



West North West homes Leeds

Business Plan 2011

Vision:

West North West homes Leeds' Vision is:

“To excel in delivering homes and services relevant to our customers, meet their aspirations and enhance communities”

Mission Statement

West North West homes Leeds' Mission Statement is:

“Putting Customers First”

Aims:

Quality Homes

To ensure that all our homes are warm, safe, energy efficient and maintained to high standards

Quality Services

To work with customers to deliver high quality housing services that continues to improve and meet with customers' needs and aspirations.

Quality Neighbourhoods

To make a real contribution to the Council's wider strategic and housing objectives, helping to build successful, safe and sustainable neighbourhoods which are great places to live.

Promote equality and diversity

To provide an inclusive service which values its diverse communities, supports vulnerable customers and empowers its staff and contactors.

Promote Independence

To work with support providers to enable the most vulnerable and socially excluded to live independently and realise their potential.

Strong Governance and Value for Money

To provide sound financial management, demonstrate open governance and integrity, and to ensure that we offer excellent value for money to our customers.

Foreword

West North West homes Leeds is a not for profit Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), limited by guarantee and wholly owned by Leeds City Council. It is responsible for providing housing management and property investment services on behalf of the Council within the West and North West Districts of the city. We work in close partnership with the Council's other housing ALMO organisations; East North East homes Leeds and Aire Valley homes and alongside Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation.

The Council has retained its strategic role and offers direct services to customers in relation to housing options and strategic commissioning services.

West North West homes Leeds and the Council are working closely together to ensure the provision of high quality, value for money services to all customers of West North West homes.

In June 2010, West North West homes achieved two stars with promising prospects for improvement following the Audit Commission Inspection in March 2010. Whilst this is a strong achievement for West North West homes Leeds, the organisation continues to strive for excellence, high customer satisfaction and to assess positively for value for money.

WNWhL's progress has been rapid with a number of major reviews including major service areas such as independent living, customer services, neighbourhood caretaking and anti social behaviour management being reviewed and modernised.

There have been many achievements both for the entire organisation and also within specific service areas. In line with our commitment of Putting Customers First the organisation has undergone two Service Excellence assessments and achieved accreditation with results showing continuous improvement. This reflects high standards of customer care delivered by its staff team and its delivery partners. In November 2010 the organisation continued to show improving service through its Supporting People quality assessment and successful re-tender for the provision of sheltered housing support services to older customers. We have Tenant Participation Advisory Service accreditation reflecting the extent and quality of our customer involvement work, Investors in People status and are working towards Investors in Diversity accreditation. These accomplishments recognise the hard work and partnership between staff and customers and enable us to benchmark our achievements in continuously improving our services, in providing personalised support for vulnerable customers and in developing the organisation's capacity.

Introduction

The Business Plan supports the Management Agreement between West North West homes Leeds and Leeds City Council which defines how the organisation will plan, operate and deliver its strategic objectives and services to customers over the next 1-3 years. The Plan is looking forward over three years and is updated annually. This annual review has been consulted upon with major stakeholders including Directors, Staff, Customers and our Shareholder Council. The main elements of the Plan include West North West homes Leeds' Strategic Priorities and targets for the next year, how WNWhL and the Council (and other partners) will work together to deliver the strategic objectives of Leeds City Council, governance arrangements and financial management including the capital programme.

West North West homes Leeds seeks to Put its Customers First and to be much more than a landlord or managing agent, contributing to a range of strategic priorities at a local, regional and national level.

West North West homes Leeds' Culture and Values

West North West homes Leeds' culture is:

- Listen, respond, support and respect each other in all our diversity
- To enable us to learn, give and take challenge constructively and develop individual talents
- Be motivated to work in the best interests of West North West homes Leeds and its customers at all times
- Demonstrate ambition and determination to succeed, delivering value for money and best outcomes to customers
- Encourage innovation, taking calculated risks and learning from experience
- Behave with fairness, integrity and honesty at all times while making work enjoyable wherever possible

Our Values are:

- **Performance Orientated** - A professional, performance driven organisation where people enjoy their work
- **Innovation** – A supportive environment where people feel able to try new things and take measured risks, sometimes by leading and being first, and other times learning from other organisations
- **Influential** - Staff, customers and stakeholders respect each other and influence what is done and how people behave
- **Developing** - Customer driven, flexible, constantly learning and moving forward
- **Efficient** - Works efficiently to deliver significant results in the simplest possible way possible

Governance

The governance arrangements for West North West homes Leeds are set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Management Agreement governs the relationship between the Council and West North West homes Leeds.

