

Democratic Services Officer: Erica Fredericks (Ext. 37547)

29 August 2013

## **HOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP**

A meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group will be held in Committee Room 1 at the Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton on **Tuesday, 10 September 2013 at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Clayden (Chairman), Edwards (Vice-Chairman), Bicknell, Mrs Bower, Chapman, Mrs Goad, Mrs Harrison, Haymes, Mrs Oakley, Oliver-Redgate, Oppler, Pendleton, Squires, Dingemans (Cabinet Member), Mrs Madeley (Deputy to Cabinet Member), Elkins (Cabinet Member), Gammon (Deputy to Cabinet Member)

## **A G E N D A**

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Please send your apologies to Erica Fredericks – tel: 01903 737547 or e-mail: [erica.fredericks@arun.gov.uk](mailto:erica.fredericks@arun.gov.uk)

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are reminded to make any declaration of personal and/or prejudicial/pecuniary interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda.

You should declare your interest by stating:

- a) the item you have the interest in
- b) whether it is a personal interest and the nature of the interest
- c) whether it is also a prejudicial/pecuniary interest

You then need to re-declare your interest and the nature of the interest at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

3. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

5. GAS SAFETY CERTIFICATES VERBAL UPDATE

6. \*UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS WITH FORMULATION OF THE TENANTS SCRUTINY AND COMPLAINTS PANELS

This report provides information on the results of local consultation with Arun's Tenants and outlines the proposed next steps.

7. \*ROUGH SLEEPERS AND COLD WEATHER PROVISION

This report identifies a way forward for the development of an improved service for homelessness on a six month trial basis.

8. \*CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY

This report sets out the initial Action Plan to go with the Customer Services Access Strategy which was recently agreed. The Action Plan covers a number of areas of work and it will be expanded as individual services include their own projects. The report also describes what Customer Services at Arun will look like at the end of 2014/15

9. \*WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

To note the work programme for 2013/14 and make any necessary amendments.

(Note: \*Indicates report is attached for Members of the Committee only and the Press (excluding exempt items). Copies of reports can be viewed on the Council's web site at [www.arun.gov.uk](http://www.arun.gov.uk) or can be obtained on request from the Democratic Services Officer.)

'Subject to Approval at the Next Working Group Meeting'

HOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP

16 July 2013 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: - Councillors Clayden (Chairman), Bicknell, Chapman, Mrs Oakley, Oliver-Redgate, and Squires.

Councillors Elkins, Mrs Emberson, Evans, Gammon, Maconachie, Mrs Maconachie, Mrs Madeley and Steward were also present for either all or part of the meeting.

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Edwards, Mrs Goad and Mrs Pendleton. Apologies had also been received from the Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Councillor Dingemans.

In the absence of Councillor Edwards, Councillor Squires carried out the role of Vice-chairman for the duration of the meeting.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

12. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013 were approved by the Working Group and were signed by the Chairman.

13. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chairman confirmed that there were no items to consider.

14. GAS SAFETY CERTS VERBAL UPDATE

The Working Group had requested an update with respect to Gas Safety Certificates at every Housing & Customer Services Working Group meeting. It was noted that there were 9 Gas Certificates outstanding as of 16 July 2013 with 5 of those currently pursued by Legal to gain access to conduct a gas safety check.

‘Subject to Approval at the Next Working Group Meeting’

15. REVIEW OF ROUGH SLEEPERS AND COLD WEATHER SHELTER PROVISION

The Head of Housing presented his report on the Review of Rough Sleepers and Cold Weather Provision. The report identified the success of the homelessness night shelter operating from Glenlogie, delivered by Stonepillow, and outlined the possible next steps for the future development of the service.

It was explained that Arun District Council, along with Chichester District Council had the highest levels of homelessness of all Councils in West Sussex. For the past two winters the Council had operated a Night Shelter, with Stonepillow, between 1<sup>st</sup> November and April which had opened when the temperature was forecast as below minus zero degrees for three consecutive evenings. Members were informed that Arun District Council had made a successful grant application to Homeless Link for £2,000. This grant enabled Stonepillow to extend the service it was able to offer by funding a driver and fuel to transport rough sleepers from other areas of the Arun District to Bognor Regis. The grant also allowed advice sessions to take place at Glenlogie on evenings when the night shelter was not open.

It was reported that there had been significant use of the Night Shelter. During the last winter there were 443 visits and 291 overnight stays which highlighted the demand for a service that supported the homeless in the District. The Head of Housing advised that there were a number of options for the Council to consider. Following the decision to retain Glenlogie for the provision of six units of temporary accommodation, located on the floors above the basement, the opportunity was available to extend services beyond the night shelter provision during winter months.

The Head of Housing requested that the Working Group support further investigations into funding and development of a service to support homelessness and once this had been concluded brought back to a future meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group for consideration prior to recommendation to Cabinet.

The Chairman then introduced staff members from Stonepillow, a charitable organisation based in Chichester. A presentation was given outlining the work of Stonepillow and their mission to offer shelter, information and support to empower homeless and vulnerable people in order to make positive changes in their lives.

Key Items presented were –

- The proactive work between Stonepillow and Arun District Council was welcomed. The focus of the work was described as homelessness prevention as well as offering cold weather shelter provision.
- Members were informed that there had been a large increase of young people that had found themselves homeless. Broadly the types of homelessness was described as economic (including

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redundancies and loss of job), mental health, substance misuse, family breakdown, crime related (including prison discharge).

- The presentation outlined how Stonepillow focused on the prevention of homelessness whilst helping with the “recovery journey” for homeless individuals.

