



# AGENDA

**NOTE: In the case of non-members, this agenda is for information only**

- Committee - **POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PANEL 3**
- Date & Time - **TUESDAY, 11TH SEPTEMBER, 2007 AT 10.00 AM**
- Venue - **SWAFFHAM ASSEMBLY ROOMS, THE MARKET PLACE, SWAFFHAM**

**Members of the Committee requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting. If the information requested is available, this will be provided, and reported to Committee.**

**Panel 3 Members:**

Mr R.G. Kybird (Chairman)	Mr R. Kemp
Mrs S.R. Howard-Alpe (Vice-Chairman)	Mr J.P. Labouchere
Mr G.P. Balaam	Mr B. Rose
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mrs D.K.R. Irving	Mr M. Spencer

**PERSONS ATTENDING THE MEETING ARE REQUESTED TO TURN OFF MOBILE TELEPHONES**

Committee Services  
Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,  
Dereham Norfolk, NR19 1EE

Date: Friday, 31 August 2007

**PART A**

**ITEMS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

	<u>Page(s)</u> <u>herewith</u>
1. <b><u>MINUTES</u></b> To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2007.	1 - 7
2. <b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b> To receive apologies for absence.	
3. <b><u>URGENT BUSINESS</u></b> Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Members' Code of Conduct requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a personal or prejudicial interest.	
4. <b><u>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</u></b> Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Members' Code of Conduct requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a personal or prejudicial interest.	
5. <b><u>NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING</u></b> To note the names of any non-members wishing to address the meeting.	
6. <b><u>OPERATION OF LEISURE FACILITIES AT DEREHAM AND THETFORD</u></b> Report by the Leisure Services Manager.	8 - 10
7. <b><u>UPDATED ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN</u></b> Report by the Acting Operations Manager (Commercial Services).	11 - 13
8. <b><u>WORK PROGRAMME</u></b> To receive the Work Programme and note any amendments.	14
9. <b><u>NEXT MEETING</u></b> To note that the next meeting of Policy Development and Review Panel 3 will be held on 16 October 2007 at 10.00 am.	

# PROTOCOL

## The Working Style of the Policy Development & Review Panels

This document sets out the roles of Members and Officers, and the general principles to be adopted by the Policy Development & Review Panels (PD&RP) overseeing the Panel's mode of operation.

### **Member Leadership**

Members of the Panel will undertake scrutiny topics as directed by the Overview & Scrutiny Commission (O&SC) and will recognise that best practice identifies scrutiny as a Member-led activity. The Panel will expect Cabinet members, to take responsibility for answering their questions about topics which primarily relate to the Council's activities.

### **A Constructive Atmosphere**

Meetings of the Panel will be constructive and not judgmental. Panel recognises and accepts that effective scrutiny is best achieved through challenging and constructive enquiry. People giving evidence at Panel should be given due respect and not made to feel under attack.

### **Independence**

Members of the PD&RP will not be subject to whipping arrangements by the party groups.

### **Respect and Trust**

Meetings will be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and trust.

### **Consensus**

Members of the Panel will work together and, while recognising political allegiances, will attempt to achieve consensus and agreed recommendations. There will be recognition that the Panel has a primary duty to scrutinise on behalf of the community.

### **Openness and Transparency**

The PD&RP's business will be open and transparent, except where there are sound reasons for protecting confidentiality. The minutes of the Panel's meetings will explain the discussion and debate so that they can be understood by an outside reader.

### **Impartial and Independent Officer Advice**

Officers who advise and support the Panel will give impartial and independent advice, as officers support all members of the Council.

### **Regular Review**

There will be regular reviews of how the scrutiny process is working, and a willingness to change if it is not working effectively.

### **Programming and Planning**

The Panel will have a programme of work assigned by the Overview & Scrutiny Commission. The Panel will be able to suggest additional topics for review through the O&SC for approval in the work programme. Before each topic is commenced, the O&SC will agree the scope of the exercise, what information they will need initially, and which members, officers and external witnesses they wish to see.

