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03 May 2007

To: All Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
c.c. All Other Persons Receiving OSC Agenda

Dear Councillor,

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Monday, 14th May, 2007

I attach a copy of the following report for the above-mentioned meeting which was not available at the time of collation of the agenda:

9. REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING (PAGES 1 - 22)

(Report of the Director of Urban Environment) To update the committee on the progress made by the Housing Service to address the recommendations of the Scrutiny review entitled 'The Council's Approach to Private Sector Housing'.

Yours sincerely

Clifford Hart
Non-Executive Committees Manager

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DATE

Report Title: Review of the Council's Approach to Private Sector Housing

Report of: Niall Bolger. Director of Urban Development

Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: Information

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update the Executive on the progress made by the Housing Service to address the recommendations of the Scrutiny review entitled 'The Council's Approach to Private Sector Housing'.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Executive notes the progress made and agrees to consider the draft Private Sector Housing Strategy 2008-2012 at a future meeting.

Report Authorised by: Niall Bolger Director of Urban Environment.



Contact Officer: Nigel Long Strategy and Partnerships Manager.
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3. Director of Finance Comments

- 3.1 There have been no additional resources identified in connection with the preparation of the Private Sector Housing Strategy. All work will need to be completed within existing resources.

4. Head of Legal Services Comments

Any comments will be table at the meeting

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

6.1 Housing Scrutiny Panel report 'The Council's Approach to Private Sector Housing'

7. Strategic Implications

The Council proposes to develop a private sector strategy covering the period 2008 to 2012.

The strategy will draw, in part, upon the March 2005 Scrutiny review of private sector housing. That review identified a range of issues that required action.

The officers developing the private sector strategy will draw upon the evidence collected in monitoring the scrutiny report to inform and develop a private new sector strategy.

8. Background

In March 2005 the Council undertook a scrutiny review of private sector housing services entitled 'The Council's approach to Private Sector Housing.'

This report highlights the importance of that scrutiny review and sets out the progress made against the recommendations.

Attached at **Annex A** is a summary of the recommendations and the details of progress made.

9. Financial Implications

There have been no additional resources identified in connection with the preparation of Private Sector Housing Strategy. All work will need to be completed within existing resources.

10. Legal Implications

Any comments will be table at the meeting

11. Equalities

The monitoring information addresses a range of equality issues. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) will be carried out as part of the development of the new private sector strategy and any issues arising will be addressed.

12. Conclusion.

This is a progress report updating Members on progress made against the 52 recommendations in the Scrutiny review of private housing.

The information will be used to inform the development of the private sector housing strategy.

SCRUTINY UPDATE

Scrutiny Recommendation and Executive Decision

Target Implementation Date

Who Responsible

Implemented?

Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes

This must be completed

SECTION ONE: EMPTY PROPERTIES	Target Implementation Date	Who Responsible (who and what)	Yes/No*	Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes
<p>Recommendation One</p> <p>The Director of Housing Services should ensure joint working with the Empty Property Officer in partnership with Benefits & Local Taxation Team to design an up-to-date database showing breakdown of all empty properties in the private sector. (Agreed)</p>	?	<p>Rupert Brandon/Moira Lucas</p> <p>Meetings have been held between the EPO and Benefits/Taxation staff to improve joint working around empty property. The EPO has access to the Benefits/Taxation database which lists empty properties. This is used as a basis for intervention work around private sector empty properties.</p>	<p>Yes (Partly)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council tax records will be used to help develop a database. A timetable for implementation will be agreed between the Housing Service and Council Tax. BV64 should be achieved for 07/08, which measures the number of empty private sector dwellings returned to occupation. The target for 07/07 is 100 properties.
<p>Recommendation Two</p> <p>The Director of Housing Services should ensure that the database is maintained through continued partnership with Benefits Service and the Empty Property Officer. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Rupert Brandon/Moira Lucas</p> <p>The Empty Property Officer has had access to the Council Tax database for the past year.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database developed by having direct access to C/T records.
<p>Recommendation Three</p> <p>Benefits & Local Taxation Team should ensure that the Empty Property Officer has direct access to its computer information systems/screen(s), subject to Access to Information implications. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Rupert Brandon/Moira Lucas</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Empty Property Officer has had access to the Council Tax database for the last year.
<p>Recommendation Four</p> <p>The Directors of Housing & Environmental Services should design clear standards and criteria for when enforced sales; compulsory purchases or empty homes management orders procedures should commence. The Panel suggests 1 year for empty properties, after which a decision should be made as to which of the three procedures should be adopted and then</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>Within general criteria of debt to Council and non action by owner, each potential case is assessed for likelihood of successful enforcement action. Eg. if sufficient outstanding debt to Council – enforced sale; if repairs can be recovered from rent – EDMOs: others CPOs. NLSR has appointed two CPO</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A cross service group has been set up, which looks at options for enforcement. This group will develop criteria. The Panel's suggestion of 1 year as a time when a decision is made, is noted. Haringey has signed up to deliver EDMO through NLSR. Contract at tender stage. CPO programme