This included:

use of the day centre, the Old Glassworks - Assistance to homeless and vulnerably housed people. Members were advised that the centre provided breakfast, snack facilities, laundry facilities, statutory services, life skills training, GP Surgery, access to mental health nurse, substance misuse triage and a resettlement service.

the Arun Resettlement Worker supported by Stonepillow – It was stated that a primary worker had been appointed to support new rough sleepers into accommodation.

The Restore Project – This was explained as a project that provided purpose for homeless individuals with the provision of work that entailed the restoration of, donated, old furniture.

St Joseph’s – Members were informed that clients were offered an initial 28 day stay in supported living and specialist accommodation. It was noted that ex-offender support was also given to prevent further offences. The Clockwalk Project provided the substance misuse triage.

Mental Health Support – It was reported that individuals that suffered from mental health issues were often left vulnerable by the mental health system and Stonepillow had taken steps to close this gap.

ASURA (Abstinent Service User Recovery Assistant) – ASURA was described as a service of recovery workers who had experienced homelessness themselves and could identify with homeless individuals on a personal level.

- The presentation then described Stonepillow’s work on Cold Weather Shelter Provision at Glenlogie with Arun District Council. It was noted that the service is well run and there had been no reported incidents from its operation at this site. Stonepillow was pleased with the grant from Homelink that indicated their support for the work carried out.

Following a short question and answer session the Chairman thanked Stonepillow for their informative presentation and the Working Group commended the organisation for their excellent work.

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The Working Group Members were particularly pleased with the successful use of Glenlogie given that the Housing & Customer Services Working Group had strongly recommended the building’s retention as a cold weather shelter facility.

Councillor Evans, as an elected representative for Arun District Council, informed Members of the work of the project led by West Sussex County Council called Bognor Regis Community Street Outreach Project. It was reported that meetings take place on a quarterly basis and involved representatives from organisations that included Sussex Police, Stonepillow, Arun District Council’s Housing department and CRI (a social care and health charity working with individuals, families and communities across England and Wales that are affected by drugs, alcohol, crime, homelessness, domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour). It was reported that the project was tasked with outreach work for rough sleepers in Bognor Regis. It was confirmed that the project had been funded, in the main, by West Sussex County Council with the remainder from Arun District Council and Sussex Police. Stonepillow confirmed the excellent collaborative working between the agencies involved.

A question was raised as to whether CRI produce a newsletter or other means of updating Members with respect to their service. The Housing Services Manager stated that she would investigate.

The Working Group noted the Review of Rough Sleepers and Cold Weather Provision Report and agreed the report’s recommendation that the Housing & Customer Services Working Group support further investigation into funding and development of a service to support homelessness and once this had been concluded brought back to a future meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group for consideration prior to recommendation to Cabinet.

## 16. IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM ACT

The Head of Housing presented the report on the Implications of Welfare Reform changes on Arun Council Tenants which identified the possible next steps that would assist in reducing the impact of such changes.

The potential impact on tenants and Arun Housing Services was outlined.

### Key Items -

- It was noted that of the 2,400 working age tenants about 20% received full Housing Benefit and a further 20% received partial benefit. Tenants over pensionable age would be exempt from many of the welfare benefit changes.
- It was reported that the Council’s rental collection rate was good at 98.5%. Comment was made that this collection rate could suffer when tenants, under state pension age, in under occupied accommodation receive a housing benefit reduction of 14% for

‘Subject to Approval at the Next Working Group Meeting’

each room unoccupied. It was identified that it was too early to precisely predict levels of arrears.

- All 77 households affected by the Benefit Cap had received a letter from Arun District Council.
- Members noted that Housing Services would give consideration to appointing a Financial Inclusion Officer to increase Tenant Support.

Following question and discussion it was agreed that the report was speculative and required update when accurate information was available. The Head of Housing stated that he would further update the working group in January 2014. In view of this, the Working Group agreed not to support the report’s recommendation to forward the report for noting, to the Overview Select Committee, at this stage.

## 17. WORK PROGRAMME

The Housing & Customer Services Working Group amended the work programme 2013/14 with the addition of the Impact of the Welfare Reform Act at the meeting scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

It was suggested that Stonepillow could update the working group early in the municipal year 2014/15 and this suggestion would be included in the suggested item part of the work programme.

The Housing & Customer Services Working Group noted and agreed the work programme 2013/14.

(The meeting concluded at 7.40pm)

AGENDA ITEM NO.6ARUN DISTRICT COUNCILHOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING PARTY – 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013

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Information Paper

Subject : Tenant Scrutiny and Complaints Panels

Report by : Richard Ayres and Elaine Gray Report date: 6<sup>th</sup> August 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The attached information provides the results of local consultation with Arun tenants and outlines our next steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Elected Members are asked to note the report and approve the proposed next steps.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Previous Working Parties have received reports setting out the framework and general principles of tenant scrutiny and the new complaints handling requirements.

At the end of May 2013, Elaine Gray started as the Council's new Senior Tenant Participation Tenant Officer.

Since then we have written to all Council Tenants asking for their views on various aspects of Tenant Scrutiny and the setting up of a Tenants Complaints Panel.

The attached information provides the results of local consultation with Arun tenants and outlines our proposed next steps.

In addition, in the interim an Out of Pocket Expenses Policy has been approved by the Cabinet Member. This helps to remove one of the potential barriers to tenants getting involved and will allow us to recompense tenants for expenses they incur whilst working with the Council to shape future housing services and reviewing complaints.



We are now ready to embark on the formation of a Tenant Scrutiny Panel and a Tenants Complaints Panel along with the setting up of other more informal tenant involvement opportunities. The following activities are underway in order to facilitate this:

- Invite all interested participants to an introductory meeting to clarify what is involved.
- Development of job descriptions and person specification.
- Undertake recruitment process
- Training needs analysis and development of a training programme
- Appointment of official roles
- Statement of purpose / terms of reference

We aim to have completed all the above by the end of 2013.

