Research, University of Lincoln, 2004

Recognising this, the Commissioning Body agreed to an increase in funding in 2004, but even this expansion has not met the level of demand in the area.

It is proposed this service should be reviewed and more appropriate funding levels be established to ensure this service meets local demand.

- Take over funding of the Domestic Violence Outreach Service in North Kesteven

North Kesteven District Council have monitored homelessness presentations between April 2003 and March 2004. During that period there were 223 homelessness decisions, of which 112 were considered to be priority need. Out of those considered to be in priority need, 20 cases reported the primary reason for homelessness was because of a violent breakdown of the relationship with their partner. This is confirmed in the Regional Housing Strategy which states, "Domestic violence is a major cause of homelessness throughout the region."

Currently in North Kesteven there is a low-level outreach service providing housing related support for victims of domestic violence which is funded through the local Crime and Disorder Partnership and supported by the Victim Support scheme. This funding comes to an end in March 2005.

This service provides access to health and legal advice, support and training, and access to support and accommodation. In some instances women are helped to access Women's Refuge accommodation, although this entails them having to move to another area. In other instances women are supported to access homelessness support services and there is an agreement with North Kesteven District Council to help them have 'fast-track' access to properties.

It is proposed for the Supporting People programme to take over funding of this service from March.

Services Being Developed

None at present. Work is underway to identify the potential and likely costs of replacement accommodation for the Lincoln Women's Refuge which may result in an application for capital funding from the Housing Corporation.

What will services look like in 2010

As described above, the shortage of service provision for women fleeing domestic violence in Lincolnshire has long been recognised. As such work is further advanced to identify how services should be developed to meet this shortfall.

As a result of the Commissioning Body identifying this service area as a priority, services will expand (although some developments are dependent upon capital funding).

By 2010 there will greater provision of support services right across the county. These services will include:

- Intensive refuge provision providing support for women, and their children, still traumatised by their experience
- General purpose housing supported through a floating support or outreach service. This provision will be a first 'port of call' for women who do not wish to supported in a refuge
- General purpose housing will also be used as 'move-on' accommodation for women who no longer need the intensive support of a refuge but still need access to support. In time these service users will be able to manage without support and may continue in the property in their own right, or move on to other accommodation
- Floating support services that are able to provide support to women in their own homes without needing to move to access support
- Community alarm services where appropriate

4.10 People with a Physical or Sensory Disability

Strategic Links

- ◆ Lincolnshire Commissioning Strategy for Physical Disability Services 2004 – 2007
- ◆ Lincolnshire Health and Social Care Community Strategic Framework 2004 – 2010
- ◆ The East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 – 2010
- ◆ Audit Commission Inspection Report of Supporting People in Lincolnshire, August 2004

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 1.7: Strategic Partnership Working
- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy
- ◆ Section 3.2: Commissioning Priorities
- ◆ Section 4.1: Older People with Support Needs
- ◆ Proposals to establish a Countywide Home Improvement Agency

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

Housing related support services funded through Supporting People are at an extremely low level. Even the neighbouring unitary authorities of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincs each allocate significantly more resources to this provision than Lincolnshire, although they are both tiny in comparison.

Likewise, Supporting People in Lincolnshire currently fund no support services for people with a sensory disability in the county, although there is clearly a need for them.

Taken together, this constitutes a serious shortfall in service provision which needs to be addressed urgently. As a result, the Commissioning Body has identified this service area as a priority.

The Lincolnshire Commissioning Strategy for Physical Disability Services states that 'future services will be commissioned on the premise that a person will be maintained in the community and in their own home, wherever possible'.

This corresponds to similar policy priorities for the health and social care communities³⁰ – 'Promoting Independence, Self Care and Health Care' and 'Caring for People with Chronic Disease or Illness'. It also corresponds specifically to two policies in the Regional Housing Strategy:

- Policy 10: Assisting people to maintain their independence for as long as they wish
- Policy 12: Ensuring that in rural areas and market towns there is both an appropriate provision of quality housing to meet a range of housing needs and access to related services for vulnerable people of all ages

The Commissioning Strategy for Physical Disability Services also confirms its intention to develop services through partnership with health and housing organisations. These discussions are focussed upon the Physical Disability Modernisation Team, on which the Lincolnshire Housing Forum is represented.

Preparation for the Supporting People 5-year Strategy had identified some key priorities:

- The Supporting People programme should give service users a wider range of options
- Young people in transition from residential schooling have a right to develop living skills and to live independently – the Commissioning Strategy has identified a need of anything up to 150 places for this group of people over the next five years
- People who acquire disability following accident, including head injuries, have the right to be supported to retain their independence
- There needs to be service provision for single disabled parents

The development of a Countywide Home Improvement Agency is one central element to developing provision for this service user group. Access to services that help deliver effective, appropriate adaptations in a timely way is essential for those people who wish to have their existing home adapted to meet new levels of disability. Section 3.1 has more details.

³⁰ Lincolnshire Health and Social Care Community Strategic Framework, 2004 – 2010

Similarly provision in this sector will need to develop alongside the Integrated Community Equipment Service.

As referred to above, Lincolnshire Supporting People programme does not fund any service for people with sensory disability currently. Services are provided to people through charitable organisations which include housing related support. Funding for these services is haphazard and subject to fluctuation.

In particular, there is a clear need to provide a short-term intensive support service for people with newly acquired blindness to help them adapt to the disability, tackle normal living tasks and to find their way around their home and outside. This support is essential to help the person remain within their own home and to retain as much independence as possible. Providing funding for such a service through Supporting People would ensure stability and sustainability. The Audit Commission report highlighted the lack of diversity of Supporting People services in the county, and the development of this would go some way to addressing that criticism.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

None

Assessment of Value for Money

Not applicable. Level of current service provision makes comparison inappropriate.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- The current level of provision is totally inadequate for local needs. Young people returning to the county from residential education will not be able to access any support service.

Contingency Plans: To work through the Physical Disability Modernisation Team to identify appropriate types and level of new service.

- Current adaptation services in Lincolnshire do not meet the needs of local disabled people. Services are often slow to deliver which is a particular problem in relation to people needing to leave hospital.

Contingency Plans: The development of a Countywide Home Improvement Agency will deliver a more consistent and effective service.

- Current provision for people with sensory disability is funded through charities and is subject to fluctuations. Without such services some

people are likely to require much more intensive services and lose their independence.

Contingency Plans: Developing and funding a short-term intensive support service to help people adjust to their disability through Supporting People will provide greater stability.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

- There is a very limited range of services at present which fail to meet local need
- Over the next five years it is likely that up to 150 young people will be returning to the county and will require accommodation with support
- There is an urgent need to develop a short-term intensive support service to people who experience serious sight loss, to help them to adjust to their disability, continue to undertake daily living tasks and to retain their independence. In some circumstances this will require the person needing to find alternative accommodation and adjust to these new surroundings.

Work is underway to identify likely numbers of people requiring this type of service

Services Being Developed

None at present.

What will services look like in 2010

Given the very low level of service provision currently it is difficult to describe how services will be in 2010. What is clear is that services will expand.

Because of the relative low cost of providing an intensive support service for people with newly acquired sight disability, and because of the urgent need to provide more diverse services it is likely this service will be developed early in the 5-year period.

A similar model of service is applicable to other vulnerable people following a traumatic incident, such as a stroke. It is likely such services will also be developed, probably as part of a wider strategic partnership with health and social care services.

Many support services will focus upon the service users' existing accommodation rather than requiring them to move.

Section 4.1 has already described the impact of the development of a countywide Home Improvement Agency.

4.11 Refugees

Strategic Links

- ◆ Asylum and Immigration Act, 1999
- ◆ East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 –2010
- ◆ Race Equality Strategy

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes Underpinning the Strategy
- ◆ Section 4.12: Service Diversity Incorporating BME Issues

Information about current provision

Current annual spend on services	
Number of service users supported	
Average weekly unit cost per person	

Spend across the county	
West Lindsey	
East Lindsey	
City of Lincoln	
Boston Borough	
South Holland	
South Kesteven	
North Kesteven	

Context

Lincoln City is a dispersal area for asylum seekers. As a result, the city saw a rapid and substantial growth in specialist services for both asylum seekers and refugees in the period prior to the implementation of Supporting People. (The Supporting People programme does not fund services for asylum seekers, only for those people who have been given leave to stay.)

This growth can be seen when comparing total spend on primary client groups for each authority in the East Midlands. Lincolnshire far outstrips any other authority.

Service providers report that the use of refugee services goes in 'peaks and troughs'. Currently demand is low but is likely to increase in the future. There is a suggestion that central government agencies may wish to disperse more refugees around the country, and Lincoln would be a prime target for this to take place.

In the meantime, asylum seekers are using vacant places within the service, with the equivalent Supporting People Grant being reclaimed.

The consultation process raised questions about the needs of migrant workers who are an important part of the local workforce in the south east of the county, Boston and South Holland in particular. As with asylum seekers, migrant workers are not included in the Supporting People framework. However, other support services do meet the needs of the more vulnerable migrant workers who, for example, become homeless.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

Nothing specific.

Assessment of Value for Money

Overall, local unit costs are in the range of national and regional averages. However, one service provider's costs stand out as being higher than others. Work is continuing through the Monitoring and Review Programme to establish reasons for this and to report back to the Commissioning Body.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- Continuing low usage of service provision may lead to the services being unviable.

Contingency Plans: The Commissioning Body will need to give thought to whether to continue to commission these services or switch funding to areas of greater need.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

None at present. Much depends upon future Government policy and the influx of service users.

Services Being Developed

None at present.

What will services look like in 2010

In the absence of a clear Government guidance on the future of dispersal policies, it is not possible to describe the likely shape of service for this service user group in the future.

4.12 Service Diversity Incorporating BME Issues

Strategic Links

- ◆ East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2004 - 2010
- ◆ Audit Commission Inspection Report of Supporting People in Lincolnshire, August 2004
- ◆ Race Equality Strategies

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 3.1: Key Themes
- ◆ Section 3.2: Commissioning Priorities
- ◆ Section 4.10: People with Physical or Sensory Disability
- ◆ All Sections

Context

The Audit Commission inspection of Lincolnshire's Supporting People programme highlighted key gaps in service provision for minority groups in the county. It also criticised the lack of service diversity in some service areas.

“There is not an embedded approach to diversity in the Supporting People programme in Lincolnshire.”

The Commissioning Body is particularly keen to ensure that local services focus clearly upon the needs of service users and potential service users from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Providing services for people minority ethnic backgrounds and increasing the diversity of support services has been confirmed as a key principle underpinning the Supporting People 5-year Strategy.

People from minority ethnic communities make up just 3% of the total population in Lincolnshire – much lower than both the national and regional averages. Furthermore, people from minority ethnic communities are dispersed throughout Lincolnshire, although there are concentrations of migrant workers in the south east of the county. However, the black and minority ethnic (BME) population is growing and the 5-year Strategy needs to focus particular attention on their service needs, especially those of BME elders.

Currently, there are very few services available which specifically focus upon the needs of the BME community. Similarly, very few services make particular preparations to receive service users with a minority ethnic background. But there are exceptions:

- Several services are ensuring they have access to a translation service

- Some refugee services are taking steps to employ other refugees who have been in this country longer to be support staff. Thus creating clearer links between the minority ethnic group and this country
- The extra-care service development at Bunkers Hill, Lincoln, will have a multi-cultural area for religious worship
- Some Supporting People documents have been available in more than one language, and this will increase

A particular area of criticism from the Audit Commission Inspection was the large number of local services not completing the BME sections of the Service Performance Indicators (SPIs) returns. This has led to a lack of information available to the Supporting People programme about the extent and usage of local services by people from minority ethnic backgrounds.

This was particularly noted in the Audit Inspection report:

“So far it has been difficult to undertake any effective analysis of ethnicity in the county”

Similarly, the Audit Commission highlighted the lack of services for people with HIV / AIDS although there up to 150 people in the county who have been identified as being HIV affected.

Positive Health is a specialist organisation working in Lincolnshire to provide advice and support to people with HIV / AIDS. Their services are funded through East Lincs Primary Care Trust and the Social Services Department. Some of the support Positive Health currently provides is closely related to housing support. With increased funding through Supporting People enabling an expansion of the support team, it is likely Positive Health would be able to use their specialist knowledge to fill this gap in service provision.

Information from Monitoring and Review Programme

In relation to providing services to people from a minority ethnic background, as described above, service providers have not consistently completed SPI returns. This restricts the potential to undertake effective analysis of ethnicity.

The Monitoring and Review team will particularly focus on this issue in the future.

Potential Risks to Current Provision and Contingency Plans

- The low level of specific services available for the BME community, and the lack of preparation by service providers for the potential use of their services by people from a minority ethnic background means that vulnerable people are likely to be missing out on services they need.

Contingency Plans: The Supporting People programme, through the 5-year Strategy and in other ways, will work with service providers to

ensure a greater focus upon the needs of the local BME population. This will include working closer with the Racial Equality Council in Lincolnshire.

- People with HIV / AIDS are an identified primary group under the Supporting People Programme. There is no housing support service provision currently operating in Lincolnshire although there are people known to be suffering from the condition. Without a housing support service some of these people must be seen as extremely vulnerable.

Contingency Plan: The development of a specialist service is a major priority.

Identified Gaps in Service Provision

As above, services catering for the needs of the BME population are at a very low level. All services need to focus upon this issue and become more prepared to appropriately support BME service users.

The Commissioning Body has agreed that there is lack of knowledge currently about the needs of vulnerable people from a BME background. To fill this gap it has been agreed that research will be commissioned early in 2005/6 to identify their likely needs and how current services can adapt to meet those needs.

There is also a priority need to ensure greater diversity of service provision in Lincolnshire.

Services Being Developed

None at present.

What will services look like in 2010

The Commissioning Body has confirmed that the development of more diverse services is a priority, key principle that underpins the Supporting People 5-year Strategy.

It has also agreed that the Monitoring and Review Programme will focus upon ensuring that service providers do return the relevant section of the Service Performance Indicator returns. This will begin to build a clearer knowledge base of the extent to which vulnerable people from BME backgrounds access services in Lincolnshire.

Similarly, the research the Commissioning Body has decided to commission into the needs of the BME population will help local services to be better focussed upon gaps in provision.

By 2010, services will be able to clearly demonstrate how the needs of the BME population and other minority groups can be met, either through

specialist provision or through existing services being adapted and more flexible.

There will be specialist services for people affected by HIV / AIDS and for people with newly acquired serious disability such as sight disability and following a stroke.

In this way, by 2010 services in Lincolnshire will clearly demonstrate that diversity and a commitment to meet the needs of minority groups in the county is fully embedded in the Supporting People programme.

4.13: Cross-Authority Services

Cross-reference to other sections of this Strategy

- ◆ Section 4.7: Young People at Risk
- ◆ Section 4.9: Women Fleeing Domestic Violence

Context

The national Supporting People programme has always recognised that there are services across the country that cater for the needs of vulnerable people from outside their local area. Many of these services are an important element of the wider and regional support infrastructure and are relied upon by other neighbouring authorities. A particular example of this type of service is support provided for women fleeing domestic violence where there may be specific reasons why the person needs to be supported well away from their home area.

The Supporting People programme has identified such services as having cross-authority strategic relevance. In these circumstances, the host authority must not make radical changes to the support services without reference to other authorities which may be dependent on that provision.

The Lincolnshire Supporting People programme has been an active member of the sub-regional Cross-Authority group identified by ODPM. Work will continue to identify services in this area that have cross-authority strategic relevance.

However, apart from the services for women fleeing domestic violence, no other services in Lincolnshire that have been registered as cross-authority services within the East Midlands region. Changes to Women's Refuges identified in this Strategy will not impact upon their effectiveness as cross-authority services except in a positive way.

One service does have a particular relevance to two authorities outside of the East Midlands region however. The Foyer at Market Rasen is used regularly by vulnerable young people who originate from outside of Lincolnshire...specifically from North East Lincs and North Lincolnshire.

This potential dependence has been recognised. No changes are envisaged within the lifetime of this Strategy that will impact upon the Foyer being able to continue to offer support to young people from those areas. If changes did seem necessary however, no action would be taken without discussion with those two authorities and the Foyer itself.

Agenda Item 7

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: Corporate Director of Regulatory Services

REPORT NO: DRS14

DATE: 9th May 2005

TITLE:	HOUSING STOCK OPTION APPRAISAL
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	YES
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	16 th November 2004
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	PFP

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	CLLR PETER MARTIN-MAYHEW – HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	PRIORITY B – HOUSING MANAGEMENT
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	NONE
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	This report is publicly available by the Council's website at www.southkesteven.gov.uk under Council's meetings.
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Previous reports to Council, minutes of Stock Option Appraisal Commission and supporting papers. Reports and minutes to the Development and Scrutiny Panels for Community and Capacity and Resources.

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report details the recommendations of the Stock Option Appraisal Commission. The Commission was established in September 2004, comprising of four tenant representatives drawn from the Tenant Option Appraisal Group together with four elected members and has carried out a work programme as approved by the Council on 28th October 2004. The programme has addressed the Government requirement for local housing authorities to undertake an appraisal of the options for service delivery improvements of the housing landlord function in terms of service and property related improvements whilst also addressing the decent homes standard.

Members will recall that the Council is required to obtain Government Office sign off of this process by July 2005. This report seeks Cabinet endorsement of the Stock Option Appraisal Commission's recommendations to Council for the 26th May 2005.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

Endorses the Stock Option Appraisal recommendation to identify large-scale voluntary transfer as the preferred option for the following reasons:-

- i) To provide the opportunity to secure investment for tenant priorities
- ii) To also provide an opportunity to invest in improving housing services
- iii) To provide opportunities for enhanced tenant involvement
- iv) To provide the opportunity for investment in affordable housing
- v) To provide the ability for the Council to focus on its strategic housing function.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

The Stock Option Appraisal Commission has undertaken a programme of work, which was approved by Council on 28th October 2004. This work has been carried out in accordance with the terms of reference approved by the Commission at its inaugural meeting of the (16th September 2004) and has also undertaken the appraisal process by reference to the "Criteria for considering Stock Options" which was subject to a consultation process with Cabinet, the Community Development and Scrutiny Panel, staff, and approved by the Commission.

A detailed report, prepared in consultation with the Council's lead consultants Beha Williams Norman Ltd, will follow. However, the supplementary

appendices to that report are attached at Appendix A. This appendix provides the detailed, information and a summary of evidence required for submission to Government Office East Midlands as part of the sign off process, this is supported by two further reports from external consultants. The first being the “Base Case Position” as validated by Beha Williams Norman Ltd together with the report of the Independent Tenant Advisor provided by Libra.

Throughout the work programme the Stock Option Appraisal Commission considered various sources of evidence and data provided by the Council, Independent Tenant Advisors and other external consultants who have validated both the financial position and the stock condition assumptions (the latter has been undertaken by Rand Associates Ltd). The key areas of evidence considered by the Commission may be summarised as follows:

- A review of the Council’s Base Case position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan over a 30-year period as required for the appraisal process.
- The results of the validation of the Council’s housing stock condition.
- The 30-year planned improvement programme including proposals for achievement of Decent Domes standard by 2010 together with on going requirements for further improvements.
- The Priority Aspirations for improvements as identified by tenants.
- Feedback from the tenant consultation initiatives undertaken during the six-month period.
- The housing needs of the district as identified in the Housing Needs Survey undertaken by Fordhams in 2002.
- The opportunities for enhanced tenant involvement and empowerment in the future management of the housing service.
- Consideration of the four options identified by the Government:-
 - Stock Retention with improvements to service and properties
 - Private Finance Initiative (PFI)
 - Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO)
 - Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT)

The Stock Options Appraisal Commission, having considered the evidence presented during their work programme, undertook an objective assessment of the preferred option using the scoring matrix as defined at Appendix B. The purpose of undertaking an assessment of the preferred option using this matrix is to provide for an objective evidenced based decision with supporting evidence for the reason for the recommendation.

4. THE BASE CASE POSITION

Beha Williams Norman Ltd (BWNL) presented the Commission with a first draft of the Base Case position in January and finalised the report in March following further tenant consultation on Priority Aspirations.

BWNL's conclusion of the base case were that if the Council was to continue to own and manage the Housing Stock:-

- “The Council will be able to maintain a viable HRA for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, in the short term the Council would be able to make substantial contributions from the HRA towards capital expenditure programmes if it so wishes.
- Current projections suggest that the Council will be unlikely to satisfy needs of all those requiring affordable housing in the district. Nor is the Council likely to be able to meet the year on year increase in demand for affordable homes.
- The projections show that the Council will have more than sufficient resources to meet the 2010 Decent Homes target and to carry out other essential works.
- The Council does however face significant shortfalls in resources needed to bring the Housing Stock up to aspirational standards.”

BWNL concluded that whilst the Council is not compelled to change the existing arrangements an alternative strategy appeared to be required if tenants aspirations are to be met.

Following detailed evaluations of the four options BWNL concluded that:-

- ALMO – it was extremely doubtful that additional Government resources could be accessed by the Council as it would be difficult to substantiate a bid that would bring the stock up to aspirational standard. Furthermore, the ALMO would need to achieve at least a two star ‘good’ performance rating from the Housing Inspectorate for all services that would be delivered by the ALMO before being eligible for additional funding.
- PFI - Technically the Council could bid for funding under the Housing PFI scheme. However, Housing PFI has so far been directed to areas where the investment need is extremely high and a relatively small number of properties have been included in each scheme. BWNL felt PFI would not be a suitable option in view of the above and also as result of the extremely lengthy process and high set up costs experienced by Pathfinder PFI schemes.

- Full Stock Transfer or a LSVT - Full Stock Transfer would involve the transfer of both the ownership and management of the Stock to an independent Registered Social Landlord. It would enable the increased investment to be made in the Housing Stock and would also provide resources for improvements in service delivery. However, Stock Transfer is entirely dependent on securing the support of tenants and there is a risk of failure with abortive costs. The Council would also be likely to receive financial benefits as a result of the capital receipt generated by Stock Transfer.

5. SOAC'S RECOMMENDATION ON THE PREFERRED OPTION

Having completed its work programme and received evidence and data as described in section 3 above SOAC undertook an objective assessment of the preferred option for recommendation to the Council. The results of scoring exercise are attached at Appendix C and based on the consideration of the results of this exercise and all the evidence they had received during their work programme the Commission came to the following recommendation.

“That LSVT be identified as the preferred option for the following reasons:-

- i) To provide the opportunity to secure investment for tenant priorities.
- ii) To also provide the opportunity to invest in improving Housing Services.
- iii) To provide opportunities for enhanced tenant involvement.
- iv) To provide the opportunity for investment in affordable housing.
- v) To provide the ability for the Council to focus on its Strategic Housing function.”

6. CONSULTATION ON THE IDENTIFIED PREFERRED OPTION

The February newsletter to tenants included a ‘Stop Press item and feedback form’ identifying the Commission’s preferred option. This consultation exercise was conducted to provide a ‘barometer reading’ of tenant’s current views of the option. Whilst information was sent to all 6,500 tenants and three preference events were held in Bourne, Grantham and Stamford response levels were disappointing, a further exercise of telephone consultation has been undertaken to improve response rates. Detailed analysis of the returns is attached at Appendix D and may be summarised as follows:-

<u>Responses Received</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>% of responses</u>
Agree with Commission’s recommendation	183	35.7%
Disagree with Commission’s recommendation	308	60.2%
No view Given	21	4.1%
-----	-----	-----
	512	100%
-----	-----	-----

Efforts to contact a further 188 tenants, to achieve at least a 10% response rate, resulted in no reply or commitment to return a feedback form.

It must be stressed that this consultation exercise was only intended to provide a 'barometer reading' of current views of tenants and should the Council resolve to identify LSVT as the preferred option, detailed consultation with tenants will be undertaken. A formal offer made to them upon which they would be able to take an informed vote in a formal ballot of all tenants. Any transfer could only proceed if the majority of tenants who vote in a formal ballot support the transfer.

7. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

On the 8th April 2005 the combined Development and Scrutiny Panels of the Community and Capacity and Resources met to consider the work undertaken by the SOAC. The remit of the Scrutiny Panel was to consider the following:

- Has the Commission carried out its allotted task
- Does the evidence support the Commission's findings
- Is there anything in the evidence to suggest a different conclusion

Having considered the evidence supplied to the Commission by the Corporate Director (Regulatory Services), the Council's Lead Consultant, the Independent Tenant Advisor, the Stock Option Appraisal Commission, together with officers and staff, the Scrutiny Panel reached the following conclusion:-

The Panel concluded unanimously that:-

1. "The Stock Option Appraisal Commission had carried out its allotted task.
2. The evidence to support the Commission's findings was robust.
3. At the present time, there was nothing in the evidence to suggest a different conclusion by the Commission should have been reached.
4. The Commission be requested to give considerations to the following concerns of the DSP.
 - Any recommendation should include whatever option the Council decides to pursue; the final decision could be overruled by a subsequent vote by tenants.
 - That the different circumstances and needs of different area should be addressed.
 - Communication techniques should be better targeted."

8. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Throughout the Stock Option Appraisal the Commission were required to consider the most appropriate option for the future management and

ownership of the Council's Housing Stock against four defined options as outlined above in this report. The more detailed report attached to Appendix A identifies the reasons for not supporting the remaining three options.

9. COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

I have been involved with this process throughout and the report reflects the financial position identified in the Independent Financial Advisor's reports.

10. COMMENTS OF CORPORATE MANAGER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER)

I am aware that the Stock Option Appraisal Commission has been properly constituted and their deliberations have been the subject of pre-decision scrutiny. Until a formal resolution on the preferred option has been determined detailed legal implications cannot be specified. Legal Services will engage and advise when appropriate in the delivery of the preferred option.

11. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

None

12. CONCLUSIONS

The Cabinet are asked to consider the evidence presented by the Stock Option Appraisal Commission in this report and its attachments and then endorse the recommendation of the Stock Option Appraisal Commission to be presented to Council on the 26th May 2005. Should members of the Cabinet believe that this is not the most appropriate option, then there will need to be supporting reasons for that decision identified by members of the Cabinet enabling an alternative view to be submitted to Government Office East Midlands, in a bid to seek sign off of the option appraisal process.

13. CONTACT OFFICER

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**Beha Williams
Norman Ltd**

SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING OPTIONS APPRAISAL

FINANCIAL VALIDATION

REPORT

BASE CASE AND ANALYSIS OF THE AVAILABLE OPTIONS

March 2005

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2004 the Council appointed Beha Williams Norman Ltd to assist in carrying out an appraisal of the strategic housing options that are available to the Council. The Communities Plan placed a requirement on all local authorities to carry out a housing options appraisal and for the appraisal to be signed-off by the Regional Government Office.
- 1.2 The terms of reference for the work to be carried out by BWNL included the following:-
 - Carrying out a critical review of the Council's HRA business plan financial projections with the intention of developing the 'base case' long term position of the HRA.
 - Assessing the Council's ability to meet the Government's decent homes target and to deliver high standards of repair and improvement to the housing stock.
 - Reviewing relative advantages and disadvantages of the other main strategic options that are available to the Council for the future management and ownership of the housing stock.
- 1.3 The report has been prepared in respect of the work outlined above. It considers:-
 - Key elements of the Government's Social Housing Policy.
 - The base case position for South Kesteven (i.e. the situation if the Council continues to own and manage the housing stock).
 - An analysis of the other main strategic options and the implications for the Council.
 - An assessment of the ways in which the options meet key criteria.

2 THE BASE CASE

2.1 The Financial Position

The following sections of the report show an analysis of the estimated financial position if the Council continues to own and manage the housing stock.

The projections are based on latest stock condition information and latest budgets, using the HRA business plan financial model to project the long-term position.

2.2 The Condition of the Council's Housing Stock

During 2004 the Council commissioned Rand Associates, a specialist firm of Chartered Surveyors, to carry out a validation of the requirements for expenditure on the Council's housing stock over the next 30 years. The results of this exercise were expressed in four alternative ways as follows:-

- Expenditure required to solely meet the Government's decent homes standard ('Decent Homes').
- Expenditure required to meet the Government's decent homes standard and also carry out other essential works ('Decent Homes Plus Essential Repairs').
- Expenditure required to modern day standards (Industry Standard)
- Expenditure required to meet the Decent Homes Plus standard plus the costs of meeting aspirations identified by the tenants and expressed at the following three levels:
 - “Tenant Priority Aspirations”
 - “Highly desirable aspirations”
 - “Desirable aspirations”

The results of the survey are shown in the tables below. These underpin the projections contained in the 30 year HRA business plan.

Table 1 – Decent Homes Standard

	Years 1-5 £m	Years 6-10 £m	Years 11-30 £m	Total £m
Future major works	15.6	13.3	75.8	104.7
Improvements	2.1	2.0	8.0	12.1
Contingent major repairs	0.9	0.6	2.2	3.7
	18.6	15.9	86.1	120.6
Cyclical maintenance	4.2	4.2	16.9	25.3
Disabled adaptations	1.7	1.8	7.0	10.5
Response and void repairs	8.7	8.7	34.6	52.0
	33.2	30.6	144.5	208.3

Table 2 – Decent Homes Plus Essential Repairs

	Years 1-5 £m	Years 6-10 £m	Years 11-30 £m	Total £m
Future major works	17.3	15.5	84.6	117.4
Improvements	9.4	8.2	13.5	31.1
Estate works	0.1	-	0.2	0.3
Contingent major repairs	0.8	0.6	2.3	3.7
	27.6	24.3	100.6	152.5
Cyclical maintenance	4.2	4.2	16.9	25.3
Disabled adaptations	1.7	1.8	7.0	10.5
Response and void repairs	8.7	8.7	34.6	52.0
	42.2	39.0	159.1	240.3

Table 3 – Industry Standard

	Years 1-5 £m	Years 6-10 £m	Years 11-30 £m	Total £m
Future major works	21.3	15.5	83.6	120.4
Improvements	20.8	14.8	0.8	36.4
Estate works	0.2	0.1	-	0.3
Contingent major repairs	2.1	1.8	7.1	11.0
	44.4	32.2	91.5	168.1
Cyclical maintenance	4.2	4.2	16.9	25.3
Disabled adaptations	2.1	1.8	7.0	10.9
Response and void repairs	8.7	8.7	34.6	52.0
	59.4	46.9	150.1	256.3

2.3 Difference between the Three Standards

The main differences between the four different standards are as follows:-

DECENT HOMES COMPARED WITH DECENT HOMES PLUS ESSENTIAL REPAIRS

In the first 5 years the Decent Homes Plus Standard includes the following over and above that included in the Decent Homes Standard.

