

Business Plan
2008 to 2013
(2010 Update)

Document Information

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Issue Date | 15.06.10 | |
| Version/Issue Number | 1.7 | |
| Document Status | Approved Revision | |
| Effective From Date | 11.06.08 | |
| Scope of Document | Business and Delivery Plan 2008 to 2013 | |
| Objective | To provide a formal statement of attainable business goals and background information to support them. | |
| Document Sponsor | Name | Peter Jefferson |
| | Job Title | Chief Executive |
| | Division | N/A |
| Author | Name | Peter Whittaker |
| | Job Title | Company Secretary |
| | Team | N/A |
| | Contact Tel: | (01253) 477974 |

Amendment Record

| Date | Issue No. | Section/Page | Details of Change | Authorised By: |
|-------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Amendment Notes

- Documents at draft status are to use letter designations to denote issue status: a, b, c etc.
- Documents at full issue status are to use number designations to denote issue status after full revision: 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, etc.
- For an amendment to a full issue document you are to use number designation to denote issue status: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, etc.
- On full issue the draft amendment record should be deleted from the above table.
- Notification of the amendment must be sent to the person maintaining the Central Register.

Contents

| | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 1 | Summary (Updated March 2010) | 4 |
| 2 | The Organisation | 6 |
| 2.1 | Vision, Mission & Values | 6 |
| 2.2 | Equalities Statement | 7 |
| 2.3 | Legal Establishment And History | 7 |
| 2.4 | Services Provided | 7 |
| 2.5 | Company Locations and Facilities | 8 |
| 2.6 | Results Of External Inspection | 9 |
| 2.7 | Key Stakeholders | 10 |
| 3 | Context | 11 |
| 3.1 | Locality (Updated March 2010) | 11 |
| 3.2 | Blackpool Council (Updated March 2010) | 12 |
| 3.3 | Housing Stock (Updated March 2010) | 13 |
| 3.4 | Customer Base (Updated March 2010) | 14 |
| 3.5 | Customer Involvement | 15 |
| 3.6 | Key Trends, Drivers, And Expected Future Developments (Updated March 2010) | 16 |
| 3.7 | Local Market (Updated March 2010) | 18 |
| 4 | Staff, Management & Governance | 21 |
| 4.1 | Staffing (Updated March 2010) | 21 |
| 4.2 | Organisational Structure | 22 |
| 4.3 | Board Structure and Governance (Updated March 2010) | 23 |
| 5 | Key Organisational Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats | 25 |
| 5.1 | SWOT Analysis | 25 |
| 5.2 | PEST Analysis | 26 |
| 5.3 | Key Business Risks | 26 |
| 5.4 | Customer Satisfaction Trends | 28 |
| 6 | Financial Information (Updated March 2010) | 29 |
| 6.1 | BCH Revenue Budget 2007/08 to 2012/13 | 30 |
| 6.2 | Blackpool Council Housing Revenue Account Budget 2007/08 to 2012/13 | 31 |
| 6.3 | Capital Programme and Capital Expenditure Budget 2007/08 to 2012/13 | 32 |
| 6.4 | Value For Money | 36 |
| 7 | Strategic Priorities (Updated March 2010) | 37 |

1 Summary (Updated March 2010)

Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH) is the Arms Length Management Organisation contracted to manage Blackpool Council's Housing stock of just over 5,800 dwellings, including leasehold flats and maisonettes, hostel rooms and the homes let on weekly tenancies that form the majority of the housing stock.

BCH has made significant improvements in recent years both in terms of the quality of services provided and in terms of value for money. Our customers can see that we are improving and that we have the potential to continue to improve to be an excellent provider of housing management services.

The Board has set the following Goals and Priorities for the life of the Business Plan. These Goals and priorities are as follows:

Goal 1 To provide our customers with high quality homes and services that represent excellent value for money.

- We will focus our attention to meet the challenges for our core services and strive for excellence in neighbourhood management, repairs, capital investment and customer involvement.
- We will work towards providing an excellent housing management service that meets Audit Commission three star standards, and towards being the best housing management organisation on the Fylde Coast.
- We will learn from identified good practice to continually improve our services
- We will improve the way we manage our performance to provide even better value for money whilst continuing to meet the needs of our customers.
- We will subject our services to rigorous self assessment, external evaluation, and use quality controls and assurance as part of a performance management framework that will support the delivery of excellent core services

Goal 2 To empower our customers ensuring that they are placed at the heart of everything we do.

- We will improve our knowledge of our customers and use this information to find out what they need and what they want by the use of targeted surveys, customer profiling, benchmarking and components of social marketing.
- We will grow our business to meet customer aspirations where doing so will add value to our core services and we will maintain a detailed awareness of the resources needed to sustain excellent core services.
- We will proactively involve our customers in deciding what kind of services we provide and how they are provided.
- We will provide opportunities to customers who wouldn't normally get involved to get involved and stay involved

Goal 3 To contribute to the wider regeneration of Blackpool including creating jobs and opportunities for local people.

- We will work closely and innovatively with partners to ensure that there is added value to the wider community of Blackpool in everything we do.
- We will work closely and innovatively with partners to ensure that our work supports community cohesion and sustainable communities.
- We will grow our business and our customer and client bases to provide added value to our existing customers and to the wider community of Blackpool.
- We will prioritise the use of local labour in our capital projects.
- We will seek to create local jobs for local people.
- We will work with our partners and with our communities to make the differences that our customers tell us that they want.

Goal 4**To become an excellent employer that support and develops its staff through training, appraisal and reward.**

- We will continue to develop our culture of valuing people and will use reward, recognition, and good communication to do this.
- We will focus on developing staff and providing careers rather than jobs.
- We will work towards being in the Times Top 100 companies to work for.
- We will work towards being in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index top 100.
- We will make learning from excellent employers a core part of our approach.
- We will develop a reputation of being a company that is fun to work for and that people want to work for.
- We will provide our Board with more training and resources to support their decision making

Goal 5**To reduce our impact on the environment**

- We will ensure that we comply with all relevant environmental legislation.
- We will minimise waste by evaluating operations and ensuring they are as efficient as possible.
- We will actively promote recycling both internally and amongst our customers and suppliers.
- We will source our materials and supplies carefully to minimise our environmental impact.

This Business Plan takes account of Blackpool Council's strategic direction for its housing stock, as described in the HRA Business Plan and the Housing Strategy. The Business Plan is geared towards delivery of housing services as specified in the management agreement between Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH) and Blackpool Council and to meeting the specific needs of local people. As such the plan is also geared towards annual assessments of performance against targets and a continuous review of service delivery throughout the year.

Our Business Plan is supported by a planning framework that translates goals and priorities into actions that can be measured at strategic and operational levels.

This Business Plan is:

- Aligned with our vision, mission, values, competitive situation and operating strengths.
- Goal-oriented, setting clear expected outcomes and making explicit links between these outcomes and our goals.
- Fact-based and supported by real data.
- Based on broad thinking and consideration multiple alternatives and a range of scenarios.
- Focused on what the company will and will not do and on clear priorities.
- Agreed upon and supported and informed by the points of view of our customers and stakeholders
- Engaged and linked into lower level plans that make clear what is required and from whom.
- Adaptable and responsive and able to respond to learning.
- Implementable and provides clear guidance for decision making in order to shape behaviour throughout the company.

Actions contained in the Business Plan will inform Operational Strategy and Team Plans and progress towards achieving the objectives will be monitored at Operational, Senior Management and Board levels to ensure effective delivery.

The Business Plan runs from 2008 to 2013, at which time our major capital works programme to bring housing stock to Government and locally set standards will be completed, and changes to the way that Council Housing is funded will have been made by Government.

At that time we will refocus our Business Plan to reflect the new challenges that lie ahead.

2 The Organisation

2.1 Vision, Mission & Values

Vision Statement – Working Together to Achieve Quality Living

Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH):

- Will be 'One Team' – where everyone identifies with the Company as a whole not just with the area in which they work
- Will have 'One Culture' - where tenants views are at the heart of all decision-making and customer and staff involvement not only inform, but also lead the development of services in the community
- Will share 'One Vision' to be the best housing management service in the North West, and to be an excellent employer providing services our staff are proud to deliver and our customers are delighted to receive

Mission Statement

In delivering its Vision BCH will:

- Effectively manage the investment in Blackpool Council's housing stock to ensure it meets the Decent Homes Standard and meets the additional standards developed by customers (Decent Homes Plus)
- Continually improve services to tenants
- Extend the empowerment of tenants in the management of their homes and the services they receive
- Contribute to the wider regeneration and sustainability of the communities of Blackpool by entering into partnerships with appropriate organisations by training and, where possible, by employing local people
- Provide value for money to tenants, Blackpool Council and the wider community
- Become one of the Sunday Times Top 100 best companies to work for
- Minimise the detrimental impact the organisation has upon the environment

Values Statement

- BCH puts people at the heart of everything it does, valuing staff and empowering customers to be involved in decision making in a spirit of openness
- In improving and developing its services BCH balances the aspirations of its customers and the ideas of its staff with value for money and cost effective services
- BCH is committed to partnership and works with all of its stakeholders to provide services that meet the needs of customers
- BCH strives to improve continually, puts things right quickly in the event things go wrong and learns so that it does not happen again
- BCH offers fair access and treatment to all customers and employees regardless of age, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation or religion

2.2 Equalities Statement

Blackpool Coastal Housing is committed to providing services that meet the needs of all sections of the community housed by Blackpool Council, living near properties managed by BCH or seeking access to or information on housing services in the Blackpool area.

We seek to ensure that access, services and opportunities are equal, regardless of race, religion, culture, nationality, ethnic background, colour, physical or mental disability, mental health, gender, sexuality, age, literacy, income level and marital status.

BCH is also committed to developing a workforce and a democratic Board that reflects the community it serves. We seek to be an employer that values and develops the skills and abilities of people from different backgrounds.

BCH operates a Race Equality Scheme to ensure that all policies and procedures comply with the requirements of the Race Relations Act 2000. A programme is in place to ensure that all BCH policies and procedures are assessed for their equalities impact and BCH has ensured that all staff have received and will continue to receive regular equality and diversity training.

2.3 Legal Establishment And History

BCH is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated and registered at Companies House on 6th July 2006. It became fully operational on 15th January 2007 when it began to carry out the Landlord functions for Blackpool Council's stock of tenanted and leasehold properties. BCH Limited is an Arms Length Management organisation that is wholly owned by and works in close partnership with Blackpool Council to support it in achieving its corporate aims.