**Background Papers:** Previous H&CSWP reports on Tenant Scrutiny and Complaints Panels

**Contact:** Richard Ayres / Elaine Gray

# Update on Progress

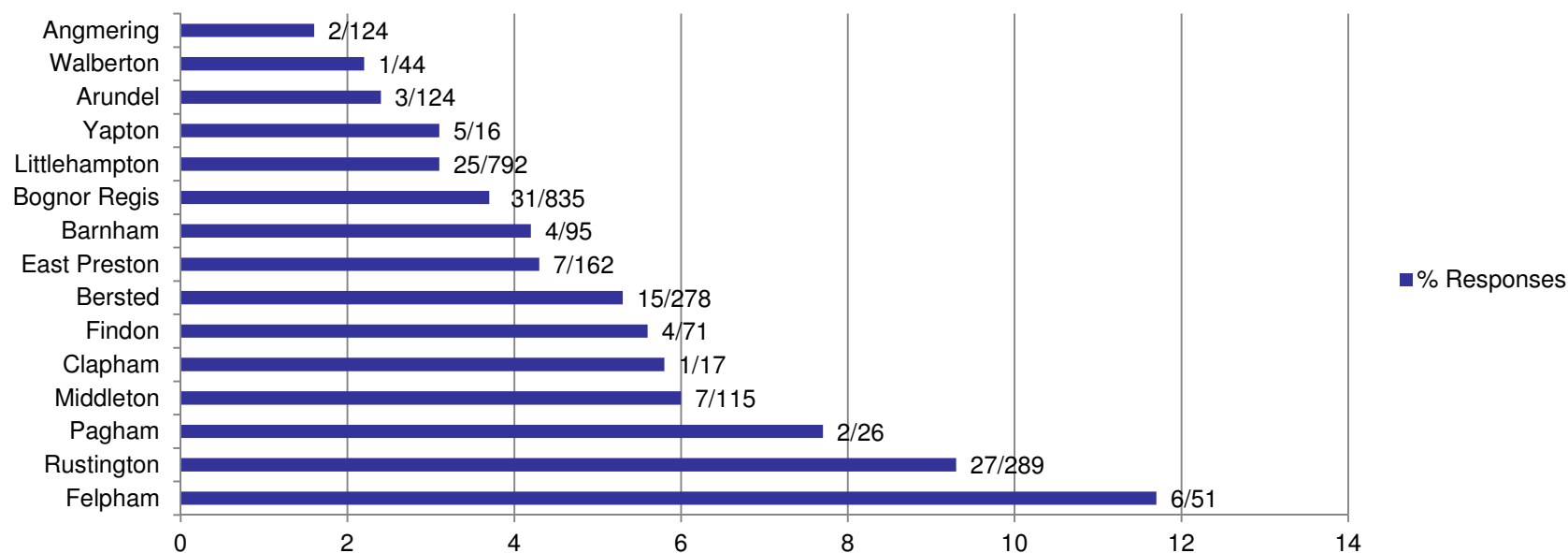
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- 143 Responses = 3.4% response rate
- 39 ✓ involvement with Tenant Scrutiny – 27%
- 44 ✓ involvement with Tenant Complaints Panel – 31%
- 33 ✓ would get involved with both
- 106 support the formation of a Tenants Complaints Panel – 74%
- 73 happy to be called for ad hoc feedback – 51%
- 101 happy to complete questionnaires and surveys – 71%
- Specific areas of interest:
  - Repairs – 42 = 29%
  - Anti-Social Behaviour – 36 = 25%
  - Environmental Issues – 29= 20%
  - Allocation of Council Homes – 26 = 18%
  - Caretaker Service – 23 = 16%

# Responses By Parish

|                     | Felpham | Rustington | Pagham | Middleton | Clapham | Findon | Bersted | East Preston | Barnham | Bognor Regis | Littlehampton | Yapton | Arundel | Walberton | Angmering |
|---------------------|---------|------------|--------|-----------|---------|--------|---------|--------------|---------|--------------|---------------|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| Number of responses | 6       | 27         | 2      | 7         | 1       | 4      | 15      | 7            | 4       | 31           | 25            | 5      | 3       | 1         | 2         |
| Number of Homes     | 51      | 289        | 26     | 115       | 17      | 71     | 278     | 162          | 95      | 835          | 790           | 16     | 124     | 44        | 124       |
| % of responses      | 11.7    | 9.3        | 7.7    | 6         | 5.8     | 5.6    | 5.3     | 4.3          | 4.2     | 3.7          | 3.1           | 3.1    | 2.4     | 2.2       | 1.6       |

**% Responses By Parish**



**There were no responses from the following parishes:**  
**Aldingbourne (76), Aldwick (48), East1&2 (35), Ferring (28)**  
**Houghton (2), Patching (4), Poling (3), Slindon (13) and Warningcamp (4)**

# Next Steps

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- Invite all interested tenants to an introductory meeting to clarify what is involved and to give them the chance to ask any questions – short meetings, varied times and locations
  - Job description and person specification
  - Recruitment process – tenant involvement, informal
  - Appointment of chairman, secretary and deputy chairman
  - Preparation of performance data and evidence
  - Training needs analysis and training developed
  - Statement of purpose / terms of reference
  - Develop a plan for how we engage with those who have expressed a preference for more ad hoc / informal involvement
  - Timescales – aim to have Panels recruited, trained and ready to go by the end of the year
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ARUN DISTRICT COUNCILHOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP – 10 September 2013


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Decision Paper

Subject : ROUGH SLEEPER & COLD WEATHER PROVISION

Report by : Brian Pople

Report date: August 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report identifies a way forward for the development of an improved service for homelessness on a 6-month trial. Dependent on the outcome of the subsequent review, consideration will be given to a year round service for homelessness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Housing & Customer Services Working Group:-