	£m
Kitchens	1.3
Heating	6.0
Car parking	1.1
Estate improvements/footpaths	0.5

DECENT HOMES PLUS ESSENTIAL REPAIRS COMPARED WITH INDUSTRY STANDARD

As above the Transfer Standard includes further additional expenditure in Years 1-5.

	£m
Energy conservation	5.4
Car parking	2.3
Estate improvements	0.5
Other tenant aspirations	2.2
Increased contingencies	1.2

Tenants' Aspirations

A schedule of tenants' aspirations and the potential cost is attached as an appendix to the report.

The aspirations cover both service delivery improvements and additional capital investment.

In total the additional expenditure required to meet the tenants' aspirations is estimated as follows.

	30 year expenditure requirement	
	Service Delivery	Capital Investment
		£m
'Tenant Priority Aspirations	2.6	27.0
'High Desirable Tenant Aspirations	14.9	20.2
'Desirable Tenant Aspirations	6.1	6.0
Total	23.6	53.2

2.4 Resources for investment in the housing stock

The table below shows the level of resources that are projected as being available to support the major repairs and improvements programmes.

As part of the options appraisal process the Council's HRA business plan financial model has been updated to reflect 2004-05 budgets and has been used as the basis for assessing the future position of both the Housing Revenue Account and the Housing Investment Programme.

	Years 1-5 £m	Years 6-10 £m
Borrowing	3.2	2.7

RTB receipts	4.5	3.3
Major repairs allowance*	26.9	18.3
HRA contributions	9.4	4.0
	44.0	28.3

* Years 1-5 include £9.7 million unspent balance brought forward from the Major Repairs Reserve.

In line with Council policies it has been assumed that all supported borrowing and the full 25% usable portion of receipts from RTB sales will be available to support HRA expenditure.

2.5 Comparison of Investment Needs with Resources

As described earlier the HRA business financial model has been used as a means to test the Council's ability to meet investment needs.

Capital investment projections are based on the figures contained within the stock condition survey but have been adjusted to take account of:-

- future build cost inflation
- an allowance for fees
- reductions in stock numbers through continuing RTB sales

After making the above adjustments the position is as follows:-

Decent Homes Standard	Years 1-5 £m	Years 6-10 £m
Resources available	44.0	28.3
Capital investment required	21.3	17.2
Potential Surplus Resources	22.7	11.1

Decent Homes Plus Essential Repairs Standard	Years 1-5 £m	Years 6-10 £m
Resources available	44.0	28.3
Capital investment required	29.8	25.7
Potential Surplus	14.2	2.6

Industry Standard	Years 1-5 £m	Years 6-10 £m
Resources available	44.0	28.3
Capital investment required	41.3	40.0
Surplus/(Shortfall)Shortfall	2.7	(11.7)

Fit for Tenant Priority Aspirations	Years 1 – 5	Years 6 – 10
	£m	£m
Resources available *	43.1	27.6
Capital investment required	44.4	34.0
Shortfall	(1.3)	(6.4)

Fit for Tenant Priority Aspirations/ Highly Desirable Standard	Years 1 – 5	Years 6 – 10
	£m	£m
Resources available *	39.9	24.4
Capital investment required	50.5	38.5
Shortfall	(10.6)	(14.1)

Fit for Tenant Priority Aspirations/ Highly Desirable / Desirable Standard	Years 1 – 5	Years 6 – 10
	£m	£m
Resources available *	38.7	24.3
Capital investment required	50.8	42.9
Shortfall	(12.1)	(18.6)

*In the three Aspirations scenarios the level of resources reduces as a result of additional expenditure on service improvements affecting the amount that the HRA can contribute towards capital expenditure.

Based on the above analysis the Council will be able to comfortably meet both the 2010 Decent Homes and the 2010 Decency Plus standards.

However there would be insufficient resources to meet the three different levels of tenant aspirations as follows.

Aspiration Standard	Shortfall	
	Next 10 years	Next 30 years
	£m	£m
Tenant Priority Aspirations	7.7	47.2
Tenant Priority Aspirations/Highly desirable	24.7	84.0
Tenant Priority Aspirations/ Highly Desirable /desirable	30.7	93.7

2.6 Meeting the Decent Homes Standard

As mentioned above, the projections indicate that the Council should be able to comfortably achieve both the 2010 Decent Homes Target and to carry out other essential work to achieve the Decent Homes Plus Standard.

2.7 Future Position of the Housing Revenue Account

The future projections of the HRA using the HRA business plan financial model show the following picture for each of the four scenarios:-

- Decent Homes Standard**

The HRA would remain in surplus throughout the 30 year period covered by the financial model.

- Decent Homes Plus Essential Repairs Standard**

The financial model shows that the HRA would remain in surplus for the next 28 years.

- Industry Standard**

The financial model indicates that the HRA would remain in surplus for the next 18 years. Thereafter increasing deficits would be likely to occur.

- Aspirational Standard**

The financial projections indicate that the HRA would fall in deficit as follows

Tenant Priority Aspirations	Years 18
Tenant Priority Aspirations/Highly desirable	Year 12
Tenant Priority Aspirations/ Highly Desirable /desirable	Year 9

In all three scenarios the position further deteriorates in later years.

As can be seen from the above the HRA would remain viable for a considerable period of time for each of the first three scenarios. However varying increases in expenditure on service delivery in the aspirational scenarios would bring the HRA into deficit within a range of 9 to 18 years.

2.8 Service Delivery

Appendix A to the report sets out the tenants aspirations for improvement in service delivery.

As a separate issue the Council is experiencing increasing difficulty in both retaining and recruiting key staff to manage its housing services. There is concern that this will act as a major constraint to the Council's key objectives of maintaining and improving performance standards within the housing service.

2.9 Rent Restructuring

In December 2000 the Government issued more detailed guidance on the proposals for rent restructuring within the social housing sector as a whole. The main objective of this is to create the situation where all tenants within the sector pay a similar rent for a similar property.

The proposals contain details of the formula that will be applied in calculating the target rent which local authorities and RSLs will be expected to achieve within a ten year period. This formula is based on the following principles:

- 70% of the target rent will be based on regional wage levels compared with the national average.
- 30% of the target rent will be based on local house prices compared with the national average.

Existing rent levels in South Kesteven are on average a little below the target rent and therefore annual increases in actual rents will be above the level of increase in the target rent.

	Average Rent 2004/05	Annual Increase to 2011/12	Annual Increase from 2012/13 onwards
	£ p.w.	%	%
Bed sit	39.37	3.0	3.0
One bed	46.15	4.01	3.0
Two bed	50.12	4.62	3.0
Three bed	54.33	4.45	3.0
Four bed	55.06	5.06	3.0

The above table shows that annual rent increases will vary depending on property size. There will also be variations in the level of rent increase for individual tenants although this is subject to an overall maximum of RPI + 0.5% + £2 per week for any individual tenant in any individual year.

2.10 Conclusions

In considering the base case position for South Kesteven we have reached a number of initial conclusions.

Investment in the Housing Stock

The projections indicate that the Council will have more than sufficient resources to be able to achieve the 2010 Decent Homes Standard and to carry out other essential works (to meet the Decent Homes Plus Standard).

There would however be a significant shortfall in the level of investment needed to meet the tenants' aspirational standards. This shortfall ranges from £8 million to £30 million over the next 10 years and £47 million to £94 million over the next 30 years.

Housing Revenue Account

The projections indicate that the Council should be able to maintain a viable HRA for the foreseeable future under both the Decent Homes and Decent Homes Plus Standards.

The Housing Revenue Account would however be placed under increasing pressure if expenditure was to be increased to meet tenant's aspirations for service delivery improvements.

Depending on which of the scenarios is considered the HRA would fall into deficit in the next 9 – 18 years.

Rent Projections

Current Council rents are a little below the Government's target rent for the area. In order to comply with the rent restructuring regime, Council rents will need on average to:-

- increase by between 3.0% - 5.60% per year up to 2011/12;
- increase by RPI + 0.5% thereafter.

3 ARM'S LENGTH MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS (ALMOs)

- 3.1** Various policy documents have consistently emphasised the Government's commitment to strengthening the role of local authorities and raising the standard of social housing and that there should be greater separation of local authorities' strategic housing and management roles. This latter objective could be achieved by setting up arm's length management organisations.
- 3.2** It is perceived that by adopting the arm's length approach local authorities will be able to establish a clear focus on the management role, to involve a diverse range of people (including tenants) in the decision making process and to adopt a more business like approach concentrating on delivering high quality management services.

3.3 Structure

- 3.3.1** The key features of an ALMO are as follows:-

- Ownership of the housing stock will remain with the local authority.
- The local authority will remain the legal landlord.
- Tenants will retain their existing tenancy rights.
- The arm's length body will be appointed to manage all or part of the stock.

3.4 Constitution

- 3.4.1** The Government envisages that an ALMO length body will be:-

- 100% owned by the Council;
- established on a 'not for profit' basis, usually as a Company Limited by Guarantee.

- 3.4.2** The Board of Directors will comprise:-

- Tenants
- Council representatives
- Independent specialists.
- No one of these groups should have a majority.

- 3.4.3** Because the Company is owned by the Council, changes to the Constitution of the Company could only be made with the agreement of the Council.

- 3.4.4** In practice it is envisaged that a number of strategic objectives will be embodied in the Company's constitution and that these could only be changed with the support of the Council.

- 3.4.5** In principle, it is not expected that more than 12,000 dwellings will be managed by a single arm's length company.

3.5 Tenant Consultation and Involvement

- 3.5.1 A local authority must ensure that it has the support of the tenants for any proposal to establish an ALMO.
- 3.5.2 Whilst a formal ballot of tenants is not a specified requirement the Government will only approve proposals for setting up an ALMO if tenants have been fully consulted and their support can be demonstrated.
- 3.5.3 In setting up the ALMO the local authority will be expected to:-
 - Continue with any existing TMO arrangements.
 - Ensure that tenants' wishes continue to be taken into account.
 - Honour any agreements made between the Council and tenants in Tenant Participation Compacts.

3.6 Relationship with the Local Authority

- 3.6.1 The relationship between the Council and the ALMO will need to be defined in an agreement which covers:
 - The functions to be delegated to and carried out by the company;
 - The standards to which they are to be carried out;
 - Arrangements for reporting on and monitoring performance;
 - Requirements for involvement of tenants in decision making;
 - The financial relationship and obligations of each party (including liability for claims from events before the setting up of the company);
 - Arrangements for liaison and consultation between the authority and the arm's length company;
 - The role of the company in helping deliver the authority's housing strategy;
 - The length of the agreement (either an initial period of 5 years, renewable, or 10 years, renewable, with provision for a break after 5 years is suggested);
 - Any warranties to be given to the directors;
 - The actions to be taken where there is non-compliance or failure;
 - Arrangements for termination.

3.7 Government Approval

- 3.7.1 Local authorities have powers under the Local Government Act 2000 to establish arm's length companies. However, the delegation of the housing function will require the approval of the Secretary of State under S.27 of the Housing Act 1985.
- 3.7.2 In considering an application the Secretary of State will need to be satisfied that the proposals are consistent with the role envisaged for an ALMO. The interests of tenants, staff and the Council must be properly protected and the ALMO must be able to operate in a viable, business-like manner.

3.8 Staffing

- 3.8.1 It is expected that those staff who spend the majority of their time in carrying out the service which will be delegated to the ALMO will also transfer to the ALMO.
- 3.8.2 The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) will apply to such staff transfers. This will ensure that transferring staff enjoy terms and conditions of employment which are at least as beneficial to those which applied at the Council.
- 3.8.3 The ALMO will also have the option to engage other staff to carry out its functions and to procure services externally. Subject to best value criteria, the ALMO, for example, would be able to contract with the Council for the provision of support services.

3.9 Functions of the ALMO

- 3.9.1 Local authorities can decide what functions will be delegated to the ALMO. However, the functions considered to be appropriate for delegation include:-
 - Rent collection, dealing with arrears, debt counselling;
 - Tenant information and consultation on matters which are the responsibility of the company;
 - Tenant participation, including involvement in monitoring and review of service standards;
 - Enforcement of tenant conditions;
 - Similar functions for leaseholders;
 - Stock investment decisions and repairs ordering;
 - Managing lettings, voids and underoccupation;
 - Estate management, caretaking and support services under 'Supporting People';
 - Environmental protection and improvement.
- 3.9.2 It is thus envisaged that the Council will retain direct responsibility for housing policy and strategy and for statutory housing services such as homelessness and housing advice.

3.10 Financial Arrangements

- 3.10.1 As the stock would continue to be owned by the Council the existing financial arrangements would also continue, e.g. the Council would have to:
 - Maintain a Housing Revenue Account
 - Claim Housing Subsidy
 - Submit HIP returns
 - Prepare HRA business plans

- 3.10.2 The ALMO will be required to prepare the equivalent of an HRA business plan. In addition to the costs of carrying out the management role the Plan must show proposed levels of investment in the housing stock and the impact of any additional resources which are made available.

- 3.10.3 The key principles which local authorities will be expected to follow in setting up an ALMO are:-

- They should be clear and transparent and set out in an agreement which is a contract, or of a contractual kind, which sets out the obligations of each party;
- They should leave the ALMO the greatest possible autonomy to take decisions about the stock;
- The ALMO should receive the full benefit from any additional resources available to the authority as part of this initiative and the agreement should specify how the appropriate share of the other resources available for housing to the authority is to be determined;
- The agreement should cover mechanisms, through the HRA business planning process and otherwise, for ensuring that the company takes account of and fully contributes to the authority's strategic housing and other objectives;
- The agreement should enable the authority to perform its legal obligations in relation to the HRA (for example preparing and setting a balanced budget, monitoring it throughout the year, providing information in connection with subsidy claims);
- The agreement should in particular enable the authority to ensure that the company's rent policy is consistent with policy restructuring.

3.11 The Additional Resources

3.11.1 Initially, Government allocated £460 million over a two year period to provide additional resources to arm's length companies. These funds were intended to enable additional investment of about £5,000 per dwelling for approximately 90,000 dwellings.

3.11.2 The Government through the Communities Plan indicated that it would continue to support the establishment of Arm's Length Management Organisations by local authorities.

3.11.3 In order to be eligible for Government support under the ALMO programme the following criteria must be met:-

- The local authority must first obtain a place on the Government's annual programme.
- The local authority must set up the ALMO.
- The ALMO must then obtain at least a 2* (good) performance rating from the Best Value Inspector.

3.11.4 Government however have now made it abundantly clear in the latest ALMO guidance for bids for the 2005 programme that additional funding will only be given to the extent that this funding is needed to enable the Decent Homes targets to be met. A small tolerance – 5% of the bid – would be considered in respect of other works which improve sustainability.

3.11.5 Eligibility will also depend on:-

- The local authority having developed a comprehensive HRA business plan which fully justifies the decision to establish an ALMO and is consistent with other local and national housing objectives.

- Demonstration that the company will fully involve and consult tenants consistent with Tenant Participation Compact principles.
- Demonstration that the Company will help deliver Government policies on rents and lettings.

3.12 Mechanism For Providing Additional Resources

3.12.1 The housing subsidy system is used to provide additional resources to those authorities which make successful bids to Government. The process operates as follows:-

- Government will grant additional borrowing powers of up to the approved amount per dwelling to the local authority via a Supplementary Credit Approval.
- The loan charges related to the additional borrowing will rank for housing subsidy.
- The additional resources will be passed to the ALMO for investment to an agreed programme of works to the housing stock.
- The ODPM will monitor the process to ensure that resources are used effectively.

3.13 The Next Steps

3.13.1 If a local authority believes that there is strong justification for setting up an ALMO and that the necessary criteria can be met, it should assess the amount of additional resources required and then bid for a place on the ODPM programme for the following year.

3.13.2 For Round 5 detailed applications are required by 28 January 2005 and the announcement of successful bids and conditional funding allocations made in May 2005.

3.13.3 If a local authority is successful in obtaining a conditional allocation of funds it will be expected to:-

- Consult tenants in accordance with Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985;
- Consult staff likely to be affected;
- Apply for approval to delegate functions;
- Set up the company;
- Conduct a Best Value Review and invite an inspection by the Housing Inspectorate;
- Receive the Inspectorate report;
- Submit a final application for additional resources with supporting material, normally at the same time as the HIP material.

3.14 The Implications for South Kesteven

3.14.1 *Potential Benefits*

Because of the strong financial position of the Council (i.e. both the Decent Homes and Decent Homes Plus standards can be comfortably achieved from within existing resources) it is extremely doubtful that the ALMO route could be used to access additional Government funding.

The Council could however decide to adopt the ALMO approach:

- to give tenants a much stronger role in the control and management of the housing service;
- to reinforce the separation of the housing management and strategic roles.

The ALMO approach would not however address the issue of maintaining and improving service delivery as described in Section 3 of the report.

3.14.2 *Staffing Implications*

If the Council decided to set up an arm's length management company the staff who currently provide the housing management services would transfer to the Company. The transfer would be governed by the TUPE Regulations which would ensure that the interests of staff would be fully protected.

Other staff who provide support services to the housing management function could also transfer by agreement or alternatively the Council could contract to provide support services to the Company.

Provided that the necessary arrangements can be made for provision of support services from the Council there would be little impact on other Council departments. However, the guidance on arm's length companies emphasises that the procurement of such services is subject to best value criteria and that it will be up to the Company to decide on the most cost-effective way in which these should be provided.

3.14.3 *Impact on the General Fund*

Provided that arrangements can be put in place enabling the Council to provide services to the Company there should be little impact on the General Fund.

3.14.4 *Impact on Existing Tenants*

Existing tenants would potentially benefit as follows:-

- Their role in the management of the housing service would be enhanced.

Establishing an arm's length company would be unlikely to affect rent levels or tenancy rights as ownership of the stock and housing policy would remain with the Council.

3.14.5 ***Prospective Tenants***

Establishing an ALMO would not increase the overall provision of affordable homes and therefore would not enable those in housing need to be housed more quickly. However, once prospective tenants are housed by the Council they would benefit in the same way as existing tenants.

3.14.6 ***Setting up costs***

It is estimated that the costs involved in setting up an ALMO would be in the order of £250,000 (this relates mainly to staff time, consultancy fees and the costs of consultation with tenants). However the major part of this expenditure would only be incurred if the Council received a provisional allocation of funding from ODPM earmarked for this purpose. The key tasks involved in the setting up process include:-

- Extensive consultation with tenants on the rationale proposed, including the provision of independent advice to tenants.
- Selection and training of Board Members.
- Agreement of the Company's constitution and policies.
- Extensive consultation with staff who would transfer to the Company and those remaining with the Council who are affected by the transfer.
- Preparation of staffing structures, staffing and operational budgets and longer term financial projections and the ALMO's business plan.
- Liaison with ODPM and the Housing Corporation.
- Preparation and agreement of the housing management contract.
- Preparation and agreement of contracts for the provision of services from the Council to the Company.
- Staff assimilation and recruitment (if necessary).
- Preparation and agreement of a detailed strategy for achieving 'excellent' performance.

3.15 Overall Conclusions

3.15.1 In summary we have concluded that the ALMO option could potentially:-

- increase levels of tenant involvement in the management of their homes;
- retain existing tenancy arrangements;
- have minimal impact on the Council's finances (subject to satisfactory procurement arrangements);
- protect the interests of staff.

3.14.2 However, the level of influence which the Council has over day to day management of the stock would reduce.

3.14.3 The relative attractiveness of the ALMO is however somewhat reduced as it is unlikely that an ALMO in South Kesteven would be able to access additional Government funding, given the current strength of the Council's HRA.

4. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

- 4.1 As a variation to the ALMO option the Council could consider entering into partnership arrangements with an existing social landlord for the provision of housing management services to the Council.
- 4.2 The main advantages of this approach would be:-
 - to address the Council's concerns about its ability to deliver a high quality housing management service;
 - to reinforce the separation of the management and strategic housing functions;
 - to provide opportunities to involve tenants at the heart of the decision making process.

4.3 Constitutional Arrangements

Whilst the constitutional arrangements would depend on the agreement with the preferred partner, we envisage something along the following lines:-

- a new landlord body would be set up as a subsidiary of an existing social landlord;
- it would be managed by a Board comprising tenants, Council representatives and independent specialists.

4.4 Arrangements with the Council

The potential arrangements with the Council would be similar to those relating to an ALMO as described in paragraph 3.6.1.

4.5 Tenant Consultation

The Council must be able to show that it has consulted with its tenants and has the support of the tenants for any proposal to delegate the housing management service.

However, a formal ballot of tenants would not be required.

4.6 Government Approval

Delegation of the housing management function would require the approval of the Secretary of State under S.27 of the Housing Act 1985.

4.7 Staffing

It is expected that those Council staff who spend the majority of their time in carrying out the services that will be delegated will transfer to the management organisation.

The TUPE regulations will apply to such staff transfers and thus the terms and conditions of transferring staff will be protected.

4.8 Functions to be Delegated

The functions that are included within the scope of the management agreement will be the subject of detailed discussions between the Council and its partner organisation.

However, it is expected that these would be consistent with the ALMO arrangements as set out in paragraph 3.9.1.

Under the proposed arrangements, it is expected that the Council would retain a number of core activities. Typically these would include:-

- All matters of housing policy
- Maintaining the Housing Revenue Account
- Preparation of the HRA business plan
- Housing subsidy claims
- HIP returns
- Performance monitoring and reporting

4.9 **The Financial Arrangements**

The Council and the management body would normally agree a fee for carrying out the specified services. This would be subject to annual review.

The principles that the Council will be expected to follow would be consistent with those applying to a proposed ALMO (paragraph 3.10.3).

4.10 **Choice of the Partner Organisation**

Best practice indicates that the tenants should be at the heart of the process for selecting the partner organisation. More specifically, it is proposed that the tenants should be heavily involved in:-

- Drawing up the initial specification for the services to be provided
- Selecting a short list of potential partners
- Agreeing criteria against which prospective partners can be judged
- Interviewing and making site visits to potential partner organisations
- Drawing up the detailed management agreement

4.11 **Impact of the Housing Revenue Account**

It is expected that there would not be a significant impact on the Housing Revenue Account as a result of the delegation arrangements.

On the one hand the new organisation should be able to benefit from economies of scale but on the other hand there may be some additional costs associated with running a new organisation that is independent from the Council and in maintaining or improving the standard of delivery of housing management services.

4.12 **Impact on the General Fund**

The new organisation is likely to have its own central services functions and hence it is likely that central services will no longer be required from the Council in respect of the functions that are delegated.

It will therefore be necessary for the Council to make commensurate reductions in central service costs to avoid additional expenditure falling to the General Fund.

4.13 **Impact on Tenants**

Existing and prospective tenants would benefit through higher standards of service and the opportunity to participate in the management of the new organisation.

Tenancy rights and rent levels would remain unaffected as ownership of the housing stock and housing policy would remain with the Council.

4.14 Setting up Costs

It is expected that the costs of setting up the arrangements would be shared between the Council and the management organisation. The Council would however be involved in additional work and possible consultancy costs. Key tasks involved would include:-

- Consultation with the tenants on the proposals, including the provision of independent advice to the tenants.
- Conducting the process for the selection of the partner organisation.
- Consultation with staff who would transfer and with those who are affected by the proposals
- Liaison with ODPM
- Preparation and agreement of the housing management contract
- Setting up the arrangements for the strategic housing service.

4.15 Overall Conclusions

In summary we have concluded that delegation of the housing management function to an existing social landlord could potentially:-

- ensure that standards of service are maintained and improved;
- increase tenant involvement in the management of their homes;
- retain existing tenancy rights;
- reinforce the separation of the management and strategic roles.

The Council would retain responsibility for housing policy but would lose some influence over the day to day management of the housing stock. The Council would also need to ensure that any additional costs that might fall to the General Fund are avoided.

5 THE PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE (PFI)

5.1 As mentioned earlier in the report the Government has set aside funding to support a number of schemes undertaken jointly by the public/private sector under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Government support had previously been given to eight pathfinder schemes some of which are now underway.

5.2 Housing PFI is available to support both development of new affordable homes and for the refurbishment of existing Council housing. The main features of a typical scheme for refurbishment of existing properties are set out below:

- Responsibility for managing and maintaining part of a local authority's housing stock would be contracted out to a housing management agent.
- The management agent would, for example, be an existing RSL or a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) set up specifically for this purpose. (An SPV might comprise an RSL, a construction company and a private sector funder).
- The local authority would draw up a detailed specification with defined outputs, required performance standards etc., which would form the basis of the agreement between the two parties.
- The fee that would be paid by the local authority would be determined via a competitive process through which suitable organisations would be asked to bid for the management contract.
- The contract would normally run for 25 or 30 years and would only be varied for RPI or changes to the specification.
- There must be sufficient transfer of risk to the private sector with the local authority retaining the ability to impose financial penalties if defined outputs and performance standards are not maintained throughout the contract period.
- Depending on current responsibilities within the Council staff might transfer to the contractor (i.e. under the TUPE regulations those staff who spend the majority of their time on the transferring service would be entitled to transfer).
- The new landlord would raise sufficient finance by private sector borrowing to carry out the required level of repairs and improvements to the housing stock.
- Provided that the Council could demonstrate that value for money is being achieved then the scheme would be eligible for Government support. In practice this support would be given via the housing subsidy system - by allowing the full management fee to rank for subsidy.

5.3 The pathfinder schemes for refurbishment of Council housing have encountered a number of difficulties and delays and it is only now, after some 3 years, that the works have commenced. The pathfinder schemes included, on average, some 1600 Council-owned properties with Government support of £16,000 per dwelling. All relate to only a small proportion of the host local authority's housing stock. It appears that future PFI schemes will be developed on a similar basis and generally include stock which is in relatively poor condition and has a low or negative value (TMV). The PFI scheme also appears to be appropriate as part of wider regeneration and redevelopment proposals.

5.4 There are a number of other factors which restrict the use of PFI as a means to attract investment into a local authority's housing stock, for example:

- There is a finite amount of Government support available and consequently there is likely to be fierce competition.
- In order to secure Government support (PFI credits) a local authority will need to demonstrate that value for money is being achieved. This, for example, could involve comparison with housing transfer in terms of value for money.
- Borrowing by the management contractor would normally be secured against the incoming cash flows (i.e. the management fee from the Council). Borrowing without 'bricks and mortar' as security would result in higher interest charges (typically an additional 0.75% - 1.00%). However this additional borrowing cost might be avoided if the contractor is an existing RSL that has the capacity to secure the borrowings against its existing housing stock.
- Contractors are concerned about the level of risk to which they will be exposed. For example, the allowances for expenditure on major repairs and improvements may prove to be inadequate over a 30 year period or there may be changes in the pattern of demand for social housing. If an RSL owned the stock the normal way of addressing these issues would be to increase rents or to defer expenditure on major repairs. Under a PFI contract neither course of action would be available to the contractor.

5.5 PFI in South Kesteven

Section seven of the report considers the options of transferring the Council stock of sheltered dwellings and also the stock of defective dwellings

As a purely hypothetical exercise we have considered the implications of using the housing PFI scheme for each of these options.

Based on our analysis we estimate that a PFI scheme would enable investment to be increased in the housing stock as follows:

Sheltered stock - Overall increase in investment of £4 million

Defective dwellings – overall increase in investment of £1 million.

We would however expect that there would be a relatively small negative impact on the Council's Housing Revenue Account and/or General Fund as a result of some diseconomies of scale.

5.6 Strengths and Drawbacks of a Typical PFI Scheme

The typical situation that has applied in existing PFI schemes is as follows:-

- Strengths
 - Would meet the objective of separation of strategic and management roles.
 - Could attract significant additional investment.
 - Particularly appropriate for negative value stock and as part of broader regeneration initiatives.
 - Requires the contractor to meet agreed output specifications and links payment to performance.
 - Allows the Council to retain ownership and strategic control.
- Drawbacks

- Costs/disruption linked to setting up the arrangements and delegating management.
- Strong competition for limited Government resources.
- Possible protracted timescale.
- Loss of control of day to day management.
- Relatively small negative impact on the HRA/GF.
- Does not address the needs of the stock outside the PFI scheme.

5.7 **Implications for South Kesteven**

South Kesteven is untypical of the local authorities that have so far participated in Housing PFI schemes for refurbishment of existing Council stock.

Whilst, in theory, it would be possible to bid for additional resources to enable aspirational standards to be met, it is extremely doubtful that such a bid would be successful given the strength of the financial position within the Council's HRA.

It has therefore been concluded that Housing PFI is not an appropriate option for inclusion in the future housing strategy.

6 STOCK TRANSFER

- 6.1 Since 1988 some 180 local authorities have transferred all or part of their housing stock to independent landlords. This has involved the transfer of over 600,000 properties. In the following paragraphs we have analysed the implications of a possible housing transfer in South Kesteven.
- 6.2 Stock transfer can only proceed if the majority of the tenants are in favour of the proposals. Tenant opinion must be measured in a postal ballot. The Council can decide whether or not a ballot takes place, but if a ballot is held and tenants vote in favour of the transfer proposals then we find it difficult to envisage the result being disregarded by the Council.
- 6.3 The promises to be made to transferring tenants usually cover six key areas:
 - Rents
 - Major Repairs and Improvements
 - Service Levels
 - The Tenancy Agreement
 - Representation and Consultation
 - Additional Housing Provision
- 6.4 Each of these areas is discussed in detail below.

6.5 RENTS

Historically, new landlords have entered into a legally binding guarantee through the new assured tenancy agreement with all tenants individually, and with the Council through the Transfer Agreement, that rents for existing tenants at the date of transfer, will be increased at no more than 1% over the rate of inflation for the first five years after transfer.

Following the introduction of the Government's rent restructuring proposals it is unlikely there will be any significant variation in rents charged whether tenants transfer or whether they remain with the Council.

The valuation is also based on the assumption that new tenants will immediately be charged the target rent as per the Government's formula.