The company was formed primarily to enable access to streams of funding not available to the Council, but also to improve services to a specified qualifying level for significant capital funding for improvement works and to manage the improvement programme.

Services are provided by BCH under a management agreement with Blackpool Council for which BCH receives an annually negotiated fixed fee. BCH is authorised to undertake the contractual or regulatory commitments in respect of Housing Services delivered on Blackpool Council's behalf, as set out in the Management Agreement.

The first break clause in the management agreement comes into effect on 1st December 2013.

2.4 Services Provided

BCH is responsible for administering all landlord housing services, including the Building Maintenance Direct Service Organisation, which delivers the Day to Day and Void Housing Repairs Service. BCH is also responsible for determining and implementing cyclical and planned maintenance programmes.

The BCH Property Services Division provides all the day-to-day and void maintenance services and facilitates the catch-up repair and modernisation works needed to the Council's housing stock under the Egan principles of Rethinking Construction.

Housing Support Services are provided for vulnerable tenants, particularly older people and homeless people, including a Sheltered Housing Service and Emergency Housing Service. These responsibilities are delivered by BCH under the Supporting People Programme, through a contracting agreement with Blackpool Council. Contracting agreements are also in place that allow BCH to manage the Travellers site and the Re-assurance project on Grange Park.

The functions delegated to BCH can be summarised as:

- Dealing with arrears
- Tenant information and consultation on matters which are the responsibility of BCH
- Tenant participation, including involvement in monitoring and review of service standards
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Enforcement of tenancy conditions
- Similar functions for leaseholders
- Stock investment decisions
- Responsive repairs
- Planned and cyclical maintenance
- Managing lettings, voids and under occupation
- Tenancy sign up and allocation
- Estate management and caretaking;
- Sheltered Housing Service

The functions retained by the Council include:

- Overall housing strategy and enabling
- Determining policies on lettings and anti-social behaviour (in consultation with BCH) and rents
- Managing the Supporting People programme
- Homelessness, general housing advice
- Administration of the Housing Register

The Board of BCH is ultimately responsible for the performance of the organisation and regularly monitors and reviews performance against the objectives and targets. Monitoring by the Board complements the arrangements agreed with the Council and set out in the Management Agreement.

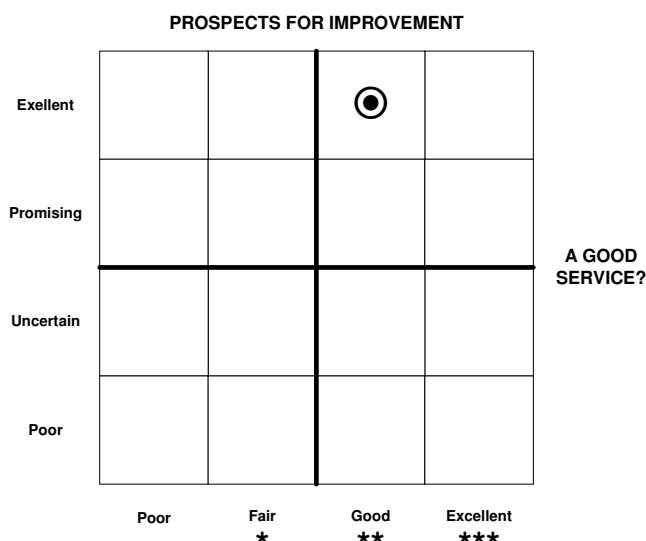
The BCH Board receives performance and financial monitoring reports quarterly in respect of BCH activities. Performance is also discussed at sub committee level. All performance monitoring reports submitted to the BCH Board are available to Blackpool Council.

There is an internal quarterly performance reporting framework in place within BCH. A comprehensive review of performance takes place between the Council and BCH every six months and monthly problem solving meetings take place between officers of BCH and the Client Officer at Blackpool Council.

2.5 Company Locations and Facilities

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Registered Office | Blackpool Coastal Housing Ltd, Progress House, Clifton Road, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY4 4US, Company Registration 5868852 |
| Estate Offices | Queens Park Housing Office 25-27 Laycock Gate, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY3 8AT |
| | Mereside Housing Office Mereside Housing Office, Unit 1A Langdale Place, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY4 4TP |
| | Grange Park Housing Office Grange Park Housing Office, 67 Chepstow Court, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY3 7PH |
| Homestop | 57 Chepstow Road, Grange Park, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY3 7PH |
| Hostels | 53 Gorton Street, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY1 3JW |
| | 255 Central Drive, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY1 5HX |
| | 48 Buchanan Street, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY1 3LQ |
| | 139 Watson Road, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY4 3EW |
| | 1 Grasmere Road, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY1 5HS |

2.6 Results Of External Inspection



BCH was inspected by the Audit Commission in November 2007. The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively and delivers high-quality local services for the public. Following inspection the Audit Commission has made the following judgments:

- Overall, BCH provides a good service to customers and has excellent prospects for improvement as shown in the scoring grid above.
- Positive outcomes are being delivered for customers. Customers can see improvements in the delivery of key housing services such as repairs, improvement works and ASB. There are varied routes to access services and staff are very customer focused.
- BCH has a well-developed approach to diversity. There is a strong corporate focus on equality and diversity. Staff have a clear understanding of diverse customer issues, and approaches to delivering services tailored to customer needs are being developed. BCH is very effective in using its strong strategic partnerships to meet both the housing needs of customers and the wider needs and development of sustainable, cohesive communities.
- Customer involvement is well developed in all service areas. A range of customer consultation mechanisms are in place to ensure involvement both formally and informally.
- Some weaknesses however exist in the delivery and monitoring of the income management service. The service is not fully responsive to customer needs, with an old fashioned approach to service delivery.
- Prospects for improvement are judged as excellent. Strong effective leadership, customer focus, valuing of staff and a focus on continuous improvement support the ALMO in developing and improving services. Capacity to deliver improvement is sound with good human resources procedures and well-trained staff. Effective and robust partnership working supports improvement. The organisation uses its strength in this area to support its capacity to develop, influence and deliver wider strategic improvements for customers.
- A focus on inward investment supports the capacity of the organisation to develop and deliver wider community initiatives. Performance management systems support improvement although this is not yet systematic across all areas and is leading to inconsistency in some services.
- ICT limitations are affecting the organisations capacity, as existing systems are not always effective in supporting further service improvement.

2.7 Key Stakeholders

In order to maximise the effectiveness of the services it provides, BCH is committed to working in partnership with other organisations and agencies, especially Blackpool Council. Partnership working is an important feature of BCHs current improvement activity and will continue to add to capacity to improve in future years.

Level 1 – Agencies that may have the power to stop or prevent work from progressing.

- Blackpool Coastal Housing SMT
- Blackpool Coastal Housing Board
- Chief Executive – Blackpool Council
- Executive Director of Tourism and Regeneration – Blackpool Council
- Leader – Blackpool Council
- Portfolio Holder Adults, Community Safety and Health
- Housing Client – Blackpool Council
- CLG
- Government Office
- Audit Commission
- Health & Safety Executive
- Tenant Liaison Forum – Chair

Level 2 – Agencies that have the power to influence work either positively or negatively.

- Tenants
- Blackpool Coastal Housing Staff
- Elected Members – Blackpool Council
- Supporting People Partnership
- Contracted Council Services
- Council services that work in partnership and collaboratively with BCH
- Head of BSafe Blackpool
- Local Strategic Partnership
- Manchester Methodists Housing Association

Level 3 - Agencies that can be ambassadors for our work and support our work.

- Unions
- Police & Fire Services
- Contractors
- Home Start
- All other tenants groups including Leaseholders
- Sure Start
- Advice Link
- Health and Safety Executive
- Registered Social Landlords
- Blackpool Primary Care Trust
- Local Schools
- Age Concern Blackpool
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Connexions
- Job Centre Plus
- Local Area Forums
- Final Frontier
- Blackpool Council
- External Auditors
- Investors in People (IiP)
- International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO)
- Blackpool Transport

3 Context

3.1 Locality (Updated March 2010)

Blackpool is a coastal resort town in the North West of England. It is the most popular resort in the country with about 10 million visitors each year. The centre of the town contains neighbourhoods of holiday guest houses and hotels. Blackpool has one of the highest population densities in England, with 137,627 people living in 13.5 square miles including seven miles of seafront.

The proportion of older people in Blackpool is higher than in many other areas and is expected to rise. Ethnic minorities make up a small proportion of Blackpool's residents; about 3.5 per cent compared to 6 per cent for the North West and 8 per cent for England as a whole. The number is growing at a slower rate than the regional and national averages.

Blackpool, like other English coastal towns, faces economic challenges. Tourism is the key industry but has been in decline for many years. This has reduced private investment, with slow employment growth in recent years.

More than 20 per cent of the working age population in Blackpool have no qualifications compared to the national average of 13 per cent. Work is seasonal with many low paid jobs. Average wages in Blackpool are among the lowest in the UK and almost one quarter of the working age population claims a work related benefit.

Almost one third of the borough is among the 10 per cent most deprived areas in the country. Two thirds of children in Blackpool live in poverty. There is a lack of good quality housing to rent or buy.

The Council and its partners have ambitious plans which aim to reverse the decline. Their goal is to build a more skilled and diverse economy focusing on revitalised tourism and Blackpool's role as the centre for the wider Fylde Coast. They have secured large amounts of national funding to support their plans.

Blackpool is a high crime area driven by the high number of visitors – but overall crime is falling. However, perceptions of crime remain high among residents. Only a quarter think the police and other public services are successfully dealing with antisocial behaviour and crime. The strong night time economy means that over half of violent crime is linked to excessive drinking.

People in Blackpool live shorter and less healthy lives than the national average. Men in Blackpool have the second lowest life expectancy in England and the relative position for women is worsening. In the wealthiest ward, Norbreck, life expectancy is 79 years compared to 71 years in the most deprived ward, Bloomfield. Deaths from smoking and drug use are above regional and national averages. Alcohol related deaths are the highest in the UK. The town has the highest suicide rate in England and Wales and is in the top three for teenage pregnancy rates. Both rates are twice the national average.

Families move home within the borough regularly and many families move into the borough but do not stay. The annual turnover of pupils in some schools can be as high as 30 per cent and these transient pupils do not do as well as those from more stable homes.