### **Managing Time**

The Panel will aim to conclude the business of each meeting in reasonable time. The order of business will be arranged as far as possible to minimise the demands on the time of witnesses. Where possible, members should give advance notice of specific questions being provided at the time of the meeting to save items being deferred.

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PANEL 3**

**Held on Tuesday, 10 July 2007 at 10.00 am in  
Attleborough Town Hall, Church Street, Attleborough**

**PRESENT**

Mr R.G. Kybird (Chairman)	Mrs D.K.R. Irving
Mrs S.R. Howard-Alpe (Vice-Chairman)	Mr B. Rose
Mr G.P. Balaam	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mr M. Spencer

**In Attendance**

Anita Brennan	- Strategic Housing Manager
Mark Broughton	- Scrutiny Officer
Sian Hall	- Senior Committee Officer
Stephen McGrath	- Principal Committee Officer
Gordon Partridge	- Principal Environmental Health Officer
Darryl Smith	- Principal Housing Officer (Strategy and Enabling)

**Action By**

**32/07 MINUTES**

(a) Apologies (Minute 25/07 refers)

Mr Rose wished to note that he had sent apologies via e-mail for the meeting and the minutes would be amended to reflect this information.

(b) Adoption

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2007 were confirmed as a correct and signed as a correct record with the exception of the above amendment.

**33/07 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs R. Kemp and J. P. Labouchere.

**34/07 ADDITIONAL HMO LICENCING**

The Principal Environmental Health Officer submitted a report which summarised the progress of the proposed additional licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

It was hoped that a consultation document would be available to present to the Members but this would be circulated shortly and attached to the minutes as an appendices.

**Action By**

At present HMOs consisting of 3 or more stories and occupied by at least five persons in at least two households the licensing was mandatory. Section 56 of the Act allows for a Local Authority to designate all or part of its area as subject to an additional licensing scheme in relation to specified types of HMO. It was therefore proposed to designate the whole of Breckland's district for an additional HMO scheme. It was also proposed to specify all types of HMO (except those specifically exempted by legislation) for inclusion within the scheme. This was due to the finding of many different types of properties from bungalows to disused shops being used to house tenants, often migrant workers, in all parts of the district, both rural and urban.

The contents for the additional scheme would be exactly as those for the mandatory scheme covering management, provision of amenities, fire precautions and means of escape. The charge for the licence would also be the same at £250 per HMO.

All such schemes must be submitted to the appropriate national for approval before they can be implemented and as part of the condition for submission the Council must prove that they have consulted widely on the proposal with those likely to be affected including local residents, tenants, landlords, agents and member so of the business community. In additional consultation would also take place with the fire and police authorities.

In response to Members queries the Principal Environmental Health Officer gave the following advice:-

- Payment of Council Tax

The Payment of Council was sometimes the responsibility of the tenants and sometimes the landlord.

- Location of HMO

A district wide survey of the location of HMOs was undertaken two years ago. Complaints may be received from neighbours regarding an HMO in the area. Council Tax and Housing Benefit would contact the team if a large number of people were claiming from one property.

Once the scheme was implemented it would be a duty of the owner of the HMO to notify the Council of the property and pay the licence.

- Hot Beds

When a HMO was located the team would arrange for an inspection and there would be a limitation imposed on the number of people residing in the property according to the facilities and means of escape etc. However, action could still be taken under current legislation if it was found that a property was overcrowded.

**Action By**

- Timetable

It was hoped that following consultation Cabinet would be presented with a report in October. If that scheme was approved it would then go forward to the Secretary of State for consideration and approval. It was envisaged that the scheme would then come into force early in 2008.

- Staffing

Cabinet had agreed to fund an Administrative Assistant for the first year of the scheme to assist with the influx of applications and each licence would last for a period of five years.