6.6 MAJOR REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The fundamental requirement of the stock transfer process, which as discussed in detail below is reflected in the calculation of the transfer price, is that the receiving body must commit itself to bring the properties up to a defined standard within 5 to 10 years of transfer, and then to make full provision for future routine, cyclical and major repairs, so to maintain them in that condition. Therefore a full transfer of the stock would enable the properties and the environment to be brought up to higher standard that would encourage tenants to support the transfer proposals.

Thus the Council would be able to give firm undertakings on level of investment in the housing stock for a defined period (typically 5-7 years) following completion of the transfer.

In practice this would mean that housing transfer in South Kesteven would enable up to an additional £6 million to £27 million to be spent on major repairs and improvements over the next ten years and £47 million to £94 million over the next 30 years.

In addition to the understanding that a very extensive programme of catch-up repairs and improvements would be carried out, the new landlord would also be able to give specific guarantees, for example they may state that within 5 years of transfer properties would be as follows:

- Full central heating systems would be installed in all properties.
- All properties would be double glazed.
- All properties would have a modern kitchen.
- All properties would have a modern bathroom.

The Council would also have the option to introduce other improvements into the proposed work programmes. This would, however, be likely to have a negative impact on the stock valuation.

Of equal, if not greater importance is the requirement that the new landlord must keep the stock in good condition. This will be a requirement included within the transfer agreement and it will be insisted upon by the new landlord's funders who will be anxious to retain the long-term value of their security.

6.7 SERVICE LEVELS

A critical part of the tri-partite negotiation between the Council, tenants and the new landlord will be the assurances given that the new landlord will improve the quality of service delivery. The calculation of the transfer price will take into account the current service levels and any enhancements agreed by the Council (and thus paid for by the Council) or offered by the new landlord (and thus funded from their Business Plan). Again these commitments will be included within the transfer agreement and service delivery and quality will be directly managed by the new landlord's Board, including tenants and Councillors.

6.8 THE TENANCY AGREEMENT

The other key factor within any stock transfer relates to the nature of the tenancy and the tenancy agreement. When a stock transfer takes place all the tenants of the new body, including the transferring tenants (who up to the point of transfer are secure tenants of the local authority) become assured tenants.

An assured tenancy is a contract between the landlord and the tenant, the terms of which can only be changed in accordance with the terms of that agreement which would normally require the consent of both parties. The normal course of events in an LSVT is for the tenancy agreement to be negotiated between the Council and the new landlord with the involvement of an independent advisor to the tenants. In all the transfers that we have been involved with, the tenancy agreement has been agreed to provide both transferring and new tenants with security of tenure which is effectively the same as a secure tenancy agreement. This has been done by providing preserved personal rights for transferring tenants on such issues as the rent guarantee, the continuation of their existing right-to-buy on the same terms and, where appropriate on such issues as succession rights. Aside from these preserved rights it is normal for the landlord in such cases to contractually waive some of the statutory rights available under an assured tenancy. A key role of the independent tenants' advisor is to provide clear guidance to tenants on this issue.

The only rights which cannot be mirrored in the new tenancy agreement are:

- The right to participate in the rent to mortgage scheme;

- The right to establish a tenant management organisation (although a new RSL could agree to consider favourably any proposal from its tenants).

The tenancy agreement is enforceable by tenants individually and crucially, because it is incorporated into the transfer contract between the local authority and the landlord, it is enforceable by the Council. The powers of the Council under the transfer agreement should be seen as a key element in the long-term protection of tenants' interests. They cover a wide range of issues including the commitment of the new body to the completion of the works programmes, the governance arrangements for the body, including tenant and Council representation and the long term affordability of rents.

The Government is currently formulating proposals that will seek to harmonise tenancy agreements for all types of social housing landlord. The introduction of a common tenancy agreement would clearly remove any concern that tenants may have about perceived loss of tenancy rights.

6.9 REPRESENTATION AND CONSULTATION

Tenants generally view their direct involvement in the decision making process on an equal footing to the Council representatives and the independent expert Board members as a key benefit of stock transfer. Our advice is that tenants should be encouraged and provided with the necessary financial support to develop their own preferred structure for consultation and representation. Our experience is that once tenants realise that they can really "make a difference" by becoming involved, the possibilities for expanding involvement increase considerably.

One critical element of the transfer agreement is the Minority Protection Agreement (MPA) which effectively provides each of the three groups within the tri-partite structure with a veto in relation to changes in the key governance arrangements. For example, in a typical new landlord structure the shareholding membership consists of:

- 1/3 : the Council
- 1/3 : the Tenants
- 1/3 : Independent members

The MPA which is embodied within the new landlord's constitution requires a 75% majority to approve any changes to key governance arrangements. This prevents the type of problem that arose some years ago in West Kent Housing Association where the Association decided to eliminate local authority representation.

It is important that both the Council, in the first instance, and the New Landlord, after transfer, provide financial support to allow for training for both tenant representatives and for other tenants who wish to become involved. There are many positive examples of strong tenant involvement arrangements being developed by stock transfer RSLs.

Increasing tenant involvement is a significant feature of the "best value" arrangements and is thus encouraged by the ODPM.

6.10 VALUATION OF THE HOUSING STOCK

The transfer price of the stock to be transferred is determined through a process, the main elements of which are set by the ODPM, although the actual price to be paid by the new landlord is the subject of detailed negotiation between the parties in each case.

Tenanted property transferring under the Voluntary Transfer arrangements is valued on the basis of Tenanted Market Value (TMV). This is essentially an accountancy exercise, rather than a professional valuation process. The value is determined by projecting the streams of income and expenditure generated by the properties over a thirty-year period and then discounting these projections back to a net present value. The projections of income and expenditure reflect the commitments made to tenants in the consultation process leading up to their decision on transfer.

The complex financial model which is used to calculate TMV takes account of the following assumptions:

- the new landlord will be obliged to retain all the properties for letting at affordable rents;
- the new landlord will have to honour all the undertakings which have been given to transferring tenants;
- the new landlord will have to provide high standards of management and maintenance.

In recent years housing transfer valuations have averaged about £10,000 per dwelling although there is evidence of much lower valuations being achieved where investment requirements in the housing stock are relatively high.

The Government has recognised that, in some cases, the value of the housing stock will be below the outstanding debt related to the stock and has introduced measures to deal with this situation (which is known as 'debt overhang').

Gap Funding

Very recently the Government has also indicated that it will be prepared, in principle, to provide 'Gap' Funding where the valuation of a local authority's housing stock is negative.

Valuation of the Council's housing stock

That ranges between £18 million to £45 million based on the three alternative improvement levels for the 'tenant aspiration' scenarios. In the following financial analysis we have used the "Tenant Priority Aspirations" scenario which generates an estimated valuation of some £45 million for the purposes of illustration. We would however expect that any offer to be made to the tenants would include some additional items of expenditure, with a corresponding reduction in the stock valuation.

VAT Saving Scheme

In recent years a scheme has been developed to reduce the impact of VAT on a new landlord receiving stock via housing transfer. Adoption of this approach would have the potential to both increase the stock valuation and to strengthen the financial viability of the new landlord.

Setting up costs

Housing transfer involves considerable time and effort in preparation, detailed consultation with tenants, valuation and business planning and preparing and agreeing the contract which embodies the terms of the transfer.

Based on experience of other stock transfers we have estimated that overall setting up costs would be in the region of £3.5 to £4.0 million. Of this about £0.5 million would be incurred pre ballot and would therefore be at risk if the tenants did not support the proposal.

Normally these setting up costs would be written off against the capital receipt.

6.11 ESTIMATED CAPITAL RECEIPTS

As described above it can be seen that the value of the housing stock could vary significantly depending on key assumptions used.

Government Levy

The Government requires local authorities to pay the Exchequer a levy of 20% of the capital receipt generated by the sale of the housing stock after allowing for the setting up costs and any existing debt.

The estimate of the net capital receipt generated by the transfer and the Government levy payable is shown in the tables below:-

	£m
Calculation of Government Levy	
Stock valuation	45.0
Less: Element relating to non-housing assets*	3.0
HRA outstanding debt	1.0
Setting up costs	4.0
	37.0
Levy at 20%	7.4
Estimated Capital Receipts	
Stock valuation	45.0
Less: Setting up costs	4.0
Government Levy	7.4
Debt repayment	1.0
Usable receipt	32.6

*Garages

Use of the Capital Receipt

Receipts from housing stock transfer are outside the scope of the pooling arrangements that were introduced from April 2004. Therefore the capital receipts from stock transfer could be used by the Council to fund any legitimate capital expenditure.

Right to Buy Sharing Agreement

It is usual for the receipts from RTB sales that occur post-transfer to be shared between the new landlord and the Council.

As an approximate guide to the way in which this arrangement would operate we have shown an example in the table below:-

		RTB Receipts £m	RSL Share £m	Council Share £m
Year 1	80	3.6	1.6	2.0
Year 2	75	3.4	1.5	1.9
Year 3	70	3.1	1.4	1.7
Year 4	65	2.9	1.3	1.6
Year 5	60	2.7	1.2	1.5

Investment in additional affordable homes

Historically it was usual for a local authority involved in stock transfer to invest any usable receipts in supporting the provision of additional affordable homes via local authority social housing grant (LA SHG). Under the LA SHG rules expenditure by the Council would have been reimbursed by the Housing Corporation.

However the recent withdrawal of the LA SHG scheme has meant that this is no longer possible. The Council does retain powers to give grants to private landlords although any such expenditure would be a direct cost to the Council.

6.12 THE IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL & COUNCIL TAX-PAYERS

Because housing transfer would involve the transfer of one of the Council's major services there are also potential implications for the Council, its staff and the Council tax payer. These are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Statutory Housing Services

It is essential that the Council recognises the resource requirements for the statutory housing services for which it would retain responsibility, i.e.

- Housing Strategy
- Homelessness
- Housing Advice
- Private Sector Housing
- The Enabling Role
- Supporting People

The Council has the option of retaining these functions in-house or contracting with the new landlord or another provider. Regardless of the method of delivery the Council must ensure that it has sufficient in-house staffing and budgetary resources.

In assessing the overall impact of housing transfer we have assumed that there would be the need for a further £100,000 per year to meet additional costs arising from the separation of the strategic and management roles. This is based on our experience in other stock transfers where there has been a consistent need to strengthen the strategic role after stock transfer has taken place.

We have discussed with officers the potential impact on the General Fund of the reallocation of costs that are currently being charged to the Housing Revenue Account to the extent that this is no longer possible. South Kesteven, in common with many other local authorities, faces a particular problem in this respect, in that the

great majority of these allocations represent partial allocation of staff time and related overheads and thus there are not whole units of staff available for transfer under TUPE. As a consequence it is inevitable that the amount of staff time and other overheads which is charged against the General Fund will increase as a result of the transfer. It is estimated that this will amount to around £500,000 per annum at the point of transfer. We would, however, expect the Council to seek to reduce this amount over time.

Housing Benefit Costs

Following the removal of the costs of housing benefit from the HRA there should not be any significant impact on the General Fund, with the exception that there may be a short period of data-lag' which may affect the Council's entitlement to Housing Benefit Admin subsidy for a one year period.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

Currently the Council can reclaim VAT paid in respect of exempt services such as property and some leisure activities provided that the VAT in respect of the exempt services does not exceed 5% of the total VAT reclaimed by the Council.

Stock transfer will result in a reduction in the total VAT but the Council expects that it will continue to be able to meet the 5% criteria in respect of VAT on exempt services.

We have therefore assumed that stock transfer would not affect the Council's VAT position..

Estimated Impact on the General Fund

The table below illustrates the potential annual impact of a stock transfer on the local authority.

	Year 1
Revenue	
Interest on capital receipt	1.47
Diseconomies of scale	(0.5)
Strategic housing function (additional)	(0.1)
Annual additional benefit/(cost) to GF	0.87
Capital	
Share of RTB receipts	1.7
Less amount receivable under existing arrangements	(0.7)
Additional benefit to GF	1.0

It must however be stressed that if the Council chooses to spend the Capital Receipts then the benefits to the General Fund would reduce commensurately.

For example, if the Council decides to support the provision of some 300 additional affordable homes at a cost of £10 million the interest on the capital receipt would fall to a little over £1 million.

As an alternative the Council could decide to invest the receipts from the RTB sharing agreement described in paragraph 6.11 in the new affordable homes. Based on the figures in the table this would provide capacity to deliver approximately 260 homes over a five period.

Impact on Rate Support Grant

The experience of other local authorities who have transferred their housing stock confirms that neither the Capital Receipt nor the interest generated has affected their RSG entitlement.

Conclusions

Overall we estimate that the transfer would be likely to have an overall positive impact on the General Fund, although this would vary significantly depending on the assumptions used for calculating the value of the housing stock.

6.13 THE IMPACT ON STAFF

As far as staff are concerned, housing transfer would be covered by the Transfer of Undertakings regulations. Staff wholly or mainly engaged on housing work would be transferred, subject to the needs of the strategic function as defined, with terms and conditions being protected. In the transfers to date there have been very few staffing problems arising and it is usual practice for local agreements to be made so that staff who are affected receive the maximum levels of job security. In practice a transfer tends to lead to increased job opportunities with the Local Housing Company (LHC), both in terms of the significantly enhanced development and repair programmes and in relation to the separation of functions between the Council and the new landlord.

Thus we believe that there would be potential benefits to staff both in terms of increased job opportunities and improved job satisfaction.

6.14 LEASEHOLDERS

There are no statutory requirements for consulting long leaseholders (i.e. people who have purchased under Right to Buy on a long leasehold basis) as the terms of their lease would not change under stock transfer.

However leaseholders should be consulted on the transfer proposals particularly if transfer would result in them being asked to pay increased contributions towards repair and maintenance costs (e.g. for works to communal areas in flats).

Leaseholders should be kept informed of progress and told that they may make any objections to the transfer to the Secretary of State. Where significant numbers of leaseholders are involved the local authority should consider issuing separate leaseholder information.

6.15 THE OVERALL IMPACT OF TRANSFER

Our assessment is that the impact of stock transfer in South Kesteven on the various stakeholders would be as follows:

- Existing Tenants – would benefit from additional investment in their homes and greater involvement in decision making without significant loss to existing rights. Their existing 'Secure Tenancy' would be replaced by an 'Assured Tenancy' with additional contractual rights so as to minimise any change in the conditions of tenancy.
- Potential Tenants – Would also benefit from higher standards of accommodation.
- All tenants – would be charged a rent which complies with Government targets for the social housing sector.
- Staff – would be able to transfer on protected terms and conditions.

- Council and Council Taxpayers – transfer would result in financial benefits to the General Fund.

However, stock transfer would remove the housing stock from the control of the Council and is a time-consuming and costly exercise which can only proceed with the demonstrable support of the tenants with the risk of abortive costs if such support is not received.

6.16 THE CHOICE OF A NEW LANDLORD

If the Council decides that housing transfer is the preferred route forward there are then fundamental questions to be considered in relation to the form of the new landlord, i.e.

- An existing housing association
- A subsidiary of an existing housing association
- A new housing association
- A new local housing company

Further details on the stock transfer process are included in Appendix D.

Housing Association or Local Housing Company

A housing association or a local housing company (LHC) would have similar objectives and would both be 'not for profit' organisations. Housing Associations are set up and regulated under the Industrial and Provident Society Acts, whereas LHCs are governed by the Companies Act.

There are two main reasons why LHCs have become the preferred route forward:-

- The Companies Act is less restrictive and would give a LHC more freedom to undertake a wider range of activity.
- The ownership and management of the Company are more clearly separated. For example, some LHCs are owned in equal proportion between the Council, the tenants and the independent membership, but the composition of the Board of Management is in different proportions.
- The fact that the Council, as a legal entity, would always own a third of the Company provides protection against any constitutional change (which would require 75% support).

Charitable or Non-Charitable

One factor, which has a bearing on this aspect of the decision making, relates to the question of whether or not the body should have charitable status. The key fact is that charitable organisations are not subject to Corporation Tax. A non-charitable LHC will therefore be required to incur substantial Corporation tax liabilities once overall trading surpluses are achieved, because it needs surpluses to repay debt and surpluses attract tax liabilities.

In order to register as a charity the landlord will have to convince the Charity Commissioners that it is carrying a 'charitable' business. This may constrain the landlord in some areas. Charitable status also involves more onerous reporting requirements.

New or Existing

Historically most local authority stock transfers have been made to new stand-alone housing associations and, more recently, local housing companies. The reasons why this approach has been adopted are as follows:-

- The use of an existing housing association could be difficult to explain to tenants, particularly given that one of the key messages that is used in transfer is that "this is only a minimal change, most things will stay the same".
- There is a partly perceived and partly actual difficulty in achieving the degree of influence that the local authority and tenants require over policies, rent levels etc., given that existing associations have existing policies and procedures and a resistance to change.
- There are a number of staff within the central services functions who would expect to transfer under the TUPE arrangements. Failure to achieve the transfer of such staff would result in additional costs being charged to the local authority's post transfer General Fund position, as well as creating a potential source of staff discontent, which could undermine the possibility of a successful transfer.

Governance

As mentioned above, virtually all recent stock transfers have been made to new RSLs which in terms of both ownership and Board membership have been split:

1/3	Council
1/3	Tenants
1/3	Independent specialists

There are however some more recent transfers where the split of ownership between the three constituent groups is as above but where the levels of tenant representation on the Board of Management is higher.

With regard to governance, the key issue is to appoint a Board which has the necessary skills and experience to manage the organisation effectively. This will be an absolute pre-requisite to achieving Housing Corporation registration and private sector funding.

It is also important to recognise that the RSL will need to operate independently from the local authority, with any services provided by the local authority being subject to detailed scrutiny as to their value-for-money from the viewpoint of the RSL. The Housing Corporation will require that the RSL should have a code of governance which, *inter alia*, requires board members to be able to demonstrate that they are acting at all times in the interests of the RSL, rather than their constituency.

Choice and Competition

The Government is keen to introduce an element of competition into the process of selecting the new landlord. Latest guidelines stress the importance of informing tenants of the various options which are available and involving tenants in the process of choosing the most appropriate option.

Conclusions

If housing transfer is the preferred option there are a number of alternative forms which the new landlord could take.

The ODPM transfer guidelines indicate that the tenants should be consulted on the various options which are available and their views reflected in any stock transfer proposals.

7 MIXED OPTIONS

Consideration has also been given to the potential implications of a mix of options involving, for example, the transfer of part of the Council's housing stock.

In the following paragraphs two potential mixed solutions are examined as follows:-

- the transfer of the Council's stock of 1,433 units of sheltered accommodation;
- the transfer of the Council's stock of 871 defective dwellings.

In each case an analysis has been made of the potential implications for the following stakeholder groups:-

- existing tenants
- potential tenants
- tenants remaining with the Council
- Council staff
- the Council

Sheltered Stock

Currently the Council has a stock of sheltered accommodation as follows:-

	Bedsit	One Bed	Two Bed	Three Bed	Total
Bedsits	98				98
Flats		372	226	4	602
Bungalows		163	566	4	733
	98	535	797	8	1,433

Valuation of the Sheltered Stock

Using the 'stock transfer' stock condition data, the sheltered stock has a value of £2 million.

For the purpose of the evaluation it has been assumed that the stock would transfer at a Nil valuation to a specialist landlord who would invest to tailor the stock to meet the future needs of the community.

Impact on the HRA

The transfer of the sheltered stock would have a relatively marginal positive effect on the Council's HRA.

As with the full retention options the Council would continue to be able to meet both the decent homes standard and the decency plus standard whilst maintaining a viable HRA for the foreseeable future.

It would also have the effect of reducing the shortfall in resources for the aspirational standard scenarios.

Impact on the Stock Valuation

The transfer of the sheltered stock would also have the effect of reducing the value of the stock remaining with the Council by about £7 million.

Conclusions

Transferring tenants – would potentially benefit from modernisation to their homes and from the services of a specialist landlord.

Potential tenants – would potentially benefit from a sheltered housing stock more appropriate to the needs of future generations.

Council staff – who are employed in the provision of the service would transfer on protected terms and conditions.

Tenants remaining with the Council – would benefit from a marginally stronger HRA.

The Council – may be affected by diseconomies of scale on central service departments and would need to manage the situation carefully.

Defective Dwellings

Currently the Council's stock of defective dwellings comprises the following:-

Type	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
Airey		1	15		16
BISF			109		109
Cornish		3	44		47
Easiform		1	90	11	102
Orlit			11		11
Swedish		6	7		13
Unity Brickclad		15	13		28
Unity External Insulation		26	56		82
Unity Original Brick		25	11		36
Unity Original Concrete	2	23	11		36
Wessex			18		18
Wimpey		88	284	1	373
	2	188	669	12	871

Valuation of the Defective Dwellings

Using the 'stock transfer' stock condition data the defective dwellings have a valuation of £4 million.

For the purpose of the evaluation, we have assumed that the stock would be transferred at a Nil valuation on the grounds that over the next 30 years further investment will probably be required in the defective dwellings. It would also be necessary to carry out further, more detailed work as we would expect that different solutions would be adopted for each of the sites involving a combination of refurbishment and re-provision and that the inherent land values would compensate for the negative value of the stock.

Impact on the HRA

The projections indicate that the transfer of the defective dwellings would have a marginal positive effect on the HRA.

As with the full retention options the Council would continue to be able to meet both the decent homes standard and the decency standard whilst maintaining a viable HRA for the foreseeable future.

It would also have the effect of making a relatively small reduction in the shortfall in resources for the industry standard and the three aspirational scenarios.

Impact on the Stock Valuation

The transfer of the defective dwellings would also have the effect of increasing the value of the stock remaining with the Council by £4 million.

Conclusions

Transferring tenants – would potentially benefit from the certainty that their homes would be refurbished or that they would be re-housed in modern properties.

Potential tenants – would potentially benefit from access to refurbished properties. It would however be likely that the number of affordable homes would reduce.

Council staff – who are employed in the provision of the service would transfer on protected terms and conditions.

Tenants remaining with the Council – would benefit from a marginally stronger HRA.

The Council – would be certain that any future issues related to the defective dwellings are resolved. Redevelopment could contribute to the Council's other strategic objectives. The Council would however have to take action to avoid any impact of diseconomies of scale.

General Comment on the Partial Options

Given the relative strength of the Council's existing position there is no compelling reason to adopt a mixed approach.

If however the Council decided that this should form part of its future housing strategy then considerable further work will be required, probably involving a detailed analysis on a site by site basis for both the sheltered and/or the defective dwellings.

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The Base Case

In considering the situation if the Council was to continue to own and manage the housing stock we have reached the following conclusions:-

- The Council will be able to maintain a viable Housing Revenue Account for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, in the short term the Council would be able to make substantial contributions from the HRA towards capital expenditure programmes if it so wishes.
- Current projections suggest that the Council will be unlikely to satisfy the needs of all those requiring affordable housing in the District. Nor is the Council likely to be able to meet the year on year increase in demand for affordable homes.
- The projections show that the Council will have more than sufficient resources to meet the 2010 Decent Homes target and to carry out other essential works.
- The Council does however face significant shortfalls in resources needed to bring the housing stock up to the aspirational standards.

Whilst the Council is not compelled to change the existing arrangements an alternative strategy appears to be required if tenants' aspirations are to be met.

8.2 Arm's Length Management Organisation

The ALMO approach is intending to, amongst other things, to assist local authorities to achieve the 2010 Decent Homes target. An ALMO would also meet the Government's objective of clear separation of the Council's management and strategic housing functions.

It is therefore extremely doubtful that additional Government resources could be accessed by the Council (i.e. it would be difficult to substantiate a bid that would bring the stock up to the aspirational standard). Furthermore, the ALMO would need to achieve at least a two star 'good' performance rating from the Housing Inspector for all services that would be delivered by the ALMO before being eligible for the additional funding.

8.3 PFI

Technically the Council could bid for funding under the Housing PFI scheme. This would enable investment to be made in part of the housing stock whilst retaining the stock in Council ownership subject to the Council being able to meet challenging value for money criteria.

However, housing PFI has so far been directed to areas where the investment need is extremely high and a relatively small number of properties have been included in each scheme. Implementation of the pathfinder PFI schemes has proven to be an extremely lengthy process and the set up costs have been high. We therefore question whether the PFI option would be a suitable option for South Kesteven.

8.4 Full Stock Transfer

Full stock transfer would involve the transfer of both ownership and management of the stock to an independent registered social landlord. It would enable the increased investment to be made in the housing stock and also would provide resources for improvements in service delivery.

However, stock transfer is entirely dependent on securing the support of the tenants and there is a risk of failure with associated abortive costs. The Council would also be likely to receive financial benefits as a result of the capital receipt generated by stock transfer.

8.5 Mixed Options

An initial analysis has been carried out to consider the potential impact of transferring part of the Council's housing stock. Two scenarios have been tested:-

- the sheltered housing stock of 1,133 dwellings and;
- the stock of 871 defective dwellings.

In both cases the partial transfers would have a marginally beneficial effect on the Housing Revenue Account and on overall housing investment. However, the partial transfers may well result in additional costs to the General Fund.

8.6 Criteria for Evaluation of the Options

In the table below we have compared the main strategic options against criteria that have typically been developed by the Council and its tenants

	ALMO	PFI	Retention	Transfer
Increased tenant involvement	Yes	Yes	Possible Yes	Yes
Enhanced service delivery	Possible Yes	Possible Yes	Possible Yes	Yes
Staff Recruitment and retention	Possible Yes	N/A	No	Yes
Increased provision of affordable housing	No	No	No	Yes
Attraction of external funding	No	Yes	No	Yes
Realisation of substantial capital asset	No	No	No	Yes
Set up costs	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Complexity of process	Reasonable	Complex	N/A	Reasonable
Financial Impact on SKDC	N/A If managed	N/A In managed	N/A	Positive
Security of Tenure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes But change in tenancy Agreement

	ALMO	PFI	Retention	Transfer
Opportunities for greater partnership working	Yes?	Yes	N/A	Yes
Continued Government scrutiny	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Achieve Decent Homes Standards	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Achieve aspirational standards	No	No	No	Yes
Strategic and Landlord functions separated	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Political will	?	?	Yes	Yes
Potential for conflict between Council and provider	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes
Provides a partial stock solution	No	Yes	N/A	No
Issues affecting practicality of option	Unlikely to attract funding	Unlikely to be successful on bidding	N/A	Need tenant support
Proven track record	Yes	Very limited	Yes	Yes

9. THE NEXT STEPS

9.1 The results of the desk top review have been and should be further used as a key element of the consultation exercise with tenants and other key stakeholders.

The main objectives of this exercise are:-

- to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the Council's position;
- to explain the other options that are available to the Council and their relative advantages and disadvantages;
- to obtain feedback.

LIBRA HOUSING ADVISORY SERVICES

Final report to the South Kesteven Stock Options Appraisal Commission in relation to the Stock Options Appraisal

1. Introduction

Libra was formed in 1988 and has extensive knowledge of housing options and role of the Independent Tenants Advisor (ITA). Since being established, Libra has worked with the tenants and leaseholders of many local authorities.

Libra is part of PCA Holdings Limited, along with PCA Management Consultants, a social housing consultancy which specialises in working with local authorities and housing associations. Libra remains as a separate company and continues to employ the same staff. However there is now an added benefit of having additional available resources, if necessary, through a team that is experienced in carrying out Options Appraisals and Housing Stock Transfers on behalf of local authorities.

Our style is to work alongside our clients to achieve the best local solution, providing support throughout the process and excellent project management skills to ensure key dates are met.

Libra Housing Advisory Services (Libra) was appointed as Independent Tenant Advisor by the Tenants Option Appraisal Group (TOAG) in September 2004 and started work on the contract in that month with a view to completing by the end of May 2005.

It was agreed by the TOAG that the following tasks should be provided by Libra (these were identified on Libra's appointment with supplementary identified tasks being agreed throughout the project):

- Assessment of the current position and the options/ Liaison with the Council and Advisors.
- Reviewing the quality of policies and cost of services (a benchmarking exercise)
- Gathering information from and the aspirations of the wider audience of tenants and the identification of local priorities.
- Summarising the results
- Support to TOAG and tenant representatives on the Stock Options Appraisal Group (SOAG)
- Training as appropriate
- Briefing Sessions for Elected Members, stakeholders and staff
- Input into the Communication and Consultation and Tenant Empowerment Strategies
- Preparation of articles for publication in Newsletters and scrutiny of Council publications, documentation etc

2. The Financial Assessment

The Beha Williams Norman Ltd (BWNL) draft report on Housing Stock Options Appraisal, recently made available to Libra in draft form, concludes that SKDC 'is not compelled to adopt any one of the alternative options' on the strength of its base case on stock retention. On the other hand, it also concludes that stock transfer 'would enable increased investment to be made in the housing stock and also would provide resources for improvement in service delivery'. Our report reviews the factors which have a bearing on these conclusions and offers Libra's own interpretation of the issues.

The Basic Issues

Any assessment of available options must address two separate but interlinked issues:

- What investment monies are available under each option?
- Can the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) stay in balance over the longer term without reducing management/service standards?

The second question is, of course, not relevant to the full stock transfer option under which the HRA would no longer operate.

Options must now be linked to the government's Decent Homes Standard (DHS). Four standards are referred to in the BWNL report:

- Basic DHS
- DHS plus Essential Works (referred to below as Decent Homes Plus)
- Stock Transfer based on the level of investment which might reasonably be expected in a stock transfer
- Tenant Aspiration Standard which would include all reasonable expectations of tenants as indicated in the consultation process.

The Stock Condition Survey (SCS)

The SCS carried out by Rand Associates has identified a required spend on major repairs/improvements only and on all repairs/improvements together as follows:

	Maj. Reps 30 years	All Works 30 years	Maj. Reps 10 years	All Works 10 years
Decent Homes Standard	£120.6m	£208.3m	£34.5m	£63.8m
Decent Homes plus	£152.5m	£240.3m	£51.9m	£81.2m
Transfer Standard	£168.1m	£256.3m	£76.6m	£106.3m
Tenant Aspiration	£209.4m	£297.2m	£80.1m	£109.4m

The Transfer Standard on all repairs and maintenance for 30 years equates to approximately £37k per unit which we understand to be close to the computed average for the UK, based on similar assumptions.