Blackpool is in urgent need of comprehensive regeneration.

The Blackpool Task Force reviewed the existing economic, social and environmental regeneration plans for Blackpool and concluded that the ambition to transform Blackpool into a world-class resort must be set within the context of a more diversified economy, with sustainable communities and high quality environment.

The Task Force has developed an Action Plan, which builds upon and extends existing activity and is of sufficient scale to enable Blackpool to achieve the required regeneration by revitalising business and enterprise, transforming access, infrastructure and the environment; creating sustainable communities and neighbourhood renewal. It is in creating sustainable communities and in neighbourhood renewal where BCH will be able to make a significant contribution to the overall regeneration of Blackpool.

3.2 Blackpool Council (Updated March 2010)

Blackpool is the 14th smallest unitary authority in England and Wales. The Council has 42 councillors, representing 21 wards. The Conservatives have been the controlling party since May 2007. The current political make-up of the Council is: Conservative – 27, Labour – 12, Liberal Democrat – 3. The Council has a one party executive with a leader and five cabinet councillors. Councillor portfolios are Tourism and Regeneration, Business Services, Children's Services, Adult Social Care & Housing and Culture & Communities.

The scrutiny function was restructured in 2007. Council business is supervised by a Policy, Overview and Scrutiny Management committee, which has two sub-committees for Audit and Health respectively. The structure is completed by four others: Tourism & Regeneration, Children's Services, Adult Social Care & Housing, Culture & Communities and Business Services.

Blackpool Council has a vision for Blackpool to be a great place to visit and an even better place to live. It has five goals which are to:

- Improve Blackpool's Economic Prosperity create local jobs and opportunities for local people
- Develop a safe, clean and pleasant place to live, work and visit
- Improve skill levels and educational achievement
- Improve the health and wellbeing of the population
- Ensure Blackpool is an efficient and high performing organisation

Blackpool Council's Community Plan aims to ensure that the residents of Blackpool have:

- Quality education and training
- Healthy lives
- Safer communities
- Quality homes in clean and green residential areas
- Strong and vibrant communities
- A prosperous town

Within all of these six themes there are two crosscutting commitments, which are integral to the delivery of all six themes:

- To ensure a sustainable environment.
- To support vulnerable people

The Council's Corporate Plan is built around three corporate goals:

- The New Blackpool – seeking to deliver a step change in the Blackpool product and ensure the provision of a quality, attractive, multi-purpose and all-year resort
- Quality services – involving a commitment to improving service provision and recognizing the need to make all services more accessible
- Community involvement – seeking to consult, engage and inform all sections of the community, including tackling transience and hard-to-reach groups, and increase the capacity of the local community to influence policies

The Council's Housing Strategy gives considerable emphasis to strong corporate support to housing objectives. It recognises that having a healthy housing market, with decent housing conditions, and accessible to the whole community, is crucial to the well being of Blackpool residents and to the future vitality of the area.

Responsibility within Blackpool Council for developing and delivering the Housing Strategy is through an interdepartmental Housing Strategy Group, with representatives from Housing, Social Services, Planning

and Transportation, Environmental Health, Business Services (Finance), Legal and Democratic Services, and from the Blackpool Primary Care Trust.

BCH works to support Blackpool Council in achieving all of its corporate aims, whilst remaining mindful that the focus of its operations will be to comply with the Management Agreement.

With effect from April 2010 Blackpool Council restructured its senior management and departmental structure and responsibility for the Council's "Client Function" for its relationship with Blackpool Coastal Housing now falls within the remit of the Places Directorate.

3.3 Housing Stock (Updated March 2010)

BCH currently manages just over 5,800 dwellings, including leasehold flats and maisonettes sold under the Right to Buy, and hostel rooms as well as the homes let on weekly tenancies that form the majority of the housing stock.

Two thirds of the tenanted stock (67%) is made up of flats, the original stock of houses having been significantly depleted as a result of Right to Buy sales in the years since 1980. The number and proportion of leasehold dwellings (almost 7%) in the housing stock is also high by comparison with councils or ALMOs having similar or even larger sized total housing stocks.

Over the past five to six years a significant problem arose from the low levels of demand for available dwellings across Blackpool. Empty dwelling numbers at any point in time became high compared to comparable housing authorities or ALMOs, and average relet times were longer. Both factors contributed to the comparatively high levels of void rent loss.

Previous analysis of low demand dwellings demonstrated clearly that the high proportion of flats was the primary reason for the stock of rented dwellings being declared to have over 1,700 homes (32%) that were in low demand, the only houses amongst them being 15 on one particular estate.

Concerted efforts were made to reduce the incidence and effect of low demand, which met with increasing success. This was done through a combination of management initiatives to increase both initial acceptance of tenancies and longer-term tenancy sustainability. A 'systems thinking' re-engineering of void management and repair processes, together with the full implementation of a Choice Based Lettings scheme, also made a significant contribution to reducing relet times.

Partnership redevelopment with locally operating housing associations has also helped to deal with the small pockets of housing that were effectively unlettable and thus surplus to requirements. This has usually seen the demolition of unpopular flats and the construction of much needed rented family houses on the cleared sites.

Very recently, as a result of a successful funding bid to the Homes & Communities Agency, work has begun on the construction of new houses by Blackpool Council, which BCH will manage upon completion of the schemes in March 2011.

Stock of HRA Dwellings As at 31st March 2010

| | Management Area | | | Total Dwellings | Dwelling Type % | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | Grange Park | Mereside | Queens Park | | | |
| Tenanted Dwellings | | | | | | |
| Bungalows | 20 | 59 | 1 | 80 | 1.4 | |
| Bedsits | 9 | 76 | 34 | 119 | 2.1 | |
| Low & Medium Rise Flats | 777 | 971 | 1402 | 3150 | 54.6 | |
| High Rise Flats | 0 | 0 | 383 | 383 | 6.6 | |
| Houses | 489 | 733 | 366 | 1588 | 27.5 | |
| Total | 1295 | 1839 | 2186 | 5320 | - | 92.2 |
| Hostels | | | | | | |
| Dwelling Equivalents | (154 Hostel Room Units) | | | 52 | | 0.9 |
| Total Tenanted Dwellings | 1295 | 1839 | 2186 | 5372 | 100 | |
| Leasehold Dwellings | 65 | 120 | 214 | 399 | - | 6.9 |
| HRA Total | 1360 | 1959 | 2400 | 5771 | - | 100 |

3.4 Customer Base (Updated March 2010)

At March 2008, when information from the last STATUS survey of its general needs housing was carried out, BCH had approximately 8,800 tenants and dependants living in the homes that it manages. Further and more recent analysis of that data has been carried out and gives the following picture.

Similar surveys of both Sheltered Housing and Leaseholds have recently been carried out and the result of analysis is awaited. A further STATUS survey is due in 2010 and, in combination with the two recent surveys, will help to increase useful knowledge of our customer base that can help us to shape services and service improvements.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Customers that have been tenants for two years or less | 30% |
| Customers that have been tenants for more than 10 years | 51% |
| One person households | 66% |
| BME customers | 3% |
| LGBT customers | 6% |
| Customers who use a wheelchair | 13% |
| Long term illness or disability | 70% |
| Under 25 | 3% |
| Over 65 | 41% |
| Males | 48% |
| Females | 52% |
| Customers with a stated faith | 73% |
| Employed | 15% |
| Unemployed | 7% |
| Permanently sick or disabled | 29% |
| Retired customers | 42% |
| Customers who get Housing Benefit | 80% |

3.5 Customer Involvement

BCH is committed to giving customers a real say in their housing service and has made significant improvement in this area in recent years. Tenants and residents can be involved in shaping the decisions that affect them, their homes and their community. We are continually working with as many Tenants as possible to provide an excellent housing service, and give every tenant the opportunity to get involved in a way that suits them. BCH works to Blackpool Council's Tenant Compact which:

- Details our commitment to working in partnership:
- Identifies the support and opportunities available to ensure that Tenants are effectively involved in the decision making process at a level and pace chosen by Tenants themselves, whilst cultivating both personal and community development
- Provides a flexible framework to encourage, promote and support the development and expansion of future tenant involvement, with a special emphasis of involving 'hard to reach groups' and giving a voice to minority groups in areas without representation.

The key measure as to whether the partnership is delivering a quality service is in the perceptions of those receiving the service. As a consequence the views of tenants and residents are paramount, not just in how the service is delivered, but also in the formulation of policy as to what the service will provide. BCH takes pride in the level of consultation between officers and tenants and residents across all aspects of the service.

To enable as many Tenants as possible to become involved we have a Customer Involvement Team who work regularly with Tenants from around Blackpool. Many of our Tenants have been working with us for some time. We are always looking to widen these groups and have established a number of ways in which Tenants can work with us and with each other. Some of the ways in which we involve Tenants are listed below

Tenant and Resident Associations

Tenant and Resident Associations work in partnership with BCH and other agencies to help develop and improve the housing services you receive. They are an opportunity for Tenants and residents to improve their local environment, have their say in the community, and help to improve BCH services. There are Tenants and residents associations covering:

- Mereside
- Bostonway
- Queens Park
- Ingthorpe North
- Grange Park
- Edmonton & Linden
- Washington Court
- Munster Avenue
- MBH

Other opportunities to be involved in decision making and improving services include:

- Tenant Liaison Forum
- Tenant Liaison Forum Panel/Workshop
- Open Forum
- Mystery Shoppers
- Conferences
- Surveys
- Telephone, E-mail and Postal Survey Group
- Tenant Feedback
- Customer Suggestion Scheme
- Repairs Roadshows
- Viewpoint
- Reading Panel
- Tenant Board Members
- Estate Walkabouts
- Repairs Forum
- Tenant Inspectors
- Green Wardens
- Sheltered Tenant Forum
- Disabled Tenants Group
- BME Involvement Panel

3.6 Key Trends, Drivers, And Expected Future Developments (Updated March 2010)

Future Plans for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The HRA subsidy system has been the subject of much discussion in recent years, particularly around key areas of weakness within the current system:

- A significant amount of HRA subsidy funds the debts from capital expenditure which means councils in surplus are effectively paying for the programmes of councils in subsidy.
- A number of authorities have significant pressures and yet they are seeing resources taken from them and passed to other authorities with possibly less severe problems
- Frequent changes in distribution policy mean that subsidy figures are unpredictable, making forward planning difficult.