Scrutiny Recommendation and Executive Decision	Target Implementation Date	Who Responsible	Implemented?	Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes
		(who and what)	Yes/No*	This must be completed being initiated by Enforcement Service.
<p>appropriate and immediate action should be implemented in every case. (Agreed)</p> <p>Recommendation Five</p> <p>Benefits & Local Taxation Team should include leaflet / information about empty properties with next annual Council Tax bill to all residents. Also when owners register their vacant properties with Benefits & Local Taxation Team, information should be sent to them outlining the various options available, highlighting penalties to be imposed for failing to comply with the Council's requirements, concerning bringing empty properties back into use. Also the final 2 letters sent to owners should emphasise clearly the penalties and actions the Council will take to bring empty properties into use. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Officers and one day is spent in Haringey</p> <p>Rupert Brandon/Moira Lucas</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information booklet was circulated with 2005 council tax bill. Specific information on options and penalties directed to owners of empty properties will be developed. This information is already given out.
<p>Recommendation Six</p> <p>Placing a Registered Charge against an empty property allows enforced sales procedures to be enacted. The Panel recommends that Benefits & Local Taxation Team should set a financial threshold for when a Charge should be levied against a vacant property (the Panel suggest when the debt reaches £1,000); when the property has been empty for over 6 months; or at identified trigger points. The Charge on empty properties should be registered at the earliest opportunity, preferably (subject to legal constraints) after the despatch of the first bill and reminder, if still unpaid. The cost for administration should be added to the Charge. The sum charged should incur interest at the same level set by the Small Claims Court accumulating until final settlement. (Agreed)</p>	2008	<p>Rupert Brandon</p> <p>Financial threshold is currently set at £2,000 but will remain under review. The recommendation of £1,000 was considered but it is felt that £3,000 be applied unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. poor condition. C/T to decide.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial threshold will remain under review.
<p>Recommendation Seven</p> <p>The Executive should ensure that recording of all outstanding debts owed to the Council from different departments across the authority is</p>	?	<p>Rupert Brandon</p> <p>Each service department is responsible for collection of debt, but debt activity is</p>	Yes	

Scrutiny Recommendation and Executive Decision	Target Implementation Date	Who Responsible	Implemented?	Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes
			Yes/No*	This must be completed
centrally co-ordinated. (Agreed)		(who and what) co-ordinated, monitored and reviewed corporately via the Debt Management Board (this is done effectively through Legal Services collating data from service departments and Council Tax.)	No	
Recommendation Eight	2007	Rupert Brandon This in practice does not happen. Environmental Health Officers report to the Empty Property Officer and further checks are then undertaken. Ad hoc information is being returned from various sources.	N	
Recommendation Nine	2007	Rupert Brandon	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new campaign about empty properties is due this summer.
Recommendation Ten	2007	Rupert Brandon Empty properties can be reported via the Haringey website but we will review the link location to ensure it is easily accessible. There are also Haringey and North London empty property hot lines.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to participate in the London wide empty property hotline.
Recommendation Eleven	2008	Rupert Brandon	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated Empty Property Strategy is due to be developed in June 2007.
Recommendation Twelve				

Scrutiny Recommendation and Executive Decision	Target Implementation Date	Who Responsible (who and what)	Implemented? Yes/No*	Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes
<p>The Executive should increase the staffing level in the Empty Properties Group to ensure effective delivery of the strategy. And ensure that empty properties is part of the Better Haringey Campaign, funding from this budget should be explored. Funding from the North-London sub region should also be explored. (Not Agreed)</p>	N/A	<p>Rupert Brandon The Business Planning process did not agree extra resources for empty property work. The resource implications of the implementation of the Empty Property Strategy will be reviewed and feed into the Business Planning process, as appropriate. Additional resources have been available in 2004/05 and will be in 2005/06 as a result of sub regional bidding activity.</p>	Yes	<p>This must be completed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sub region has identified additional resources for empty property work.
<p>Recommendation Thirteen The Director of Housing Services should ensure that (under current financial rules) provided a property is acquired under Compulsory Purchase Order and is resold within 3 years, 100% of the sale proceeds should be returned to the housing capital programme budget. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers are working on a list of 20 properties which satisfy criteria. One case will be forward planned for CPO test case
<p>Recommendation Fourteen The Director of Housing Services should consider disposing of properties (acquired under Compulsory Purchase Order) to Registered Social Landlords or private sector developers. (Agreed in part)</p>	2007	<p>Rupert Brandon/Robin Payne</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our preferred option, when disposing of properties acquired through enforcement action is to sell to RSLs. If this is not possible the property will be sold at auction.
<p>Recommendation Fifteen The Director of Housing Services should investigate the Government's pilot scheme for Compulsory Leasing of long-term private empty homes and consider participating in the scheme. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Rupert Brandon/Robin Payne</p>	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration given to EDMOs but not recommended at present.
<p>SECTION TWO: INITIATIVES FOR ELDERLY OWNER-OCCUPIERS AND PRIVATE RENTED TENANTS</p>				
<p>Recommendation Sixteen The Directors of Housing & Environmental Services should ensure that leaflets, booklets and videos of the House Proud Scheme and the Council's grant schemes are developed in</p>	2007	<p>Lynn Seller In January 2006 the contract between Haringey Council and House Proud</p>	Yes	<p>The sub region has trained 2 officers from the Metropolitan Care and Repair</p>