Inspections of the properties would be undertaken as part of the day to day work of the team.

- Penalties for Non-Declaration of a HMO

If a landlord did not declare that his property was a HMO and was, therefore, not licensed they could be liable for a fine of up to £20,000.

Members wished to note the progress of the scheme and looked forward to receiving a copy of the consultation document.

**RESOLVED** that the progress of the proposed additional HMO Licensing Scheme be noted.

**35/07 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY REVIEW ACTION PLAN - ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT**

The Strategic Housing Manager submitted the annual review of the Homelessness Strategy Review Action Plan.

The recommendations contained in the Homelessness Strategy Review action plan annual review would be fed into and align with the Strategic Housing Service Team Plan and Annual Delivery Plan targets for 2007/08 and form the basis for the development and improvement of the Housing Advice and Homeless Service.

In response to Members queries the Principal Environmental Health Officer made the following main comments.

- Of the volume of calls received regarding homelessness enquiries the Council had a re-housing duty to 180.
- Re-housing was achieved through using social housing stock an through the private rented sector.

**Action By**

- Once a person or family was accepted as homeless they would be given priority on the housing list as legislation stated that reasonable preference had to be given to certain client groups which included the homeless.
- With regard to include housing provision in the Local Development Framework (LDF) for 16 and 17 year olds the LDF would include the needs of the housing market. There was a need for small units for 16 and 17 year olds and there was no provision of this type currently in Breckland. This age group had a number of different access issues around benefits and sometimes supported housing was the only way forward.

There had been 'wardened' single units in Thetford but this provision had ceased as a result of a number of different issues.

If a provision was built in Breckland the Housing Association would build the unit but there would be a need for specialist management control to assist this age group. There was a plan in place to build such a provision but there issue was how to gain funding as bidding for grants would be on a regional basis.

It was understood that the problems faced by 16 and 17 year olds was a national problem as a result of national legislation. The Housing Team were in dialogue with the Department for Communities and Local Government around this issue. Registered Social Landlords were reluctant to offer tenancies to young people and required rent guarantors. The Housing Team were investigating other options to tackle this problem and ensure that young people were housed.

Discussions were always taking place with Social Services who had a responsibility for this age group and some may have just come out of care and require housing. These were vulnerable young people and there needed to be a mechanism of transfer from Social Services to living independently. There were protocols in place but these needed to be built upon. Senior Officers from Social Services would be meeting Senior Officers from this Housing Team to discuss this issue and if it was felt that the issue was not resolved then a representative from Social Services would be invited to a Panel meeting. It was suggested that if a representative were to come they should be provided with a list of questions to enable them to answer the Panel queries fully.

- In the course of investigation it was found that some families were intentionally homeless as a result of an intentional act such as rent arrears or mortgage arrears. These would be offered as much advice as possible to enable them to either stay in their own home or find alternative forms of accommodation. There were also families who arrived in Breckland due to a local connection but had left homes from the area from which they had come. In certain cases Social Services would be informed of the family's situation as there were children involved.