Consultation instigated by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) proposing major changes to the Housing Subsidy system and a review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has now been completed and a prospectus issued outlining proposals for the future of Council Housing finance.

The proposals aim to support a sustainable, long term system for financing council housing.

The Vision for Self-Financing

Proposals include:

- A once and for all settlement of debt between local authorities and central government, replacing housing subsidy.
- Local authorities to retain all rental income and sale receipts.
- Creation of additional resources of £1.2 billion nationally to fund 10,000 new homes annually
- A commitment to fund the completion of the Decent Homes programme.
- Creation of financial certainty and thereby support for better asset management and improvement to services.

The Government sees the introduction of these changes as an opportunity for local authorities to improve strategic planning and improve the accountability between tenants and landlords.

The Self-Financing Settlement

The settlement is intended to put all housing authorities in a financial position where they are able to manage their housing stock from their own rental income in the future. Financial modelling has been used to assess income levels and expenditure needs and the level of debt that the net income can support. There is an increase in resources proposed as part of the settlement, with a minimum of a 10% increase in funding for management, maintenance and major repair by comparison with the current system.

The only income included in the financial model is rental income. The model assumes that all authorities will move toward rent convergence in equal steps by 2015/16 (a move to five years convergence from the current three). Rent changes would still be restricted to RPI +/-0.5% +/- £2.

Self-financing is intended to enable landlords to maintain their existing stock from their own resources. The CLG accepts that some landlords have a backlog of works that will need extra capital funding from outside the settlement in the early years. It has been estimated that this backlog is around £3 billion. It has not been decided how these resources will be allocated, or if they will be funded as the availability of resources is subject to the next Government Spending Review.

Any approved new council housing build schemes would be excluded from this model as they are outside the subsidy system.

Housing & Regeneration Act

The Housing & Regeneration Act contains provisions that have merged the housing investment and regeneration functions of the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships into a new Homes and Communities Agency.

By bringing together land and housing, and shifting from grant funding of social housing to investing in infrastructure, the Agency will support the regeneration and delivery of new social and affordable housing, both public and private, and deliver a strategic approach to regeneration.

The Agency is now also able to make better use of surplus public sector land and maximise the potential for brownfield development.

The Act also created a new regulator of social housing, the Office for Tenants and Social Landlords, commonly known as the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). The TSA's regulatory powers with regard to organisations like BCH came fully into effect on 1st April 2010.

The TSA has a clear, well-focused set of powers to regulate social housing providers. They reflect the TSA's key role of tenant protection. These powers include explicit power to set standards for social housing provision, particularly around key areas such as tenancy terms, rents, tenant involvement, viability and contributions to sustainable communities.

The TSA has consulted on six standards that social housing providers must meet. They are designed to help improve the services provided for the eight million people who live in social housing in England.

The six standards are:

- Tenant involvement and empowerment
- Home
- Tenancy
- Neighbourhood and community
- Value for money
- Governance and financial viability

These standards are the centrepiece of a new regulatory framework set out in the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England. They describe the outcomes the TSA wants to see delivered and the specific requirements expected of social housing landlords in complying the standards.

The Housing and Regeneration Act may present opportunities for BCH to develop new partnerships and collaborations as well as providing opportunities to take on new housing management functions.

Local Initiatives

In addition to national change agendas there are local drivers for change that will impact on BCH.

- Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme
- Opportunities to work with the PCT to deliver their local agenda
- Blackpool Council review of Homeless Service and Strategy
- An increase in the number of older and vulnerable people living in their own homes
- The development of local Extra Care sheltered schemes
- Improvement work on Queens Park, Grange Park and Mereside that has been identified by stakeholders

BCH's involvement of customers is well established and programmes of involvement will continue to provide opportunities to effectively meet local customer needs and respond to changing aspirations.

Completion Of Decent Home Programme (Updated March 2010)

In 2013 the £66m Capital Programme to bring housing stock up to the Government's Decent Homes Standard, and the Blackpool Standard agreed with customers, will be completed. The completion of this major work coincides with a break clause in the Council's management agreement with BCH.

The completion of the Decent Homes programme will present BCH with opportunities to develop as a Housing Management Service, as a market force, and as a community leader and facilitator.

BCH may wish to consider a number of different new activities, using the existing organisational structure. These potential activities include:

- Delivering new services for the council
- Providing services for other organisations
- Property ownership and new build
- Participating in wider regeneration activities

There are also new areas of activity open to BCH including:

- New build and acquisition of stock
- Regeneration activities
- Further investment in existing stock
- Assistance for owners in the private sector

BCH also has options in relation to its structure including:

- Company limited by shares
- Limited liability partnership (LLP)
- Industrial and provident society
- Partnership
- Limited Partnership
- Trust status
- Unincorporated association
- Charitable status

The development of a new vision for BCH and the planning of a new way forward will, by necessity, involve careful consideration of a range of political, environmental, service, and customer considerations. This must include consultation with all stakeholders, but in particular customers, who can help to shape the future of BCH.

3.7 Local Market (Updated March 2010)

Blackpool has a well-established home improvement agency that provides a repair and improvement service to elderly and disabled people living in the area. The agency also provides a falls prevention service and works closely and effectively with local statutory agencies.

In addition to BCH, there are 16 Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) operating in Blackpool and HousingCare lists 15 providers of sheltered housing. The 16 RSLs all carry out similar management functions to BCH and all 15 sheltered housing operations carry out similar supported housing functions to BCH. RSLs also provide low cost home ownership.

The social rented housing stock locally is 10.5% of the total housing stock, which is significantly lower than the North West average of 19.6%. The private rented housing stock in Blackpool, however, accounts for 17.7% of the total stock, which is over double the North West average. The majority of this private rented stock is in the central area of Blackpool and is predominantly poor quality.

There are a number of property management companies operating within Blackpool that carry out lettings and income management functions for private landlords that are similar to those that BCH undertakes. Similarly there are a number of asset management companies operating within the area.

BCH leads the Reassurance project on Grange Park and there are similar schemes in the South and Central areas of Blackpool that are led by Blackpool Council.

BCH's current partnerships and collaborations are well established and effective. A proven ability to work closely with partners will ensure that BCH can remain in the forefront of supporting neighbourhood renewal and sustainable communities and develop its role as a community leader.

A Fylde Coast Sub Regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment was carried out by Blackpool Council in 2008 in order to identify actions that will help deliver better housing and social and economic outcomes for those living in Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre.

A Housing Needs Assessment was part of this study. Key findings were as follows:

Current Need

- As at 2007, Fylde Coast Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA) had 10,720 waiting list applications of which 3,180 were priority applicants and a total of 3,270 were classified as in current need – approximately 40% in Blackpool, 40% in Fylde and 20% in Wyre
- This gives rise to an annual need of 650 households, over the next five years
- In Blackpool, and urban Wyre, the private rented sector plays a key role in accommodating households who do not have the means to pay market rents, but who are eligible for housing benefits
- 23% of all Blackpool households receive housing benefits and 83% of private rented dwellings are benefit cases
- A benefits driven market has emerged in and around the urban core. It appears to be both a magnet for and satisfier of housing need

Future Need

- Average net household growth to 2011 is projected to be about 2,000 households per annum across the Fylde Coast SHMA
- About 50% of newly forming households are estimated not to be able to afford market housing (private rented or sale) - that is about 1,000 households per annum
- Every year it is estimated that 860 new applicants in need join the SHMA authorities' housing waiting lists
- Taking account of the area estimates, the total minimum newly arising need was calculated at 1,820 per annum for the next five years

Affordable Housing Supply (Social Rented)

- Net social relets are estimated to total 950 per annum and there is an anticipated annual supply of 120 new social units
- There is only a limited supply of RSL shared ownership properties (630 in Blackpool and 130 in Wyre) with low or no turnover

Level of Housing Need

- The Housing Needs Assessment demonstrates a need for an additional 1,280 social rented properties per annum, on top of what is planned to be delivered
- The overall shortfall is highest in Fylde and Wyre
- A 10% affordability improvement would reduce the need for additional supply to 1,110. Conversely a 10% affordability decline would increase the need to 1,500 dwellings per annum

- Whilst the profile of housing need suggests the main Fylde Coast SHMA requirement is for 1 bed properties, in Blackpool the supply of 1 beds as bedsits appears to be disproportionate to need, implying a need to prioritise provision of 2 and 3 bed dwellings in the future.

(Source: Fylde Coast Strategic Housing Market Assessment, DTZ, April 2008)

4 Staff, Management & Governance

4.1 Staffing (Updated March 2010)

Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH) currently employs 167 staff, varying from joiners and housing officers to accountants and IT specialists. In order for BCH to achieve the goals within this plan and meet the challenges ahead, BCH will require a highly skilled and effective workforce. We need to ensure that our employees have the required knowledge, skills and experience to ensure a successful future for Blackpool Coastal Housing and its customers.

Recruitment

Due to the geographical location of Blackpool, BCH faces a number of difficulties in attracting and recruiting talented individuals with housing experience. Therefore effective recruitment and retention of talented individuals is key to achieving this business plan. A comprehensive succession plan is required to ensure that individuals are supported in achieving their potential and the organisation has contingency plans in place to ensure the organisation is effectively managed in the future.

BCH aims to become an employer of choice over the next 5 years which will enable us to develop a talent bank of suitable individuals wishing to join our organisation.

Training and Development

It is vital that BCH continues to develop the skills and knowledge of its workforce to meet the challenges ahead. The Board and Senior Management Team is committed to retaining Investor in People status and investing in the development of the workforce to ensure the future success of the organisation. A key priority for BCH will be management development. This will be delivered through training and development programmes, mentoring with other managers and directors and regular coaching and support.

Communication

Regular and effective communication with all employees is vital to ensure the effective running of the organisation. This will be achieved by continuing with ongoing successful initiatives such as; regular Staff Awareness Sessions, monthly Staff Newsletter, Team Talk and monthly team meetings, and also the Staff Consultation Committee. Regular consultations will take place and where appropriate trade unions will be involved where any changes are proposed. The Board and Senior Management Team believes it is vital to share information with all employees and raise their awareness of key issues and provide timely feedback on our performance.

HR Service

The HR service coaches, advises and supports managers in positive people management practices to ensure teams are motivated, developed and high performing. The HR Service will continue to support the development of a positive, pro-active culture within BCH and guide the organisation to achieving its goal of becoming recognised as one of the Times Top 100 employers by 2012.