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			Yes/No*	
<p>different community languages. They should be circulated to likely grant recipients or people living in priority areas, at luncheon clubs and other organisations that work with the elderly to raise awareness of the scheme. (Agreed in part)</p>		<p>(who and what) expired. Before renewing our contract with House Proud the Housing, Grants and Regeneration group carried out telephone consultation with the residents currently on the House Proud waiting list and with those residents who had benefited from the service. The group also consulted with the North London Sub Regional Partners on their current position with House proud and the provision of Equity Release. It was agreed that the contract with House Proud would not be renewed and that a new equity release package would be investigated to provide similar advice on a sub regional basis.</p>		<p>This must be completed to provide equity release advice as an alternative to House Proud.</p>
<p>Recommendation Seventeen Consideration should be given by the Director of Environmental Services to extending the role and partnership of Metropolitan Care and Repair to provide a wider range of services to provide intensive help with repairs and improvements to vulnerable homeowners (Agreed in principle)</p>	2007	<p>Rupert Brandon/Lynn Sellar Through our partnership with Metropolitan care and repair a model for the delivery of our local area agreement to reduce carbon emission across the borough has been set up. This delivery model will utilise our decent homes grant funding through this partnership as well as support a handy person service</p>	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LAA partnership to commence in 2008. The partnership involves Age Concern, handy person and the Fire Authority.

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<p>Recommendation Eighteen</p> <p>The Director of Environmental Services should ensure better co-ordination of information between the various agencies working with the elderly to check that the hard to reach and vulnerable clients are referred for the various grants and services available. (Agreed in principle)</p>	2007	<p>provided by Met Care through Age Concern. It is envisaged that this partnership may extend to providing home assessments based on the Housing Act 2004 Housing Health and Safety Risk Rating System.</p> <p>Information on the new delivery model for decent home grants has been established and will be provided through 'Here To HELP'</p> <p>Under the new delivery model for decent homes our key partners for delivery will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Gas and the 'here to HELP' scheme. Eaga Partnership and Governments 'Warm Front' initiative Age Concern and the 'Handy Person' Fire Service Met Care <p>It is envisaged that due to the new eligibility criteria introduced with decent homes that Sure Start will be used as a means of advertising the funding and grants available to a new set of vulnerable clients which includes families in receipt of working Families Tax Credit when their joint income is less than £14,200 .</p> <p>Through better co-ordination with these partners on board greater out reach work to those more harder to reach groups will be attainable.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure alternatives approaches to information sharing and consider the resources implication of this actions • Delivery model for decent homes grants was agreed sub regionally and Haringey are now in a position to implement the programme. • Relevant information on the funding available to vulnerable residents will be provided to partners through series of presentations delivered by British Gas.
<p>Recommendation Nineteen</p> <p>It is recommended that Housing and Environmental Services make use of training and briefing events (including the use of</p>	2007	<p>Lynn Seller</p> <p>Urban Environment has continued to use its management briefing system to</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with adult, culture and community services, adaptations