1. Recommend to Cabinet the adoption of the 6-month trial period for the enhanced Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) at Glenlogie, Bognor Regis which will be open every night during the winter period (November 2013 – April 2014 inclusive) and provides 3 surgery-type daytime openings per week
2. That a report is completed for the Housing & Customer Services Working Group following the 6-month trial period which identifies how support for homelessness is delivered

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the last meeting of the Housing & Customer Services Working Group, it received a 'Review of Rough Sleepers & Cold Weather provision', which was supported by a presentation from a number of key staff working for Stonepillow. Stonepillow are a charitable organisation who have operated the night shelter provision from the basement of Glenlogie for the past 2 years. The service has been well received and has supported the Council in addressing street homeless in the district, which is the second highest within West Sussex Council and Boroughs.
- 1.2 The report was well-received by the Housing & Customer Services Working Group who recognized that there was a clear need for the service and that there was an opportunity to develop it further, now that a decision had been taken to retain Glenlogie in Bognor Regis and refurbish the ground, first and second floors for

temporary housing accommodation. This, in turn, means that the basement could continue to be used to support street homeless.

- 1.3 At the meeting, it was agreed that the report's recommendation that the Housing & Customer Services Working Group support further investigations into funding the development of a service to support homelessness and, once this has been concluded, brought back to a future meeting of Housing & Customer Services Working Group for consideration, prior to recommendation to Cabinet.
- 1.4 Set out below in 'Proposals' is how the issue of improving services for homelessness could be addressed.

## 2.0 PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The previous 2 years have seen Stonepillow running the SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol – when the weather is forecast to be below 0°C for three consecutive evenings) provision, this year with the addition of 3 surgeries per week running on the evenings that the SWEP could not be open.

As a model for moving forward, it is important to understand the drivers behind the service which are:-

- Stability and consistency
- Effective and efficient support
- Bringing service to clients who are difficult to engage

Therefore, as the first step towards a long term solution, the following model is based on an enhanced SWEP service, which is open every night during winter (November to April) and provides 3 surgery type daytime openings per week. The 6 month trial period will also provide an opportunity to monitor any issues that may arise as a result of the temporary accommodation being made available in the rest of Glenlogie.

Below is a table that sets out the proposed service provision outcomes and associated costs.

| Element                                | Staffing  | Funding Required    | Outcomes   |
|--|---|---------------------|--|
| 3 weekly surgeries<br>10.00am – 3.00pm | <b>2 at any one time</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hostel Manager</li> <li>• NSNO Team</li> <li>• Arun Resettlement Worker</li> <li>• Probation R'ment</li> <li>• Mental Health Team Leader and</li> </ul> | Existing staff team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focal point for other services</li> <li>• Regular engagement</li> <li>• Consistent support</li> </ul> |

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|   | Recovery Manager <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Manager</li> <li>• Head of Client Services</li> </ul> |   |   |
| Overnight Accommodation<br>7.00pm – 8.00am              | 2 sleep in night project workers every night<br>£48,000   | HB options<br>SWEP funding through ADC                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable housing</li> <li>• Pathway into Housing</li> <li>• Feed into Housing Panel</li> </ul>                       |
| 3 lunches per week and evening dinners                  | Staff present/volunteers  | Food donation, basic food purchases                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Better engagement</li> <li>• Utilization of volunteers</li> </ul>         |
| A10 Client workshop (taking place during surgery)       | Expanding Communities (on contract with Stonepillow)<br><br>Volunteers  | Existing  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better and targeted engagement for A10 communities</li> <li>• Facilitating work of CRI street project</li> </ul>   |
| Support to Temp Accom above and permanent staff members | Temp Accom Support Worker – part time   | Could be funded through Intensive Housing Management charge in TA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best value – supporting all the property</li> <li>• Sharing of expertise</li> <li>• Consistent approach</li> </ul> |

2.2 In terms of funding for the operation, it is proposed that the basement at Glenlogie is leased at a market rent to Stonepillow, with the rental being reduced to a nominal charge of £1.00 per annum. The Council will also be responsible for the maintenance of the basement along with electricity and heating costs. Equally, Stonepillow would finance the food and bedding laundry costs for the homeless clients.

2.3 In the table above, details are shown of the staff required to signpost the operation of the surgeries. All of the costs are met either directly by Stonepillow from their existing resources or by West Sussex County Council in respect of the Arun Resettlement Worker and probation. The table also highlights the need for 2 sleep-in night project workers to cover the overnight accommodation. The costs for this provision have been estimated at £48,000 by Stonepillow. As the basement will effectively be leased to Stonepillow, it will be possible for Housing Benefit to be claimed at the rate of £30.00 per person per night. Such funding would provide an amount of more than

£54,000, in the event that all nights and all of the accommodation was used. In reality, this is not likely to be the case, as national insurance numbers are required and it is quite possible that these may not be available in all cases. Stonepillow are confident that there will be take-up of the accommodation and is prepared to underwrite the costs of appointing the night project workers on this basis. Housing Benefit staff will work closely with Stonepillow to ensure that the detailed arrangements to recover benefit payments are put in place. No salary costs will be directly incurred by Arun District Council.

- 2.4 The reference in the table to supporting A10 clients can be met from existing resources.
- 2.5 The reference in the table to support temporary accommodation and permanent staff, may be able to be met via a further charge being made on temporary accommodation units via rental and recovered by Housing Benefit. This option could be explored further should the Council choose to consider Stonepillow managing the temporary housing accommodation units on its behalf. This will be looked at in the event that a decision is taken to operate the homeless facility on a year-round basis, following the review.
- 2.6 The Severe Weather Emergency protocol will also continue to operate on the occasions when the weather is forecast to drop below 0°C for three consecutive nights. The funding for this activity will operate with extra funding of £70 per night and Housing Benefit claims per eligible client.
- 2.7 As part of the new arrangements, the Council will undertake to provide 10 lockers and some start-up furniture. In the case of the start-up furniture, it is planned to provide this as a result of house clearances resulting from re-lets.