We should add that the expenditure forecasts make a broad assumption that the properties will generally stay in demand over the period.

The Base Case (Stock Retention)

Introduction

We set out in this section the contents of an earlier draft report written prior to the release of the BWNL and focusing only on the base case assumptions. Given the importance of this issue in South Kesteven the level of detail is somewhat greater than for other options discussed below.

Under the Base Case, South Kesteven Council appears to be in a sound longer-term position both in terms of HRA balance and capital works funding but a relatively modest level of capital programme is assumed i.e. Decent Homes plus Essential Works. There may also be some aspects of future housing need impact on the stock profile which will have to be factored in.

The level of capital works is arguably the most important assumption in the Business Plan (BP). The BP indicates the position assuming that the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) will be met by 2007/8 and maintained over the life of the BP and that some further Essential Works will be completed. We should state that the DHS is not in itself seen as a particularly high standard and most Councils looking at options seem to be aiming towards a local standard significantly above DHS, meeting as many tenant aspirations as possible.

Calculation of the HRA/Major Repairs Forecast

Libra has no reservations about the methodology involved in the forecast i.e. the application of the various assumptions to the stock profile over the life of the BP and the incorporation of a schedule of works based on the Rand Associates Stock Condition Survey (SCS) as it relates to DHS plus Essential Works. We set out below our thoughts on the assumptions made within the calculation.

If those assumptions are generally sound, then the HRA will remain in balance to year 20 and in cumulative balance to year 28. In terms of Major Repairs, all but £20m of the assumed programme can be funded with any shortfall arising in years 28-30. In other words, there is good evidence of a strong long-term position on the assumed level of capital works. If basic DHS only were the target, no HRA problem would arise within 30 years. More importantly, the HRA could remain in balance under the BP assumptions for some 18 years even if the Transfer/Tenant Aspiration Standards were met.

We understand that further sensitivity work may be carried out on e.g. Right to Buy sales levels (as discussed further below). The real increases in Major Repair costs may also need some further consideration.

The BWNL report underpins these conclusions with a look at the short and mid-term positions over 1-5 years and 6-10 years based on the £44.0m and £28.3m respectively of funding resources available for those periods. Some 62% of this funding comes from the Council's Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) including £10m from unspent balances; 19% from HRA contributions to capital (RCCO); 11% from Right to Buy receipts and 8% from borrowing. Only in the case of the Transfer and Tenant Aspiration Standards is there any significant shortfall in resources, being around £12m between years 6-10.

The HRA/Major Repairs Assumptions

Global Assumptions

Libra has no concerns about the following global assumptions made and offer the following comment:

Stock: Opening stock profile taken as a given.

Inflation: 2.5% is a relatively standard figure.

Discount: 6% is effectively the present government norm.

Interest: Libra would not expect to analyse the Consolidated Rate of Interest (CRI) or the Interest on Balances detailed calculations and can only say that both seem reasonable.

ROCE: Return on Capital (relevant to subsidy) at 3.5% follows government guidelines.

Rent Weeks: 48 week rent year is taken as a given in the BP.

Stock Specific Assumptions – Key Issues Only

Rent Rises: We are satisfied that an appropriate link is made between rent increases and the restructuring/convergence process required by the government by 2011/12. The average starting rents per unit type are effectively a given.

Rent Loss: Voids at 2% are in line with subsidy targets and 0.44% bad debt write-offs seem reasonable.

Services: We assume that service charge income and expenditure is broadly in balance.

RTB: Right to Buy sales are a key issue in HRA viability. The model appears to include a relatively sharp decrease in sales against recent levels reducing to a negligible level later in the life of the BP. We comment further on this in Section 4.0 below. Calculation of value/discount to establish gross RTB sales income seems reasonable and the assumptions re applicability to the HRA.

Management: We recognise the significant (16%) real increase in resources in Year 1 to meet 2-star standards but have no detail on the basis on which that has been calculated. 1% real increases p.a. thereafter is a 'sector norm' in our experience.

Maintenance: Responsive Maintenance costs seem to follow the SCS requirements and 0.5% real increases p.a. applied are the 'sector norm'. The same comments apply to Cyclical Maintenance.

Major Reps: Also in line with SCS based on DHS plus Essential Works. A 1% real increase in Years 1-5 and inflation only thereafter may be seen as relatively low and might have a significant impact if applied to stock valuation.

HRA Subsidy Assumptions

M&M Allow: The starting level of 96% of target is 2005/6 is taken as a given. The basis of rises of around 18% (S&M) and 13% (R&M) assumed for year 2 and the 2% real rises in years 3-8 we cannot specifically substantiate but no rises above inflation are assumed thereafter.

MRA: *Inflation only increase on Major Repair Allowances after year 2 appears prudent.*

Rent: Calculation consistent with government guidelines.

CFR: Subsidy Capital Financing Requirement calculation seems sound on opening balance given.

Major Repairs and Improvements Account

Borrowing: The level of Supported Capital Borrowing has apparently been agreed for years 1 & 2 by the Government Office (East Midlands) and it is assumed that it will be used entirely on HRA capital expenditure. From year 3 the level is assumed to be 70% of years 1 & 2, again all used for HRA capital purposes. The longer-term position on this issue is not guaranteed, as referred to further below.

RTB sales: The 25% proportion of RTB sales receipts available as capital funding are a key issue. As referred to above, receipts are included in the BP at a relatively low level and therefore in the context of capital funding from RTB assumptions are relatively conservative. See further comment below.

Maj. Repairs: Real term increases of 1% p.a. for Years 1-5 are consistent with the 'sector norm'.

RCCO: Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay depend on HRA performance and are also subject to impact of RTB sales on the HRA and the relationship of actual costs to notional costs. See below for further comment.

Observations and Queries

The HRA Business Plan appears to be fairly and reasonably constructed and allows for some improvement in management resources. Any reservations Libra has are not about the calculation on the given assumptions but on two broad areas of potential doubt:

- Public sector housing policy in the future
- Three key assumptions

In a sense, these reservations are not so much about the BP (as set out on the given assumptions) as about the significance of the apparent long-term strength of the BP in relation to other options which may be available.

Any retention option comes with the possibility of future changes in government policy because stock ownership remains in the public sector. Those changes are most likely to relate to subsidy issues such as M&M and MRA allowances but might also relate to the rules on Council borrowing. Changes could make it more difficult for the Council to

perform well against targets and lead to greater pressures on balancing the HRA and funding capital works. Of course, subsidy rules and other factors could change in favour of the Council but the forecast pressures on public sector spending would seem to make that less likely. Housing has not always been a favoured sector when budgetary constraints emerge.

More importantly, we feel that some further sensitivity checks may be needed in relation to RTB sales and their potential impact on HRA viability. A continuing high level of RTB sales (e.g. at recent levels) would tend to reduce HRA income without necessarily allowing compensating cuts in cost other than by reducing the Major Repairs programme. A higher level of sales implies more funding for capital direct from RTB income (as far as it can be applied to funding housing) but the key input of revenue contributions (RCCO) in the middle to later years of the BP could be compromised by higher than anticipated sales.

The second specific area of doubt relates to the longer-term level of Supported Capital Expenditure and the degree to which the programme of major capital works could be compromised. As far as we are aware there is no mid to longer-term government commitment to borrowing levels

The third specific area has been referred to above viz. the degree to which the level of capital works assumed in the BP will meet the aspirations of tenants, particularly as compared with the full level of resources to meet all SCS requirements potentially offered e.g. by the transfer option.

Conclusion on Base Case calculation

Our general conclusion is that the Business Case material is soundly and fairly constructed but that some further sensitivity analysis might be carried out to assess the impact of the risks referred to above.

Benchmarking

Before we look at the ALMO, PFI and Transfer options, it might be appropriate to address two issues specifically relating to management - SKDC's performance in comparison to similar Councils (benchmarking) and the concept of a partnership arrangement with a Housing Association.

Libra attempted to construct a basis of comparison with other housing organisations (mainly Councils but with a few Housing Associations and an ALMO) either in the audit group relevant to SKDC or with some similarity to SKDC. We selected 10 key Performance Indicators (PIs) to which a reasonable proportion of the selected organisations offered a clear response.

In practice, responses to our own questionnaire were poor and we have had to place reliance on the limited amount of up to date pooled data available. We have to emphasise that this benchmarking process is only a broad guide to comparative performance and cannot be seen as a 'scientific' exercise.

We set out the results in the table below comparing SKBC with an average of all the responses (ranging from 11 to 22 cases). The high and low levels for each PI are included as a further guide.

Our conclusion on the results would be that for 5 of the 10 PIs SKBC is close to the average. In the other five cases no deviations are evident which would cause particular concern. Given that SKBC have some concerns about future staffing and management as discussed below, the results might suggest that any change in management arrangements is not specifically as a result of a poor PI performance.

	SKDC	Others	High	Low
Avge. Weekly cost p.u - management	£10.03	£10.73 (11)	£13.94	£4.75
Avge. Weekly cost p.u. - repairs	£13.98	£11.74 (11)	£14.02	£6.78
% Rent collected	98.1%	97.2% (21)	99.4%	95.3%
% Arrears – current	1.86%	2.25% (12)	3.93%	0.80%
% Rent written off	0.44%	0.44% (16)	0.80%	0.00%
% Rent lost – vacant	2.11%	1.47% (13)	3.90%	0.70%
Avge. Re-let time	34 days	37 days (15)	86 days	17 days
Avge SAP rating	65	58 (22)	69	45
% Repairs completed within target	98.5%	93.6% (16)	98.5%	82.2%
% Tenants satisfied with overall service	81.0%	81.2% (22)	88.7%	70.0%

Housing Management Partnership

Entering into a partnership arrangement with a Housing Association for the provision of housing management services has certain similarities with the more familiar ALMO arrangements but without any new investment dimension.

As this report is essentially about financial issues, this option does not call for any particular comment other than that it could imply a reduction in the Council central service costs to offset the impact on the General Fund of the reduction in the requirement for those services by the HRA, given that the partner Housing Association would have its own resources.

The actual impact on the HRA should be negligible. Set up cost would probably be shared between the Council and the partner organisation.

In the context of the improvement of management resources referred to above, the best use of such resources would tie in well with the consideration of a management partnership

Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO)

The BWNL report refers to a range of technical issues involved in the ALMO option but concludes that SKBC would not be able to make a successful ALMO bid for new investment precisely because it can easily meet and maintain the basic DHS from resources available to the Council. On the basis of any evidence available to Libra, this would seem a fair assumption. In any case ALMO bids under the present funding limitations would probably only attract a maximum of £2000 per unit above the MRA level available to the council under the retention option

It is also fair to say that ALMO bids are essentially about new investment - they do not solve any underlying HRA viability problems face by the Council. The HRA reservations referred to above still largely apply under ALMO arrangements. BWNL refer to a range of the technical considerations involved in ALMO. If new funding was attracted, the extra cost of set up (around £250,000) could fall on the HRA which would have to be offset by savings notionally arising from a more focused service delivery under ALMO arrangements.

The original idea behind ALMO was to establish an organisation with a clear focus on housing management to produce greater efficiency i.e. it did not have to involve new investment. Some of the ALMO rules – e.g. gaining a 2 star rating for the organisation – have been imposed essentially as a condition for receiving funding for new investment. Even so, ALMO arrangements without the potential for new investment are unlikely to prove attractive.

Libra has not had sight of specific figures on which to base comment on whether it is worthwhile for the Council to submit a bid and what level of bid that might be. As far as we are aware no such work has been carried out to date. We would agree that the balance of probability is that competing bids for ALMO from Councils with more pressing problems might well rule SKBC out of serious contention.

Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

Again, the BWNL report covers the background to PFI at some length and confirms that the higher aspirational standards might be achieved for any units involved. However, PFI is not a whole stock solution (as accepted by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in its own guidelines on Option Appraisal) and best suits areas of high deprivation.

In the absence of any pockets of especially deprived stock identified as potentially suitable for PFI, Libra cannot comment further on its relevance in South Kesteven. We have no reason to view PFI as an alternative option to staying put in the same sense as the transfer or ALMO options.

Stock Transfer

It is open to SKDC to apply for a place on the disposal programme for 2006. The BWNL report places a value on the Council housing stock of approximately £48m or around £7000 per unit, a level close to the average for similar transfers to date. It should be stressed that the final transfer price would only be reached after extensive negotiation

and might vary on BWNL's assessment between £36m and £70m depending on the standard of investment forecast.

A receipt of £48m would first clear SKBC's minimal current housing debt and meet the costs of setting up the transfer (£4m) and the Government levy (£8m). That would leave £35m which is available to the Council to spend on whatever it sees fit including the development of new housing - something not offered by the retention and ALMO options. In practice, application of, say, £10m of these receipts (which might seem a reasonable proportion given the fact that the receipts are from the sale of housing) could provide up to 300 new homes,

The key issue in the context of option appraisal is that the transfer price allows all the work identified in the Stock Condition Survey at the Transfer Standard to be carried out in full within 5-10 years. Equally importantly, it allows sufficient funding for the sustainability of standards over an extended period, subject to the assumptions in the price calculation being reasonable and to future good management. It would be likely to offer more environmental resources to improve conditions around housing stock

It would appear that at least £10m of extra investment would be injected in the first 10 years as compared with the retention option

Libra has had sight of background information on the transfer price calculation. We confirm that the assumptions included are basically reasonable and generally in line with those used in the Council's Business Plan as referred to above.

The key items are:

- Stock turnover: based on recent Council experience
- Voids/bad debts: 2.4%
- Starting rents:
 - Existing tenants: Average Council rents
 - New tenants: RSL target rents
- Management costs: £2m pa
- Responsive and cyclical maintenance: £88m over 30 years
- Major Repairs: £168m over 30 years
- Discount rate: 6%

We feel that it is also important to remember that the nature of the transfer partner would have to be agreed - i.e. a new 'stand alone' or an existing RSL - which would also have some bearing on any stock transfer arrangement.

Future Right to Buy sales are usually shared between the Council and the transfer organisation under a separate agreement on a basis which takes into account the Council's particular financial circumstances. We might stress here that the RTB sales level is not without impact on the transfer option in that a continuing high level of sales might ultimately affect the ongoing cost effectiveness of the transfer organisation

The Council in approving transfer arrangements must satisfy itself that there is no unreasonable financial impact on the General Fund. It is not the role of the ITA to check the Council's position in this regard but we note that BWNL take view that the General Fund might benefit at the margins in both capital and revenue terms depending on the degree to which capital receipts were used to fund new housing development.

The BWNL report recognises a greater certainty of resources to meet investment need under a transfer. It also recognises that failure to gain the tenants' approval in a ballot might lead to significant abortive costs (which would have to be met in the main from the General Fund but from the HRA in the case of tenant participation costs).

It might be appropriate to mention here that whatever the potential benefits of transfer are there is an element of risk both in the assumptions made in the valuation (sale price) and in the future management of the transfer organisation. Tenants need to confidence in the ability of the Housing Association sector regulator (the Housing Corporation) and other agencies to step in if difficulties should arise.

Mixed Options

The BWNL report gives consideration to the impact of any decision to transfer part of the Council stock e.g. the sheltered schemes or the defective dwellings.

Libra has had no access to the finer details of any calculations involved but accepts that such transfers are likely to be at a nil valuation, given the future investment requirements in each case to tailor that stock to specific housing needs.

The impact on the HRA would be marginally positive and the shortfalls in the resources to meet the Transfer and Tenant Aspiration Standards options might be reduced – quite significantly in the case of a sheltered housing transfer.

While the impact might be marginally advantageous, considerable further work would have to be done on both scenarios and the splitting of stock has non-financial aspects we need to be considered. We would tend to agree with BWNL's line that the strength of the Council's existing position might be a strong argument against the need for partial solutions.

3. Tenants Feedback

Libra met with approximately 150 tenants from South Kesteven District Council and found a range of views amongst tenants.

- A number of tenants said they wanted to stay with the Council. Some said they trusted the Council would make the right decision. Tenants raised concerns about security of tenure and rent rises should there be a change in landlord. There appeared to be limited knowledge of housing associations and their role in the area.
- There was a desire to see much stronger tenancy enforcement, more investment in rural areas and an improved grass cutting service.
- Many tenants wanted to see the Repairs service improved in terms of speed and contractor performance.

- A number of tenants said that kitchens, bathrooms, guttering and showers were key areas for improvement.
- Many tenants reported that communications between tenants, the Council and contractors could be improved. More information on services was required, more use of plain English and greater tenant involvement in the service generally.
- The lettings policy, resulting in an inappropriate mix of young tenants and older tenants in specific areas, was highlighted as an area causing concern locally.

Listed at Appendix 2 is a list of all the points raised with Libra by tenants throughout the period of the contract.

4. Lead Tenant Groups View

Following all previous work and evidence provided by the consultants, including Libra, the TOAG fully debated the choice of preferred option on 18/2/05 and discussed the issue again on 11/3/05.

Overleaf is the report which was submitted to SOAC following the meeting of TOAG on 11/3/05.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF TOAG

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- Report on TOAG's view on the stated preferred option
- Provide SOAC with the observations of the TOAG on the Stock Options Appraisal process

2. TOAG's View on the stated Preferred Option

At a meeting of TOAG on 18th February 2005 attendees concluded that:

- There are two realistic options:- retention or transfer

PFI and ALMO were considered and judged to be inappropriate for this authority

- The stock is in a relatively good condition and the stock will reach the Decent Homes Standard within the 2010 deadline under the retention option.
- Retention could offer a long term solution but would not meet all the tenant aspirations identified during this process.
- Transfer offers the best opportunity to meet most or all of the tenant's aspirations.
- Transfer could possibly result in an opportunity to provide more affordable housing in the area.

3. TOAG observations on the Stock Options Appraisal process

At a meeting of TOAG on 18TH February 2005 the following observations and views were put forward:

- Concerns were expressed that the majority of tenants involved in the process were elderly and did not consider the views of younger or potential tenants. There were also concerns that the majority of the aspirational information gathered and used during the Options Appraisal process was provided by older tenants.
- The group had concerns regarding the level of support and access to the appropriate information through the Council, in particular absence of a TPO and lack of administrative support. Tenants recognised that administrative support from the Council had improved since December 2004 but had concerns that this would need to be sustained when the final option was chosen.
- Concerns were expressed by the group that they had felt pressurised by the very tight timetable. The process itself should have started and been fully resourced much earlier.
- The group acknowledges that it had not met the anticipated standard of involvement in the initial stages. The ITA commented that tenants need to ensure that, in the future, they 'speak up' and question at meetings. After a full discussion the group accepted the ITA's comments.
- Despite the initial problems with the process and the relationships within TOAG they shared the view that towards the end of the process their knowledge had improved. Confidence in their ability to take the process forward does however need to continue to be developed.
- In relation to the wider audience, despite an improvement after December, there are concerns about the amount of accessible information made available by the Council.

4. Tenant's priorities and recommendations for the next steps:

- That if transfer is the chosen option there is a fully resourced project team to develop the proposal with tenants.
- Whatever the option, it is essential that there are a range of good quality opportunities for tenants to be involved at the level of their choice, particularly those tenants who are traditionally difficult to engage.
- That there are increased opportunities to shape and monitor the quality of services in partnership with staff.
- That there should be an emphasis on attracting new groups of tenants to take an active part in the development of the option and service generally and that tenant activity and opportunities should be extended beyond the 'District Compact'.
- That tenants involved in the next stages should be required to attend training events following an appraisal of their skills and abilities with the ITA or TPO. That there should be different levels of involvement offered clear criteria for involvement at these levels eg different criteria for members of a Shadow Board than for members of a general working group.
- That active tenants should be fully committed to their involvement and take a flexible approach to attend at regular meetings, even if they are arranged at short notice.
- TOAG feel that wider use of the local press to disseminate information may benefit future work on the chosen option. This should be done in a coordinate manner.
- A meeting with the Council and TOAG, with support from the ITA, be arranged as soon as possible to discuss the future of the group and the group's role in the next stages of the process.

5. The Final View of the TOAG

Following receipt of all previous work and evidence provided by officers and consultants, the TOAG fully debated the choice of preferred option on 18th February 2005. The consensus on that date was that stock transfer should be recommended as the preferred option

This view was endorsed at the meeting of TOAG on the 11th March 2005.

The Recommendation of the SOAC

At a meeting of SOAC on 11/3/05 the evidence and information received, feedback from the preference survey (incomplete) and events and the view of TOAG was discussed.

The criteria to assess the options were revisited and it was agreed that all the criteria, excluding deliverability, had been fully analysed and considered in developing the recommendation to Council.

It was felt the 'deliverability' criteria would need to be informed by the final outcome of the preference survey and that the Council should have this information when taking the final decision.

The recommendation of the SOAC was therefore that stock transfer is the preferred option and that the Council should consider this recommendation and be informed by the final outcome of the Preference survey.

5. Libra's Conclusions

We must first stress that it is not Libra's role as ITA to make any specific recommendation on what choice tenants should make. Our view on the factors is summarised below.

1. The Council is in a strong position to retain its stock over a significant period while still investing in repairs/improvements to a standard above Decent Homes and keeping the HRA in balance. It would not be able to satisfy the need for affordable rented housing in the area because it would not have resources for the development of new homes.
2. We should also say that, because under retention the stock would remain in the full public sector, the degree to which the Council can achieve its Business plan could be affected by any changes to central funding and subsidy dictated by the national economy. In the past housing has not always fared well if there is a downturn in the economy and it has already enjoyed a recent period of above average capital investment
3. We do not see ALMO as a likely option for new investment given the Council's current sound position. Equally, PFI is not likely to be a relevant option simply because it cannot address the whole stock and there is no obvious social deprivation which would benefit from this approach.

4. We do not feel that the management partnership option has a particular financial impact. We can only comment that the Council's current performance seems reasonable and does in itself seem to require a partner. Concern about future staffing may be justified but we have no basis on which to confirm that conclusion. However, the best use of future management resources would benefit from consideration of a partnership arrangement.
5. Stock transfer merits serious consideration as an option because it can offer the highest level of new investment and arguably the best long-term assurance of value for money. It could also enable a significant number of new affordable homes to be developed, given the co-operation of the Council. On the other hand, transfer involves a major change in both ownership and management and carries normal business risk if the forecasts made in valuation prove wrong or unsustainable or indeed if the new organisation is badly run. Transfer is also not totally free from the impact of central policy (e.g. on rents)
6. The Council itself will have to form its own view on the impact of ALMO or transfer on the Council as a whole but that is not the direct concern of tenants (except perhaps as Council Tax payers themselves) or indeed the ITA. The tenants' choice of option should be based on:
 - overall value for money (i.e. the standard of your home in relation to the rent paid)
 - the sustainability of service standards
 - In the case of transfer, confidence in the ability of any new organisation involved to remain financially viable and deliver on its undertakings.
7. Arguably, the relative strength of the Council's current position suggests that tenants should be convinced that the transfer route can bring sufficient additional benefits to justify the major changes involved but there is available a significant track record of successful transfers to weigh in the balance.

In addition to the financial conclusions a number of conclusions relating to the consultation element of the project are listed below:

8. There is a clear necessity to provide tenants with regular and easy to understand information about the services they receive and to ensure tenants are actively involved in the management of the housing service whatever option is finally agreed. An effective communications policy and a publication advisory board for written information should be established to ensure a regular supply of clear, understandable and accessible information.
9. Strong tenancy management and enforcement is seen as important by many tenants. Any option should ensure this is a priority development area for staff to work with tenants.
10. The role of tenants in the management and performance monitoring of the repairs service should be strengthened.

11. Support for tenants and TP development should be provided by able, adequately trained and resourced TP staff.
12. Following a full review of the existing TP structures, resources and after conducting a full tenant survey a new Tenant Participation Strategy should be developed which will ensure:
 - TP is adequately and appropriately funded. With budgets for TP staff to develop and deliver effective training opportunities, support groups and individuals, carry out surveys etc in addition to enabling fully constituted and recognised groups to manage their own resources.
 - There are a range of opportunities for all tenants to get involved on an individual and group basis at a level that suits individuals and that these opportunities should be extended beyond the District Compact groups.
 - Those tenants who do not normally engage are given the opportunity to contribute their views (it was noted that generally older tenants had become more involved during the options appraisal process)
 - Roles and responsibilities for everyone involved are clear with appropriate terms of reference and codes of conduct produced for all local tenant groups and tenant working groups to ensure all tenants can effectively contribute.
 - There is strict and clear criteria, responsibilities and requirements for tenants at different levels of involvement.
 - There are standardised procedures for eg payment of expenses, obtaining transport to events.
 - There is clarity in the decision making process
 - The direction and development of TP generally is managed by tenants working in partnership with their landlord, with action plans and regular review / monitoring opportunities.

6. Acknowledgements

Libra has appreciated the support and help of all SOAG members.

In addition staff at South Kesteven District Council have provided information and assistance throughout. In particular we would like to express our thanks to Sally Marshall, Sam Goodwin, Jane Booth and Philip Doughty.

7. List of Useful Contacts

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Sally Marshall	Corporate Director	01476 406511
Sam Goodwin	Acting TPO Options Appraisal	0776 4413211
Jane Booth	Project Manager	01476 406167
Ali Clarke	Project Manager- Libra	01727 810192
Jerry Whaley	Financial Consultant-Libra	01727 810192
Maggie Carter	Consultant-Libra	0800 0850026
Sally Harbey	Consultant-Libra	0800 0850026

Completed Elements of the Work**Appendix 1**

Libra met all the original agreed requirements in addition to all additional tasks identified throughout the process.

Listed below are the results of Libra activity throughout the contract:

Element	Activity
Assessment of the current position and the options/ Liaison with the Council and Advisors	<p>Libra attended meetings, had regular telephone conversations and contact via email with appropriate Council officers and the Councils financial consultants in order to ensure the information required to assess the options was made available.</p> <p>At a meeting on 7/1/05 Libra commented on the information provided on the Council's base case position. On 4/2/05 Libra presented their views on the options and the financial case based on the information received at that time.</p> <p>Following the receipt of the final report of the Councils financial advisor Libra provided their final comments on the financial assessment at a meeting of the TOAG and SOAC on 11/3/05.</p>
Benchmarking exercise	<p>Libra contacted a number of national local authorities, members of the Welland partnership, a national ALMO and a number of housing associations to gather performance information. Additional information was obtained from the Housing Corporation and Audit Commission websites.</p> <p>Details of the exercise were provided to the TOAG and SOAC in an initial report and presentation on 4/2/05.</p>
Gathering information from and the aspirations of the	<p>Sheltered Scheme residents</p> <p>Three events were held in Stamford, Grantham, Bourne and Deeping for all residents of the Council's sheltered schemes at</p>

<p>wider audience of tenants</p> <p>Identification of local priorities and the identification of local priorities.</p>	<p>the end October 2004. Help with transport was offered but numbers attending were low.</p> <p>Drop-in sessions Libra attended all the Council's 19 local events throughout late October and November 2004.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Compact Meetings Four events were held and all neighbourhood Compact groups were asked to attend. Attendance was poor and there was some confusion as to who should attend the session ie many local residents attended who were not Neighbourhood Compact officers.</p> <p>Home Visits In total three home visits were requested throughout the project.</p> <p>In total Libra met with 103 tenants. The results of the discussions are attached at Appendix 2</p> <p>Freephone provision The freephone was staffed and made available to South Kesteven from the beginning of the contract. A summary of all the calls received is attached at Appendix 3.</p>
<p>Summarising the results</p>	<p>The first draft of the financial assessment element of the Libra final report was presented to the TOAG and SOAC at a meeting on 4/2/05. Further work was necessary once the Council's financial consultant had access to the final results of the Councils aspiration survey.</p> <p>The first draft of the Consultation element of Libra's final report was discussed with the TOAG on 18/2/05 with agreement that the full final report (combining both the financial and consultation elements) would be submitted to the TOAG and SOAC on 11/3/05.</p>
<p>Support to TOAG and tenant representatives on SOAG</p>	<p>Libra met regularly with the TOAG (including the SOAC representatives) throughout the contract at scheduled meetings and via the telephone and email.</p> <p>The relationship with the majority of members proved useful and constructive but some confusion did arise relating to the role of TOAG, the role of SOAC representatives and the role of an ITA's from the outset. Libra consider this was, in part, due to content of the original ITA brief (see Training element below).</p> <p>Libra arranged a team development day where all issues and concerns could be raised outside of the normal 'business' meetings of the group. It was agreed that an independent Chair (Stephen Smith from the CHTF) should be appointed. (Appendix 3 refers).</p>

	<p>Numbers and individuals attending meetings of the group varied considerably throughout the process due to health problems and the alterations to the locations / times of meetings which were set and agreed by the Group.</p> <p>Libra worked with TOAG to develop the programme of events for the wider audience of tenants. It was also agreed that Libra should attend all drop-in sessions arranged by the Council and should work closely with Council officers throughout. TOAG agreed to take part in group development sessions which resulted in closer working as a cohesive team towards the end of the process.</p> <p>Further information is contained in the Conclusions element of this report.</p>
Training appropriate	<p>as</p> <p>Together the TOAG and Libra discussed and agreed what training was required.</p> <p>The original ITA brief did not place a general emphasis on the ODPM guidance expectations of the ITA role. The brief highlighted the importance of a 'technical advisor' rather than ITA training, support and advice.</p> <p>In the initial stages of the process Libra endeavoured to develop a schedule of training events but the group agreed that they would require financial training only.</p> <p>As the process progressed it was apparent that a number of key issues were limiting the development and progress of work of the group, their understanding of the process itself, the roles of everyone involved and the options. Following a development day (Appendix 4 refers) the group started to work more effectively together and began to make an increased contribution to the process as a whole.</p> <p>Libra did provide training sessions on the Options Appraisal process (and roles of those involved), each of the options in greater detail and the Decent Homes Standard. In addition the Council was asked to provide a housing finance training session and this was supplemented later in the process (when the financial assessment began) by Libra.</p>
Briefing Sessions for stakeholders, elected Members and staff	<p>A number of separate sessions were held staff and tradesmen throughout the process. In addition all elected members and stakeholders were invited to their own briefing sessions during December 2004.</p> <p>Attendance at the staff sessions was consistently high with numbers attending reducing in the tradesmen sessions which were held separately.</p> <p>Only 7 stakeholders attended from parish councils, NACRO</p>

	and other local housing providers and only 5 elected members attended the briefing session provided.
Input into the Communication and Consultation and Tenant Empowerment Strategies	Libra assisted officers and tenants in the preparation and production of the Communication and Consultation and Tenant Empowerment Strategies
Preparation of articles for publication in Newsletters and scrutiny of Council publications, documentation etc	<p>From the start of the contract Libra produced various articles for inclusion in Newsletters sent to all tenants by the Council and by the tenants on the district compact. These articles included an introduction to Libra, how to contact Libra, the options and the process, in addition to articles on our findings and the financial assessment.</p> <p>The text of all articles was agreed with the editorial group of TOAG and newsletters were distributed by the Council.</p> <p>Libra was asked to comment on and propose additions/alterations to Council publications.</p> <p>Limited newsletter information was provided to the wider audience of tenants by the Council and often the quality of design was not eye catching and could have been improved. Tenants provided some information on the process to tenants in their quarterly magazine- Skyline and this appeared to be well received.</p> <p>However, the Council did produce a good quality tenant aspiration survey which was sent to all tenants. The response rate was good and the data collected supplemented the results of the district wide drop-in sessions held previously.</p>

SOUTH KESTEVEN TENANT FEEDBACK

Appendix 2

Comments received from approx 100 tenants met at all organised meetings and drop in sessions throughout October.