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		(who and what)	Yes/No*	This must be completed
<p>newsletters and other communication materials) to emphasize the range of grant services available so that those staff working at the frontline with the elderly are well informed and kept up to date. For example a copy of the handbook:</p> <p>"your guide to local services - services for older people in Haringey" should be distributed to all such staff and agencies including the Primary Care Trust, homehelp and community nurses when these documents are produced.</p> <p>(Agreed)</p>		<p>inform staff of services available and new initiatives. Future training and regular team meetings will also be used to inform staff of relevant services and schemes. The recent development of the Urban Environment Directorate allow for enhanced working relationships with housing strategy and needs, children and young people as well as adult culture and community services.</p> <p>Our partnership with aids and adaptation services and the PCT will ensure that relevant information is shared between the services so that clients are offered a full range of options and assistance. Greater consultation, advice and training to all staff and the Voluntary Community sector who are involved with vulnerable clients will be one of the main aims of the new decent homes delivery model.</p>		<p>team is already functioning through a referral process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity events are planned with the fuel poverty officer for April 07 onwards to promote energy efficiency grants for vulnerable residents through Voluntary and Community Sector.
<p>Recommendation Twenty</p> <p>Housing & Environmental Services should ensure a monitoring/feedback exercise is undertaken of people who have accessed grants service which would be a useful way of obtaining accurate assessment of needs and resources for future provision.</p> <p>(Agreed)</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>Lynn Seller</p> <p>The Housing Regulatory Reform Order and its supporting Haringey Private Sector Housing Policy is no longer supported by the Housing Capital Grants programme. This has meant that the delivery of financial assistance towards private sector home owners to assist in maintaining their properties has had to cease.</p> <p>Funding for grant assistance in Haringey is now provided through the North London Sub Region. Funding for home improvements in Haringey has dropped from 33million to approximately £500,000 per year. The delivery of sub regional funding is strictly governed by the rules set by GOL. The service is</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service operates surveys on closed grants and enquiries. Performance for 2006/7 shows that 91% are very satisfied or satisfied with the service. 9% did not respond.

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				<i>This must be completed</i>
(who and what)				
<p>Recommendation Twenty One</p> <p>To overcome the current backlog of the Disabled Facilities Grant the following is recommended:</p> <p>a) Minor adaptations to be funded through the Home Improvements Grant.</p> <p>(b) Assessments for minor adaptations to be undertaken by Occupational Therapists Assistants. This will require some officers to be trained in the assessment procedures. This would leave Occupational Therapists free to concentrate on the major or more complex adaptations. Since writing this report, the Panel is pleased to learn that an agency technician as well as an Occupational Therapy Assistant/Technician has been employed by the service.</p> <p>c) Currently there is one technician attached to the Occupational Therapist team who is responsible for carrying out the minor adaptations. We were told that this works well and the officer concerned has completed over 100 adaptations over a six month period. The Panel recommends that the opportunity for expanding this arrangement should be considered and/or a member of the Haringey Homes & Building Services team be seconded to work in the</p>		<p>therefore restricted to how it can meet the needs of residents wishing to access grants which are currently outside the funding remit.</p> <p>Monitoring and feedback is obtained on the service provided and can be adapted to assess future need. Funding to meet this need would however have to be made available.</p>	<p>Yes/No*</p>	
		<p>Steve Russell</p>		

Scrutiny Recommendation and Executive Decision	Target Implementation Date	Who Responsible (who and what)	Implemented? Yes/No*	Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes <i>This must be completed</i>
<p>Occupational Therapist team as an additional technician.</p> <p>d) An alternative solution would be to sub-contract Metropolitan Care & Repair who we were told has a strong track record to assess and carry out all minor adaptations. (Not Agreed)</p> <p>Recommendation Twenty Two</p>				
<p>The Executive should consider piloting an external Handyperson scheme from Metropolitan Care and Repair maybe using regeneration funding.</p> <p>This would be along the lines of the current internal Handyperson scheme to include charging a subsidised fee and a hardship fund. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Lynn Sellar The Handyperson scheme is already an external service available across the borough through Met Care and Repair and Age Concern. Due to a loss of capital funding for housing improvements the enforcement service is no longer in a position to fund the handy person to target its services to the regeneration or renewal areas within the borough or to support any wider activity across the borough.</p> <p>The Handy person is a partner in our future model for delivering a stretch target as part of our LAA and is also a charity partner advertised through 'here to HELP' scheme. Pump priming funding obtained through the LAA will help fund better co-ordination of the handy person in order to enhance the delivery of our LAA target and fund additional handy person services</p>	Yes	<p>Handy person scheme has been incorporated into the delivery model for LAA to start April 07.</p> <p>This performance managed through Metropolitan Care and Repair. Funding through the house improvement grant programme is no longer available</p>
<p>Recommendation Twenty Three</p> <p>It is recommended that The Older People's Strategy Group (Chief Executive's Service) be encouraged by Housing and Environmental Services to look further at the wider issues for private homeowners and also to consider whether or not there is a case for targeting</p>	2005	<p>Mary Hennigan</p>	YES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A study looking at the housing needs of older people across all tenures was commissioned and the results will be used to inform the development of a comprehensive older people's Housing Strategy.