### 3.0 NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The purpose of the 6-month trial period is to work towards the long term model which would amalgamate the good working elements of both Hub and Hostel within the Chichester area, with the outcome of providing accessible services to engage new and entrenched rough sleepers and provide a journey out of homelessness.

The basement at Glenlogie would be open 24 hours a day to incorporate a Hub 'Day Centre' and overnight accommodation, housing 10 clients on longer term stays.

- 3.2 Whilst the Council recognizes the issue of homelessness is a significant issue in the District and would like to continue its very positive working arrangement with Stonepillow to support year-round provision to homelessness, it does however need to satisfy itself that the service can be sustained.
- 3.3 With this in mind, it is proposed to recommend to Cabinet that a six-month trial is conducted from November 2013 to April 2014 inclusive, as identified in 2.1 above, with a view to assessing:-



1. Measuring the success that the improved service delivers for homeless clients
2. That the financial viability of the improved operation is able to be sustained
3. Monitoring issues resulting from the use of the floors above the basement for temporary housing accommodation
4. Monitoring the effects on the locality of the increased/improved service available for homeless clients.

**Background Papers:** None

**Contact:** Brian Pople  
Head of Housing  
Tel: 01903 737718  
Email: [brian.pople@arun.gov.uk](mailto:brian.pople@arun.gov.uk)

AGENDA ITEM NO.8ARUN DISTRICT COUNCILHOUSING & CUSTOMER SERVICES WORKING GROUP10 September 2013Decision

Subject : Customer Access Strategy

Report by : Jackie Follis

Report date: 13 August 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper sets out the initial Action Plan to go with the Customer Access Strategy which was recently agreed. The Action Plan covers a number of areas of work and it will be expanded as individual services include their own projects. The paper also describes what Customer Services at Arun will look like at the end of 2014/15

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the Action Plan and any feedback/comments will be welcomed by Officers.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Customer Access Strategy came to the Housing and Customer Services Working Group on 23 May 2013 and was approved by Full Council at the meeting on 10 July 2013. The attached document is the associated Action Plan.

1.2 The Action Plan has been divided up into a number of areas of work:

- Customer insight
- Corporate systems and technology
- Working arrangements for corporate customer services staff
- Review of written communication
- Arun website
- Use of mobile devices by Services
- Outreach and vulnerable groups
- Lean Reviews

Each of these areas represents an important part of the Strategy and a number of individual projects.

Although these are not in a priority order we must better understand the needs of our customers in order to make decisions on a number of issues and there are some pressing time constraints for the decisions around future technology.

- 1.3 Many of the work areas are closely connected, an example being that any written material going out to customers should be reflected in what we are saying and how we are saying it on the website. We need to move forward in parallel on a number of areas of work
- 1.4 The intention is that the Action Plan is populated by projects from all service areas as they arise so that it is a true record of what we are all trying to do to improve the experience for customers and should lead to a more joined up approach across services. One of the next steps will be to share the Action Plan fully with service areas and ask for their detailed input.
- 1.5 The Action Plan will be a 'living document' and will move and change as the organization changes. Whilst we all want the best for our customers we recognize that we will be working under greater financial constraints in the future and cannot predict what this might mean further into the future.

## 2 THE VISION

- 2.1 So what will our Customer Services look like by the end of 2014/2015?
  - We will have a better understanding of when and how our customers would like services delivered, including some of our hard to reach residents. This will include the collection and analysis of feedback from all Services as well as Corporate Customer Services. We will have an action plan in place to improve access for our most vulnerable customers.
  - We will have joined up technology delivering an efficient process for our Customers which links front and back office systems and mobile devices where possible and reduces double entry.
  - Our Corporate Customer Services staff will be working with Services to deliver a more consistent service between locations, and working more closely with Partner agencies.
  - Services will have reviewed key written communications, prioritized by impact and volume, which will have helped to reduce the need for customers to contact services directly, through Arun Direct, or face to face and therefore reduce costs. These communications will link well with our website and any social media which we might be using.

- We will have a much improved, more user friendly website which is seen as the most efficient means of communicating with the Council by many of our customers.
- A number of lean reviews of services will have taken place, resulting in more efficient and cost effective service delivery

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to note the Action Plan and any feedback/comments will be welcomed by Officers.

Contact: Jackie Follis, Head of HR & Customer Services  
Ext 37580

**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|     | TASK  | ACTION   | BY WHO   | DATES                                      | OUTCOME                               |
|-----|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1   | <b>CUSTOMER INSIGHT</b><br><b>Undertake further investigations and measurement of how customers are contacting us, what happens to these contacts and how we can improve efficiency and effectiveness</b> |  |  |  |                                       |
| 1.1 | Customer Service Forum  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish customer forum to meet customers on a regular basis (6 monthly?)</li> </ul>   | JH/SS/JF<br>Service Managers as appropriate              | February 2014                              |                                       |
| 1.2 | Surveys/customer feedback   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve opportunities for customers to give 'on-line', telephone and face to face feedback regardless of channel</li> <li>Develop a structured approach to customer surveys, including individual service areas and use of existing tools, eg Wavelength panel</li> </ul> | JH/SS/JV<br>/PF/JF<br><br>JH/JAF/JV<br>/Service Managers | Ongoing<br><br>April 2014                  |                                       |
| 1.3 | Implement Lonsto queue management at BRTH   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify funding</li> <li>Consult with reception staff at BRTH</li> <li>Implement System</li> </ul>   | JF<br><br>SS<br><br>RW/SS                                | COMPLETE<br><br>COMPLETE<br><br>April 2013 | Supplier problems mean that system is |