The Board of Directors is the main decision making body with the responsibility for the strategic direction of the organisation. It is accountable for the performance of the Company across its full range of responsibilities and activities.

The Board of Directors consists of 12 members from three constituent groups with four Tenant Representatives, four Independent Members and four Local Authority Members (Councillors). It is supported by four committees; Service Performance, Finance and Resources, Governance, Risk and Audit and Remuneration, all of which have clear Terms of Reference.

The Board and Committees are supported by the Governance Team which uses a wide range of tools to ensure the effectiveness of the Board's decision making. This includes the Forward Plan, Board Development and Training packages, appraisal formats and clear reporting lines between the Committees and the Board.

The Board Training and Development Plan and Governance Self Assessment are both important tools for the development of the Board which is key to maximising the effectiveness and efficiency of the leadership at West North West homes Leeds. Each Board Director receives an annual appraisal which records their personal training and development needs assessed against core competencies. This forms the basis of the Training Plan for each year.

The ALMO has four Area Panels which forms part of its governance arrangement. The Panels are constituted with membership from Council Members, Tenants and Leaseholders and Board Director Sectors. They have terms of reference and delegated budget responsibility for funds to improve the environment and safety of neighbourhoods and to build community capacity in line with bid criteria.

Assessment of Organisational Strengths and Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities

West North West homes Leeds is committed to continuous improvement and strives to build on its current main organisational strengths, mitigating and tackling its weaknesses. It also identify significant opportunities and threats

Through consultation the following assessment of corporate strengths and weaknesses have been identified:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 stars with promising prospects Audit Commission assessment • Highest performing Leeds ALMO (LCC PI comparisons) • Strong financial management resulting in surplus funds used for reinvestment in homes • Efficiency savings of £3.2m in 2009/10 • Strong track record in customer involvement and diversity work • Competitive and efficient staff terms and conditions • Range of skills and expertise at Board and Executive team level • Successful and ongoing culture change programme • Innovation demonstrated through community based partnership projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term financial forecasting • Costs currently outstrip resources • Mixed performance picture in key areas such as repairs and customer contact • Reductions in overall tenant satisfaction levels • Performance penalties projected to be incurred • Commercial contract management skills are at an early stage of development • Vulnerable profile of customers with limited availability of support services
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the ALMO Business Centre • 2012 move to HRA self financing • Energy Efficiency related grant availability • Council move to locality management and devolved services • Inward investment and fundraising • Capacity building through increased level of partnership working • Improved services and value for money through new property investment and gas contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of the Localism and Welfare Reform Bills on our customers and services • Loss of capacity with reduced staffing arrangements • Transition into shared services arrangements • Services do not match customer expectations set out in the City and Local Service Standards • Reduction in expected income and increase in costs • Inadequate assessments of risks and audit results

Through the development of appropriate aims and strategic objectives linked to robust action planning and achievements the balance of strengths and weaknesses will shift over the lifespan of the business plan.

Valuing Employees

West North West homes Leeds is a medium sized organisation. It is well known in the local community and a direct employer to approximately 370 staff team members. An effective Human Resources Strategy is in place which has recently been reviewed and revised to ensure it not only meets the needs of West North West homes Leeds and its workforce but is also reflective of the community it services.

West North West homes Leeds' Human Resources Strategy 2011-2014 is a framework for applying people management practices to achieve business outcomes. It recognises that employees are the most important assets of an organisation and the way in which they are trained, developed and rewarded and motivated influences how services are delivered. The strategy determines the kind of employer West North West homes aims to be and sets out how this will be achieved with a view to seeking appropriate accreditation via Investors in People and Investors in Diversity. It has a number of strategic themes. Implementation of the Strategy will be achieved through the Action Plan, whose progress is monitored by WNWhL's Management Team and Human Resources Team and the Committees of the Board.

Financial Management and Value for Money

West North West homes Leeds sets its own budgets within the overall Management Fee (see income section below) paid by the Council. The financial operations are managed through the Board in line with clear delegated authority to staff. Since its incorporation, WNWhL has been able to demonstrate its financial independence from the Council, by having its own Bank Account(s) with Yorkshire Bank PLC and being independently audited.