Motivation

It is vital that the workforce is highly motivated and committed to achieving the challenges laid down within this business plan. To support this BCH will endeavour to find out more about its employees to be able to support them effectively and retain them. This will be achieved by annual staff attitude surveys, consultation groups and questionnaires.

Reward and Recognition

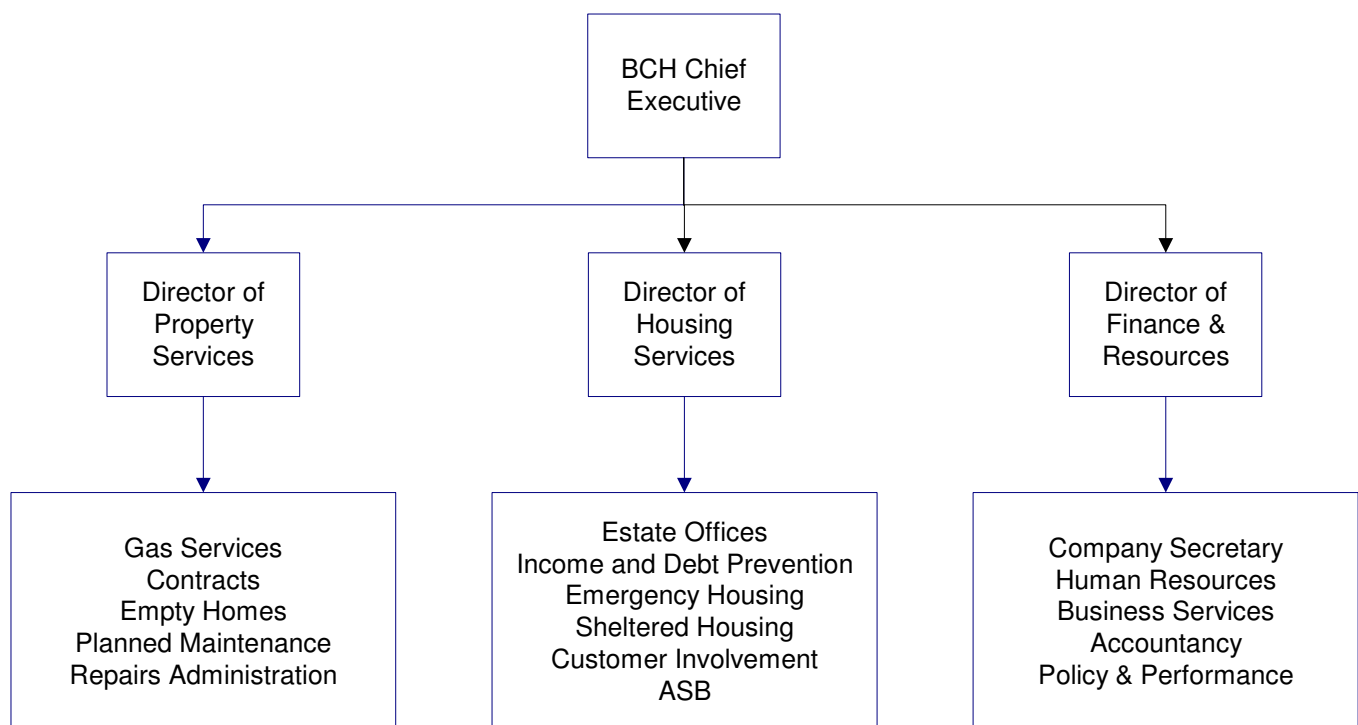
In order to retain excellent employees, Blackpool Coastal Housing will ensure reward packages remain competitive. This will be achieved through external benchmarking with other ALMOs and also locally. Benefits packages will be continually monitored, reviewed for their effectiveness and revised where necessary, to ensure they add real value for employees and remain cost effective.

A job evaluation exercise was conducted together with a pay review during 2009. This ensured that work of equal value is rewarded comparably across the entire organisation.

4.2 Organisational Structure

Day to day operations are delegated to the Senior Management Team headed by the Chief Executive. BCH has visible, approachable and accessible leaders who communicate well with staff. The senior management team is stable and there is a broad mix of approaches and styles that facilitates innovation, motivation and clear leadership.

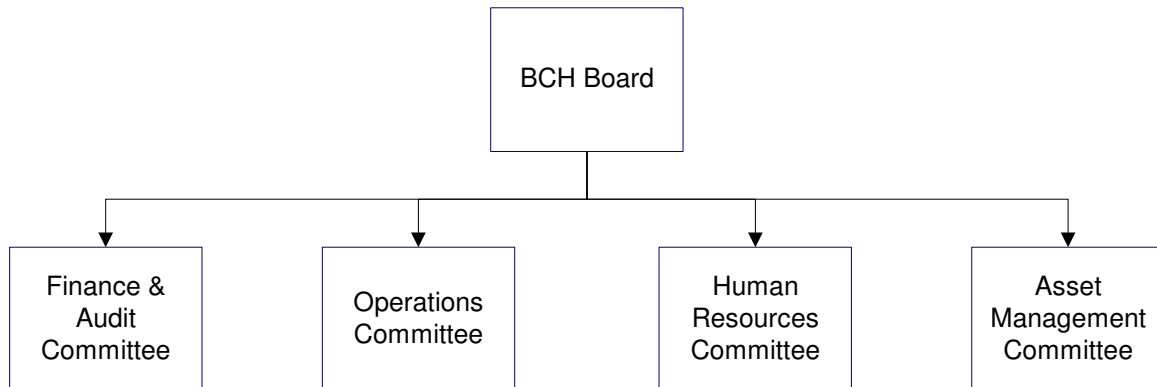
The following diagram shows the senior management team structure and areas of responsibility.



4.3 Board Structure and Governance (Updated March 2010)

The Board of Management consists of 15 Non-Executive Directors. Five Directors are Customers (four elected Tenants and one elected Leaseholder), five Directors are nominated by Blackpool Council and five are Independent Directors appointed by the other ten members of the Board for their knowledge, skills and experience. The Board meets eight times per year and is supported by Committees that also meet eight times per year. These Committees cover: Finance and Audit, Asset Management, Operations, and Human Resources.

The following diagram shows the Board and Committee structure and areas of responsibility.



Directors have clear roles and responsibilities and a broad mix of varied skills and interests that enable effective decision making to meet the needs of the whole community and deal with difficult issues in a holistic way. The Board is committed to continually developing its arrangements for good governance to ensure that BCH is well run, remains financially solvent, is a top performing organisation and employer, and delivers excellent housing services to the community.

The Board is also committed to ensuring that Directors are effectively trained to undertake their duties to ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of BCH and its customers. Board Directors undergo Individual Performance Appraisal every year to ensure their individual training needs are met. New Board Directors have their training needs assessed upon appointment to the Board and a programme of induction training is designed to meet their individual needs.

An external review of BCH governance structures and arrangements is being carried out during 2010.

There are basically two reasons for carrying out this review:

- It is now three years since BCH took on its responsibilities under the Management Agreement with the Council. Although some small changes in governance arrangements have occurred in that time they are essentially the same as those originally approved by the Shadow board in 2006. It is, therefore, important to check that they are still fully relevant to both current and future circumstances and legal requirements.
- The Government (CLG) and Audit Commission have placed increased expectations on the governing bodies of all housing providers, including ALMOs. Governance and strategic leadership now plays a very important part in regulation and inspection

The governance review will inform and be informed by the 360 degree performance appraisals for both the Board and SMT and will include the following:

- It will offer the Board assurance that governance arrangements are still fit for purpose and compare well with other ALMOs and housing bodies.
- It will consider whether the relationship between the Board and the tenant/resident engagement structures are still working well and whether they meet the emphasis now placed by the Tenant Service Authority on resident influence and co-regulation
- It will look at best practice compared to other ALMOs and housing sector providers, including Board effectiveness, succession planning, capacity building and how well the staff team support the Board in meeting its responsibilities and skill development
- The review will involve observation of Board and Committee activity plus discussion and feedback from all Board Directors, including a short questionnaire
- When the fieldwork has been completed, preliminary discussion of the emerging findings and conclusions will be discussed with the Board/SMT before the report is finalised
- The final output will be a report with recommendations and a proposed action plan
- The desired outcome is that best practice in governance at BCH will be in evidence, helping shape the strategic direction and drive up standards.

The requirements of the Tenant Services Authority (TSA), whose regulatory role is outlined in Section 3.6 earlier in this plan document, also have a bearing on the governance of BCH. This arises from the need to develop systems of Tenant Led Self-Regulation, or Self-Scrutiny as it is sometimes called and work on this is already underway and is running in parallel with the governance review.

Proposals for a Blackpool Tenants & Leaseholders Assembly have been approved in principle by both the Board of BCH and the Tenants' Liaison Forum. The aim is to separate the Community Development activities of Tenants and Residents Associations from Customer Involvement activity relating to BCH service priorities, delivery and improvement. The new Assembly will provide:

- A formal involvement structure of Service Improvement Panels
- Formal involvement opportunities open to all tenants and leaseholders
- A new strategic tenant body created to
 - Scrutinise & recommend improvements to services
 - Monitor & assess performance of BCH
 - Review & inform strategic policies

With regard to supporting Community Development there will be a relaxation of the 'Criteria for Tenants & Residents Associations' as their remit will be to focus on their own area and community.

Work on developing the new involvement structure is in hand to formalise the Service Improvement Panels and recruit to them. Once the outcome of the governance review is known and approved in late July 2010 it will become possible to formally approve and implement any necessary changes in BCH direct governance alongside approval and implementation of the tenant-led scrutiny arrangements.