**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|     | TASK  | ACTION   | BY WHO                          | DATES                                   | OUTCOME  |
|-----|---|--|---------------------------------|---|--|
|     |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review System</li> </ul>  | RW/SS/<br>JAF                   | 3 months after implementation           | not yet in place   |
| 1.4 | Capture General Feedback  | Twitter and Facebook<br>Press enquiries<br>Customers contacting individual service areas   | JV +<br>Service managers        | Continuous                              |  |
| 2   | <b>CORPORATE SYSTEMS &amp; TECHNOLOGY</b><br><b>Understand where we are with existing systems and how these support Customer Services. Identify corporate systems/technology and associated supporting resources needed to deliver Customer Services in the future.</b> |  |                                 |   |  |
| 2.1 | Existing technology & methods of service delivery   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify current processes &amp; supporting technology used by Arun Direct &amp; corporate reception areas</li> <li>Review contract for Lagan CRM system and Better Together Partnership</li> </ul> | JH/RW/SS<br>/PS<br><br>JH/PW/JF | April/May 2013<br><br>January/June 2013 | COMPLETE<br><br>Still awaiting final costs from Partnership contract to be extended for 12 months to cover 2014/15 |
| 2.2 | Technology options for the future   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review options (including SharePoint) for replacing Lagan + approximate costs (without additional funding from Transformation Challenge Award Bid)</li> </ul>                                       | JH/RW/PS<br>/NQ                 | October 2013                            |  |

**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|               | TASK                  | ACTION  | BY WHO                     | DATES              | OUTCOME |
|---------------|-----------------------|---|----------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Page 23 of 31 |                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review options (SharePoint workflow and EDRMS/Workbench) to provide Cleansing back office system to replace Lagan</li> <li>Explore how we receive customer service requests, track progress and resolve to provide a more joined up process</li> <li>Explore options for integrating back office systems automatically</li> <li>Individual business case(s) and project proposals for solutions, including detailed costs</li> <li>Implementation</li> </ul> | JH/GR                      | December 2013      |         |
|               |                       |   | JH/RW/PS                   | December 2013      |         |
|               |                       |   | RW/PS/NQ /Service Managers | Ongoing            |         |
|               |                       |   | TBA                        | January/March 2014 |         |
|               |                       |   | TBA                        | 2014/15            |         |
| 2.3           | Self-service          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore options to introduce more self-service (links to work on website) eg develop 'My Arun' app</li> </ul>  | TBA                        | 2014/15            |         |
| 2.4           | Working with services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with services as demands and constraints on service delivery change to improve the customer experience and</li> </ul>   | JH/SS/ Service Managers    | Ongoing            |         |

**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|                    | TASK  | ACTION  | BY WHO                         | DATES                  | OUTCOME |
|--------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------|
|                    |   | reduce double handling  |                                |                        |         |
| 2.5                | GIS   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review current functionality of GIS system</li> <li>Consider alternatives to current system and implementation if necessary</li> </ul> | KR + others<br><br>KR + others | 2014/15<br><br>2015/16 |         |
| Page 3<br>24 of 31 | <b>WORKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CORPORATE CUSTOMER SERVICES STAFF</b><br><b>Review working arrangements for Arun Direct and Reception Staff to look at ways of increasing flexibility to meet customer demand within budget constraints</b> |   |                                |                        |         |
| 3.1                | Review location of Arun Direct  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be included as part of Accommodation Review</li> </ul>  | PW                             | December 2013          |         |
| 3.2                | Review Arun Direct Opening Hours  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask customers/staff/Members for views</li> <li>Cost different options including use of homeworking</li> </ul>                          | JH/PF<br><br>JH/JAF            |                        |         |
| 3.3                | Review Reception Opening Hours  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask customers/staff/Members for views</li> <li>Cost different options</li> </ul>   | JH/PF<br><br>SS/JAF            |                        |         |
| 3.4                | Flexible Staff Resource   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review structure, current working arrangements &amp; skills within whole</li> </ul>  | JH/SS/JAF                      | February-March 2014    |         |



**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|     | TASK   | ACTION   | BY WHO                   | DATES   | OUTCOME |
|-----|--|--|--------------------------|---|---------|
|     |  | Customer Services Team to identify improved ways of working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review consistency of information/service across different locations</li> <li>• Review opportunities for partnership working</li> </ul>   | JH/SS/JF<br><br>JF       | February-March 2014<br><br>January 2014 onwards |         |
| 3.5 | Working with Partner Agencies  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop reception and other working arrangements with the West Sussex</li> <li>• Develop reception and other working arrangements with the Police</li> </ul>  | JF/PW/PB<br><br>JF/PW/PB |   |         |
| 4   | <b>REVIEW OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION</b><br><b>Review written communication across the Council to ensure clarity, appropriate level of language and co-ordinated approach across all media</b> |  |                          |   |         |
| 4.1 | Review all forms of written material   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope the project – ie what written material do we use</li> <li>• Liaise with all services in the Council to identify written material</li> <li>• Prioritise material for review and agree</li> </ul> | LE/JH<br><br>LE/JH/JV    | July/August 2013                                |         |