1. Tenancy Issues

Positive	Concerns/ Issues
Trust Council will make the right decision	Rents- will they increase? Need to ensure security of tenure under the options Need to ensure tenants understand their responsibilities as tenants
Don't mind who landlord is so long as the service is good	Concerns about who the landlord might be if there was a change Don't trust HA's –they will find loopholes to not deliver promises
Trust Council will make the right decision Like Council and all they do	Discussed rents, the freephone Rather stay with Council/ don't want any change/ trust the Council
Happy with Council services	Would I keep the RTB Would HA house anyone, including ethnic minorities
Wants to stay with Council	Who would be responsible for Aids and Adaptations Rents – how will they rise Would new landlord force tenants to pay by direct debit Concern about rents Can we have Swipe cards for payment of rent Rents- what will happen Rent- will they increase Will we keep our RTB LSVT- what does it mean Housing Associations-discussed what they are and how they are regulated etc HB- will we still be able to claim it? Repairs-will anew landlord do these? If there is a new landlord where would their office be? Will they still have the RTB? Want to stay in their homes Generally happy

	<p>Want to keep the RTB Will rents increase? Understand the process What would happen to staff if there was a change What happens to the money the Council would receive if the properties were sold? What will happen to service charges? When will we know the decision? Can we choose how the money is spent? Will a HA still do our repairs?</p>
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2. Current Services

Positive	Concerns/ Issues
Garden service good	The grass cutting is not good- leave the risings
Excellent Bin service	The issues in towns and villages are different More investment in the rural homes
Happy with Council	Enforcement of Tenancy Agreements An end to Anti Social Behaviour Grass cutting improvements
Good Council Services	Need an improved grass cutting service
Satisfied with service/ satisfied with Council	Need an improved grass cutting service We need a Caretaker/Handyman Service How much does it cost to keep communal room open?
Satisfied with standard of work done	More done on Anti Social Behaviour and noisy neighbours We need a Caretaker/Handyman Service Concessionary gardening and tree cutting Improved grass cutting and removal of cuttings
Refuse collection is good	More should be done on Anti Social Behaviour Can we have a Caretaker/Handyman Service We need concessionary decorating Enforcement of Tenancy Agreements should be a priority Improved grass cutting service required Better gutter clearances Better tree trimming Rubbish is bad in the town Parking is a problem Remove grass cuttings and improved grounds maintenance needed Reward good tenants- don't spend time on bad tenants More facilities for teenagers required

3. Letting Houses and Meeting Housing Need

Positive	Concerns/ Issues
	Shouldn't mix young people with the elderly Shouldn't mix young and old Shouldn't put single mums in with the elderly

	<p>Don't mix elderly and young people</p> <p>Lettings & Allocations – should not be placing young people in bungalows which were sheltered.</p> <p>Young tenants cannot get out to jobs or entertainment</p> <p>Young tenants cannot live normal life ie having visitors and entertaining themselves after 9pm causes problems to older neighbours</p> <p>Why are council housing young people with elderly</p> <p>Why are council housing drug addicts and young people in elderly peoples flats & bungalows</p> <p>A change in Allocations – keep elderly units for older folk</p> <p>Lettings & Allocations – 2nd and 3rd generation to come before homeless</p> <p>More sensitive lettings</p> <p>Public transport poor</p> <p>No shops- we need more</p> <p>By pass needed</p> <p>Better transport</p> <p>Better transport needed</p> <p>Local Workforce needs to be prioritised</p> <p>More social housing required</p> <p>Need more social housing</p>
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4. Repairs

Positive	Concerns/ Issues
Good repairs	Repairs slow Contractors need to tidy up after improvement works
Repairs ok	Cheapest contractors are used and get the cheapest job done
Excellent repairs service	Repairs are fast but very wasteful-4 visits to deal with a problem-should get it right first time
Good repairs service	Council should have a more flexible approach to repairs and work Quality of work is poor repairs slow Repairs – could be improved Too many pre-inspections, not enough post inspections Repairs – not quick enough Less Inspections more action Not enough post inspections Repairs are often patch ups Better quality repairs needed Need quicker repairs New bathroom

5. Improvements

Positive	Concerns/ Issues
Had new kitchens	Have original kitchens- almost 50 years old Bathrooms are too small and need improving

Would PFI work for Unity houses? Lots of improvements going on	Guttering- why only clear part of the guttering not all of it? The villages always miss out on improvements to Grantham (especially Earlesfield) Storage heaters should be replaced Walled gardens to stop disputes Can't get a mortgage on pre-fabricated houses Problems with guttering New bathrooms required More storage space Refurbished bathrooms Don't do improvement works in the winter for the elderly New front doors New kitchens which are suitable to the individuals needs Showers provided as standard Off Road parking Bigger baths Paths not even so elderly can trip Walk in showers Would like a bath to be provided Why can't council put in new sink unit without full kitchen Boundary fencing ignored
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6. Communications

Positive	Concerns/ Issues
The receptionists are very nice	The information is confusing- the Council should use plain English and it should be clearer
Nice staff	We need access to more information about things that concern tenants
Good Warden	Communications between Council and tenants poor We don't know who TOAG are Improved communications with Council and tenant reps Council forget the villages- the Council keep throwing money at Earlsfield Should have information lists in schemes Communications – between Inspectors and workmen need to be improved We need real involvement in planning programmed work Problems with a member of staff in Bourne Office – not getting on with tenants More consultation – on anything and everything affecting tenants lives Need a quicker response to complaints Leaseholders are still not consulted-especially when improvements are being done

SOUTH KESTEVEN FREEPHONECALLS
Appendix 3

DATE	CONTACT	QUESTION	ANSWER
25/10	Ms x Sandygate lane Horbling 01529	Missed meeting, is poorly and would like a chat and maybe a home visit	Passed to Ali to call her who explained all
25/10	Anon	Didn't understand any of it	AB explained
25/10	Miss x Thistleton Lane South Whitham Grantham 01572	Didn't understand	AB Explained some and passed to AC for further call
25/10	Anon	Very unhappy, critical of whole this, quite nasty to AB	AB explained it should not affect rights and no decision made and if they feel that strongly they should get to a meeting and find out more
25/10	Mrs x Rutland Terrace Stamford Lincs PE9	Secure and assured tenancy differences	JG passed to AC
25/10	Mrs Turner	Really doesn't want Housing Association to take over is happy with the council	Will go to a meeting
25/10	Mr x Long Benington	Missed meeting and didn't understand	AB explained. Mr x said he would read the leaflet and call back if he needs a home visits
26/10	Mrs x The Grange Flats Grantham 01476	Very confused, missed meeting. She has been poorly and this seemed to cause distress	I advised her to have a home visit because she was so confused and getting upset. Took details to pass to Ali but Mrs x called back and said she would talk to her warden first and try to arrange a residents meeting for someone to come and talk to

25/10	Mr x	Was quite nasty about it said he does not want any changes but that the council would do it any way. He was on the phone about 15 minutes but kept saying he didn't give a damn	I advised him that no decision had been made and if he feels strongly he should go to a meeting. He said if he did he would get arrested! And he didn't know where on Essex Rd the meeting is
25/10	Mr x Sharp Road	Wanted to know how long meeting was (3 hours?)	Told him it is a drop in
25/10	Mr x Clare Close Stamford 01780	Wants more paperwork to read up about the process and how it will affect right to buy.	Passed to AC who dealt. He is in sheltered accommodation so has no right to buy, he was advised that it would not change
8/10	Mrs x 01476	Received newsletter and wanted more info	JG checked with AC then called Mrs x back to advise she would get more info in the post
8/10	Cllr x	Town councillor, didn't understand and had people asking him questions	Passed to Ac who advised and updated him on the situation
11/10	Mr x New Beacon Road Harrowby	Wanted to know when evens would be held	Ali advised info would be sent
11/10	Mrs x Riverside Grantham 07950	Wanted to arrange an exchange	Told her to call council

13/10	Cllr	Asked to speak to Ali	Passed to AC who told him what he needed to know about meeting times etc
14/10	Mrs x 01476	Wanted to know why the community compact was not mentioned in some paperwork	Passed to AC Ali is going to visit them
26/10	Mrs x Lincoln Road Stamford 01780	In favour of change, hates the council, wants to go to a meeting but does not know where the Essex Road event is	Said I would call her back with address. Ali returned call and gave her details
3 times	Mr x 01476	Called asking for Ali wanting to discuss right to buy and what happens if tenants move etc	Passed to AC who has dealt. Ali explained his right to buy would not be affected if he already has the right if he doesn't he still will not
27/10	Mrs x Drydon Close Grantham 01476	Does not understand, would like it all explained to her	Passed to AC who has dealt
27/10	Mrs x	Request for a home visit	Passed to AC

	Pinfold Close Poynter 01529		
27/10	Mrs x Oak Hill Swinestead Grantham	Was worried – she is in her 80's and has recently had a cataract op. She cannot read the leaflet.	She will go to the meeting if she can. If not, she will call back and we will make further arrangements
27/10	Anon	Lady very upset. Does not understand leaflet and thinks she is losing her home.	
27/10	Mr x (No address or phone number left)	Wants to stay with council. Asked us to call her back but she left no number	
28/10	Mr x Clare Close Stamford	Wanted to know why they couldn't buy their sheltered property	Advised that this was legislation and not council policy
3/11	01529 xxxxx(no name or address)	Line was too bad to hear	Passed onto Ali. Hard to communicate. Very happy
5/11	Mrs x Grantham	Read leaflets – concerned that not everyone will be heard	Warden. Communication has been poor. Told her to get tenant forms from council. Offered a meeting but was told that no one would turn up. (Happy with repairs and maintenance.)
8/11	Mrs x Charles Close Bourne Linc 01778	Didn't understand letter.	Arranged a home visit.
8/11	Miss x	Cannot remember making a home visit request and says she doesn't want one.	No action to be taken.
9/11	(Warden)	Wants to arrange a meeting	Sally Harby attended two tenant meetings
09/11 /04	Mrs x South Kesteven	Assured and secure tenancies. Confused about what is in the letter	Asked Ali to ring Tuesday am or Wed pm. Ali spoke to Mrs x who is now quite happy. Phone to say she should never have doubted Ali and to thank her very much!

11/11/04	Mr x Folkingham Road Pickworth Lincolnshire 01529	Lack of public transport means number of people unable to attend consultation events. Would want a meeting locally. Also discussed capacity of any new transfer org in tackling ASB	Mr x to see how many people would attend a local meeting and phone back
	Mrs x	Requested a home visit	Sally spoke and sent her some information, the lady seemed happy with the info provided and at present does not require the visit.
21/1/05	Mrs x Tel 01536	Is Council going to sell housing stock	Council considering options to raise the standard of homes & services. One of options could be transfer to a housing assn which is a non profit making body but at present still consulting on options. If did decide to transfer could not do so without balloting tenants. Confirmed that if transfer occurred existing tenancy rights would be preserved. Offered home visit to explain options & give him chance to give his views as he cannot get to meetings. Will phone back if he wants that service.
25/1/05	Miss x Larch Close Grantham NG31 Tel01476	What are implications for leaseholders if stock transferred	Clarified still going through options appraisal. Council will decide in April what option they prefer & will take account of consultation. If decided to go for transfer would need to ballot. Ref impact of new landlord – explained legal requirements to consult on service charges & to act reasonably. Wants more info & may then request home visit as disabled. Referred to Ali.
23/01	Mrs x 01476	Completed Survey Form	Passed to Ali. Completed Survey form and discussed process with her.
23/01	Mrs x Dryden Close Grantham 01476	Concerned about her Father's bungalow (Mrx)	Passed to Ali, Mrsx understands what's happening now and seems ok with the response.
25/01	Mrs x	Would like clarification on the	

	01780	leaflet received.	
26/01	Mrsx Sandy Gate Lane, Horbling, NG3	Lives in tenant held property and would like to know who will be controlling it. Can we resend her a form and leaflet. Also wanted more info ref implications of transfer especially concern that properties would be sold off & no longer available to waiting list. And management policies.	Explained transfer is one option, explained what a HA is & how regulated Council prefers this option & reasons why transfer may be recommended – investment into existing & new homes. Explained ref RTB & preserved RTB and other guarantees which would be built into offer document. Advised that whether council or HA cannot lose tenancy if in hospital as long as rent paid.
25/01	Mrs x South Kesteven 01778	Would like information about the leaflet concerning conditions of housing. Please call before 12am.	

Appendix 4

TOAG DEVELOPMENT MEETING

10 JANUARY 2005 1.30-4PM

MANOR STREET COMPLEX, COMMUNITY ROOM, GRANTHAM

CHAIR- STEVE SMITH (CHTF)

AGENDA

1. Membership of TOAG and role

- Do we understand our roles and responsibilities
- Do we understand what we do not discuss? (eg non options appraisal issues)
- Commitment to attend training session being developed by Lisa
- Do we all want to be part of the process and why?
- Do we want to develop as a team?
- Are we achieving what we need to achieve?
- Why don't we keep to the agenda? And how can we ensure we do from now on?
- An independent Chair- A Chairs role is to ensure the agenda is managed –do we need a local tenant chair or should we appoint an independent Chair from outside of South Kesteven? Tenants can then concentrate on TOAG business.
- Are we conducting ourselves appropriately at meetings? We need a code of conduct –what should be in it?
- Do we understand the process (looking at all the options equally, the financial issues, the Decent Homes Standard etc)
- Do we need to extend the membership- attendance is varied, are there any potential members who are really interested in the process? eg leaseholders and from drop ins
- How do we prove to the GOEM and CHTF we are a capable group?
- Frequency of meetings- weekly? One meeting for OA business only one for team development

- It's too late to change the next meeting on 7/1/05 but what about future meetings?
- Should future meetings be TOAG Thursday 1-4pm, SOAC Friday 9.30-2pm. This will not be suitable for everyone but we have lots of work to do to keep up with the process and to ensure the TOAG/SOAC starts to develop as a group
- Should we have weekly meetings of TOAG- one for business only one for team development (linked to training etc)?
- We must accept meetings may run over and that the times may not be convenient for everyone- but we must be committed to the process (are we committed to the process?)

2. Membership of SOAC and role

- How can we develop the relationship between tenants and members on the group?
- If we want to develop a Board structure in SK we need to work together how can we do this?
- Would we prefer visual presentations rather than written reports?
- Should the meetings be less formal and less like Council meetings?

3. How do we all work together and what's not working?

- How can we develop into a team with the Council?
- What works and doesn't work with the Council?
- What works and doesn't work with tenants?
- Working with consultants eg Sam and Ali- listening to advice and information- understanding their role
- What works and doesn't work with CHTF/GOEM?

4. Communications

- How do SOAC reps feedback to TOAG colleagues?
- How do TOAG reps feedback to the District Compact and their communities?
- We need to receive all paperwork well in advance of all our meetings- why isn't this happening?
- How do minutes get circulated and who does it- why does it keep going wrong?
- Why haven't tenants received more information such as newsletter's, via the website etc?
- How are staff being kept informed?

5. The Timetable

- We must keep to the Key Dates- how are we going to make sure we do this?

Evaluation Matrix for Housing Stock Options - Summary Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Retention	Stock Transfer
Impact on Tenants		
Existing Tenants – Security of Tenure & preserved rights	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
All Tenants – Ability to meet decent homes standard	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
All Tenants – Ability to meet aspirations for investment (Aspirational investment standard)	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
All Tenants – Ability to deliver service improvements (eg Housing Management standards, Allocations, Performance standards)	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
All Tenants – Ability to deliver enhanced tenant involvement	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
All Tenants – Ability to deliver investment for enhanced services to vulnerable tenants	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Impact on Staff		
Ability to recruit, retain & motivate staff	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Financial Impact		
Impact on General Fund	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Sustainability of 30 year Business Plan	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
One off set up costs (and associated risks)	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Impact on Council & Community		
Ability to contribute to the Council's Vision through existing priorities (Relevant Category A - Anti-social behaviour, access, street scene, Category B – Vulnerable people, housing management, affordable housing)	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Ability to focus on strategic functions	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Ability to deliver additional resources - Investment in affordable housing	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4
Overall impact of preferred option		
Potential deliverability of option if identified as preferred option	0 1 2 3 4	0 1 2 3 4

Notes to accompany criteria for evaluation

Please use the notes below to provide you with background information regarding the factors to be taken into account when scoring the applicability of each of the options. Please score each of the items in the matrix on page 1 by circling the most appropriate score, the guide to scoring range is as follows:

0 = does not meet the criteria at all, 1 = Partially meets the criteria, 2 = Adequately meets the criteria, 3 = adequately meets the criteria and provides a few additional benefits, 4 = meets the criteria and provides several additional benefits

Criteria	Factors to be considered - agreed evaluation criteria
Impact on Tenants	
Existing Tenants – Security of Tenure & preserved rights	
All Tenants (Existing & Prospective)– Ability to meet decent homes standard	<p>Housing Repairs and Asset Management –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production & maintenance of asset management strategy setting out priorities for maintaining housing stock & achieving decency standards • <i>Provision for the independent verification of stock condition (already completed)</i>
All Tenants (Existing & Prospective) – ability to meet aspirations for investment (Aspirational investment standard)	<p>Housing Repairs and Asset Management –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money assessment of traditional procurement and partnering contract options • Opportunity for investment in stock to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Decent homes standard B) Decent homes plus essential repairs standard C) Transfer standard D) Tenant aspirational standard

All Tenants (Existing & Prospective) – ability to deliver service improvements	<p>Housing Management –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic leadership to deliver service improvements • Opportunities for the introduction of Tenant Incentive Schemes • Ability to produce and creation of capacity to implement a strategy for tackling nuisance & anti-social behaviour • Production & implementation of clear service standard for estate management • Capacity for enforcement of tenancy standards • Achievement of cost effectiveness targets of 2% per annum • Capacity to achieve e-Government Targets by end of 2005 • Appointments system for repairs • Ability to produce and creation of capacity to implement Equalities & Diversity policies and practices • Achievement of enhanced communications (including the use of plain language) • Resident satisfaction survey and feedback <p>Housing Allocations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive management of waiting list – including an annual review • Proactive tenancy sustainment to prevent homelessness • Customer focused lettings <p>Rents & Rent Collection –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimal use of existing stock and improved sustainability of lettings • Management of rents to achieve upper quartile performance • Provision of Housing debt advice and promotion of benefit take up initiatives • Compliance with rent restructuring to show convergence by 2012
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<p>Inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to achieve a 2 star (good) service with “Will improve” score by 2006 Adoption and use of quality assurance measures and tools <p>Performance Standards –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption and use of SMART Performance Indicators 	<p>All Tenants (Existing & Prospective) – ability to deliver enhanced tenant involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective network of Tenant groups including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard to reach groups Tenant involvement in setting targets and service standards Involvement in decision making and shaping of policy & service delivery <p>Rents & Rent Collection –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant involvement in discussions on rent and service charge levels <p>Community Governance (based on Ladder of Involvement –)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional methods (eg Tenant Assoc. Reps, Village Voice etc) Informing methods (eg Newsletters, Meetings, Website) Consultative methods (eg Questionnaires, surveys, open days) Advisory and influence methods (eg Forums, customer panels, estate management agreements) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant involvement in decision making Tenant Management Organisations
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All Tenants (Existing & Prospective) – ability to deliver investment for enhanced services to vulnerable tenants	<p>Housing Repairs and Asset Management –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of sheltered accommodation facilities and ability to provide investment for remodelling of accommodation to address future needs of older people <p>Vulnerable Groups –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of floating support • Provision of quality support in Sheltered Housing • Restricted and sensitive use of de-designated allocations to sheltered housing • Provision for those fleeing domestic violence • Policies and Practices in place to meet the needs of vulnerable people and minority groups • Effective partnerships with other agencies to develop “Homes for Life”
Impact on Staff	<p>Ability to recruit, retain & motivate staff</p> <p>Staffing –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TUPE • Ability to recruit and retain qualified and experienced housing and associated services staff • Robust and proactive programme of staff training and development
Financial Impact	
Impact on General Fund	
Sustainability of 30 year business plan	
Ability to deliver additional resources - Investment in existing stock	<p>Housing Repairs and Asset Management –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity for investment in stock to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decent homes standard 2. Decent homes plus essential repairs standard 3. Transfer Standard 4. Tenant aspirational standard
One off set up costs (and associated risks)	

Impact on Council & Community	
Ability to contribute to priorities (Relevant Category A - Anti-social behaviour, access, street scene, Category B – Vulnerable people, housing management, affordable housing)	Regeneration - Active involvement of partners to tackle problems/issues including deprivation, crime and social inclusion
Ability to focus on strategic functions	
Ability to deliver additional resources – Investment in affordable housing	Housing Need – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to generate capital investment opportunities for the delivery of additional units of affordable housing
Overall impact of preferred option	
Potential deliverability of option if identified as preferred option	

South Kesteven District Council - Stock Option Appraisal Process - Results of Scoring Process																				
	Retention								Stock Transfer											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total score	Average Score	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Score	Average Score
Impact on Tenants																				
Existing tenants - security of tenure & preserved rights	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	28	4.000	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	27	3.857
All Tenants - ability to meet decent homes standard	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	26	3.714	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	27	3.857
All Tenants - ability to meet aspirations for investment (aspirational investment standard)	3	3	2	4	2	1	1	16	2.286	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	25	3.571
All Tenants - Ability to deliver service improvements (eg Housing Management standard, Allocation, Performance standards)	3	3	2	4	2	3	2	19	2.714	4	2	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	24	3.429
All Tenants - Ability to deliver enhanced tenant involvement	3	4	2	4	2	1	2	18	2.571	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	2	26	3.714
All Tenants - Ability to deliver investment for enhanced services to vulnerable tenants	4	4	3	4	1	3	2	21	3.000	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	25	3.571
Impact on staff																				
Ability to recruit, retain & motivate staff	3	4	2	4	2	4	3	22	3.143	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	27	3.857
Financial Impact																				
Impact on general fund	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	13	1.857	4	2	3	2	4	2	2	4	2	19	2.714
Sustainability of 30 year business plan	4	3	2	2	1	1	3	16	2.286	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	24	3.429
One off set up costs (and associated risks)	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	25	3.571	1	4	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	9	1.286
Impact on Council & Community																				
Ability to contribute to Council's vision through existing priorities	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	18	2.571	4	3	4	2	4	3	3	3	3	23	3.286
Ability to focus on strategic functions	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	18	2.571	3	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	2	23	3.286
Ability to deliver additional resources	4	2	1	2	1	1	1	12	1.714	1	1	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	21	3.000
Overall impact of preferred option																				
Potential deliverability of option if identified as preferred option	3	3	3	4	2	1	4	20	2.857	3	2	2	2	4	4	1	1	18	2.571	
Revised Deliverability score taking account of preference events	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	14	1.750	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	28	3.500	
Total	45	42	35	44	30	34	2	266	37.75	46	44	51	49	48	48	4	328	4	46.3571	

The dark highlighted area shows the initial view of the Commission prior to tenant feedback

TENANT RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATION OF COMMISSION as at 3rd May 2005

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Sub Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Responses received			
Agree with Commission's recommendation (comment slips)	177		
Agree with Commission's recommendation (telephone calls)	<u>6</u>	183	35.7
Disagree with Commission's recommendation (comment slips)	280		
Disagree with Commission's recommendation (telephone calls)	<u>28</u>	308	60.2
 Phone calls but no tenant view given			
Not interested or bothered either way	9		
Feels unable to give a view – difficulty in understanding issues	<u>12</u>		
Total responses received	<u>21</u>	<u>512</u>	<u>4.1</u>
		<u>100</u>	
 No response			
No reply to call	136		
No view given – will return slip	<u>52</u>	188	
Total efforts of engagement		<u>700</u>	
% as total of tenants (based on 6483)			10.8%

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (COMMUNITY SERVICES)

REPORT NO: DCS23

DATE: 9TH MAY 2005

TITLE:	CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE - PROGRESS REPORT
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	No
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	N/A
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Non-Key Decision

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Councillor Carpenter (Technology)
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	Access To Council Services
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	None
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	This report is publicly available on the via the "Local Democracy" link on the Council's website www.southkesteven.gov.uk
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Consultation Strategy - 27 th May 2004

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1.1 The Consultation Strategy was adopted by Council on 27th May 2004. The Strategy made provision for specific consultation to take place with young people. A forum called Youth Engagement and Local Liaison was identified with the objective of meeting two times per year.

- 1.2 The Council has experience of working with young people and during the period 2001 to 2003 had worked with the Local Learning Partnership to facilitate events during the autumn terms with 16-19 year olds. The purpose of these events was to develop mutual understanding and to obtain their views about local issues. Experience suggests that the autumn term is about the only time young people have available in the school year because of competing demands presented by challenging timetables. In the main the young people that attended these events were from the Grantham area.
- 1.3 In 2003 (Citizenship Day) a visit was arranged for primary school (Year 6) children to visit the Council Chamber. This event was well received by the children concerned.
- 1.4 The work described above was led by the Training Manager with an input time of approximately 3.5 full time equivalent (F.T.E.) being invested in this work. Evaluations of the sessions were undertaken with the outcomes being reported to senior managers as appropriate. There is some evidence that changes were made to activity programmes at the Council's Arts Centres and Sports Centres and that these changes were influenced by young people following these events. In addition the environmental improvements carried out to the Boots Passageway in Grantham were identified following work with young people.
- 1.5 More recently the Corporate Director (Community Services) has partnered with the Stamford Police to access a group of young people (Youth Forum or YELL) drawn from the local schools to discuss local issues. It has been possible to obtain some useful information from young people about their concerns and experiences. Notes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2005 are attached as "Appendix A". A further meeting is scheduled for 20th May 2005.
- 1.6 It is clear that the Council could access young people during school time. Indications from Headteachers suggest that time exists within the curriculum under the headings Personal, Social, Health and Education but this work would need to be resourced using staff with appropriate skills.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **To note the work undertaken to develop a Youth Forum (YELL) in partnership with the Police in Stamford and to consider the issues identified in Appendix A.**
- 2.2 **To consider what outcomes Cabinet Members wish to achieve through engagement with young people.**
- 2.3 **To note that to develop this initiative may require additional skills and resources. The Director of Community Services to bring forward**

proposals about how resources may be allocated to this work following discussions with the County Council.

2.4 To agree that member representation on YELLS will be through the appropriate Portfolio Holder.

3.0 DETAILS OF REPORT

3.1 The report of the Russell Commission published in March 2005 identifies the importance of a society in which young people feel connected to their communities, seek to influence what is done and the way it is done, and are able to make a difference.

3.2 The purpose of Youth Engagement and Local Liaison is to try and provide an opportunity for young people to influence the Council. Moreover it is hoped that they will have the effect of building social capital. This means that by involving them we can help to build a network of relationships that help to build trust between people.

3.3 Research undertaken by Mori last October provided evidence that the general picture painted by young people is negative. A study of tabloid broadsheet and local papers carried out during a sample period discuss young people in the context of violent crime or anti social behaviour, with three out of four articles (71%) having a negative tone while only fourteen percent (14%) were positive and fifteen percent (15%) neutral.

3.4 In contrast earlier national research undertaken in 2001 indicated that 7 out of 10 young people would like to have a greater say in decisions about their community. However more than two-thirds of these believed their views were taken less seriously because of their age. The research is relevant because the Council needs to consider how it portrays young people through its activities as this may impact on the development of relationships with them.

3.5 Many Councils are increasingly involving young people in participatory projects. However the evidence from evaluations is that they are still having little impact on public decision making. The limited available evaluation and research evidence suggests that listening to young people has positive outcomes for them and their communities.

3.6 A commitment to involving young people is not enough for ensuring success. Evaluation of work in other organisations has identified a number of barriers to involving young people in making public decisions and some negative impacts if this work is undertaken inappropriately.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND ASSESSED

4.1 It is proposed to approach the County Council to seek advice and the practical involvement of the Youth Service in assisting the District Council in developing engagement with young people through YELLS.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Supporting young people to participate in local decision making is relatively new. For success to be achieved engagement needs to be child centred focusing on caring and listening, then action rather than just talk. It needs a semi structured approach requiring attentive listening and probing skills. It is important to have the time and resources to build relationships.
- 5.2 A major pitfall is to focus on the process of involvement rather than achieving outcomes and not being explicit about the goals to be achieved. Some of these goals could be improving perceptions, developing role models and increasing diversity.
- 5.3 The Council needs to be very clear about what it is hoping to achieve by engaging with young people and to recognise that it requires particular skills for success. Resources will need to be allocated to this work if progress is to be made in engaging with young people and this may be achieved in partnership with the County Council's Youth Service.
- 5.4 The Cabinet are asked to consider whether or not accessing young people during curriculum time offers the best approach for engaging with young people. If this approach is adopted then a learning plan will need to be developed with schools so that consultation is set in the context of learning about the role of local Councils.