5 Key Organisational Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

5.1 SWOT Analysis

| | | Positives | Negatives |
|------------------|---------------|---|---|
| Internal Factors | Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit Commission two star and excellent prospects judgments • Decent Homes funding • Level of customer involvement and empowerment • Well established and successful relationship with client • Established and successful partnerships • Reputation and external perceptions • IIP and ISO accreditation • Skill and experience mix of Board and Senior Management Team • Financial Health • Development of career pathways • Level of customer satisfaction • Membership of improvement networks • Well established and successful relationship with customers • Proven record of delivering improvement and value for money • Track record of learning from other organisations • Ability to obtain project funding • Creation of modern apprenticeships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single stream of funding • Board structure relatively new • Organisation relatively new and a number of new staff • Development needed in some areas of business continuity • Development needed in some areas of equality and diversity • Development needed in some areas of risk management • Potential difficulty recruiting to some key posts • Some IT systems have been outgrown • Stock type imbalances |
| | Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decent Homes funding • Audit Commission three star judgment • Changes to housing domain regulation • ICT Modernisation • Sub regional Choice Based Lettings scheme • Redevelopment and regeneration of Blackpool • More developed performance culture • Further value for money and efficiency • Housing Corporation list of approved bodies • Increased Housing Management business • Marketable consultancy services • External funding bids | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Management contract break point 2013 • Council brings back parts of service • Long term Housing Revenue Account losses • HRA changes • Central government policy changes • Changes to housing domain regulation • External competition • Long term changes in customer aspiration • Capacity and performance of contractors • Loss of star rating • Increase in low demand and difficult to let property • Reduced levels of involvement and participation |
| External Factors | | | |
| | Threats | | |

5.2 PEST Analysis

POLITICAL

Break clause in contract and change of local Council
Change of Central Government
Comprehensive spending review
Relationships with local politicians and MPs
Develop new routes to communicate with local councillors
Need to target key politicians
Client relationship
TSA/Audit commission

SOCIOLOGICAL

Mortality Rates
Aspirations increasing and putting more pressure on stock
Stock profile linking into customer profile
Perceptions of potential customers
Branding in the context of the general public, potential customers and potential partners
Ageing population
Levels of disability and poor health

ECONOMIC

Credit crunch/recession
Comprehensive spending review
Pay review/equal pay legislation
Rent arrears up/down
Increased levels of deprivation
Loss of custom to private sector
Increase in private sector market share
Movement in market due to stock imbalance/affordability
Aspirations cost money
Affordability of fuel
Local employment/unemployment
Housing Allowance

TECHNOLOGICAL

New IT system
Improved environmental/efficiency technologies
Solar energy and wind power
Mobile working technology that can support increased home working
Carbon footprint
Incentives to reinforce green behaviour
New building technologies/products
Waste

5.3 Key Business Risks

BCH Maintains a Risk Strategy and Risk Register the aims of which are to:

- Provide a framework whereby risk can be identified, analysed, controlled and monitored.
- Improve the quality of business decisions by minimising risk but maximising opportunity.
- Provide better protection to assets and resources.
- Reduce costs by minimising error and failure.
- Demonstrate compliance with laws and regulations.
- Improve public image and reputation.

| Key Risks | Impact | Likelihood | Mitigation |
|--|--------|------------|--|
| Inability to collect rent accounts and outstanding debt results in service failure. | 5 | 2 | Dedicated rent team in place. Clear procedures. IT failure at Progress House would be covered by IT at Estate offices. Nightly back ups. |
| A critical service provider/contractor goes bankrupt and cannot deliver the service. | 3 | 2 | Financial checks undertaken at tendering stage. Performance regularly monitored. Range of contractors employed who could gear up to cover each other if one failed. |
| Rental base of the business diminishes due to increased levels of RTB, service becomes uneconomic. | 4 | 2 | Accurate, realistic valuations. Alternative business opportunities are assessed. Procedures in place. Leaseholder interviews take place to raise awareness of the RTB process. Take action to discourage RTB companies who produce misleading information. Blackpool is a 'No cold calling' zone'. |
| Failure of key building maintenance system causing danger to tenants. | 3 | 1 | Stock survey undertaken. Regular handheld updates. Regular visits by tradesmen to properties. |
| Inadequate monitoring of vulnerable clients results in un-notified illness or death. | 5 | 3 | Contract with Vitaline. Warden control system. Support scheme for managers. Protocol with Social Care. |
| High staff turnover destabilises and damages the service. | 4 | 2 | Emphasis on involving staff. Regular meetings. IPA. Aim to be top 100 Company. Investors in People. |
| Staff do not have the skills to deliver improving services. | 4 | 3 | Regular training. IPA's - training plan. Investors in People. |
| Catastrophic event or disaster (natural/man made) cause massive damage to the service. | 5 | 1 | BCH part of Council's Corporate Emergency Plan. |
| Failure to comply with updated laws and regulations leads to massive fines and sanctions. | 5 | 2 | Contract with Legal. Constant checks on HR, buildings, housing, legislation and company law. |
| Lack of staff support for organisational change leads to poor performance. | 3 | 2 | Emphasis on involving staff. Regular meetings. IPA. Aim to be top 100 Company. Investors in People. Staff ALMO Group. |
| Inability to let poor properties compromises income and future development. | 4 | 3 | Choice Based lettings. One lettings team. Dedicated maintenance team. Handy people. Asset Management Strategy and Area Asset Management plans Identify low demand properties at an early stage to allow remedial action to be taken. |
| ALMO Board malfunctions with loss of direction and poor service reputation. | 4 | 2 | Extensive Board training programme in place. Skills gaps identified. Regular updates. Visits to exemplar organisations. Buddy ALMO planned. |
| Change of government policy stops funding and halts service improvement. | 4 | 3 | Unlikely to move away from current approach of funding to LSVT's and ALMO's Senior Managers keep a close eye on reports about Government housing policy. |

Impact scores relate to the detrimental effect on the business where 5 is the highest level of impact and 1 the lowest. Likelihood scores relate to the likelihood of the risk becoming a reality where 5 is the highest likelihood and 1 is the lowest.

5.4 Customer Satisfaction Trends

As part of its ongoing commitment to seek the views of its residents, in October 2008 Blackpool Coastal Housing commissioned BMG Research Ltd (BMG) to carry out a postal STATUS survey amongst its customers.

A STATUS Survey is a standardised survey of the satisfaction levels of general needs tenants that BCH is required to undertake once every two years. The overall objective of the survey is to learn about levels of customer satisfaction within key service areas. The key findings and trends are shown below.

During November and December 2008 BCH conducted a STATUS Survey. A STATUS Survey is a standardised survey of the satisfaction levels of general needs tenants that BCH is required to undertake once every two years. The survey provided the following insight when benchmarked against 55 ALMOs.

Benchmarked Core Satisfaction Indicators (Updated March 2010)

| Service Area | Score | National Rank | National Quartile |
|--|-------|---------------|-------------------|
| % respondents very or fairly satisfied with the services / overall service provided by their HA/Landlord | 82.28 | 11 | Upper |
| % respondents very or fairly satisfied with the overall quality of their home | 82.15 | 11 | Upper |
| % respondents very or fairly satisfied with the general condition of their property | 76.84 | 16 | Upper Middle |
| % respondents very or fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live | 74.96 | 35 | Lower Middle |
| % respondents very or fairly satisfied with the value for money for their rent | 85.07 | 4 | Upper |
| % respondents very or fairly satisfied with how enquiries are dealt with generally by their HA / landlord | 78.62 | 5 | Upper |
| % respondents very or fairly satisfied with the way their HA / landlord deals with repairs and maintenance | 81.07 | 6 | Upper |
| % respondents very or fairly satisfied that their views are being taken into account by their HA / landlord | 63.52 | 16 | Upper Middle |
| % respondents who feel their HA / landlord is very or fairly good at keeping them informed about things that might affect them as a tenant | 79.75 | 13 | Upper |

Key Findings Of The Survey

Customers who expressed higher levels of dissatisfaction tended to be:

- Customers dissatisfied with the overall quality of their home
- Customers dissatisfied with the general condition of their home
- Customers dissatisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live
- Customers who feel they are poorly informed
- Customers who are dissatisfied that their rent offers value for money
- Queens Park estate customers

Customers least likely to think that services have improved over the last year were:

- Customers aged under 64
- Families
- Customers dissatisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live
- Customers dissatisfied that their views are taken into account

6. Financial Information (Updated March 2010)

The BCH Revenue Budget covers the income that BCH receives as an ALMO and the main areas of expenditure. The primary source of income is the management fee from Blackpool Council which BCH uses to manage the Council's stock of housing.

Management of the Council's housing capital programme was transferred to BCH from the Council in 2006/07. This means that BCH is responsible for carrying out and accounting for the housing capital programme. BCH receives an additional management fee for this work.

Local authorities also have a duty to maintain a separate 'ring-fenced' account, known as the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which sets out the expenditure and income relating to the provision, supervision and management of council housing, flats and accommodation. BCH has delegated responsibility for the financial management of Blackpool Council's HRA. This means that whilst Blackpool Council continues to be responsible for planning, monitoring and reporting on the HRA, responsibilities relating to the HRA accounting and financial reporting arrangements are delegated to BCH.

The Government requires all local authorities that own council housing to produce a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan. The purpose of the plan is to outline major issues facing the housing authority, setting these against a clear assessment of the likely level of resources available to resolve them. It takes into account current service operation, demand for social housing, the current condition of stock and future options for funding – over the short (1-3 years), medium (3-10 years), and long (10-30 years) term.

The tables below show:

- 6.1 The BCH Revenue Budget 2007/08 to 2012/13
- 6.2 The Blackpool Council Housing Revenue Account Budget 2007/08 to 2012/13
- 6.3 The Capital Programme and Capital Expenditure Budget 2007/08 to 2012/13

6.1 BCH Revenue Budget 2008/09 to 2013/14

| | 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 | 2009/2010 | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 | 2011/2012 | 2012/2013 | 2013/2014 |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Income & Expenditure | ACTUAL | BUDGET | PROJECTED OUTTURN | VARIANCE | BUDGET | BUDGET | BUDGET | BUDGET |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Income | | | | | | | | |
| Management Fee | 11,212 | 11,347 | 11,347 | - | 11,109 | 11,220 | 11,332 | 11,446 |
| Capital Fees | 460 | 580 | 580 | - | 665 | 730 | 689 | 308 |
| Other Income | 154 | 188 | 188 | - | 172 | 94 | 45 | 45 |
| Total Income | 11,826 | 12,115 | 12,115 | - | 11,946 | 12,044 | 12,066 | 11,799 |
| Expenditure | | | | | | | | |
| Maintenance Expenditure | -4,682 | -4,434 | -4,371 | 63 | -4,371 | -4,407 | -4,451 | -4,498 |
| Property Management | -715 | -938 | -885 | 53 | -969 | -1,031 | -993 | -610 |
| Housing Operations | -1,308 | -1,459 | -1,407 | 52 | -1,427 | -1,438 | -1,453 | -1,468 |
| Supported Housing | -1,325 | -1,476 | -1,368 | 108 | -1,405 | -1,417 | -1,431 | -1,446 |
| Other Services | -1,215 | -1,121 | -1,103 | 18 | -1,143 | -1,152 | -1,164 | -1,176 |
| General Management & Support | -1,876 | -2,210 | -2,125 | 85 | -2,178 | -2,196 | -2,218 | -2,241 |
| Other Expenditure | -339 | -487 | -372 | 115 | -475 | -403 | -356 | -360 |
| Total Expenditure | -11,460 | -12,125 | -11,631 | 494 | -11,968 | -12,044 | -12,066 | -11,799 |
| Surplus/ Deficit (-) | 366 | -10 | 484 | 494 | -22 | - | - | - |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Working Balance | 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 | 2009/2010 | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 | 2011/2012 | 2012/2013 | 2013/2014 |
| | ACTUAL | BUDGET | PROJECTED OUTTURN | VARIANCE | BUDGET | BUDGET | BUDGET | BUDGET |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Balance At 1st April | 222 | 588 | 588 | - | 1,072 | 1,050 | 1,050 | 1,050 |
| Contribution To/ From Working Balance | 366 | -10 | 484 | 494 | -22 | - | - | - |
| Balance At 31st March | 588 | 578 | 1,072 | 494 | 1,050 | 1,050 | 1,050 | 1,050 |