Scrutiny Recommendation and Executive Decision	Target Implementation Date	Who Responsible (who and what)	Implemented? Yes/No*	Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes <i>This must be completed</i>
support at e.g. over 65s or even over 70s age groups. (Agreed)				
Recommendation Twenty Four It is recommended that The Older People Strategy Group should be encouraged to look at issues associated with disabled adaptations for elderly people living in temporary accommodation and whether more can be done to assist this section of the community. (Agreed)	2007	Steve Russell	No	This will outcome will be linked to the work programme arising from the Scrutiny review of Adaptations
Recommendation Twenty Five According to the Housing Needs Survey approximately 39% of homeowners aged over 50 in the borough own their homes outright. The Executive should consider developing policies that could assist owner occupiers access private finance and equity release (non-mortgaged home equity) to encourage them to improve their properties with their own resources. This would ensure that limited resources are directly targeted to those most in need in addition to the HouseProud Scheme. (Agreed in part)	2008	Lynn Seller In January 2006 the contract between Haringey Council and House Proud expired. Before renewing our contract with House Proud the Housing, Grants and Regeneration group carried out telephone consultation with the residents currently on the House Proud waiting list and with those residents who had benefited from the service. The group also consulted with the North London Sub Regional Partners on their current position with House proud and the provision of Equity Release. From the information provided it was agreed that whilst only two residents wished to pursue their House Proud enquiry out of 31 residents on the waiting list and in response to some negative feedback from both the sub regional and House Proud clients that the contract would not be renewed.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility of Fair money initiative carried out as part of North London Sub Region. Following procurement of the fair money tender training has been provided to two officers from Metropolitan Care and Repair to provide equity release advice as an alternative to House Proud. The sub Region is to determine how this will replace House Proud.
Recommendation Twenty Six It is recommended that the Council ends the practice of carrying out disabled adaptations for	?	Steve Russell It is a statutory requirement to assist	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin discussions with RSL's to look at opportunities for them to

Scrutiny Recommendation and Executive Decision	Target Implementation Date	Who Responsible	Implemented?	Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes
<p>tenants of Registered Social Landlords and that Housing and Environmental Services explore alternative arrangements with RSLs for financing disabled adaptations to their properties (Not Agreed)</p>		<p>(who and what) disabled households through the provision of disabled facilities grants. RSL tenants must be considered in the same way as other applicants. However, we will begin discussions with RSLs on this matter and look at opportunities for them taking responsibility by agreement.</p>	<p>Yes/No*</p>	<p><i>This must be completed</i> take responsibility by agreement</p>
<p>SECTION THREE: THE LANDLORD ACCREDITED SCHEME</p>				
<p>Recommendation Twenty Seven</p>				
<p>The Director of Housing Services should ensure that the Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LAS) is rolled out as a permanent housing option for the Council. (Agreed)</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>Rupert Brandon Properties delivered through the Accredited Lettings Scheme (ALS) will be available as a housing option for households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Scheme has been made available as an AST Option as part of Prevention and Options Strategy</p>	<p>?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancies are normally granted for 6-12 months with renewal a likely outcome. • We will secure as long a tenancy as possible to encourage stability.
<p>Recommendation Twenty Eight</p>				
<p>The Executive should ensure that there are adequate resources within the scheme to increase staffing levels in order to ensure that development of the scheme is maintained. At the moment development has stalled due to uncertainty over funding and reorganisation of homelessness services. It is also difficult for the project leaders to continue development of the scheme, as they have to carry out their core duties. Full consideration should be given to government funding regarding social housing and any advantages/disadvantages that may occur</p>	<p>2007</p>	<p>Rupert Brandon</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing resources have been reviewed as part of the review of the pilot scheme. • The scheme is being mainstreamed as one of a number of AST options available. It will benefit from additional landlord advisory support, tenancy and housing benefit support

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				This must be completed
<p>should any change be implemented or planned by the government that would affect the future financial viability of this scheme to the Council. (Agreed)</p> <p>Recommendation Twenty Nine</p> <p>It is recommended that Housing Services improve promotion of the LAS to enhance awareness of landlords, letting agents, tenants and Council services borough-wide. (Agreed)</p>	2007	Rupert Brandon	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A promotional strategy will be developed during the next year that will promote all AST schemes. The scheme has been promoted to Agents, applicants and landlords.
<p>Recommendation Thirty</p> <p>It is essential that there are sufficient staffing resources to deal with any major expansion of the scheme. This is particularly the case in respect of the housing benefit processes that are involved whether at the outset of the tenancy or to deal with the ongoing maintenance of the claims throughout the lifetime of the tenancy. (Agreed)</p>	2007	Rupert Brandon	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See recommendation 2. Funding for interim housing benefit resource allocated and recruitment in process.
<p>Recommendation Thirty One</p> <p>The Council Executive should ensure increased financial resources and long-term commitment from the Council to ensure sustainability of the scheme. (Agreed)</p>	2007	Rupert Brandon	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £300,000 has been identified over the next 3 years, which confirms the commitment to the scheme.
<p>Recommendation Thirty Two</p> <p>The Council Executive should lobby the government to ensure that proposed changes to the method of payment of housing benefits (to direct payment) does not adversely impact on the scheme and vulnerable tenants should have their housing benefit paid directly to landlords. (Agreed)</p>	?	Rupert Brandon	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobbying of the Government on the proposed changes has been carried out. Our regular evaluation and monitoring process will ensure direct dialogue with HB support, Rent Service, letting agents and landlords to gather evidence to support the effect of the payment methods. Problems have arisen due to low levels of Rent Officer