**Action By**

- The two largest populations of migrant workers were the Portuguese and the Lithuanians, Latvians and Polish. Only a small proportion of social housing was granted to the migrant worker population. Both populations were culturally different; the Portuguese would often come with their wives and children and would stay in one area and the Lithuanians, Latvians and Polish would be single and were transient. It was often found that when a Portuguese family requested social housing this would not be offered as after investigations it would be found that they owned a house in Portugal.
- Temporary accommodation was a crucial tool in tackling homelessness. Although bed and breakfast accommodation was not ideal it was a vital part of avoiding homelessness. However, the Housing Team were making steps to change the nature of temporary accommodation by providing self contained units. Through working with the Peddars Way Housing Association there were 10 units at any one time spread across the district to house a homeless family until permanent residence could be found. John Room House would increase the number of good quality temporary accommodation units.
- A loan scheme for private rented accommodation had been introduced to help people access the private rented sector and this had been very successful. The scheme would be self funding with loans being paid back to the scheme.
- Each member of the Homeless Team Staff were given a budget of £200 which they could use to help pay for storage of furniture, rent arrears, bed and breakfast accommodation or anything which would help access housing.
- The Sanctuary Scheme had been successful in helping those who had been the victim of domestic violence to stay in their own homes by providing such things as re-enforced doors and alarm systems. It was presumed that this would be enacted once an injunction had been ordered against the perpetrator. It meant a family did not have to uproot to another area and gave peace of mind to the victim.
- Funding had been secured for the provision of a domestic violence refuge within Breckland. Although there were issues surrounding the planning application as the location of the refuge could not be divulged.
- The YMCA provided a furniture recycling scheme and were willing to pick-up furniture and re-distribute to those in need.
- A Youth Homelessness Prevention Forum had been established which had been successful. All partner agencies had been willing to participate in this forum.
- The text messaging service had been a great success and this was on-going and had now been expanded to text in different languages for the migrant population.



**Action By**

- The Housing Team were currently providing advice in Dereham and in Thetford and were investigating the possibility of expanding this service to the other market towns.
- A diversity strategy needed to be undertaken in relation to housing needs.
- Leeway were no longer undertaking the domestic violence monitoring and this was currently being undertaken on a county wide level. Leeway found it difficult to meet the demand that all agencies were placing on them for information.
- A re-structure in the Housing Team would be undertaken and a Principal Officer would be employed to assist the Homelessness Team to achieve their targets.
- There were three main budget which underpinned the Homelessness Strategy and these were the budget from Breckland, the budget from CLG and the Temporary Accommodation budget.

The Solo Lodgings Scheme was mainly for single men who did not fall into the vulnerable category and would be sleeping rough if a room could not be found for them. Although it was difficult to find people who were willing to provide a room in their houses.

The Housing Benefit Discretionary Fund was used when tenants were moving from one property to another and ensured that there was no rent arrears.

It was understood that Housing Benefit was allocated to Councils on the profile of the houses in the district and on what had been spent in the past. It was suggested that a member of staff from the Anglia Revenues Partnership Limited be invited to a future meeting to provide advice on housing benefit.

The Housing Team placed a bid for CLG funding this year and the amount received was based on which key indicators had been secured and how effective the Team had been. This year the funding had been increased by £10,000.

The Temporary Accommodation grant had been decreasing year on year as the Housing Team were placing more people in need in alternative temporary accommodation to bed and breakfast.

- With regard to Emergency Planning the financial responsibility for placing people in temporary accommodation following an event such as flooding would lie with the Emergency Planning Team. However, the Housing Team were available to provide any advice necessary.

Members suggested that with the recent flooding events in the country the state of Emergency Planning for Breckland should be a future item for discussion.

**Action By**

Members wished to thank the Strategic Housing Manager and the Housing Team for the report.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the annual review of the Homelessness Strategy Review action plan be noted.
- (2) a representative from the Anglia Revenues Partnership Limited be requested to attend a future meeting to discuss issues in relation to housing benefits.

**36/07 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Officer took Members through the work programme and meeting schedule, as detail in the report. The following changes to the work programme were noted:-

- PFI Review of the Leisure Centres – September 2007
- Impact of the Re-organisation on the new PCTs – September 2007

Members agreed that the Emergency Planning Team should be requested to present what plans were in place for emergencies such as flooding. It was suggested that the Scrutiny Commission may wish to discuss this issue although the Panel were willing to include this matter in their Work Programme.

**RESOLVED** that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission be requested to add the issue of Emergency Planning either to their own Work Programme or to the Work Programme of Panel 3.