6.0 CONTACT OFFICER

- 6.1 John Pell, Corporate Director (Community Services)
Telephone: 01476 406510
Email: j.pell@southkesteven.gov.uk

YELL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2005

Following discussions with the Police a joint meeting was held between SKDC, the Police, a number of young people from Queen Eleanor School and the boy and girl's high schools in Stamford. (School year groups in attendance years 7-11). This was the first meeting branded as a YELL.

The following points were raised:-

- Anti-social behaviour was a major issue, each of the pupils outlined actual experiences of witnessing this behaviour for example stone throwing and graffiti and broken bottles.
- They raised the importance of clean streets and asked about gum tacking and whether or not this was a good idea. Recycling was an area that they would like their schools to take more seriously.
- The new All Weather Surface (Surfaced Tennis Court) was discussed and they were concerned that because there was no supervision it would get out of control.
- Concern was expressed about the lack of facilities for younger people for example the Internet Café has closed down and play activities were too plain.
- They explained their experience of intolerant elderly people throwing skates and skate-boards down the street when they are left outside of shops whilst shopping.
- One girl explained her experience of racism both in school and on the streets. She described how her house had been singled out for vandalism and attack. She had suffered racial abuse whilst going to school and playing outside.
- They discussed the general negative image of young people but understood that some 16-18+ year olds do cause problems on the streets with drinking. They said that there was a lot of negative newspaper coverage about young people.

The young people expressed a wish for more interactive sessions on crime prevention, firework safety and drug awareness etc.

Next meeting - 20th May 2005

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: Head of Planning Policy and Economic Regeneration

REPORT NO. PLA498

DATE: 9th May 2005

TITLE:	Local Development Scheme (March 2005)
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	Included in Forward Plan
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	17th May 2004
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Key Decision

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	The LDF will set future District Council land use planning policy Cllr John Smith (Economic Portfolio)
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	Planning and Conservation, Affordable Housing, Town Centres
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	Minor
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	Minor
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Lincolnshire Structure Plan (Adopted and Deposit Draft) Regional Planning Guidance Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Letter from GOEM 11 th April 2005 Letter from PINs 13 th April 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Further to the two previous reports considered by Cabinet on 24th November 2004 and 7th February 2005 regarding the Councils proposed Local Development Scheme (LDS). Confirmation has now been received that the Secretary of State will not issue a direction to change the LDS. It can therefore be assumed that the LDS as modified in February and March and submitted to GOEM has been accepted by the Government Office.
- 1.2 The revised LDS was prepared in consultation with the Economic Portfolio Member and the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development. The revised LDS was submitted to the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) on 15th March, before the deadline for submission (Thursday 24th March 2005) to meet the PSA6 target for the receipt of Planning Delivery Grant. (The LDS which was submitted is attached to this report at Appendix 1)
- 1.3 The revised LDS did take on board many of the comments made by GOEM in January, in respect of timetabling. However the LDS continues to indicate the Council's intention to prepare the Core Principles of Development and Location Strategy in tandem with the Housing and Employment Policy DPD. Ensuring that public consultation, and examination and adoption of these documents is undertaken in parallel.
- 1.4 Part of the submission and approval process for the LDS involves consultation with the Planning Inspectorate (PINs), who have raised a number of questions in respect of the detailed programming of examinations, and the time between the receipt of the Inspectors reports and adoption for each of the DPD's proposed. These comments can be incorporated in to the LDS when it is reviewed as a result of the Annual Monitoring Report process (due for publication December 2005).
- 1.5 The involvement of PINs in this approval process is very important as a significant part of the statutory process for each DPD is largely dependant upon the Planning Inspectorate. To this end PINs have issued an Initial Service Level Agreement that indicates that they are broadly content with the programme for examination of the proposed DPD's and that subject to a number of criteria they will provide the appropriate Inspectorate resources for the examinations identified in the LDS. Both the Council and the PINs should sign this ISLA.
- 1.6 The criteria included in the initial Service level agreement are as follows:
That the:
 - a) LPA meets the milestones set out in the LDS
 - b) LPA submit a plan which they consider to be "sound" in reference to the tests of soundness in PPS12
 - c) LPA demonstrates that it has considered the resource implications of the examination programme and has put into place arrangements to ensure it can meet these requirements
 - d) That at the appropriate time for each DPD the LPA will:

- i. Appoint a Programme Officer to be in post by submission of the DPD
- ii. Establish a representation database
- iii. Advertise the examinations in accordance with the Regulations, and ensure all procedural requirements required by the regulation have been met
- iv. Ensure suitable accommodation is available for each examination
- v. Inform PINs of any changes to the programme set out in the LDS as soon as it is known

A copy of the SLA is attached to this report in appendix 2.

- 1.7 The detailed requirements of the DPD examination stage will need to be discussed by the Council and PINs later in the process (eg on receipt of the Preferred Options documents). These arrangements will form the subject of a detailed Service Level Agreement between the Council and PINs.
- 1.8 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (11) requires that the LDS should be formally brought into effect by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and should specify the date from which the scheme shall have effect. It is suggested that the date of the GOEM letter, 11th April is used for this purpose. In addition Regulation 12, requires that a copy of the documents is available for inspection at the Council's principal Office, and is published on the Web site. I suggest that the LDS is also made available at the other district council offices and in local libraries.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note and welcome the Government Office's letter of 11th April confirming that the Secretary of State does not intend to issue a direction under Section 15(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2.2 In accordance with the Regulations (11 and 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004) the Cabinet is asked to resolve that the LDS (as attached) should come into immediate effect and be formally dated 11th April 2005 (that is the date of the GOEM letter approving the LDS). It should then be formally published on the Council's website, and copies placed in the district offices and libraries for information purposes.
- 2.3 The Cabinet is recommended to accept the terms of the initial Service Level Agreement and delegate formal acceptance of this agreement to the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development.

3. CONTACT OFFICER

- 3.1 Mike Sibthorp, Head of Planning Policy and Economic Regeneration

DRAFT SOUTH KESTEVEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

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Appendix A : Schedule of Proposed LDDs

Appendix B: Overall timetable for Production

Appendix C: Local Development Document Profile

Appendix D Explanation of Terminology used

FORWORD

The Government's Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduces major changes to the way the planning policy system operates. It replaces the old system of Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance with a new system of Local Development Documents (LDDs) making up a Local Development Framework (LDF).

The review of the South Kesteven Local Plan should therefore proceed through the preparation of a Local Development Framework (LDF) for the district.

This document

- explains the new system of Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) which replaces Local Plans and Structure Plans
- Sets out the proposed documents which will form the South Kesteven Local Development Framework (LDF), together with the timetable of key milestones for the preparation of these documents over the next 3 years,
- Explains how progress on the LDF will be monitored, reviewed and updated

The Local Development Documents (LDDs) which form the LDF will guide future development in South Kesteven and play a key role in delivering the council's vision to *"ensure that the residents of South Kesteven are proud of their District and their Council"*.

The preparation of the LDF will be underpinned by the Council's core values of:

- Performingby resourcing and delivering the Council's Priorities
- Respectingall residents and recognising their needs
- Informingresidents and enabling them to become involved
- Developing ...all our communities
- Enablingstaff to unlock their full potential

Overall, the Council is aiming to have a complete new planning policy framework in place by the spring of 2007. To meet this target, we have already started to prepare the background studies that will form the evidence base for the LDF. Consultation on the first of the new documents; the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and the Issues and Preferred Options document will begin towards the end of this year.

The Council is keen to maximise opportunities for the District's communities and other interested parties to shape the contents of the new policy framework and invite anyone interested in being involved in the process to contact the LDF team to register their interest and level of involvement.

This draft version of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a public document and provides the starting point for the local community and others to find out about the District Council's programme for the preparation of the documents which for the Local Development Framework (LDF) over a 3 year period. It includes a timetable which will tell people when the various stages in the preparation of any particular LDD will be carried out. In effect the LDS is the document which the public can use to find out what the District is proposing to do and when, and at what stage they can expect to be involved in the planning process.

This document is also available on the Council's website: <http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/>

If you would like to make any comments about this document, please send them to:

Mike Sibthorp

Planning Policy and Economic Regeneration

South Kesteven District Council

Council Offices

St Peter's Hill

Grantham

Lincolnshire

NG31 6PZ

Or e-mail m.sibthorp@southkesteven.gov.uk

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document is the Council's 2005 edition of the Local Development Scheme (LDS). Its purpose is to set out proposals for the next three years for the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF), the new type of plan that will replace the current Local Plan for the District. The LDS will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.
- 1.2 The LDS describes the individual documents - called Local Development Documents (LDDs) - that will make up the LDF, together with the timescales and targets for their preparation. This LDS includes a profile of each proposed document, explaining its purpose and status, and how it relates to the LDF as a whole. The LDS also sets out the overall timetable and programme for the LDF, and explains the evidence base and background studies that will underpin the preparation process. It also explains how progress on preparing the LDF will be monitored, and how any necessary revisions will be made via reviews of this document.
- 1.3 Preparation of an LDS is a legal requirement under the new planning system. The District Council is required to submit a Local Development Scheme to the First Secretary of State within 6 months of commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (28TH September 2004) and accordingly this LDS has been submitted to the Secretary of State for approval. The Secretary of State will make a judgement as to whether the content of the scheme is sound and whether the District Council has identified the correct priorities for the preparation of their local development documents, also whether the timescales for their preparation are realistic. Assuming no changes will be required following submission, the Council will formally adopt the LDS. Once the LDS is adopted the Council will enter into an Initial Service Level Agreement with the Planning Inspectorate ensuring that the Inspectorate is aware of, and committed to meeting their requirements for public examinations. The LDS will subsequently be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.
- 1.4 The LDS has been prepared in liaison with The Government Office for the East Midlands and the Planning Inspectorate.

2. WHAT IS A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK?

- 2.1 Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) are part of the Government's reform of the planning system and will replace local plans. The legislation bringing in LDFs takes effect in September 2004, and all district councils are required to replace their local plans with LDFs over the next few years.
- 2.2 In broad terms, an LDF is a framework for the location and design of development (homes, shops, offices, etc) and for protecting the natural and built environment. It is a "spatial" plan, because it deals with the location and layout of developments and activities and how these affect people and their environment.
- 2.3 LDFs will consist of a number of documents – called Local Development Documents (LDDs) -which can be prepared and updated separately. The LDF is therefore the collective name for a group of documents that form the planning policies and proposals for the district. An explanation of the terminology used within this document is given at the end the LDS.

3. THE SOUTH KESTEVEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF)

- 3.1 The South Kesteven Local Plan was adopted in April 1995, and covered a plan period of 1991 to 2001. A review of the Local Plan commenced in 2001 with the publication of the South Kesteven Local Plan 2001 – 2011, First Stage Deposit. However, in response to the Government's proposals to revise the planning system, and on the advice of the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) the Council has taken a decision not to progress this review any further, but instead to move directly to the preparation of a Local Development Framework (LDF). The First deposit version of the Local Plan Review (January 2002) has therefore be withdrawn.
- 3.2 Initially the South Kesteven LDF will be prepared in accordance with the strategic policy context provided by the East Midlands Regional Planning Guidance (RPG8) and the emerging Lincolnshire Structure Plan (Deposit April 2004 and Proposed Changes February 2005). However changes brought about by the new Act will eventually lead to the abolition of the Structure Plan. Regional Guidance in the form of a Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) will be developed to replace the Structure Plan policy context. The documents which form the LDF will be reviewed and updated in accordance with the RSS when it is prepared and adopted.

3.3 As the LDF is not a single document, it can develop and change over time as new documents are added, replaced or reviewed. Individual timetables for the preparation and adoption of each document in the LDF are proposed. These timetables will ensure that a complete policy framework for the district is in place by 2009. However additional documents may be added to the LDF and existing documents may be reviewed after this time. To maintain planning policy coverage for the District in the meantime policies in the Adopted South Kesteven Local Plan (1995) will be saved and replaced on a rolling programme as LDDs are adopted. A combination of saved policies and newly adopted LDDs will ensure that a full spatial planning framework for the District is in place by March 2007. This will mean that a number of policies within the South Kesteven Local Plan (Adopted 1995) will be saved for more than the automatic three years allowed by the Act.

4. **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS (LDDs) will comprise:**

4.1 **A STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI)**, must be prepared by the District Council as part of the LDF process. This document will set out the standards which the planning authority intend to achieve in relation to involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all local development documents and in significant development control decisions. It will be prepared in accordance with the Council's main Consultation Strategy, utilising Local Area Assemblies as the main vehicle for community engagement. The SCI will also show how the local planning authority intends to achieve these standards included. The Statement of Community Involvement will not be a development plan document but will be subject to public consultation and independent examination. A consultation statement showing how the local planning authority has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement will be required for all local development documents.

4.2 **DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS (DPDs).** These will be spatial planning documents which provide the policy framework for development within the district. These documents should be subject to community consultation in accordance with the requirements of the SCI and will be subject to independent examination. There will be a right for those making representations seeking change to be heard at an independent examination. DPDs may cover a range of policy areas, a single subject or geographic area. Individual development plan documents or coherent parts of a

single development plan document will be able to be reviewed independently from other development plan documents.

4.3 The Development Plan Documents that the District Council must prepare includes:

- **A Core Strategy** which will set out the long term spatial vision for the Council's area and the strategic policies and proposals necessary to deliver that vision. It will contain a set of primary policies for delivering the core strategy and may include broad locations for development to be set out in a 'key diagram'. This document may also include affordable housing policies and some generic, criteria based policies which will be used to ensure that all development within the area meets the vision and policies set out within the core strategy
- **Site Specific Allocations and Policies** which will include the designation of sites for development and policies identifying any particular requirements for individual proposals. In particular this document will include policies and proposals for housing and employment development. .
- **Area Action Plans** will be prepared for the three towns of Grantham, Stamford and Bourne. These documents will be used to provide a detailed planning framework for the proposed areas of change and areas of conservation.
- **A Proposals Map** (with Inset Maps, where necessary) which will illustrate, on an Ordnance Survey Map, the policies and proposals included in the LDD's. It will identify areas of protection and define sites for particular future use and / or development and the areas to which specific policies apply. It will also identify areas covered in Inset Maps. **Inset Maps** may be used to show the proposals which effect certain parts of the district, such as the policies and proposals for Area Action Plans.

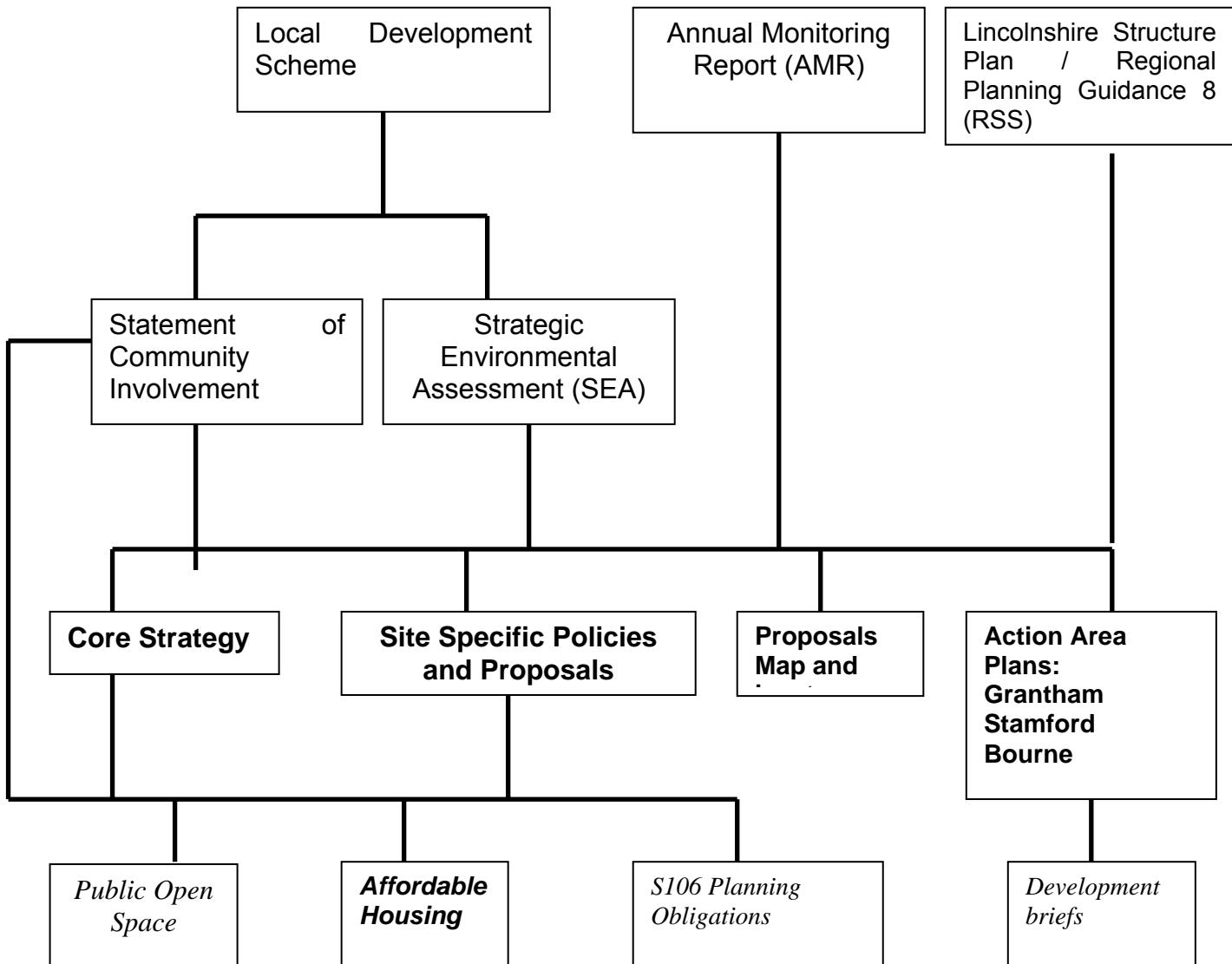
4.4 In terms of status, Development Plan Documents (DPDs) have full statutory weight – called development plan status – for making decisions on planning applications, and are subject to external testing (examination) by an Inspector.

4.5 **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (SPDs)** covering a wide range of issues on which the District Council wishes to provide additional policy guidance to supplement specific policies and proposals in development plan documents will also be prepared. They will not form part of the development plan or be subject to independent examination, although they will need to be subject to community consultation in accordance with the requirements of the SCI. At this stage it is expected that three SPD's will be prepared to cover the following topics: Affordable Housing; S106 Obligations; and Public Open Space and Children's Play Areas. SPDs must relate to an adopted policy within a DPD. All three of the proposed SPD will expand upon parent policies included within the Core Strategy and the Site Specific Allocation DPD. Preparation of these SPD will run alongside the preparation of the parent policies, however the SPD will not be formally adopted until after the parent policy documents has been adopted.

4.6 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are not subject to external examination and do not therefore have full development plan status. However, they will be taken into account in decisions on planning applications. SPDs must therefore be prepared following robust procedures, including community engagement, in accordance with the requirements of the SCI.

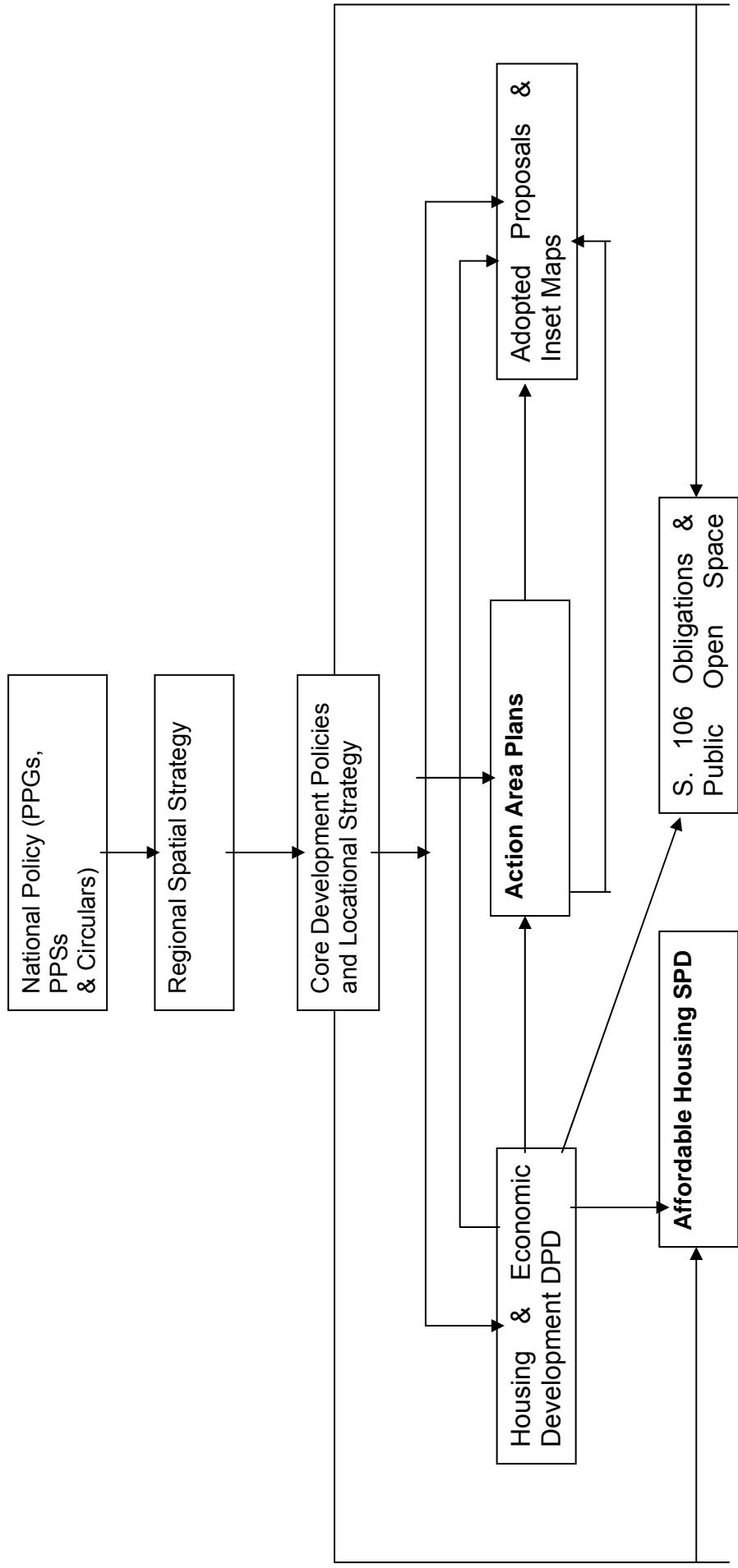
4.7 The flow diagram below summarises the main LDDs proposed and how these relate to each other and to the Lincolnshire Structure Plan and East Midlands Regional Planning Guidance (RPG8).

Figure 1: Relationship of documents in the South Kesteven Local Development Framework



4.8 **Chain of Conformity** - It is essential that documents within the LDF are in conformity with national and regional planning guidance, provided by the RSS and PPGs, PPSs and circulars. In addition it is important that documents within the framework conform with each other. Figure 2. below outlines the chain of conformity between the documents proposed for inclusion in the South Kesteven LDF.

Figure 2: Chain of Conformity



Appendix A sets out a schedule of the proposed local development documents the District Council intends to produce over the next 3 years, their role, the Saved Policies which they will replace and their position in the chain of conformity, together with an indication of key milestones in the preparation process.

Appendix B sets out the overall timetable for the production of the proposed local development documents.

Appendix C contains a profile and the role of each proposed local development document.

5. PLAN PERIOD

5.1 It is intended that the LDF will cover the period to 2021, to match the period of the emerging Lincolnshire Structure Plan and the Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) for the East Midlands. However, this may not be practical or realistic for all issues, particularly where new information and trends are expected. The relevant period for policies will therefore be identified in individual LDF documents.

6. RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING LOCAL PLAN – SAVED POLICIES

6.1 The LDDs proposed in this LDS will provide a new planning policy framework that will replace the existing South Kesteven Local Plan, which was adopted in April 1995. Until the new LDDs (in particular the Core Strategy and the Site Specific Policies) are adopted, the existing Local Plan will remain of relevance as a planning framework for making planning decisions, including determining planning applications. The Council is therefore “saving” the existing Local Plan in its entirety for the period while the DPDs are under preparation. The “saving” covers all the policies in adopted Local Plan, however it is acknowledged that a number of policies and proposals within the plan are out of date. A schedule will be prepared which identifies which saved policies have been superseded by national and regional guidance.

6.2 “Saved” policies can remain of relevance to planning decisions for up to three years after commencement of the Act, however they will be formally superseded by the adoption of one or more DPDs. Appendix A shows which saved policies will be replaced by each DPD. If preparation of one or more of the DPDs is delayed the Council will need to consider whether it is necessary to formally extend the “saved” period for policies beyond the initial 3 year period.

6.3 Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) will also continue to be relevant to planning decisions provided that it is linked to a “saved” Local Plan policy. South Kesteven has adopted the following documents as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG):

- Backland Development
- Garden Extensions
- Bourne Core Area SPG
- Bath Road, Stamford SPG
- Shop Front Guide for Grantham
- Shop Front Guide for Stamford

In addition the following Village Design Statements have been adopted by the Council as SPG:

- Rippingale
- Folkingham
- Harlaxton (Adopted as a Position Statement)

6.4 It will not be possible to transfer saved SPG directly into the LDF. Therefore when “saved” policies are replaced by new DPDs, the Council will need to consider whether and how guidance in an existing SPG is transferred to the new system. This will be done by either preparing a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) or by including the guidance in the new DPD.

7. PRODUCTION STAGES FOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

7.1 There will be four main stages of development plan document preparation as set out below, Appendix C contains a proforma for each LDD to be prepared summarising the timetable for each of the key milestone stages:

7.2 The **Pre-Production and Survey Stage (including consultation on Issues)** will involve the District Council in the collection of necessary data to develop a robust evidence base for the plan identifying, with the help of the local community and others (including developers and land-owners), the opportunities, constraints and issues for the area, including the location of future growth and development.

7.3 The **Production Stage (including pre-submission and submission consultation stages)** will involve developing, with the local community and others, the vision, objectives and spatial options for the plan. The District Council will then publish the preferred options and proposals in a report to be supplemented by an Initial Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and invite comments over a specified period of 6 weeks. Following consideration of the

representations received, the Council will prepare the development plan document to be submitted for independent examination, along with the final Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and invite representations to be made within a further 6 weeks.

- 7.4 **Examination** will take place in public by an independent inspector of the 'soundness' of the development plan document (in terms of its content and whether the correct process and procedures have been followed) and the representations received. The Inspector's report produced following the Examination will be binding upon the Council. This means that the Council must incorporate the Inspector's decisions within the adopted LDD.
- 7.5 **Adoption** and entry of the development plan document into the local development framework will follow receipt of the Inspector's report.

8. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AND STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SA/SEA)

- 8.1 Under the new system, all policies and proposals in development plan documents will be subject to a **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** to assess their impacts on environmental, social and economic aspects of sustainability. The Sustainability Appraisal must also meet the legal requirements of the European Directive on **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** to ensure that they reflect sustainable development principles. These principles, which are set out in the Government report 'A Better Quality of Life,' seek to maintain high and stable levels of economic growth; achieve social progress which recognises the needs of everyone; and, at the same time, secure effective protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources.
- 8.3 The SA/SEA of South Kesteven District Council will be undertaken as an integral part of preparing the LDDs. The Council will publish the results at 2 key stages:
 - an Initial SA/SEA report to accompany the Pre-submission consultation on preferred options; and
 - a Final SA/SEA Report which will be submitted with the DPD(s) for examination

9. PRODUCTION ARRANGEMENTS

Resources

- 9.1 The Council has considered the resources likely to be needed to prepare the documents that form the LDF. The existing Planning Policy team comprises 4 members of staff with varying

skills and experience. Whilst changes within the team cannot be predicted it is assumed that this size of team should be sufficient to meet most of the staffing resources required. It is recognised, however that certain specialised areas of work may need to be put out to consultants and provision for this has been made within the LDF budget. Budget provision has also been made to allow for the use of temporary or consultancy staff to “fill” any gaps in in-house staffing which may arise through the next three years. Use will also be made of the full range of skills and experience available within the Council as a whole, for example technical skills, consultation experience and utilising existing consultation networks.

Risk Assessment

9.2 When programming work for a three year period there is a degree of risk and uncertainty involved. Whilst the timetable shown at Appendix B is considered achievable in light of current resources, including officer levels and abilities, this situation may change during the three year period. A small amount of flexibility has been built into the timetable to allow for unexpected events and slippage, however if it becomes apparent that the programme cannot be achieved, as set out, contingency plans will be put in place. These may include the use of temporary or contracted staff for certain documents or elements of the process, or it may mean a need to review the programme by delaying the preparation of one or more LDDs. Where this occurs the Council's priority will be to ensure the production of Development Plan Documents over and above the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents. Annual monitoring of progress will be undertaken which will lead to the review and updating of the LDS. A revised LDS will be prepared and published at the end of each year.

Internal Organisation and Responsibilities

9.3 South Kesteven District Council will be the lead organisation for the preparation of the DPDs. The majority of the work will be undertaken by the planning policy team in close liaison with other sections, as appropriate to the subject and issues included. In particular it is expected that there will be close liaison with officers responsible for implementing policies and objective, with those responsible for the Community Strategy and with those working closely with stakeholders and community groups. In addition it is expected that work on the three Action Area Plans will be driven by the work of the three Town Centre Management Partnerships (TCMPs).

9.4 To ensure an efficient and effective production process the Council has established a LDF Advisory Group to consider the details of policy preparation and community involvement, this will be a non-decision making consultative panel. The Council's cabinet will ultimately make decisions on policies and proposals. An internal officer panel has also been established to

ensure that the documents are prepared in accordance with the aims and objectives of other Council strategies and programmes.

9.5 At this stage the Council does not believe it would be appropriate to prepare any of the LDF documents jointly with neighbouring authorities. However through the Council's membership of the Welland partnership, and in liaison with neighbouring authorities within Lincolnshire it is likely that a number of issues will be discussed and considered jointly through the respective planning policy officers forums.