**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|     | TASK  | ACTION   | BY WHO                       | DATES   | OUTCOME |
|-----|---|--|------------------------------|---|---------|
|     |   | with CMT and Senior Management<br><br>• Carry out review   | TBA<br><br>TBA               | September 2013                                    |         |
| 4.2 | E-mail  | • Review of e-mail responses to customers to include:<br>- Workload<br>- Response time<br>- Recording and monitoring   | TBA                          | TBA   |         |
| 4.3 | Review Customer Care Charter  | • Review existing leaflet (+ links to website etc)<br><br>• Liaise with services on content<br><br>• Implement new leaflet, including publicity  | SS<br><br>SS<br><br>SS/JF/JV | August 2013<br><br>Sept 2013<br><br>November 2013 |         |
| 5   | <b>ARUN WEBSITE</b><br><b>Review content, style, usability and search engine optimisation to improve the site for the future, including on-going resource to maintain this.</b> |  |                              |   |         |
| 5.1 | Arun Website  | Responsibility for the Arun Website sits with the new Communications Manager. She will be developing an action plan (with others) to include the following:<br><br>• Audit of existing system<br>• Work with service areas to identify their | JV + TBA                     | TBA   |         |

**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|     | TASK  | ACTION   | BY WHO | DATES      | OUTCOME |
|-----|---|--|--------|------------|---------|
|     |   | requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with customers to identify their requirements and then test options</li> <li>• Identify how we can support customers who want to access our website using mobile devices</li> <li>• Explore options to develop webchat facility</li> <li>• Identify resource required to develop and maintain improved website</li> </ul> |        |            |         |
| 5.2 | Social Media  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review options</li> <li>• Develop Strategy</li> <li>• Implement Strategy</li> </ul>   |        | 2014/15/16 |         |
| 6   | <b>USE OF MOBILE DEVICES BY SERVICES</b><br><b>Review the type and style of service mobile devices, looking for best practice options for different services, ensuring appropriate connectivity with website etc.</b> |  |        |            |         |
| 6.1 | Review current use of mobile devices by services  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review use of mobile devices (tablets etc) by services</li> <li>• Review options for future use and share best practice across the Council</li> </ul>   | TBA    | TBA        |         |
|     |   |  |        |            |         |

**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|     | TASK   | ACTION  | BY WHO   | DATES   | OUTCOME |
|-----|--|---|--|---|---------|
| 7   | <b>OUTREACH AND VULNERABLE GROUPS</b><br><b>Understand where and how we are not reaching some members of community</b> |   |  |   |         |
| 7.1 | How to reach different groups  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with services to identify vulnerable and/or hard to reach groups and possible barriers</li> <li>• Liaise with external partners/groups to identify vulnerable and/or hard to reach groups and possible barriers</li> <li>• Develop Action Plan</li> </ul> | RW/JAF Services<br><br>RW/JAF<br><br>RW + Service Managers | April – July 2014<br><br>July-December 2014<br><br>January-March 2015 |         |
|     | Introduce Welcome Pack for new residents   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree content of pack, consulting with services where necessary</li> <li>• Agree Welcome Letter</li> <li>• Start sending out</li> </ul>  | RWY/SS<br><br>JF<br><br>Arun Direct, reception areas       | October 2013<br><br>October 2013<br><br>November 2013                 |         |
|     |  |   |  |   |         |

**CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY – ACTION PLAN 2013 - 2017**

|     | TASK  | ACTION  | BY WHO         | DATES | OUTCOME |
|-----|---|---|----------------|-------|---------|
| 8   | <b>LEAN REVIEWS</b><br><b>Focus on lean reviews to identify improved service delivery within resource constraints</b> |   |                |       |         |
| 8.1 | Review first points of contact  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interface between front and back office to be reviewed for Arun Direct and face to face customer services and internet/social media</li> </ul> | RW/JH/JO/SS/JV |       |         |
| 8.2 | Individual service reviews  |   |                |       |         |

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JF Jackie Follis  
 RW Rupert Webb  
 RWY Rob Wilby  
 PW Paul Warters  
 SS Sue Stallard  
 PF Phil Freen  
 JV Justine Vincent  
 LE Lisa Emmens  
 JH James Howman  
 JO Jo O'Brien  
 NQ Nigel Qulinlan  
 PB Paul Broggi  
 KR Karl Roberts