**37/07 NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the future meetings of the Policy Development and Review Panel 3 would be as follows:-

Tuesday, 11 September 2007 at 10.00 am at Swaffham Assembly Rooms

Tuesday, 16 October 2007 at 9.30 am with a site visit to the Healthy Living Centre with the meeting commencing at 10.30 am at Town Council Chamber, Thetford

Tuesday, 28 November 2007 at 10.00 am at Elizabeth House, Dereham

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm

CHAIRMAN

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**Overview and Scrutiny Panel 3**

**11 September 2007**

**REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS MANAGER FOR COMMERCIAL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**(Authors: J. Liggett – Leisure Services Manager)**

**OPERATION OF LEISURE FACILITIES AT DEREHAM AND THETFORD**

**Summary:** This report provides an update on the operation of Dereham and Thetford Leisure Centres from April 2007. It provides an overview of usage and demand together with a summary of issues concerning residual design.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update and overview of the performance of Dereham and Thetford Leisure Centres following the opening of the new facilities. Dereham Leisure Centre was opened to the public on the 20<sup>th</sup> April with the formal opening taking place on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Thetford Leisure Centre refurbishment and extension was completed in November 2006.
- 1.2 The Full Service Contract commenced with the opening of Dereham Leisure Centre. A key feature of this contract and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) agreement was that significant financial risk was passed over to Parkwood Leisure. However while financial risk and day to day management responsibility has been devolved the public will continue to view the facilities as being a Breckland Council responsibility.

**2. UPDATE**

- 2.1 The usage of the Leisure Centres has increased significantly since the opening of the new facilities as illustrated below.

	Breckland Leisure Centre		Dereham Leisure Centre	
	Total admissions		Total admissions	
	2006	2007	2006	2007
<b>May</b>	19,113	42,348	13,812	20,879
<b>June</b>	15,778	21,662	9,194	19,348
<b>July</b>	21,826	26,134	14,052	18,691

- 2.2 The construction element of the PFI at Thetford was completed 3 months early and Dereham was completed on time and on budget. The quality of the buildings provided through the PFI is very high and this has been acknowledged by customers, the local media and key stakeholders. In terms of design there have been some issues which needed to be addressed. However given the scale of construction it is perhaps unsurprising that a few problems have emerged and we are assured by Gleeds (the independent certifier) that the number of teething problems to date is consistent with other similar projects. These are summarised as follows:

### **2.2.1 Multi Use Games Area (All Weather Area)**

At present balls are being inadvertently kicked into neighbouring domestic properties. The cost of erecting fencing will be in the order of £10 to 14K including costs associated with planning consent. It was at the Council's request that the MUGA was located in its current position in order to make way for the Health Centre on the originally proposed location. However under the terms of the PFI agreement the Council maintains that this is a risk which was transferred to Parkwood Leisure. At present Parkwood are considering the options available to them and are will bring forward proposals in due course.

### **2.2.2 Teaching Pool**

Following the opening of Dereham Leisure Centre there have been some instances of children sustaining minor cuts and abrasions to their feet. Accident report forms have shown that this is commonly on the instep of their big toe. Although none of the injuries were serious the number and frequency was a cause for concern. As a consequence the teaching pool was drained and a detailed inspection undertaken by the builders, the tile sub contractors and the Council. No fault was found with the construction of the pool and the architects confirmed that the specified 'none slip tile' was in accordance with current design criteria. Since no fault could be found the pool was thoroughly cleaned with a rotary deck scrubber and subsequently refilled.

Investigations into the cause of the problem continued in co-operation with the operators, builders and architects. Subsequent research within the industry revealed that new pools are now required to provide a non slip surface in order to ensure that children can regain their feet. This is important for safety reasons and helps children to build confidence. Several pool operators reported the same problem. Wellingborough Council closed its teaching pool in May following a few weeks of operation in similar circumstances to that experienced in Dereham and similar actions in terms of investigation. has undertaken similar actions in terms of investigation and rectification. It was subsequently found that although the pool tiles were supplied in accordance with the current design criteria the tiles were too abrasive for the location and action was taken to sand them down. The tiles remain compliant with the required specification. In order to carry out the works the pool was closed on 10<sup>th</sup> August for an anticipated period of 2 weeks. The issue will be reported to professional bodies such as the Institute of Sport and Recreation Management in order to ensure that future problems are avoided.