9.6 It is acknowledged that benefits can be derived from working jointly with neighbouring authorities to achieve objectives; this kind of joint working has already been explored and will be considered at various stages throughout the process. An example of how this joint working and pooling of ideas may be effective is in the SEA/SA process. A joint training session on SEA/SA has already taken place within the Welland partnership; consideration is now being given to the possibility of jointly funding consultants to undertake part of this work on our behalves. In the future it may become apparent that jointly prepared SPD could also be prepared and added to the LDF.

Involving the Community

9.5 Community Involvement will be a key part of the preparation of documents in the LDF. The Statement of Community Involvement will be one of the first documents to be prepared and adopted. This document will clearly demonstrate how and when the Council intends to involve the community and will give a commitment to involving the community in the early stages of policy preparation. Existing consultation forums will be utilised to achieve early involvement, in particular the six Local Area Assemblies will be used as the starting point for disseminating information and encouraging involvement. The Council has already set up a database of contact details for interested parties, this database will be expanded as more individuals and organisations register their interest and desire to be involved in the process. It is intended that though this database consultation can be targeted and focused on those individuals and groups interested in particular documents and on specific issues.

10. BACKGROUND STUDIES

10.1 A range of background work needs to be undertaken to provide a robust evidence base for the proposals and policies included within the LDF.

10.2 In preparing Development Plan Documents the District Council will have regard to:

- National policies and guidance (PPGs PPSs circulars and good practice guides).

- The Lincolnshire Structure Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the adjoining Region of East Anglia.
- The District Council's Community Strategy as it applies to the area covered by the Development Plan Document.
- Any other Local Development Document and relevant strategies adopted by the Council.

10.3 In addition as part of the pre-production and survey stage of the development plan process the District Council has already carried out, or is in the process of reviewing and updating the following background studies which will be made public and used to inform future LDDs:

10.4 Whilst a number of these background documents have already been completed or are expected, the Council may prepare and publish others in the course of preparing LDDs. An updated list of background documents will be contained in the Annual Monitoring Reports.

10.5 Background Documents that have been completed are :

- **An Affordable Housing Need Study** to identify the level, type and locations of need for the provision of affordable housing. This will be used to justify a requirement for provision of affordable housing on both private development schemes and on rural exception sites.
- **A Flood Risk Assessment Study** undertaken to identify the level of flood risk for a number of sites which may be considered for allocation, in accordance with the requirements of PPG25.
- **A Retail Study** to identify the need and capacity within the four towns for new retail development with a view to identifying whether retail sites need to be identified to preparing policies to control retail proposals.

10.6 Background Documents which are being prepared or updated:

- **An Urban Capacity Study** to identify the amount of previously developed land which may come forward for development during the plan period, and the capacity on these sites over five year periods. Consultation on this document began in March 2005.
- **An Open Space and Recreational Land (including allotments) Study** to identify the amount, level of use, and deficiencies / oversupply of public opens space and allotments with a view to protecting, reviewing alternative uses and justifying the requirement for additional open space provision as part of development schemes.
- **The Local Transport Plan** Prepared by Lincolnshire County Council in liaison with the district councils this plan sets out the transport priorities for a 5 year period, including a programme for improvements, new schemes and accident prevention measures.

- **The South Kesteven Community Strategy** prepared by the South Kesteven Local Strategic Partnership this is currently being reviewed. The community strategy sets out priority actions for achieving the economic, social and environmental improvement of the area.
- **The Housing Strategy** prepared by the district council in close liaison with the Regional Assembly, this document sets out priorities and targets for the provision of social housing.
- **An Employment Land Study** to identify the amount of employment development which has already taken place and / or which has planning permission in the district together with an assessment of the level of need and demand for land buildings. Being prepared in tandem with the Council's economic development officer.
- **Housing Needs and Market Assessment Study** A brief for tender for this element of a wide ranging Housing stock condition, need and assessment is being prepared with a view to the final report being submitted to the Council in October 2005. Once finalised this study will replace the Affordable Housing Need Study referred to in 10.5 above

11 MONITORING AND REVIEW

11.1 The District Council will monitor the LDS on an annual basis. Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) will be prepared for the Council's Executive and made available for submission to the Secretary of State. This monitoring process will assess whether the preparation programme for the local development documents as set out in this local development scheme is being met. Where the programme for the LDF is not being achieved, the Council will give its reasons why, and what actions it proposes to take to address the situation, including an updated LDS, with an updated list of background documents.

11.2 The District Council will also keep under review all matters which may affect development of the area, and will monitor the extent to which the policies in the local development documents are being achieved. Whilst monitoring of certain quantitative matters such as housing completions is ongoing, the monitoring of other key indicators will be undertaken at prescribed periods through the year. The results of this monitoring will also be included within the Annual Monitoring Report and will be used to inform the review of policies and proposals included within the LDDs.

Appendices A and B are A3 colour timetables.

Copies are available for consideration in the Members Room or from Rachel Armstrong, Planning Policy

Appendix C

Profile of Proposed Local Development Document

Title	Statement of Community Involvement
Subject Matter	Sets out how, when and why we will involve the community in the preparation of all documents in the LDF South Kesteven District
Geographical Area Covered	
Status	Local Development Document
Chain of Conformity	N/A
Timetable	
Pre-production scoping	February / March 2005
Pre- submission Consultation (6 weeks)	April 2005
Submit to Secretary of State	September 2005
Public consultation on submission document (6 weeks)	September 2005
Pre Examination consideration of representation	November 2005
Examination	December 2005
Receipt of Inspectors binding report	January 2006
Adoption and publication	February 2006
Lead Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Management arrangements	LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants.
Community Involvement	At all stages

Title	Core Principles of Development and Location Strategy
Subject Matter	Sets vision, objectives and spatial strategy for achieving sustainable development. Includes policies for Affordable Housing provision and Development Principles
Geographical Area Covered	South Kesteven District
Status	Development Plan Document
Chain of Conformity	National Policy (PPG, PPSs), Regional Spatial Strategy
 Timetable	
Pre-production / survey completed included SEA/SA baseline data	April 2005
Consult on Issues	May / June 2005
SA/SEA identify and test alternatives	September 2005
Consultation on Preferred Options (Pre-submission consultation)	Jan / Feb2005
Consider Representations and prepare document for submission	March – July 2006
Submit to Secretary of State	July 2006
Public consultation on submission document (6 weeks)	July 2006
Pre Examination consideration of representation	September 2006
Examination	January 2007
Receipt of Inspectors binding report	May 2007
Adoption and publication	Aug 2007
 Lead Authority	
Management arrangements	LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
 Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants for specialised/technical studies eg: SA/SEA
 Community Involvement	In accordance with the Councils SCI

Title	Housing and Economic development policy document
Subject Matter	Sets out the strategy for meeting housing, employment and retail development needs, including the identification of allocated sites.
Geographical Area Covered	South Kesteven District
Status	Development Plan Document
Chain of Conformity	National Policy (PPG, PPSs), Regional Spatial Strategy, and Core principles of Development and Location Strategy
Timetable	
Pre-production / survey completed included SEA/SA baseline data	April 2005
Consult on Issues	May / June 2005
SA/SEA identify and test alternatives	September 2005
Consultation on Preferred Options (Pre-submission consultation)	Jan / Feb 2006
Consider Representations and prepare document for submission	March 2006 – July 2006
Submit to Secretary of State	July 2006
Public consultation on submission document (6 weeks)	July 2006
Pre Examination consideration of representation	September 2006
Further Consultation on site suggested (6 weeks)	October 2006
Examination	February 2007
Receipt of Inspectors binding report	June 2007
Adoption and publication	August 2007
Lead Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Management arrangements	LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants for specialised/technical studies eg: SA/SEA
Community Involvement	In accordance with the Councils SCI

Title	Stamford Town Centre Action Area Plan
Subject Matter	Detailed policies and proposals aimed at strengthening the town centre as a successful retail, business and leisure destination
Geographical Area Covered	Stamford Town Centre
Status	Development Plan Document
Chain of Conformity	National Policy (PPG, PPSs), Regional Spatial Strategy, Core Principles of development and location strategy, Housing and Economic Development Policy Document
Timetable	
Pre-production / survey completed included SEA/SA baseline data	November 2005
Consult on Issues	Jan / Feb 2006
SA/SEA identify and test alternatives	Summer 2006
Consultation on Preferred Options (Pre-submission consultation)	Nov / Dec 2007
Consider Representations and prepare document for submission	January / 2007
Submit to Secretary of State	August 2007
Public consultation on submission document (6 weeks)	August 2007
Pre Examination consideration of representation	October 2007
Examination	February 2008
Receipt of Inspectors binding report	April 2008
Adoption and publication	June 2008
Lead Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Management arrangements	Town Centre Management Partnership, LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants for specialised/technical studies
Community Involvement	In accordance with the Councils SCI

Title	Grantham Town Centre Action Area Plan
Subject Matter	Detailed policies and proposals aimed at strengthening the role of Grantham as a sub-regional centre and therefore as a successful retail, business and leisure destination
Geographical Area Covered	Grantham Town Centre
Status	Development Plan Document
Chain of Conformity	National Policy (PPG, PPSs), Regional Spatial Strategy, Core Principles of development and location strategy, Housing and Economic Development Policy Document
Timetable	
Pre-production / survey completed included SEA/SA baseline data	November 2005
Consult on Issues	Jan / Feb 2006
SA/SEA identify and test alternatives	Summer 2006
Consultation on Preferred Options (Pre-submission consultation)	Nov / Dec 2007
Consider Representations and prepare document for submission	January / June 2007
Submit to Secretary of State	August 2007
Public consultation on submission document (6 weeks)	August 2007
Pre Examination consideration of representation	October 2007
Examination	February 2007
Receipt of Inspectors binding report	April 2008
Adoption and publication	June 2008
Lead Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Management arrangements	Town Centre Management Partnership, LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants for specialised/technical studies
Community Involvement	In accordance with the Councils SCI

Title	Bourne Town Centre Action Area Plan
Subject Matter	Detailed policies and proposals aimed at strengthening the town centre as a successful retail, business and leisure destination
Geographical Area Covered	Bourne town centre
Status	Development Plan Document
Chain of Conformity	National Policy (PPG, PPSs), Regional Spatial Strategy, Core Principles of development and location strategy, Housing and Economic Development Policy Document
Timetable	
Pre-production / survey completed included SEA/SA baseline data	July 2006
Consult on Issues	Nov / Dec 2006
SA/SEA identify and test alternatives	Spring 2007
Consultation on Preferred Options (Pre-submission consultation)	August 2007
Consider Representations and prepare document for submission	Spring 2008
Submit to Secretary of State	May 2008
Public consultation on submission document (6 weeks)	May 2008
Pre Examination consideration of representation	July 2008
Examination	November 2008
Receipt of Inspectors binding report	January 2009
Adoption and publication	March 2009
Lead Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Management arrangements	Town Centre Management Partnership, LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants for specialised/technical studies eg: SA/SEA
Community Involvement	In accordance with the Councils SCI

Title	Affordable Housing
Subject Matter	Provides guidance on the provision of affordable housing
Geographical Area Covered	South Kesteven District
Status	Supplementary Planning Document
Chain of Conformity	National Policy (PPG, PPSs), Regional Spatial Strategy, Core Principles of development and location strategy, Housing and Economic Development Policy Document
Timetable	
Start preparing draft	October 2005
Consultation on draft document	November 2006
Consider Representations and prepare document	Spring 2007
Public consultation on council approved document	July 2007
Adoption and publication	August 2007
Lead Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Management arrangements	LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants for specialised/technical
Community Involvement	In accordance with the Councils SCI

Title	S.106 Planning Obligations
Subject Matter	Provides guidance on the provision of the contents of S106 obligations which may be required in association with developments.
Geographical Area Covered Status	South Kesteven District Supplementary Planning Document
Chain of Conformity	National Policy (PPG, PPSs), Regional Spatial Strategy, Core Principles of development and location strategy, Housing and Economic Development Policy Document
Timetable	
Begin preparing draft	March 2006
Consultation on draft document	May 2007
Consider Representations and prepare document	August / November 2007
Adoption and publication	February 2008
Lead Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Management arrangements	LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants for specialised/technical
Community Involvement	In accordance with the Councils SCI

Title	Public Open Space and Children's Play Area
Subject Matter	Sets out the standards and justification for the provision of POS within proposed residential developments
Geographical Area Covered Status	South Kesteven District Supplementary Planning Document
Chain of Conformity	National Policy (PPG, PPS'), Regional Spatial Strategy, Core Principles of development and location strategy, Housing and Economic Development Policy Document
Timetable	
Begin preparing draft	March 2006
Consultation on draft document	May 2007
Consider Representations and prepare document	August / November 2007
Adoption and publication	February 2008
Lead Authority	South Kesteven District Council
Management arrangements	LDF Advisory Group, Officer Liaison Group with Cabinet approval
Resources required	Maximise use of internal resources, supplemented where necessary with external consultants for specialised/technical
Community Involvement	In accordance with the Councils SCI

Appendix D

Explanation of Terminology used

AAP Area Action Plan

These Plans will focus upon implementation, providing an important mechanism for ensuring development of an appropriate, scale, mix and quality for key areas of opportunity, change or conservation.

AMR Annual Monitoring Report

Authorities are required to produce AMRs to assess the implementation of the LDS and the extent to which policies in LDDs are being achieved.

DPD Development Plan Document

The documents that a local planning authority must prepare and which have to be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination. Should include the following elements:

- **Core Strategy** (sets out the general principles of where and when development will be acceptable)
- **Site Specific Allocations of Land;**
- **Area Action Plans** (where needed); and
- **Proposals Map** (with inset maps illustrating where policies and proposals apply, where necessary)

LDF Local Development Framework

The LDF will contain a portfolio of LDDs, which will provide the local planning authority's policies for meeting the community's economic, environmental and social aims for the future of their area where this affects the development of land.

LDD Local Development Document

LDDs will comprise of Development Plan Documents (DPDs), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) / Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

LDS Local Development Scheme

The LDS sets out the programme for preparing the LDDs, it is a public statement setting out which documents will make up the Local Development Framework and when they will be produced.

PPS Planning Policy Statement

Government statements of national planning policy, being phased in to supersede Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs).

RSS Regional Spatial Strategy

The RSS, incorporating a Regional Transport Strategy, provides a spatial framework to inform the preparation of local development documents, local transport plans and regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land-use activities.

SA Sustainability Appraisal Assessment of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the LDF.

SCI Statement of Community Involvement

Document explaining to stakeholders and the community, how and when they will be involved in the preparation of the LDF and the steps that will be taken to facilitate this involvement.

SEA Strategic Environmental Assessment

Assessment of the environmental impacts of the policies and proposals contained within the LDF

SPD Supplementary Planning Document

SPDs are intended to elaborate upon policy and proposals in DPDs but do not have their status. The documents will provide additional and supporting detail for policies and proposals, where necessary. The community will be consulted on their content however, these documents will not be subject to independent scrutiny.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN INITIAL SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

INITIAL SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PLANNING INSPECTORATE AND SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL AT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME STAGE

THIS SERVICE AGREEMENT IS NOT LEGALLY BINDING

This service level agreement relates to South Kesteven District Council Local Development Scheme.

1. Introduction

1.1 This is an agreement between the Local Planning Authority (LPA) indicated above and the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). It represents an initial service level agreement between the LPA and PINS in connection with the submission of a Local Development Scheme (LDS) to the Secretary of State by the LPA.

2. Agreement

2.1 This agreement confirms that PINS has seen the LDS produced by the LPA for submission to the Secretary of State and is broadly content with the programme for the examination of the proposed development plan documents, and that subject to:

- i. the LPA meeting the milestones set out in the LDS;
- ii. the LPA submitting a plan they consider to be sound having regard to the tests of soundness set out in paragraphs 4.23 and 4.24 of PPS12;
- iii. the LPA demonstrating that it has considered the resource implications of the predicted examination programme and has put in place the necessary arrangements to ensure that it can meet the requirements set by PINS for the management of the examination processes;
- iv. the LPA undertaking that at the appropriate time in relation to each individual document to be examined it will:
 - a) Appoint a Programme Officer with appropriate qualifications and/or experience¹ to manage the examination(s); the PO to be in post at the latest on submission of each individual document named in the LDS.
 - b) Establish appropriate representations databases.²

¹ The Inspectorate holds a list of professional Programme Officers which is available on request. LPAs may wish to consider sharing Programme Officer resources with one another in the interests of efficiency. It is accepted that it will not always be necessary to appoint a Programme Officer for a small examination into for example an SCI.

- c) Advertise the examination(s) in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations regulation 34(2).
- d) Ensure that all relevant procedural requirements required by the Regulations under regulations 28, 30, 31 and 34 are met for each document to be examined and that regulations 32 and 33 are met for site allocations DPDs.
- e) Ensure that suitable accommodation for the examination(s) will be available when required.
- f) Inform PINS of any change to the programme set out in the LDS as soon as any such change is known³.

2.2 PINS will then provide appropriate resource for the examination(s) within the broad timescale identified in the LDS.

2.3 The LPA and PINS note that in the absence of the requirements set out above being carried out, it may not be possible for PINS to provide appropriate resource for the examinations within the timescale envisaged in the LDS and in this agreement. In that event, PINS reserves the right not to provide the resource until the requirements set out above have been carried out, when an appropriate timescale will be agreed between the LPA and PINS.

2.4 At the appropriate time (ie on receipt of the preferred options document and its accompanying material from the lpa in accordance with PPS12 paragraph 4.13 and its accompanying text box), PINS will discuss with the lpa the detailed requirements of the development plan document examination stage and agree the date for the examination and the agreed details will form the subject of a detailed service level agreement between PINS and the lpa.

2.5 Under this agreement both the LPA and PINS agree that they will use their best endeavours to carry out the actions referred to above.

Signed for the Council

² It should be noted that the lpa will be responsible for producing an accurate list of those who have made representations as a schedule to go with the Inspector's report.

³ This should be achieved by the submission of a revised LDS to the Government Office. The GO will then consult with PINS on the revised timetable.

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: Director of Operational Services

REPORT NO. DOS 280

DATE: 9th May 2005

TITLE:	Draft Best Value Performance Plan and Best Value Review Programme 2005/06
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	Yes
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	April 2005
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	PFP

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	All Mrs L. Neal Leader
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	All
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	Commentary on crime & disorder performance data and targets Included in the draft performance plan
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	None, The Performance Plan will be published on the Council's corporate website when approved

1. SUMMARY

Under best value legislation contained in Section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999 the Council must produce and approve a best value performance plan (BVPP) by 30th June each year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is requested to:

- a) Agree the Council's 3-year performance targets against the national BVPIs (the targets for the local BVPIs were approved by Cabinet on 7th March 2005)
- b) Recommend to Council the approval of the draft Best Value Performance Plan for 2005/06 and
- c) That authority is delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to make any minor changes to the draft Plan that may be necessary following its approval by the Council on 26th May 2005 and before its publication at the end of June 2005.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

Performance Plan

Performance plan content requirements are prescribed by legislation and it is recognised that the audience for the document is mainly the Authority itself plus any interested outside parties.

The contents should give a brief summary of SKDC's strategic objectives and priorities, progress and outcomes over the past year, plans for improvement in future years plus details of past, current and planned performance against local and national indicators. It should make reference to any best value reviews and inspection recommendations.

In compiling the plan much of the commentary has been taken from recent reports to Council & Cabinet on the Council's corporate planning arrangements and review of priorities.

Performance information has been extracted from the Council's existing performance management arrangements and the 3 year BVPI targets have been set by the appropriate service manager and reviewed by Corporate Management Team (CMT).

Performance Data

Cabinet members are asked to note that some of our 2004/05 out-turn performance data is subject to final verification hence the request in the recommendation to allow minor amendments post Council approval of the plan. With regard to our performance in 2004/05, out of the 57 BVPs for which targets were set, 41 were achieved or bettered. This equates to 72%. In 2003/04 only 24 out of 50 targets (48%) were achieved.

Best Value Reviews

In identifying likely best value review areas in 2005/06 consideration had been given to earmarking Environmental Health Services as per the Council's original 5 year review programme. However the inclusion of EH Services in the pilot business process redesign project (under the Council's approved Modernisation agenda) renders the review process inappropriate at the present time.

From the 2004/05 performance data it is evident that Revenue Services are showing a 'mixed bag' in relation to achieving or meeting a number of performance targets. It is suggested therefore that a best value review is carried out in Revenue Services during 2005/06.

4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND ASSESSED

The content of the draft plan satisfies the statutory requirements under the Government's best value legislation. The BVPP will be subject to a compliance audit carried out by the District Audit Service later in the year.

5. COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

As a member of the Council's CMT I have been involved in both reviewing the draft BVPP and agreeing service performance targets. I am also supportive of a best value review being carried out in Revenue Services

6. COMMENTS OF CORPORATE MANAGER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER)

As with the Director of Finance I have, as a CMT officer, been involved in reviewing the draft BVPP and the targets therein.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

Kevin Martin
Business Services Manager
Telephone: 01476 406211
e-mail: k.martin@southkesteven.gov.uk



Performance & The Path to Pride

Best Value Performance Plan 2005/06

Best Value Performance Plan 2005/06

Introduction – What this document is

All Councils have to produce an annual performance plan. It is seen as a key element of best value. The main audience for the plan is the authority itself. Central Government also has an interest as it allows them to monitor individual local authorities. It is also a public document and will be made available to those that request it.

Here at South Kesteven both Members & Officers are responsible for delivering quality local services. All of us need to be aware therefore of:

- SKDC's improvement priorities
- How we will be addressing any weaknesses
- Any opportunities that will be exploited to provide better outcomes for local people
- Our targets for future performance both on our own priorities, our local indicators and the Government's Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)

This plan attempts to provide the above information.

How we do our business

We provide a large range of services to our taxpayers, residents, businesses & visitors alike.

Quality, value for money services can only be provided when the Council's Corporate Planning arrangements are strong and clear. Over the past 18 months much work has been undertaken to improve and strengthen our corporate planning arrangements.

Corporate Planning Structure

Over the last year the Council has developed the following Corporate Planning Structure. It is based on a vision built around the concept of **PRIDE**.

Our Vision is

‘To ensure that the residents of South Kesteven are proud of their district and their Council’

Following a Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) refresh exercise carried out by representatives from the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (Solace) this vision has been more clearly articulated to become a clear destination for the District to be reached by 2020. This has been achieved by breaking down our vision into the following work streams:

- a) **Performance and Priorities**
- b) **Respect and recognition for diversity**
- c) **Informing and Involving**
- d) **Developing Communities**
- e) **Empowering and enabling**

Booklets were produced, describing the key components for each of these “steps” on the path to pride. During the winter of 2004/05 each of our Local Area Assemblies were consulted in detail on these booklets. As a result of their considerations, amendments have been made to the booklets and updated versions are now available both on the Council’s intranet and corporate website.

The latest (2005) CPA guidance supports the Council’s approach in seeking to have a well-articulated vision for the community supported by priorities aligned to clear performance measures and resources by being explicit about non-priority services. The guidance indicates that the best authorities will combine this with the adoption of “ambitions” which will link the Council priorities to the vision. In selecting these ambitions, it was suggested that authorities may wish to have regard to the shared priorities that have been agreed at national level between representatives from Local Government and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). These are:

Sustainable Communities and Transport
Safe and Strong Communities
Healthier Communities
Older People
Children and Young Persons

It is clear from the guidance that Council will be assessed under CPA in 2006 on the extent to which it has delivered tangible outcomes in each of these areas.

The shared priorities have been designed to reflect the activities of Unitary Councils. In two-tier areas like South Kesteven, it is necessary to differentiate the responsibilities of the District and the County Councils. In addition it needs to be remembered that although the Council should consider these shared priorities, primary reliance should be placed upon determining ambitions, which reflect the desires and expectations of the residents of the District. These views were clearly captured in the wide spread consultation process that was undertaken by the Council last year regarding our priorities.

Ambitions

In view of this the Council has adopted the following four ambitions, which will link the vision with the priorities:

- 1. Economic Development**
- 2. Community Safety**
- 3. Healthy Environment**
- 4. Community Engagement**

The following tables show each layer of our Corporate Planning Framework and explain its purpose. By this approach we can ensure that individual staff development plans are driven by the Council's vision and ambitions.

South Kesteven Corporate Planning Framework

	What's it for?	Component	What does it say?
1	To describe the purpose of the Council	Vision	It is based on the concept of pride, articulated by five steps (P,R,I,D,E)
2	To identify the key themes needed to achieve the vision	Ambition	4 themes reflecting national, local and Council priorities
3	The service priorities and performance targets	Priorities	Identifies both step-change (A) and incremental (B) priorities
4	To explain what the Council will stop doing in order to invest in priorities	Non-Priorities	Non-priorities (Z) identified and targets set for financial savings

5	Identifies the changes needed within the organisation to secure improvement	Change Management Action Plan	Sets-out requirements by themes with target dates
6	Corporate advice and direction for service managers	Corporate Strategies	Covers matters such as Human Resources, Risk, Finance, IT, Management development etc
7	Identifies the key indicators and targets used to measure progress	Best Value Performance Plan	Incorporates targets for each priority and programmes future Best Value reviews
8	Sets the framework and measures for the management of each service	Service Plans	Translates priorities into service targets and considers options for improvement
9	Identifies the key development needs and targets for each employee	Personal Development Plans	Captures the outcome from the Personal Development Reviews for every employee

The linkage between these new ambitions and our current priorities, which were agreed in 2004, is demonstrated in the following table:

Proposed Ambition:	Priorities that it incorporates		Shared national priorities that it reflects
	Category A	Category B	
Economic Development	Town-centre regeneration	Business Development Planning	Sustainable Communities and Transport
Safer communities	Anti-social behaviour	Diversity. Vulnerable Persons Housing Management Affordable Housing	Safer and Stronger Communities
Healthier Environment	Street Sweeping Recycling		Healthier Communities
Engagement	Access	Communications LSP and Community Strategy	Children and Young People Older People

Cabinet Portfolios

In order to provide clear leadership, focus and accountability the portfolios of the Council's Cabinet Members have been revised to accord with these new ambitions. This also enables the appointment of "Champions" for particular issues such as Procurement or E-Government.

Four of the portfolios reflect the new ambitions:

Economic Development
Community Safety
Healthy Environment
Community Engagement

The remaining three are cross-cutting:

Resources and Assets (Champion for procurement and risk management)
Organisational Development (Champion for leadership development)
Strategic Partnerships (Champion for joined-up public services)

Development and Scrutiny Panels

To ensure a continued close alignment between the Council's Development & Scrutiny Panels (DSPs) and our aims & priorities, changes have been made to the names and responsibilities of the DSPs. This makes it easier for the DSPs to exercise both its scrutiny and policy development roles.

Development and Scrutiny Panel	Cabinet Portfolios
Economic Development	Economic Development
Community	Community
Healthy Environment	Healthy Environment
Engagement	Engagement Strategic Partnerships
Resources	Resources and Assets Organisational Development

As well as having its business and functions linked directly to our aims and priorities the Panels will continue to receive and consider performance management data.

Tying everything together

To ensure a co-ordinated approach within our corporate structure the Council has produced and members agreed a change management action plan for 2005.

Under a number of main themes including:

- Developing Managers and Members
- Community Strategy/Local Strategic Partnership
- Performance Management/Project Management
- Value for Money/Efficiency Savings
- Access & Modernisation
- Promoting Vision and Communication
- Strategic Housing Issues

Some 100 actions are identified for completion during 2005. Council members and managers are collectively responsible for completing these tasks.

A Change Management Monitoring Group set up in 2004 and made up of leading SKDC councillors plus 4 business people from outside SKDC continue to oversee our Change Management process thus enhancing accountability.

Looking Back

In the autumn of 2004 the Council agreed its new priorities (shown earlier under Categories A & B on page 4). It also identified the services that would fall into the Y (operational or statutory minimum) and Z (dis-investment) categories.

The Category Y services are:

• Asset Management	Business Rates
• Financial Services	Licensing
• Business Management	Markets
• Arts	Leisure
• Housing Repairs	Legal and Administration
• Human Resources	Parks
• Emergency Planning	Environmental Health
• Public Transport	Building Control

Operational minimums have been identified and set for all these services

The Category Z services and the anticipated savings are:

Pest Control	£125,000
Travel Vouchers	£ 63,000
Rate Relief	£ 84,000
Business Grants	£ 50,000
Arts Grants	£ 11,000
Historic Building Grants	£ 20,000
Archaeology Services	£ 13,000
Tourism	£ 78,000
Parish Council Elections	£ 6,000

The savings from these non-priority services, plus a further £200,000 from the total efficiency savings we have identified under the Government's Gershon agenda form the £700,000 earmarked for investment in our priority areas.

The Council will continue to review its local priorities on an annual basis, having regard for both the priorities of Local Strategic Partnership and those at a national level. A new Community Strategy for South Kesteven is planned by the end of 2005.

Performance and Performance Indicators

When agreeing our priorities early in 2004 the Council also set performance targets for each of the priorities. Most of these areas already have relevant performance measures within the Government's suite of best value performance indicators (BVPIs). Our performance against the BVPIs for 2004/05 can be seen on *Appendix 1*. Comparisons are also shown, where available, against top quartile performance of all district councils in 2003/04.

The ✓ ✗ ♦ have been used to show where our overall performance has improved, gone down, or stayed the same. The Council continues to maintain a strong focus on performance management with collection, reporting, monitoring and a monthly process undertaken by the Cabinet and Corporate Management Team. Corrective action is agreed and authorised where performance falls below acceptable standards

The table also contains, as required by best value legislation, targets for the next three years. The Government have set the following top quartile targets for 2005/06. The Council intends to reach these targets, where practically possible, within no more than three years where they are not already doing so.