Scrutiny Recommendation and Executive Decision	Target Implementation Date	Who Responsible (who and what)	Implemented? Yes/No*	Service or Performance Improvement Measurable outcomes
<p>Recommendation Thirty Three</p> <p>The Director of Housing Services should ensure the development of a Housing Benefit Service Level Agreement between the Council and National Approved Letting Schemes (NALs) Accredited Letting Agents. (Agreed in part)</p>	?	Rupert Brandon	Yes	<p><i>This must be completed</i></p> <p>determinations which make housing benefit lets uncompetitive. Discussions being held with Rent Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The intention is that the service level agreement will be between the Housing Benefit Service and the Housing Service and not with the NALs Accredited Letting Agents. The agreement will also be protected by the provision of services contract between the letting agents and the council. Similar SLAs will apply to all lettings schemes developed. Potential SLA has been drafted and is now subject to positive discussion
<p>Recommendation Thirty Four</p> <p>The Director of Housing Services should consider renaming the Scheme to reflect the comprehensive accreditation of landlord, letting agent, property, tenant and the procurement objectives to meet the needs of an alternative housing option for the council. (Agreed)</p>	2006	Rupert Brandon	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The suggested name is the Accredited Letting Scheme (ALS). This recognises the comprehensive aims of the scheme.
<p>Recommendation Thirty Five</p> <p>The Director of Housing Services should renew the Contract of Provisions of Services Supplied for the Management of the Scheme. The contract will need a greater degree of detail; as regards to how the scheme regulates the property, agents, landlords and tenants is necessary. Together with a Professional Indemnity Insurance and</p>	2006	Rupert Brandon	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new contract was agreed in May 2006. Renewal will need to be undertaken in May 07

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<p>Client Money Protection Policy which covers the deposits. (Contract expires in March 31st 2005). (Agreed)</p> <p>Recommendation Thirty Six</p> <p>The Director of Housing Services should consider the introduction of dedicated 'Tenancy Support Officers' posts to interface between the tenants, landlords, agents and the Council thus providing sustainability and ongoing support for the tenancies. (Agreed in principle)</p>	2006	<p>Rupert Brandon</p> <p>These support options will be available for all options offered and not tied to this specific scheme. Prevention and Options has now gone live with P&O Officers dealing with prevention issues. ALS and other AST schemes have also been supported by Housing Supply staff.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenancy sustainment work will be carried out either by the Prevention and Options Officers (resulting from the Homelessness Improvement Project) or floating support services depending on the nature of the case.
<p>Recommendation Thirty Seven</p> <p>The Director of Housing Services should ensure that appropriate monitoring procedures are in place to measure outcomes and success of the scheme. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Rupert Brandon</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear targets are being developed and will be monitored to ensure that the scheme meets its objectives and targets. Targets and monitoring in place.
<p>Recommendation Thirty Eight</p> <p>In order that the Landlord Accreditation Scheme acts in accordance with the Council's vision for sustainable communities, the Panel recommends that the Directors of Housing and Environmental Services ensure that criteria for social housing mix (70% in the west of the borough and 30% in the east) is complied with. (Not Agreed in this context)</p> <p>Recommendation Thirty Nine</p> <p>With reference to standard requirements, the Panel recommends that in addition to the landlords complying with all the criteria listed in the one star rating, the following should also be included in that rating: (i) accurate</p>	2007	<p>Rupert Brandon</p> <p>The scheme does not deliver social housing and is dependent on tenant demand and property availability. We will, however, monitor any impact on local communities.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor any impact on local communities
<p>With reference to standard requirements, the Panel recommends that in addition to the landlords complying with all the criteria listed in the one star rating, the following should also be included in that rating: (i) accurate</p>	2007	<p>Rupert Brandon</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the next six months the entry criteria for the letting agents, landlord, properties and tenants will be formalised using the pilot scheme model as a benchmark.