### **2.2.3 Timing system**

The competition timing system at Dereham Leisure Centre has been a cause of some concern. Although the system operates in accordance with the specification the swimming club and County ASA have expressed some concern about the location of socket plugs. There are no electrical risks as the system merely transmits data however there is a concern that there may be a trip hazard particularly during galas when excitement is heightened. The suppliers of the equipment are at options relating to redesigning the plugs and a form of cover for the system. Temporary arrangements have been put in place to mitigate any trip hazard risks.

### **2.2.4 Customer Feedback**

Anecdotal Customer Feedback to staff at the new leisure facilities is generally very positive. However in order to gain a complete picture of customer satisfaction a comprehensive survey is to be carried out by Parkwood Leisure. This will provide comparative data with a similar survey undertaken in 2006 and also identify areas where service provision can be further improved. In addition to this Parkwood are gathering data via a verbal log held at reception to record passing comments by members of the public and telephone conversations.

### **2.2.5 Demand Issues**

The fine facilities at Dereham and Thetford have inevitably driven up demand for improvements to the sports centres in Swaffham, Attleborough and Watton. In order to respond to these officers are undertaking preliminary investigations to see if any opportunities exist to address these demands.

There has been some demand for a sauna to be provided at Dereham Leisure Centre. While this is a low priority Parkwood Leisure have agreed to consider a proposal after the first year of operation subject to continuing demand and practical difficulties being addressed.

**3. KEY DECISION**

2.1 This is not a key decision.

**3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

3.1 The matter raised in this report falls within the following Council priorities:

- Promoting healthier lifestyles

**4. FINANCIAL DETAILS**

4.1 Although the closure of the teaching pool at Dereham Leisure centre has attracted some poor publicity the nature of the PFI agreement means that the Council has not suffered any financial loss.

**5. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

5.1 The panel is requested to note the action taken.

- Equal Opportunities – There are no implications
- Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998 – This project could have a positive effect on the Section 17, Crime & Disorders Act 1998.
- Human Rights Act 1998 – There are no implications

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PANEL 3 – 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2007**

**REPORT OF THE OPERATIONS MANAGER – ASSET MANAGEMENT**  
**(Author: Ray Johnson)**

**UPDATED ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**Summary:** The Asset Management Plan has been redrafted and is currently being used as a working document to assist with the non operational property.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 ODPM issued instructions that every Authority must have an Asset Management Plan, or their revenue support grant could be reduced if an appropriate plan was not submitted for approval.
- 1.2 Breckland produced their initial document and the grants have come through.
- 1.3 In 2006/07 it was agreed, as part of the SDP, that Assets would revisit the AMP and produce an updated document.
- 1.4 An interim surveyor was engaged on a one day a week contract to assist with the preparation of a new Asset Management Plan.
- 1.5 A copy of the completed document will be brought to Overview and Scrutiny, but as the document is almost 3 inches thick it did not seem appropriate to provide individual copies.
- 1.6 The paper is a working document and is being revised/adjusted on a fairly frequent basis.
- 1.7 The main contents of the Plan are split into the following sections:-
  1. Introduction, Background and Drivers for Change
  2. Organisational Arrangements for Corporate Asset Management
  3. Consultation
  4. Data Management
  5. Performance Management and Monitoring
  6. Programme and Plan Development
  7. Review of Past and Future
  8. Operational Property
  9. Mud to Houses
  10. Commercial Property Portfolio
  11. Economic Regeneration
  12. Surplus Property
  13. Open Space
  14. Appendix One
- 1.8 Unlike large unitary and Counties, we have very few operational properties. A Unitary or County with schools, libraries, social services, etc. may have several thousand buildings and the likes of Leeds have managed to integrate and reuse premises that have become obsolete from their original use.