6.2 Blackpool Council Housing Revenue Account Budget 2008/09 to 2013/14

| Housing Revenue Account | 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 | 2011/2012 | 2012/2013 | 2013/2014 |
|--|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | ACTUAL | BUDGET | PROJECTED OUTTURN | BUDGET | BUDGET | BUDGET | BUDGET |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Management Fee | -11,212 | -11,347 | -11,347 | -11,107 | -11,220 | -11,332 | -11,446 |
| Other HRA Costs | -485 | -532 | -562 | -596 | -607 | -617 | -628 |
| Capital Charges | -5,337 | -6,270 | -6,320 | -7,004 | -7,743 | -8,674 | -8,694 |
| Rent Rebate Subsidy Limitation | -415 | -103 | -383 | -418 | -180 | - | - |
| Provision For Bad And Doubtful Debts | -212 | -220 | -200 | -200 | -200 | -200 | -200 |
| Housing Subsidy | 532 | 400 | 895 | 1,640 | 1,544 | 1,481 | 1,674 |
| Rent & Service Charge Income Due | 16,928 | 17,113 | 17,000 | 17,187 | 17,701 | 18,242 | 18,777 |
| Other Rents & Charges | 288 | 306 | 311 | 299 | 313 | 303 | 303 |
| Interest Income | 334 | 294 | 294 | 278 | 266 | 195 | 107 |
| Contribution To/ From Working Balance (-) | 421 | -359 | -312 | 77 | 126 | 103 | 107 |
| | | | | | | | |
| Working Balance | 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 | 2011/2012 | 2012/2013 | |
| | ACTUAL | BUDGET | PROJECTED OUTTURN | BUDGET | BUDGET | BUDGET | |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | |
| Balance at 1 st April | 1,118 | 1,539 | 1,539 | 1,227 | 1,304 | 1,430 | 1,533 |
| Contribution To/ From Working Balance (-) | 421 | 359 | 312 | 77 | 126 | 103 | 107 |
| Balance 31st March | 1,539 | 1,180 | 1,227 | 1,304 | 1,430 | 1,533 | 1,640 |

Housing Stock Projected Changes 2008/09 to 2013/14

| Housing Stock | 2008/2009 ACTUAL | 2009/2010 ACTUAL | 2010/2011 BUDGET | 2011/2012 BUDGET | 2012/2013 BUDGET | 2013/2014 BUDGET |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Total Number Of Dwellings At 1 st April | 5,421 | 5,395 | 5,391 | 5,403 | 5,393 | 5,383 |
| Number Of Dwellings Completed And Acquired In The Year | 0 | 5 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Number Of Dwellings Sold / Deleted In The Year | -26 | -9 | -30 | -10 | -10 | -10 |
| Total Number Of Dwellings At 31 st March | 5,395 | 5,391 | 5,403 | 5,393 | 5,383 | 5,373 |

6.3 Capital Programme and Capital Expenditure Budget 2008/09 to 2014/15

| | 2008/2009 ACTUAL £000 | 2009/2010 ACTUAL £000 | 2010/2011 BUDGET £000 | 2011/2012 BUDGET £000 | 2012/2013 BUDGET £000 | 2013/2014 BUDGET £000 | 2014/2015 BUDGET £000 |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Number of properties meeting Decent Homes Standard at year end | 1565 | 2185 | 2805 | 3665 | 4556 | 5373 | 5373 |
| Number of properties to be brought up to the Standard during the year | 620 | 620 | 860 | 890 | 827 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage of properties meeting the Standard at the end of the year | 40.68 | 52.23 | 68.24 | 84.42 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total Capital Investment - Decent Homes & Other Works– Actual / Planned (£m) | 15.404 | 17.804 | 22.432 | 19.526 | 18.456 | 4.591 | 4.935 |

| Funding Sources (£m) | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Community and Local Government funding | 11.000 | 13.150 | 13.000 | 15.000 | 14.000 | - | - |
| Major Repairs Allowance | 3.283 | 3.629 | 3.702 | 3.656 | 3.586 | 3.492 | 3.241 |
| 1. [SCE] Grant | 0.026 | - | 2.208 | - | - | - | - |
| 2. [Other Borrowing] | - | - | 2.819 | - | - | - | - |
| 3. [Capital Receipts] | 0.522 | 0.100 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4. [Other Sources of Income] | 0.573 | 0.925 | 0.716 | 0.870 | 0.870 | 1.094 | 1.694 |
| Total Investment Programme Funding | 14.831 | 16.879 | 21.729 | 18.656 | 17.586 | 3.492 | 3.241 |

Decent Homes (Updated March 2010)

After being awarded 2 Stars and Excellent Prospects by the Audit Commission following inspection in November 2007, BCH was granted £66.15 million to help it achieve the Government's Decent Homes Standard by 2013. The money is released over a 5 year period, which began in the summer of 2008.

The programme of works commenced in the summer of 2008 with targets of providing:

- Over 4,000 new Kitchens
- Over 4,000 new Bathrooms
- 3900 new doors
- 2500 heating systems
- Other works including new windows, roofing and loft insulation

Years 1 and 2 of the Decent Home Programme have been completed and the detail of year three (2010/11) of the programme is shown below.

Proposed 2010/11 Planned Capital Programme

The total resources available for the 2010/11 Planned Capital Works are £17,000,000 inclusive of £4,000,000 Capital Funding from the Major Repairs Allowance.

The total value of schemes identified is £16,185,000, this being subject to the submission of priced frameworks by our partnering contractors

Replacement Heating and Upgrading of Electrics

BCH has identified 261 tenanted properties for heating replacement and upgrading of electrics. BCH has included two multi-storey blocks of flats on Queens Park, equating to 128 properties that will either switch fuel energy to electric heating or have a community heating plant installed incorporating combined heat pumps. The budget allocated for this work is £2,700,000.

The properties have been identified using a 'risk based' approach as the majority of these contain Gas Warm Air units that have exceeded their useful lifecycle, are un-economical to run and for which replacement parts are becoming obsolete. These replacements will help reduce carbon emissions, improve running costs, and provide a 'whole house' programmable central heating solution.

Kitchen and Bathroom Refurbishment including Upgrading of Electrics

The kitchen and bathroom refurbishment and electrical upgrading programme is split between Grange Park and Bispham 398 properties, and South shore 398 properties. The majority of properties have already benefited from the installation of central heating and replacement window frames. The existing kitchens and bathrooms are either as built or have had some units replaced on a responsive basis. As part of this scheme, we will be replacing outdated storage heaters with Economy 10 Electric Panel Heaters to 179 flats in conjunction with the kitchen & bathroom refurbishments. These properties require this investment, as they do not have adequate, modern facilities. This investment in what is predominantly family type accommodation will help encourage sustainable tenancies on these estates. The budget allocated for this work is £6,300,000.

External Encapsulation and Environmental works inclusive of Kitchen and Bathroom Refurbishment, Upgrading of Electrics

There have been 51 tenanted properties identified for the External Encapsulation and internal refurbishment works in South Shore and Bispham. These properties were built in the 1920's and are in need of major investment to the fabric of the buildings due to erosion. These properties require new roofs including fascia's/guttering, a render system that is sympathetic to the age and design of the properties and new fencing and paths. Included within this scheme is the refurbishment of kitchens and bathrooms and upgrading of electrics. The budget allocated for this work is £1,500,000.

Window Frame and External Door Replacement Programme

The window frame replacement programme has been identified to replace original timber window frames to 429 tenanted properties and 24 leasehold properties with PVCu Double Glazed windows with high security locking. The external door replacement programme has been identified to replace original timber door sets to tenanted flats with high security GRP (Glass Reinforced Plastic) door sets. The budget for this work is £800,000 which includes leasehold costs which are recoverable under section 20 of the leasehold reform act. All new door sets installed will comply with the Disabled Discrimination Act (DDA).

External Works Inclusive Of Roof Repairs

There have been 440 tenanted properties and 31 leasehold properties identified for the External programme of works. These properties were built in the 1950's and are in need of investment to the fabric of the buildings due to erosion. These properties require extensive roof maintenance including replacement fascias, gutters and extensive re-pointing of the facing brickwork. The budget allocated for this work is £3,200,000 including leasehold costs, which are recoverable under section 20 of the Leasehold Reform Act.

Balcony Replacement

There are two concrete cantilever balconies to Newby Place flats that have been identified for replacement. The reinforcement within the concrete has deteriorated and we have had to temporarily scaffold to support the balcony. We are specifying the removal of the existing first and second floor balconies and replacing them with a steel balcony and handrail. Whilst work is undertaken the flats will need to be decanted to comply with Health and Safety. The budget allocated for this work is £ 120,000.

Kennedy House External Works

Ten flats have been identified for an external render scheme at Kennedy House. This property is located on the promenade and has suffered from weather erosion to the brickwork. There are 4 tenanted properties and 6 leasehold properties contained within the block. The budget allocated for this work is £130,000 including leasehold costs, which are recoverable under section 20 of the Leasehold Reform Act.

Environmental Works

A scheme of work has been identified to provide aesthetically pleasing security fencing to the front of seven 3-storey blocks of flats on Mereside. These flats have been subjected to anti-social behaviour as they are currently afforded no protection to youths running on the grassed areas. The budget allocated for this work is £75,000.