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<p>inventory (ii) provisions of operating instructions for appliances, burglar alarms etc (iii) planned cyclical maintenance system. (Agreed)</p>				<p><i>This must be completed</i></p> <p>We will also be consulting with Environmental Services and letting agents when formalising this process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within ALS Agents are expected to provide best practice.
<p>SECTION FOUR: HOUSING IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION AND THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN</p>				
<p>Recommendation Forty</p>				
<p>The Directors of Housing and Environmental Services should target the use of grants for improvement and more external maintenance in the private rented sector and explore the use of Neighbourhood Renewal Funds to develop this. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Grants are already targeted in our Renewal Policy towards delivering improvements in the private rented sector. NRF funding has been used to deliver improvements for properties above shops and HMOs</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider opportunities to bid for future funding for the scheme that replaces the NRF will be considered.
<p>Recommendation Forty One</p>				
<p>The Executive should use the Better Haringey Initiative to exercise enforcement powers to ensure that Houses in Multiple Occupations (HMOs) are of a satisfactory standard and comply with Health and Safety Regulations: funding from the Better Haringey Initiative budget should be explored to achieve this. (Agreed in principle)</p>	?	<p>The links to Better Haringey are established and are very important. The Better Haringey budget has, however, been set for 2005/06 and no additional resources to fund additional Environmental Health Officers were agreed.</p>	Yes	
<p>Recommendation Forty Two</p>				
<p>The Executive should ensure that proactive measures are introduced to accurately identify the number of HMOs in the borough. Once the numbers have been confirmed, the highest priority should be directed at removing unfit and swift action taken where unlicensed HMOs have been identified. Additionally, the Better Haringey Initiative should be encouraged to employ extra Environmental Health Officers to assist in accurately identifying the numbers of HMOs and</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne This recommendation is an extremely resource intensive request. It is a task which would remain infinite and therefore would remain unachievable. There has not been an obvious business case made available to carryout this type of investigation and has not as yet been part of the better Haringey initiative. The Enforcement Service restructure</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are working to proactively identify HMOs and at this time are targeting 3 and 4 storey HMOs to aid licensing and HMOs on High Roads and in renewal areas. However, to reach a fully comprehensive figure may prove difficult and resource intensive. • NRF project proactively aims to identify HMO on the boroughs main

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<p>carry out effective inspection of these properties. It is essential that, at least, current staffing levels be maintained. (Agreed)</p>		<p>and its pending strategy has set very clear priorities around the role of HMO inspection and HMO licensing.</p> <p>Work has been carried out and will be continued to proactively identify HMOs above shops on the main thoroughfares as part of an NRF funded initiative. Identifying 3 and 4 storey HMOs across the borough was a priority set for the HMO team in 2006-07 which was successfully completed.</p> <p>A specific request as part of a private sector housing stock condition survey which needs to be commissioned.</p>	<p><i>This must be completed</i></p>	<p>thoroughfare and has specifically targeted accommodation above shops. The Identification of 3 & 4 storey HMOs were targeted in 06-07 in line with introduction of HMO licensing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandatory licensing applications exceeded its year 1 target, 242 had been received by end of 2006/7 and are being prioritised for action.
<p>Recommendation Forty Three</p> <p>There are also problems nationally with the recruitment and retention of skilled staff and this can only get worse with the new Housing Act. The Panel recommends that the Council continue to work with other London boroughs to overcome some of these problems. Solving skills shortages must be seen as a priority.</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>Work on recruitment and retention is being considered in the North London sub regional private sector group. The lack of skills to deliver some of the sub regional housing priorities has been identified and is being resolved sub regionally by sharing skilled staff and through sub regional recruitment. Enforcement service is currently benefiting from a Sub regional CPO officer. Environmental Service is promoting Positive, Action Training Highway (PATH).</p> <p>A recent report released 'Rogers Review' has highlighted the future priorities for environmental health. The enforcement restructure and pending recruitment programme aims to reflect some of these recommendations.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sub region is recruiting and providing specialist support officers. Haringey is benefiting from 1 officer 1 day per week on empty properties. have one PATH student.

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(who and what)				Yes/No*
<p>Recommendation Forty Four</p> <p>The Panel recommends that there is a need to build capacity by reviewing requirements and capabilities, so that costs and additional staff resources are identified, and that the Directors Housing and Environmental Services should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consider carefully whether to use the powers in the Housing Act 2004 to extend licensing under the additional licensing and/or the selective licensing schemes. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide a well-resourced tenancy relations service to inform tenants and other agencies of their legal rights. <input type="checkbox"/> Invest in good quality well managed, long term privately rented homes by building on and enhancing the Haringey Landlord Accreditation Scheme. <p>(Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>The Enforcement service has a new agreed structure and a new strategy which has been provided to overview and scrutiny is shortly to be presented to the Executive. The resource for Housing enforcement will reflect a smaller overall establishment but with a narrow focus on empty properties, rogue landlords, unauthorised development and the control of houses in multiple occupation through the use of mandatory and discretionary licensing. Mandatory licensing is about to enter its second year of a projected 3 year programme. Income from this and through NRF funding for flats above shops has allowed the service to maintain an overall capacity of 19 posts. We are currently working on a pilot for discretionary licensing as part of a future strategy for a balanced budget in future years.</p>	Yes	<p><i>This must be completed</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A first draft PID is being considered by the Myddleton Road Steering Group.
<p>Recommendation Forty Five</p> <p>The Director of Environmental Services should ensure that the Supplementary Planning Guidance is produced on target.</p> <p>(Not Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Sule Nisancioglu</p>	NO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on housing is being produced to reflect the new national guidance and will inform the Councils Local Development Framework.
<p>Recommendation Forty Six</p> <p>It will be necessary for the Council to publicise the introduction of mandatory licensing. This should include advertising and producing information material such as leaflets for HMO</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>The introduction of mandatory licensing was a huge success for Haringey. The introduction of the new licensing powers</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising and publicity regarding the introduction of HMO licensing was carried out nationally and sub regionally Haringey published its