1.9 Breckland's Asset Management Plan has concentrated on the non operational properties where we have approximately 170 industrial units, two office blocks, five shops and Barnham Broom.

1.10 The main appendix to the document identifies the DV's valuation of the estate, the rental income per annum and, therefore, the yield. It also identifies the level of maintenance split into three categories:

Repairs  
Redecoration and  
Routine Maintenance

1.11 There has in the past been a presumption that if the units were let on full repairing insuring terms, then the tenant is responsible for maintenance in every case. This may not be correct on the smaller units which are let on 'easy in, easy out' terms, where in the majority of Breckland's units they have had at least five or six tenants over their twenty five year life, it would seem unreasonable to expect the current tenant to pay for the replacement of the roof or to re-asphalt the yard or to carry out substantial repairs. It is not unreasonable to expect the tenants in our larger units on 25 year leases to carry out these works.

1.12 The Asset Department, together with the Legal Department, have been negotiating new terms for the lease renewals and insist that new short term leases include a charge to cover the repairs of major items. A charge of 20p per square foot will bring in £100,000 per annum. So far most tenants have agreed to this amendment and with new leases it is not an option; it is part of the deal.

1.13 In 2006/07 Breckland made available a rolling £100,000 for capital works to the older industrial units. The proposal in 1.12 should not necessitate the need by the Council to have this rolling programme of £100,000 as the money will come from the maintenance charge being levied on the tenants, when all tenants are signed up.

1.14 When the Asset Team is back to its full complement of staff following the backfill arrangements, (the move of the Asset Manager to Operations Manager), it is proposed that the following sections will be added:-

- Option appraisal for new and existing investment, and
- Open space to be developed in association with the Planning Team and the new Section 106 Officer.

1.15 The Asset Team is currently investigating an IT system to support the management of its assets. This system will not only make it more efficient for the team to be able to produce reports on current status, it will also help with KLOES 2.3.3 and 2.3.5, which covers the maintenance and updating of the Asset Register and monthly reports to the Portfolio Member.

## **2. KEY DECISION**

2.1 This is not a key decision.

## **3. EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

3.1 This report raises no issues relating to equalities and human rights.

## **4. COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

4.1 The matter raised in this report falls within the following Council priorities:

- A safe and healthy environment
- A well planned place to live which encourages vibrant communities

- A prosperous place to live and work

**5. RISK MANAGEMENT**

5.1 Failure to comply with guidance of CLG could affect the CAA assessment in the future and hence the grants payable to the Council.

5.2 The revenue from the Portfolio drops as the Assets are not being effectively managed.

**6. RECOMMENDATION**

6.1 That the report be noted as work in progress.



**Policy Development & Review Panel 3**

**Work Programme & Meeting Schedule**

Topic/Item	Lead Officer (s)	11 Sept 2007 Swaffham	16 Oct 2007 Thetford	27 Nov 2007 Dereham
Healthy Living & Lifestyles – PFI Leisure Centres	Joe Liggett			
Housing Improvement Plan – Monitoring	Anita Brennan			
Housing Waiting List – Allocations Policy & Choice Based Lettings	Anita Brennan			
Impact of the Reorganisation on the new Primary Care Trusts	Martin Seymour (Tara Studholme Lyons, Norfolk PCT)			
Asset Management Plan	Ray Johnson			
Drugs and Alcohol Abuse – DAAT	Martin Seymour (Daniel Harry, DAAT)			
BVPI 166 – Pest Control, Licensing & Private Sector Housing	Mike Wheatley			
Emergency Planning	Mike Wheatley			
Housing Benefits – Anglia Revenues Partnership	Anita Brennan/ARP			
Housing Strategy – BME Report	Anita Brennan			

Notes:

Visit to Thetford Healthy Living Centre – scheduled for 16 October.  
Monitoring of Homeless Strategy Action Plan – bring forward to January 2008