**Housing & Customer Services Working Group - 2013/14** (please note all dates for agenda items subject to review)

| Meeting Date   |    | 23-May-13        | 16-Jul-13           | 10-Sep-13        | 07-Nov-13        | 09-Jan-14        | 19-Mar-14        |   |
|--|----|------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---|
| <b>Agenda Prep Timetable</b>   |    | * B/H on Monday  |                     | * B/H on Monday  |                  |                  |                  |   |
| Draft Reports to Erica by 11am Thurs   |    | 25-Apr-13        | 20-Jun-13           | 15-Aug-13        | 10-Oct-13        | 05-Dec-13        | 20-Feb-14        |   |
| <b>Agenda Prep Date 3pm</b>  |    | <b>30-Apr-13</b> | <b>24-Jun-13</b>    | <b>19-Aug-13</b> | <b>14-Oct-13</b> | <b>10-Dec-13</b> | <b>25-Feb-14</b> |   |
| Final Reports to Erica by 11am Mon   |    | * 7-May-13       | 01-Jul-13           | * 27-Aug-13      | 21-Oct-14        | 16-Dec-13        | 03-Mar-14        |   |
| Despatch Agendas by 2pm Thurs  |    | 09-May-13        | 04-Jul-13           | 29-Aug-13        | 24-Oct-13        | 19-Dec-13        | 06-Mar-14        |   |
| <b>Date of Meeting 6pm</b>   |    | <b>23-May-13</b> | <b>16-Jul-13</b>    | <b>10-Sep-13</b> | <b>07-Nov-13</b> | <b>09-Jan-14</b> | <b>19-Mar-14</b> |   |
| <b>OSC Meeting Dates</b>   |    | <b>04-Jun-13</b> | <b>30-Jul-13</b>    | <b>17-Sep-13</b> | <b>12-Nov-13</b> | <b>21-Jan-14</b> | <b>TBC</b>       |   |
| <b>Cabinet Meeting Dates</b>   |    | <b>24-Jun-13</b> | <b>22Jul/27Aug?</b> | <b>16-Sep-13</b> | <b>18-Nov-13</b> | <b>10-Feb-14</b> | <b>14-Apr-14</b> |   |
| <b>Full Council Meeting Dates</b>  |    | <b>10-Jul-13</b> | <b>04-Sep-13</b>    | <b>23-Oct-13</b> | <b>08-Jan-14</b> | <b>05-Mar-14</b> | <b>14-May-14</b> |   |
| Item   | Le | Origi            |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  | COMMENTS  |
| Election of Chairman & Vice-Chairman   |    | ToR              | *                   |                  |                  |                  |                  |   |
| Terms of Reference   |    | ToR              | *                   |                  |                  |                  |                  |   |
| Work programme - set and review  |    | ToR              | *                   | *                | *                | *                | *                |   |
| Review of Housing Contractors Mears  | BP |                  | *                   |                  |                  |                  |                  |   |
| Customer Access Strategy   | JF |                  | *                   |                  | *                | *                | *                |   |
| <b>Suggested Items 2013/14</b>   |    |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  |   |
| Review of Rough Sleepers & Cold Weather Shelter Provision  | BP |                  |                     | *                | *                |                  |                  | Invite Stone Pillow 16/7/13   |
| Impact of Welfare Reform Act (including Bedroom Tax, Housing Rent Arrears and Housing Allocations) | BP |                  |                     | *                |                  | *                |                  | Agreed at the meeting on 16th July to revisit this topic in Jan 2014 when more information is |
| Update on Housing Development Progress   | BP |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  | Schedule Date   |
| Tenant Under Occupation Scheme   | BP |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  | Schedule Date   |
| Complaints Process Review  | BP |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  | *                |   |
| Secure Tenant Agreements Annual Review   | BP |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  | *                |   |
| Housing Business Plan Annual Review  | BP |                  |                     |                  |                  | *                |                  |   |

| Meeting Date                                  |    |       | 23-May-13        | 16-Jul-13           | 10-Sep-13        | 07-Nov-13        | 09-Jan-14        | 19-Mar-14        |  |
|---|----|-------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--|
| <b>Agenda Prep Timetable</b>                  |    |       | * B/H on Monday  |                     | * B/H on Monday  |                  |                  |                  |  |
| Draft Reports to Erica by 11am Thurs          |    |       | 25-Apr-13        | 20-Jun-13           | 15-Aug-13        | 10-Oct-13        | 05-Dec-13        | 20-Feb-14        |  |
| <b>Agenda Prep Date 3pm</b>                   |    |       | <b>30-Apr-13</b> | <b>24-Jun-13</b>    | <b>19-Aug-13</b> | <b>14-Oct-13</b> | <b>10-Dec-13</b> | <b>25-Feb-14</b> |  |
| Final Reports to Erica by 11am Mon            |    |       | * 7-May-13       | 01-Jul-13           | * 27-Aug-13      | 21-Oct-14        | 16-Dec-13        | 03-Mar-14        |  |
| Despatch Agendas by 2pm Thurs                 |    |       | 09-May-13        | 04-Jul-13           | 29-Aug-13        | 24-Oct-13        | 19-Dec-13        | 06-Mar-14        |  |
| <b>Date of Meeting 6pm</b>                    |    |       | <b>23-May-13</b> | <b>16-Jul-13</b>    | <b>10-Sep-13</b> | <b>07-Nov-13</b> | <b>09-Jan-14</b> | <b>19-Mar-14</b> |  |
| <b>OSC Meeting Dates</b>                      |    |       | <b>04-Jun-13</b> | <b>30-Jul-13</b>    | <b>17-Sep-13</b> | <b>12-Nov-13</b> | <b>21-Jan-14</b> | <b>TBC</b>       |  |
| <b>Cabinet Meeting Dates</b>                  |    |       | <b>24-Jun-13</b> | <b>22Jul/27Aug?</b> | <b>16-Sep-13</b> | <b>18-Nov-13</b> | <b>10-Feb-14</b> | <b>14-Apr-14</b> |  |
| <b>Full Council Meeting Dates</b>             |    |       | <b>10-Jul-13</b> | <b>04-Sep-13</b>    | <b>23-Oct-13</b> | <b>08-Jan-14</b> | <b>05-Mar-14</b> | <b>14-May-14</b> |  |
| Item  | Le | Origi |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  | COMMENTS   |
| Gas Servicing Contract                        | BP |       |                  |                     |                  |                  | *                |                  | BP Email 19/6/13 - In relation to the Gas servicing contract it is not let until April 2015 so it would be safe to schedule the report for around January next year. |
| Gas Safety Certificate Updates                | BP |       |                  | *                   | *                | *                | *                | *                | Figures to be noted on every agenda  |
| New Housing IT System Update                  | BP |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  | Schedule Date  |
| Tenancy Fraud - Report Back on Photo ID Pilot | BP |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  | *                |  |
| Development of Tenants Panel                  | BP |       |                  |                     | *                |                  |                  |                  |  |
| Landlord Accreditation Scheme                 | BP |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  | Schedule Date  |
| Energy Efficiency & Fuel Poverty Strategy     | BP |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  | Reschedule Deferred from 16th July meet per BP   |
| Disabled Facility Grants                      | BP |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  | Schedule Date  |
| <b>Deleted Items</b>                          |    |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  |  |
| <b>Suggested items for 2014/15</b>            |    |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  |  |
| Stonepillow Update (May 2014)                 |    |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  |  |
| <b>Suggested items for 2015/16</b>            |    |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  |  |
|   |    |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  |  |
|   |    |       |                  |                     |                  |                  |                  |                  |  |

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