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<p>operators. Information should also be publicised on the Council's Website. Officers should investigate some of the methods used by other London boroughs, such as providing a comprehensive guide on HMOs for the Council, tenants and landlords. (Agreed)</p>		<p>was achieved on time and was launched through a successful publicity campaign using the methods asked of in the housing Act 2004 Guidance, including information on the council website, local radio stations, leaflets and information in community languages. Our target for initial responses was set at 150 for year one this target was exceeded with 240 initial responses.</p> <p>Landlords are now able to access information and make applications via the website in line with BVPI 157.</p> <p>Information sharing and the publication of information on HMO licensing is carried out using methods via the North London Private Sector group as this offers better value for money.</p>		<p><i>This must be completed</i></p> <p>policy in March 06. publicity and information leaflets were provided well into Aug 06. Information can now be obtained through the enforcement website which is regularly updated.</p>
<p>Recommendation Forty Seven</p> <p>With reference to the computerised database for monitoring HMOs it is recommended that the database include the number of licensing applications received; licences granted; refusals; types and sizes of HMOs; the length of time for which licences are granted and the reasons for refusal.</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>Currently data on HMO licensing is manually recorded using an excel data spreadsheet. The recommended monitoring information is being recorded as part of this system. M3 brand new system with better reporting facilities etc computer system is currently being developed and enhanced to ensure that any information requested on HMO licensing can be manipulated effectively to produce the relevant data.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The database will include information on HMOs, which are licensed and consideration will be given to the inclusion of this range of information. 140 licensing applications have been received and entered onto the data base. 70 licenses have been granted with the remaining 70 cases allocated to HMO officers. To date no licenses have been refused
<p>Recommendation Forty Eight</p> <p>The Panel recommends joint working with the fire service, police, voluntary organisations and other relevant agencies be established. Working at sub-regional level among authorities, the police, and the fire service and other agencies in the application of the Licensing Act could provide examples of good practice.</p>	2006	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>Joint working on private sector housing is already well advanced with partnerships meeting regularly to discuss relevant cases and to share good practice.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint working on private sector housing is already well advanced. Meetings with the fire authority take place every 2 weeks and with the region monthly.

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(Agreed)		(who and what)	Yes/No*	This must be completed
<p>Recommendation Forty Nine</p> <p>It is recommended that elected Members should receive information designed to increase their awareness of the range of HMO powers available to the Council.</p> <p>The Information should detail how powers are to be used, and under what circumstances, and to establish the most appropriate and effective methods of dealing with these properties as a corporate issue. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>Members to be provided with information training and will include training on planning enforcement.</p>	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members have received training on the Housing Act 2004 specifically around HMO licensing powers and their use and the Housing Health and Safety Risk Rating system.
<p>Recommendation Fifty</p> <p>We welcome the establishment of the HMO working group and feel that it is important that any powers bear in mind that the use of circumstances will depend on the individual circumstances of each particular case. In particular the Council should decide how to treat tenants if an HMO closes due to the refusal of a licence. The new Strategy will also need to have regard to the Human Rights of the Landlords; the occupiers and the Council's obligations in respect of the homeless. (Agreed)</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>An HMO working group is due to be reconfigured and is a priority within both the Private Sector Housing strategy and the Enforcement strategy. The HMO working group will look at specific priorities including rogue landlords and better tenant relations. The enforcement service restructure has also put in place a post which will focus specifically on landlord liaison which will assist this group in making decisions on individual cases.</p> <p>At a sub regional level an external contract to manage HMO Interim Management Orders and Empty Property Management Orders are being lead through L.B Islington.</p>	No	To be established.
<p>Recommendation Fifty One</p> <p>The Panel also recommends that the HMO working group should continue in existence for liaison purposes to promote a corporate and consistent approach. The working group can</p>	2007	<p>Robin Payne</p> <p>The HMO working group is due to reconvene following the implementation of the Enforcement Service restructure.</p>	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HMO working group to continue under new structure.

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provide a forum for HMO policy development; forge links between the Planning & HMO Services and clarify professional responsibilities, if necessary. (Agreed)		The role of the group will be to focus on those areas laid out within the recommendation and to ensure joint tactical working around HMO enforcement is carried out.		<i>This must be completed</i>