Top Quartile Targets 2005/06

BVPI 9	Council Tax collected	98.5%
BVPI 10	NDR Collected	99.12%
BVPI 12	Sickness Absence	8.93 days
BVPI 14	Early Retirements	0.14%
BVPI 15	III Health Retirements	0.00%

Some of our achievements over the past year

In 2004/05 we improved our performance in many areas, both in relation to our priorities and against performance indicators. A few examples are:

- Tackling the housing problem by increasing the provision of new affordable homes to 50, compared to just 35 in 03/04 and a mere 4 the year before
- Improving our responsiveness by achieving a dramatic and sustained improvement in the speed with which planning applications are determined
- Reducing the need for landfill sites by achieving our recycling targets and welcoming over 10,000 households to our fortnightly composting scheme
- Leading the economic development of our town centres by delivering on our promise to provide a high quality attended toilet facility in Stamford and securing private sector interest in the redevelopment of Bourne town-centre
- Uniting all tiers of government together in our six Local Area Assemblies attended by over 500 local people
- Improving access to Council services by increasing the provision of services on-line from 10% to 71%
- Operating a crack-down on littering with the naming and shaming of offenders and collecting nearly £1,000 in litter fines
- Through our Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership working with the Police and seeing lower numbers of both domestic burglaries and vehicle crimes in South Kesteven and securing over 10 Anti-Social Behaviour Orders/ Behaviour Contracts
- Providing care services to a further 1,100 clients and ensuring that the service to our 1,400 sheltered tenants meets the quality framework assessment
- Keeping over 98% of appointments for housing repairs and improving over 275 of our properties to meet the decent homes standard
- Reduced staff sickness levels to below an average of 8.9 days per person thus achieving top quartile performance

2005/06 Local Performance Indicators

Whilst the Government's BVPIs provide a suite of performance indicators/measures to enable it to measure and compare local authority performance across the country on an annual basis, not all these indicators are useful measures to help South Kesteven monitor its progress against its own recently agreed priorities. The Council has therefore identified and agreed a mix of local and national performance for use within its performance management framework for 2005/06. These are shown in *Appendix 2* and in keeping with national BVPIs three year targets are also provided for all the local indicators.

Areas for Improvement

Inspections

Whilst our performance is improving in many areas the Council recognises that certain services are not meeting service targets or improving against national BVPIs. Whilst the Council did not carry out any best value reviews in 2004/05 an inspection was undertaken by the Housing Best Value Inspectorate on the Council's Strategic and Private Sector Housing Service. The review was carried out in February 2005 and the final report from the inspectors was due for publication in May 2005. Certain actions have already been taken in advance of the report such as the commissioning of a private sector stock condition survey. (The Inspectors will be returning later in the year to review our Housing Landlord Service)

The Council has recently embarked on a major consultation exercise with its council house tenants and other stakeholders called a 'Stock Option Appraisal'. The results from this, which ultimately need Government acceptance, will be published in the early summer of 2005.

Best Value Reviews

In 2005/06 the Council will be carrying out a best value review of its Revenue Services. It recognises that whilst certain areas are improving, e.g. speed of processing benefit applications and fraud investigations, other areas such as the collection rate for NDR and the accuracy levels for benefits have declined. Hence a best value review will, amongst other things, examine the reasons for this.

Shared Services and Formal Market Testing (FMT)

In seeking to achieve continuous improvement and efficiency savings in line with both best value legislation and our procurement strategy the Council is undertaking two specific initiatives.

One is in partnership with our neighbouring authority at South Holland and is exploring the potential for shared services in Legal, Revenues & Benefits and Building Control.

The other relates to formal market testing wherein alternative service delivery models are being identified for certain services and appropriate market testing will be undertaken. The first services to be evaluated under FMT are Graphics & Printing along with Facilities Management.

Keeping you informed

Through its revised consultation strategy introduced in 2004 the Council has improved its communication and consultation with all its stakeholders. The strategy uses many types of consultation and identifies the many different groups that it needs to be aimed at. Some examples are:

- Six Local Area Assemblies meet twice a year and offer attendees the opportunity to consider the needs and priorities of the district
- The Local Strategic Partnership, made of representatives from the other public sector agencies and the business world, provides input and knowledge to inform the Community Strategy
- As well as annual staff surveys and regular team briefings, monthly staff newsletters will be produced from May 2005. This will improve the understanding and sense of inclusion for all staff and provide the opportunity for ideas, comment and feedback to be made to senior management

Our consultation strategy will ensure that the Council remains in contact with all its stakeholders.

Any questions

This Performance Plan contains a large amount of information. If you have any questions regarding the content, or a query on any performance information please contact Kevin Martin in the Council's Business Management Section.

Similarly if you require a copy of any documents or reports mentioned in this plan please contact Kevin on k.martin@southkesteven.gov.uk or 01476 406211

SKDC employees can also speak directly to their Head of Service or Corporate Management Team member if they require any clarification.

Contracts

By way of compliance with Government requirements on the contents of Performance Plans, South Kesteven District Council states that it has not awarded any individual contracts during 2004/05 that involved the transfer of staff.

Document Enhancement for the visually impaired or translation from English is available on request

Please contact our Customer Services Network Manager on 01476 406080 or e-mail frontdesk@southkesteven.gov.uk

PI	Subject Area/Performance Indicator	SKDC 2003/04	03/04 Top Quartile	SKDC 2004/05	Improving YR on YR	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08
Housing								
62	Unfit private sector dwellings made fit/demolished following SKDC action	0	3.75%	0	♦			
63	Average SAP rating of SKDC owned dwellings	65	65	65	♦	65	65	65
64	Number of vacant non SKDC owned dwellings returned to occupation or demolished as a result of SKDC action	1	n/a	5	✓	10	15	20
66a	Local authority rent collection: proportion of rent collected	98.12%	98.6%	98.3%	✓	98.4%	98.5%	98.5%
66b	% of total tenants with more than 7 weeks of rent arrears					4%	4%	4%
66c	% of tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession					6%	6%	6%
66d	% of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears					0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
74a	Overall satisfaction with landlord - all tenants	81%	83%				86%	
74b	Satisfaction with landlord - ethnic minority tenants	88%	80%				75%	
74c	Satisfaction with landlord - non ethnic minority tenants	81%	84%				84%	
75a	Satisfaction with participation in management - all tenants	64%	69%				70%	
75b	Satisfaction with participation - ethnic minority tenants	50%	73%				70%	
75c	Satisfaction with participation - non ethnic minority tenants	63%	69.5%				70%	
164	Does the authority follow the CRE's code of practice in rented housing	Yes	Yes	Yes	♦	Yes	Yes	Yes
184a	% of SKDC dwellings which were non-decent at the start of year	17%	15%	14.22%	✓	10.64%	6.71%	2.78%
184b	% change in proportion of non-decent dwellings in year	14.5%	26.6%	25.18%	✓	36.94%	58.57%	100%
185	% of repair jobs for which an appointment was made & kept	97%	83.2%	98.41%	✓			
211a	Housing Repairs and Maintenance - % spend Planned/Responsive					76/24	77/23	78/22
211b	Housing Repairs and Maintenance - % spend Urgent/Non Urgent					20/80	19/81	18/82
212	Average time taken to re-let council houses					37 days	36 days	35 days
Homelessness								
183a	Average length of stay in bed & breakfast accommodation (weeks)	0	1.18	2.33 weeks	✗	1 week	1 week	1 week
183b	Average length of stay in hostel accommodation (weeks)	0	0	0	✓	0	0	0
202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night in SKDC					0	0	0
203	% change in average number of families placed in temporary accommodation compared with the previous year			-34.70%	✓	-5%	-8%	-10%
213	% Households where homeless cases were prevented per 1,000 h/holds					3.6%	3.8%	4.0%
214	% of homeless households which were repeat homeless cases					5%	4%	3%
Housing Benefits								
76a	Number of claimants visited per 1,000 caseload	156.2	304	186.87	✓	190	200	210
76b	Number of fraud investigators employed per 1,000 caseload	0.18	0.48	0.21	✓	0.21	0.21	0.21
76c	Number of fraud investigations per 1,000 caseload	32.03	61.7	53.63	✓	55	60	65
76d	Number of prosecutions & sanctions per 1,000 caseload	1.72	5.83	2.38	✓	2.5	2.6	2.7
78a	Average time to process new claims	45.28 days	31 days	42.21 days	✓	42 days	40 days	38 days
78b	Average time to process change of circumstances	8.35 days	7.2 days	5.62 days	✓	8 days	7 days	6 days
79a	Benefit cases processed correctly	97.56%	99%	94.12%	✗	98%	99%	99%
79bi	% of in-year recoverable overpayments recovered in year	62.36%	55.6%	62.12%	✗	38%	42%	46%
79bii	% of recoverable overpayments recovered in year including both in-year and previous period debts					7%	7%	7%
79biii	% of overpayments written off of both in-year and previous period debts					7%	7%	7%
80a	Satisfaction with contact/access facilities in benefit office	79%	83%				85%	
80b	Satisfaction with service in benefit office	85%	85%				85%	
80c	Satisfaction with benefit telephone service	73%	77%				85%	
80d	Satisfaction with staff in benefit office	82%	85%				85%	
80e	Satisfaction with clarity of forms & leaflets	59%	67%				85%	
80f	Satisfaction with time taken for a decision	72%	76%				85%	
80g	Overall satisfaction with benefits service	80%	83%				85%	
Waste and Cleanliness								
82ai	% of household waste sent for recycling	13.65%	16.86%	14%	✓	14%	16%	18%
82aii	Total tonnage of household sent for recycling					6,900	8,400	9,900
82bi	% of household waste sent for composting	0%	5.14%	0.5%	✓	4%	5%	6%
82bii	Total tonnage of household sent for composting					2,000	2,600	3,300
84a	Kgs of household waste collected per head of population	378 kgs	371.7 kgs	391 kgs	✗	393	403	410
84b	% change from the previous year in the kgs of waste per head					3%	2.5%	2%
86	Cost of waste collection per household	£35.20	£38.00	£34.29	✓	£46.50	£50	£52
89	Satisfaction with cleanliness in their area	52%	66%				85%	
90a	Satisfaction with household waste collection	78%	89%				85%	
90b	Satisfaction with waste recycling facilities	66%	75%				80%	
91a	% of population served by a kerbside collection of one recyclable	69.26%	100%	71.9%	✓	32%	20%	0%
91b	% of population served by a kerbside collection of 2 or more recyclables					40%	60%	80%
199a	% of relevant land that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter & detritus that fall below an acceptable level	20.52%	12%	19%	✓	17%	15%	12%
199b	% of relevant land & highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible					To be	calculated	in 2005/06
199c	% of relevant land & highways from which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible					To be	calculated	in 2005/06

PI	Subject Area/Performance Indicator	SKDC 2003/04	03/04 Top Quartile	SKDC 2004/05	Improving YR on YR	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08
199d	Year on year reduction in total nos. of incidents/increase in total nos. of enforcement actions taken to deal with fly-tipping (1 = v.effective 4 = poor)					1	1	1

PI	Subject Area/Performance Indicator	SKDC 2003/04	03/04 Top Quartile	SKDC 2004/05	Improving YR on YR	Target 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Target 2007/08
Environmental Health								
166a	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practise	77.6%	90%	79%	✓	88%	88%	98%
216a	No. of 'sites of potential concern' with respect to land contamination					1,036	956	866
216b	% of those sites where necessary remediation can be identified					8%	9%	10%
217	% of pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time					85%	85%	88%
Planning								
106	% of new homes built on previously developed land	51.04%	86%	52.67%	✓	55%	60%	65%
109a	% of major applications determined within 13 weeks	50%	63.58%	63.16%	✓	65%	70%	70%
109b	% of minor applications determined within 8 weeks	50.96%	71%	74.88%	✓	75%	78%	80%
109c	% of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks	70.66%	86%	84.14%	✓	85%	86%	87%
111	Applicants satisfied with the service received	83%	81%				85%	
179	% of standard searches carried out within 10 working days	98.4%	100%	99%	✓	100%	100%	100%
200a	Local Development Scheme (LDS) by 28/03/05 and a 3-year rolling maintenance programme	No	n/a	No	♦	Yes	Yes	Yes
200b	Has the authority met the milestones set out by its LDS	No	n/a	n/a	♦	Yes	Yes	Yes
200c	Did the authority publish an annual monitoring report by the December of the last year					n/a	Yes	Yes
204	% appeals allowed on SKDC planning permission refusals					30%	30%	30%
205	Score against a quality of service checklist					83.3%	88.8%	88.8%
Culture								
119a	Satisfaction with sports/leisure facilities	52.8%	69%				55%	
119d	Satisfaction with theatres/concert halls	43.2%	56%				45%	
119e	Satisfaction with parks & open spaces	63.9%	77%				65%	
116	Score against a checklist in the Creating Opportunity Guidance	83%	100%					
219a	Total number of conservation areas within SKDC					46	46	46
219b	% of those areas with an up-to-date character appraisal					22%	26%	30%
219c	% of conservation areas with published management proposals					0%	0%	0%
Community Safety & Well-Being								
126	Domestic Burglaries per 1,000 households	12.74	n/a	9.22	✓	12	11.4	10.8
127a	Violent Crimes per 1,000 population	n/a	n/a	11.70	n/a	10	9.5	9
127b	Robberies per 1,000 population	n/a	n/a			included	in	above
128	Vehicle Crimes per 1,000 population	8.47	n/a	7.94	✓	8	7.6	7.2
174	Number of racial incidents reported to the local authority per 100,000 pop.	0.80	0	0	✓	6.32	9.48	15.8
175	% of reported racial incidents resulting in further action	100%	100%	0%	n/a	100%	100%	100%
225	% score against Actions against Domestic Violence checklist					To be	calculated	in 2005/06
226a	Amount spent on advice & guidance services provided by external organisations					£56,560	to be	decided
226b	% of that spend on organisations holding CLS Quality Mark	46.1%	100%	50%	✓	100%	see	above
226c	Total amount spent on Advice & Guidance in the areas of housing, welfare benefits and consumer matters provided directly by the authority					To be	calculated	in 2005/06
Corporate Health								
1a	Community Strategy with LSP	Yes	Yes	Yes	n/a			
1b	When will strategy review be complete	March 04	n/a	Sep 05	✗			
1c	By when will progress be reported on strategy to wider community	March 04	n/a	Sep 05	✗			
2a	Level of Equality Standard for Local Government	1	1	1	♦	2	2	3
2b	Score against checklist to promote race equality	31.58%	n/a	58%	✓	73%	89%	100%
3	Citizens satisfied with overall service provided	48%	60%				55%	
4	Citizens satisfied with handling of their complaint	36%	36%				40%	
8	% of undisputed invoices paid on time	98.35%	96.74%	98.64%	✓	99.0%	99.2%	99.4%
9	% of Council Tax collected	97.54%	98.5%	97.84%	✓	98.0%	98.2%	98.3%
10	% of Business Rates collected	98.59%	99.1%	98.46%	✗	98.9%	99.5%	99.5%
11a	% of top 5% of earners that are women	14.70%	26.69%	19.44%	✓	22%	28%	30%
11b	% of top 5% of earners from ethnic minority communities	0.00%	2.2%	0%	♦	3%	3%	6%
11c	% of top 5% of earners who have a disability					11%	11%	11%
12	Number of working days lost to sickness absence	9.04	8.93	8.82	✓	8.5	8.3	8.3
14	Early retirements as a % of workforce	0.21%	0.14%	0.81%	✗	0.80%	0.60%	0.40%
15	III Health retirements as a % of workforce	0%	0%	0.81%	✗	0.60%	0.40%	0.40%
16a	% of staff with a disability	6.62%	4.11%	7.19%	✓	7.5%	7.5%	7.5%
17a	% of staff from ethnic minority communities	0.81%	2.4%	0.76%	✗	1.1%	1.4%	1.7%
156	% of LA buildings with facilities for disabled people	81.80%	67%	81.8%	♦	100%	100%	100%
157	% of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery	63%	72%	71%	✓	100%	100%	100%
180a	Energy consumption in operational property compared with comparable UK properties - electricity	93.53%	74%	93.53%	♦			
180b	Energy consumption in operational property compared with comparable UK properties - fossil fuels	135.52%	63%	135.52%	♦			

PI	SKDC Priority Area and PI Description	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
	ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR Priority A			
127	Violent offences per 1,000 population	10	8	7
Local	No. of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders issued in year	8	6	5
Local	No. of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts	10	12	15
Local	No. of unacceptable behaviour warning letters issued	20	24	30
Local	No. of reports to Council of anti-social behaviour	100	120	150
Local	% of those reports successfully resolved	60%	65%	70%
Local	No. of SKDC projects engaging young people in year	10	15	20
	RECYCLING Priority A			
82a/b	% of household waste recycled & composted	18%	21%	24%
	STREET SCENE Priority A			
199	Cleanliness of relevant land and highways	17%	15%	12%
Local	Street Cleaning pass rate for town centres	95%	96%	97%
Local	No. of fixed penalty fines issued	60	70	70
Local	Average time taken to remove flytips	2 days	2 days	2 days
Local	Satisfaction with street scene by TCMPs	80%	82%	84%
	ACCESS Priority A			
157	Types of interactions delivered electronically	100%	100%	100%
Local	No. of hits on SKDC website	180,000	200,000	220,000
Local	No. of complaints regarding DDA related access issues	6	4	2
Local	% of customer calls dealt with at first point of contact through CRM	20%	40%	80%
Local	% increase in self service transactions from 04/05 base	10%	15%	20%
Local	% of letters responded to within 10 working days	10%	15%	20%
	TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT Priority A			
Local	Score against checklist to make Grantham a performing SRC	60%	65%	70%
Local	No. of new retail units in town centres	1.30%	1.50%	1.50%
Local	No. of vacant retail units as a % on NDR list	9%	8.50%	8%
	AFFORDABLE HOUSING Priority B			
Local	No. of affordable units negotiated and planned for future years	30	35	40
Local	New units completed in year and managed by a RSL	80	100	150
	BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT Priority B			
Local	No. of VAT registered businesses in district	4,400	4,425	4,450
	VULNERABLE PERSONS Priority B			
183a	Average length of stay in bed & breakfast	1 week	1 week	1 week
Local	No. of people in receipt of support services from the Council	5,850	6,050	6,250
Local	No. of housing applications from people fleeing domestic violence	32	32	32
78a	Average time to process new benefit claims	42 days	40 days	38 days
78b	Average time change of circumstances	8 days	8 days	8 days
	COMMUNICATIONS Priority B			
Local	No. of editions of Districtline issued	4	4	4
Local	% of PR outputs to media actually published	60%	70%	80%
	DIVERSITY Priority B			
Local	No. of racial incidents reported to SKDC	8	12	20
Local	Working days from OT referral to grant approval on Disabled Facilities	50 days	48 days	45 days
	PLANNING & CONSERVATION Priority B			
109a	Planning major applications determined within 13 weeks	65%	70%	70%
109b	Planning minor applications determined within 8 weeks	75%	78%	80%
109c	Planning other applications determined within 8 weeks	85%	86%	87%
	COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION Priority B			
9	Council Tax collected	98%	98.2%	98.3%
Local	% of CT payers paying by direct debit/self serve	56%	58%	60%
	HOUSING MANAGEMENT Priority B			
212	Average time to relet council houses	37 days	36 days	35 days
Local	% of stock that is void	2%	1.90%	1.80%
66a	Rent collection	98.4%	98.5%	98.5%
Local	No. of complaints regarding tenancy contraventions received	850	820	800
Local	% of those complaints successfully resolved	60%	65%	70%
Local	% in priority need as a % of total housing waiting list	5%	7%	10%
Local	No. of Council homes made decent in year	255	255	206
	OTHER BVPIS - CORPORATE HEALTH BASED			
8	Invoices paid on time	99.0%	99.2%	99.4%
10	NDR collected	98.9%	99.5%	99.5%
12	Days sick per member of staff	8.5	8.3	8.3
15	Ill health retirements / staff	0.60%	0.40%	0.40%
Local	Number of FTE staff employed by SKDC	560	560	560
Local	Number of leavers from SKDC in year	60	60	60

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: Chief Executive

REPORT NO. CEX290

DATE: 9th May 2005

TITLE:	Member Development Forum on 23rd June 2005
COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	All
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	N/A
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	N/A

Purpose of Report

This report considers proposals for the Agenda for this annual training and development session.

Information

As all members of the Council are invited to this Forum it might be useful to explore the Council's priorities and obtain feedback and input from members on the action plans being implemented and progress being achieved. This could be secured by asking the relevant portfolio holders and CMT members to run workshops for each priority with Members of the Council rotating between them. The workshops could focus on the reasons why the subject was chosen as a priority, the work undertaken to understand the nature of the problem, the progress being made towards improvement and the targets set.

In addition to this, I have contacted Mark Edgell of the IDeA to ascertain whether there would be any senior member available from the Peer Clearing House who would be available to make a presentation on the day regarding the work undertaken by other local authorities to embrace the concept of local leadership as set out in recent ODPM documents such as Vibrant Local Leadership and Citizen Engagement : Why Neighbourhoods Matter.

Assuming the Member Forum runs from 9.30a.m. until 2.30p.m. with a break for lunch the content proposed will enable us to fill this timeslot and leave sufficient time available for a foreshortened Council meeting which may be necessary to deal with the approval of IEG 4.5 and any other urgent matter of Council business.

Recommendation

That the Cabinet determines the Agenda for the Members' Forum so that I can make necessary arrangements.

Duncan Kerr
Chief Executive

NON-KEY DECISION

REPORT OF: Head of Planning Policy & Economic Regeneration

REPORT NO. PLA.492

DATE: 22nd March 2005

TITLE:	LAND AT HIGH STREET MARKET DEEPING
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	N/A
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	N/A
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Non-Key Decision

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Cllr John Smith Economic
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	Town Centres
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	Not significant
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	None
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Outlined and referenced within report

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND SUMMARY

A parcel of land, between High Street, Market Deeping, and the River Welland is presently being marketed for sale. The present use of the land is as a private garden, albeit separated from the property to which it relates by High Street. The land offers the potential for use as a public amenity, an issue identified in the Market Deeping Health Check. It is recommended that steps be taken to secure the land for use as a public amenity, utilising funds retained from the s.106 agreement relating to the Tesco development at Godsey's Lane.

2. DETAILS OF REPORT

The parcel of land identified on the plan attached to this report is being marketed for sale. It is situated on the south side of High Street, Market Deeping, situated between the road and the River Welland. It has a 50m frontage to High Street, and a depth of approximately 16m; a site area of 0.08ha. It is well treed, the trees being the subject of a 1988 Tree Preservation Order. The trees have been the subject of a preliminary inspection by the Council's Arboriculturalist and a number of the trees are deemed to be 'dead, dying or dangerous' and in need of removal. A number of other trees are in need of routine maintenance work. The land is presently in use as a private garden to No.45 High Street, 'The Georgians', situated on the opposite side of High Street.

The land forms part of a broader strip of land situated between High Street and the River Welland. This land has hitherto been identified as an important open space within the Market Deeping Conservation Area¹, and the recently commissioned Market Deeping Health Check² similarly recognised the importance of the space, and the benefits of improving public access to the riverside.

The land has recently been marketed for sale, and the recently reformed Town Centre Management Partnership at their meeting on 21st March 2005 have requested that steps be taken to secure this land as a public amenity, utilising funds secured for town centre enhancements from the Tesco, Godsey's Lane development.

Planning gain funding was secured from the Tesco development for a variety of projects, including contributions to the Market Place pedestrianisation scheme, CCTV coverage and traffic calming. The unspent balance of funding stands at approximately £53,000, although about £20,000 of this has been committed to a scheme of traffic calming on The Grove and The Orchard. The terms of the Section 106 agreement allows for the remaining balance (after the implementation of the traffic calming) to be utilised for the 'strengthening and enhancement of the town centre, or the better integration of the Tesco Store with the town centre. The securing of this land for public access would be consistent with these objectives.

The use of part of the s.106 funds to secure the land, obtain the necessary planning consent, and to bring the land up to an appropriate open space standard would seem an entirely appropriate use of the monies, and a project which enjoys widespread

¹ Market Deeping Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme Implementation Programme Document 1999 and Market Deeping Conservation Area 2005

² Market Deeping Health Check; Graham Vallis Associates 2004

support within the town. It is anticipated that delivering the site to an acceptable open space standard would be approximately £25,000.

Various options exist in relation to securing the site. These could include SKDC acquisition, with licensing to another body (eg. the Town Council); SKDC grant to allow another body to purchase; or SKDC purchase and gifting in trust to another body. At this point, no preferred option has been identified. However, it is recommended that authority be given to secure the acquisition of the site, on the following basis;

- (a) SKDC to meet the costs of acquisition of the site;
- (b) SKDC to meet the costs of securing planning permission and bringing the site up to an acceptable open space standard
- (c) Future maintenance and liabilities of the site to be met by another body.
- (d) Future ownership and ongoing maintenance arrangements to be determined in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council
- (e) Acquisition subject to the grant of planning permission for use as public open space, and subject to franking by the District Valuer.

The most logical body to undertake future maintenance and insurance liabilities would seem to be Market Deeping Town Council. They have given an undertaking that they would be prepared to meet the ongoing maintenance and insurance liabilities for the site.

The securing of this site for public use would, it is considered, represent a positive enhancement to the amenities of the town centre and the conservation area as a whole. There is no net cost to the District Council, and no ongoing revenue implications, assuming another body will assume ongoing maintenance responsibilities

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND ASSESSED

There is some indication that the site, through marketing, has attracted interest from other purchasers, some of which would not provide for public use of the space. Market Deeping Town Council would be interested in securing the site, although the timing would be likely to preclude this, 2005/6 precepts having been set. It is considered that prompt intervention is therefore required to secure this land for the public benefit of the community. The consequence of not doing so, would be to preclude the future creation of this space as a public amenity.

4. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT DIRECTORS / SERVICE MANAGERS

The matter has been discussed with the Director of Finance and Strategic Resources and the Corporate Manager, Democratic and Legal Services (Monitoring Officer). There are no direct financial implications for the authority, and the precise nature of any acquisition and future maintenance will be the subject of future discussion and agreement with the Solicitor to the Council.

Discussions have taken place with the Development Control Services Manager in relation to the change of use of the land to public open space. His preliminary view is that such a proposal would be likely to attract a favourable recommendation.

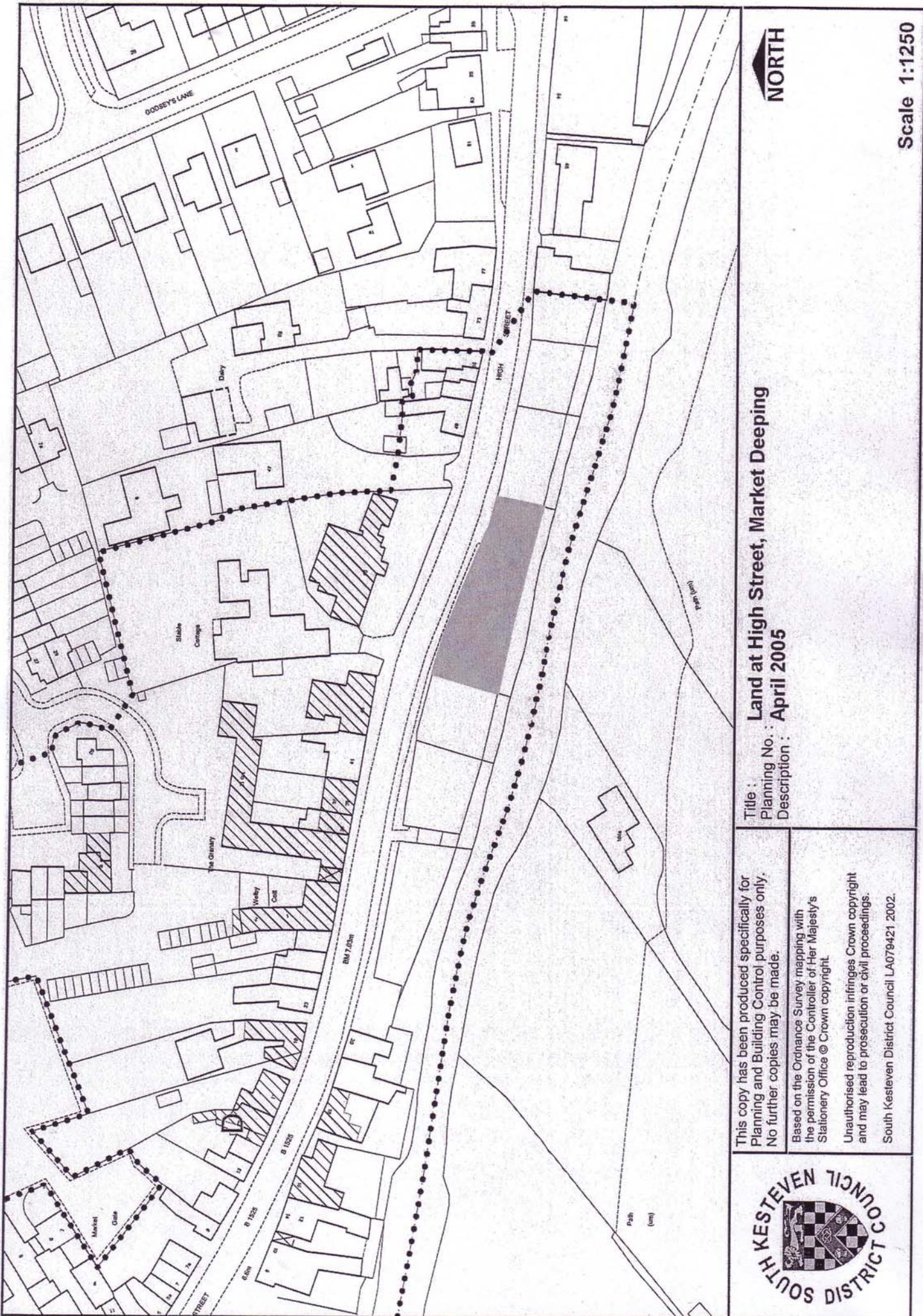
5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that authority be given to secure the acquisition of the site, on the following basis;

- (a) SKDC to meet the costs of acquisition of the site;
- (b) SKDC to meet the costs of securing planning permission and bringing the site up to an acceptable open space standard
- (c) Future maintenance and liabilities of the site to be met by another body.
- (d) Future ownership to be determined in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council
- (e) Acquisition subject to the grant of planning permission for use as public open space, and subject to franking by the District Valuer.
- (f) Funding to be drawn from the monies received via the Tesco, Godsey's Lane s.106 agreement, subject to an upper ceiling of £25,000 total cost.

6. CONTACT OFFICER

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