Fire Upgrades

A budget of £200,000 has been allocated to address fire upgrades to communal areas within blocks of flats. A company has been commissioned to carry out Fire Risk Assessments and these assessments will be prioritised to identify properties with a higher risk.

Renewable Energies

A budget of £100,000 has been allocated for addressing renewable energies. BCH has submitted a bid for ERDF funding for the installation of Solar Water heating to 60 properties over the next 3 years for which we are hoping to secure match funding.

Window Frame Refurbishments

There are 128 properties in two multi-storey blocks of flats at Queens Park that have been identified to have window frame refurbishments carried out. The work includes for the replacement of locking mechanisms, handles, keepers and rubber sealing gaskets to the pivot sashes in the flats. The budget allocated for this work is a £160,000.

Electrical Consumer Unit Renewals

There have been 313 properties identified to have their outdated consumer units replaced to comply with BS: 7671 Requirements for Electrical Installation (IEE Wiring Regulations 17th Edition). The budget allocated for this work is a £100,000.

Void Early Failures

A budget of £300,000 has been allocated from the Capital Programme for void early failures. The properties identified for this budget are homes that are included in years 4 or 5 of the Decent Homes programme that cannot be let due to their condition. Other void properties that would be paid for from this budget would be properties that require a new kitchen or bathroom that are still within their life-cycle but have been mistreated.

Leaseholders

Leasehold properties, which are flats that have been sold under the Right to Buy, are only included in the Decent Homes Programme if it is the responsibility of the landlord under the terms of the lease to carry out the work required. Generally speaking this means work to the structure of leasehold dwellings but not to the internal equipment, fixtures and fittings, which are the responsibility of the individual leaseholder. For this reason Leasehold dwellings are only included in the programmes for External Encapsulation, Window Frame Replacement, External Works Inclusive of Roof Repairs and works to Internal Communal areas where Fire Upgrades are necessary.

It is important to note that, even though the Landlord is responsible for identifying the need for these types of repair and arranging for them to be carried out, each Leaseholder must pay their share of the cost. These costs are recoverable under the provisions of Section 151 of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 (as amended by Section 20 of the Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act 2002).

It is, however, intended that Leaseholders will be given the opportunity to pay to have internal works (e.g. kitchen and bathroom replacement, heating and electrical upgrades) carried out at the same time as work is being done on neighbouring tenanted homes. This will be done through direct contractual arrangements between the individual leaseholder and the BCH partnering contractor, facilitated by BCH.

6.4 Value For Money

The current efficiency agenda was introduced as part of the Spending Review 2003. A report was commissioned from Sir Peter Gershon to review efficiency in the public sector. The review focused on the objective to release major resources out of activities which can be undertaken more efficiently into front line services that meet the public's highest priorities. The following main potential areas for savings were identified:

- Back Office Functions
- Transactional Services
- Productive Time
- Procurement

The government has adopted the recommendations of the review and has set a series of efficiency targets for local government, which covers ALMOs. Achieving these targets has become one of the main measures of performance by the Audit Commission.

Value for money needs to be a priority for BCH and the organisation's efficiency strategy outlines the key areas where activity will be prioritised:

- Reducing inputs for the same outputs, releasing money that can be reused elsewhere
- Obtaining reduced prices for the same outputs
- Obtaining greater outputs or improved quality for the same inputs
- Obtaining greater outputs or improved quality in return for a proportionately smaller increase in resources.

For BCH, providing value for money is not about making cuts, but about doing more with the same by increasing effectiveness and operating efficiency. It is about developing more efficient and effective ways of delivering the same or better outcomes for tenants and for communities.

The Efficiency Strategy lists the following BCH service areas for value for money review during the life of the Business Plan.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Responsive Repairs | • Void Repairs |
| • Gas Maintenance | • Electrical Maintenance |
| • Repairs Management & Administration | • Planned Maintenance |
| • ICT | • Right To Buy Administration |
| • General Administration | • Accountancy |
| • HR And Training | • Board Support & Governance |
| • Policy & Performance | • Payment Methods |
| • Estate Management | • Sheltered Services |
| • Emergency Housing | • Concierge & CCTV |

The Efficiency Strategy lists the following contracts for value for money review during the life of the Business Plan.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| • Legal services | • ICT |
| • Customer First & Cashiers | • Concierge & CCTV |
| • Vitaline | • Care & Repair |
| • Fuel Depot | • Procurement Advice |
| • Public Relations | • Environmental Health |

7 Strategic Priorities (Updated March 2010)

The BCH Business Plan is different from plans developed in previous years and reflects the fact that BCH is no longer part of the Council. As BCH is now a separate company there is a need to be able to show more than ever that BCH can provide quality services and value for money.

The Outcomes and Strategic Objectives that have been put into the Business Plan reflect the strategic direction that the Board has chosen for BCH, and take into account what we need to do to become an excellent organisation. The Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry tell us the things we need to do to become an excellent organisation.

Over the five year life of the plan there should be less and less to do to satisfy the Audit Commission and consequently more and more opportunities to respond to our tenants. At the end of the five years we should be able to concentrate almost exclusively on meeting the needs and aspirations of our customers.

Operational Strategies sit underneath the high level Strategic Priorities of the Business Plan and set out its Strategic Objectives with a list of Key Actions that a Team or Service Area needs to take to realise the Strategic Objectives. Operational Strategies also contain the Key Actions that individual Teams and Service Areas need to take to improve their service in line with stakeholder needs and expectations.

Team Plans contain the Key Actions from Operational Strategies and list the tasks that need to be carried out by a Team to complete the Key Actions.

The timetable below shows when things happen in the normal planning cycle.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| October | The Board considers the strategic direction that BCH need to take. |
| | Teams consider what changes they need to make to their Operational Strategies in the light of what has happened over the last year. |
| | SMT considers what changes need to be made to the BCH Business Plan in the light of what has happened over the last year. |
| November | The Board decides on what changes it needs to make to the Business Plan. |
| | SMT decides on what changes it needs to make to the Business Plan. |
| December | Teams report to their Directors on how they are progressing in delivering their Team Plans and discuss what changes need to be made to their Operational Strategies for the next year. |
| January | The BCH Business Plan is refreshed with information from the Board, SMT and any strategic issues that Teams have identified with their Director as needing addressing. |
| February | The BCH Business Plan is approved by the Board. |
| March | Teams report to their Directors on how they are progressing in delivering their Team Plans. |
| | Operational Strategies are refreshed and action plans updated. |
| April | Team Plans are refreshed. |
| June | Teams report to their Directors on how they are progressing in delivering their Team Plans. |
| | Teams report to their Directors on how they are progressing in delivering their Team Plans. |
| September | Teams report to their Directors on how they are progressing in delivering their Team Plans. |

| Access & Customer Care | | | | |
|---|-----------|---|-------------|------------------|
| Outcome | ID | Strategic Objectives | Lead | Timescale |
| BCH has identified customers who are not accessing services and appropriate action is being taken to remove barriers to access. | S01 | To develop an understanding of groups of customers who are not accessing the service as frequently as others and take action to remove any barriers to accessing the service. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S02 | To review the DDA compliance of all physical access points. | SMT | March 2011 |
| BCH has clear identity recognised by customers and outside agencies. | S03 | To relocate Headquarters to new offices. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S04 | To create a single point of access to BCH services. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S05 | To review information provided by Customer First as part of contract management. | SMT | March 2011 |
| BCH can demonstrate that arrangements for access to services provide value for money. | S06 | To test whether Area Offices are providing value for money. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S07 | To investigate and review customer telephone contact | SMT | March 2011 |
| Equality & Diversity | | | | |
| Outcome | ID | Strategic Objectives | Lead | Timescale |
| BCH has up-to-date information on the needs of different customers which is easily available and used to provide an appropriate service. | S08 | To develop a clearer understanding of customer base, and local demographics and ensure that resources are prioritised accordingly and services are adapted and developed appropriately. | SMT | March 2011 |
| Value for Money | | | | |
| Outcome | ID | Strategic Objectives | Lead | Timescale |
| Management arrangements are focused on value for money, and are they underpinned by robust mechanisms to drive and monitor progress, and review impact. | S09 | To deliver a programme of value for money reviews. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S10 | To review procurement arrangements. | SMT | March 2011 |

NOTE: All actions are to be delivered from existing budgets.

| Shaping Services | | | | |
|--|-----------|---|-------------|------------------|
| Outcome | ID | Strategic Objectives | Lead | Timescale |
| BCH achieves high levels of customer satisfaction across all services. | S11 | To ensure that the approach to measuring customer satisfaction is systematic across all service areas and that it is monitored, reported on and used to shape services effectively. | SMT | March 2011 |
| BCH can demonstrate that complaints lead to service improvement. | S12 | To put in place mechanisms to support consistent organisational learning from complaints. | SMT | March 2011 |
| BCH can demonstrate that customer involvement consistently influences the shaping of services | S13 | To reconfigure Customer Involvement structures to support Tenant Improvement Panels and Tenant Led Scrutiny. | SMT | March 2011 |
| BCH can demonstrate that customer profiling information is supporting the shaping of services. | S14 | To continually develop customer profiles apply knowledge, learning and intelligence. | SMT | March 2011 |
| Service Improvement | | | | |
| Outcome | ID | Strategic Objectives | Lead | Timescale |
| BCH has a consistent approach to performance management across all services. | S15 | To ensure that all service standards/local offers are monitored, measured and reported on and to use mystery shopping and customer involvement as an effective part of performance management arrangements. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S16 | To benchmark the performance of all key services. | SMT | March 2011 |
| BCH maximises the use of information technology to support service improvement. | S17 | To implement a new Housing Management computer system. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S18 | To optimise the benefits of new technology by improving workflow and improving procedures. | SMT | March 2011 |

| Empowering Customers | | | | |
|--|-----------|--|-------------|------------------|
| Outcome | ID | Strategic Objectives | Lead | Timescale |
| BCH can demonstrate that it empowers its customers to contribute the shaping and development of services | S19 | To implement And support a successful new tenant led scrutiny structure. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S21 | To develop, implement, and support a Tenant Project Fund. | SMT | March 2011 |
| | S22 | To actively involve customers in value for money processes. | SMT | March 2011 |

NOTE: All actions are to be delivered from existing budgets.