West North West homes Leeds performs a number of financial management functions. These are as follows:

- Managing and accounting for the Management Fee (derived from the Housing Revenue Account) and Capital Allowances on a daily basis, with Leeds City Council maintaining overall responsibility;
- Sets its own budget within the overall framework of the Management Fee paid by the Council and other income streams;
- Managing and accounting for the Board approved budget;
- Monitoring and accounting for spend on the Capital Programme.

West North West homes Leeds produces both a budget and statement of accounts for presentation to the shareholder Council. West North West homes Leeds prepares and submits all statutory and requisite subsidy returns, including information to the Government Office for Communities and Local Government (CLG). West North West also models performance in relation to stock loss, rent collection, former tenant's arrears and void assumptions in order to support the budget process.

West North West homes Leeds sets a budget that is approved by the Board on an annual basis. The Finance Team provide monthly management accounts to ensure effective management control. This includes allocating any spare resources to the highest priorities and to take appropriate action if there are additional budget pressures.

The ALMO operates within the parameters of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules. A Treasury Management Policy guides the financial strategy for the organisation and is subject to annual review from the Finance and Resources Committee of the Board. This policy gives assurances that there are secure, clear and transparent processes by which deposit and investment decisions are made.

The Council pays a Management Fee to West North West homes Leeds for the provision of services. The vast majority of the Fee is paid from the Council's Housing Revenue Account and is currently calculated based on the methodology by which the Council receives its Management and Maintenance Allowances from central Government. The Fee for 2011/12 is £28.874m

While the Management Fee is the main income for West North West homes Leeds, Table 1 below outlines all income elements from WNWhL's activities.

Table 1 – West North West homes Leeds' Budgeted Income 2011-12

	Budget 2011/12 £'000	Forecast at Period 9 2010/11 £'000	Variance £'000
Management Fee	28,874	28,874	0
Supporting People	1,053	997	56
Performance Incentive	550	550	0
Interest Receivable	132	270	(138)
Sundry Income	48	51	(3)
Total	30,657	30,742	(85)

West North West homes Leeds is committed to achieving Value for Money in all service areas and has a Value for Money and Procurement Strategy and an accompanying Action Plan which was approved by the Board. Value for Money is considered as part of any report submitted to Board or its committees for consideration. This demonstrates the organisations commitment to deliver an economical, effective and efficient service to customers and achieve value for money in everything it does. It also provides a framework for ensuring that WNWhL improves in line with national legislation and guidance, published best practice and national and local benchmarking arrangements.

West North West homes current operations result in operating budget deficits. The assumption in 2012/13 is that the organisation will have a £100k operating deficit against the management fee, which is effectively a balanced budget position.

Table two provides a 3 year financial forecast (revenue)

Table 2

	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000
Brought Forward Reserves	8,132	3,271	1,005
Add back FRS17 Provision	6,724	7,224	7,224
Total Reserves less FRS17 Provision	14,856	10,495	8,229
Transfer to LCC	(6,399)	0	0
Projected Deficit - Mgt Fee	(644)	(1,193)	(100)
Projected Surplus - SCA	2,682	0	0
Transfer to Capital Programme	0	(1,073)	0
Gross Reserves	10,495	8,229	8,129
FRS17 Liability	(7,224)	(7,224)	(7,224)
Net Reserves	3,271	1,005	905

Capital Programme Investment

West North West homes Leeds is allocated £17.1m for 2011/12 to support the maintaining our stock to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard and to support other essential investment such as fire safety measures, adaptations, gas and electrical safety.

We support environmental improvements through the allocation of £300k to support projects prioritised and approved through our four Area Panels.

West North West homes Leeds has a good track record of spending the budget accordance to agreed priorities and in supporting further investment beyond the decent homes standard to non-traditional stock types through an ongoing programme of revenue contributions to the capital budget enabled through the effective build up and use of reserves.

Table three outlines the forecasted different funding streams available for the forthcoming year 2011-12.

Table 3

WEST NORTH WEST HOMES LEEDS			
3 Year Funding Secured/ To Be Secured			
Funds Secured/To be Secured (£)	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
MRA (Major Repairs Allowance)	14,358,000	14,115,418	14,115,418
Single Pot /SCE	2,827,200	-	-
RTB Useable Receipts in year	399,700	538,800	538,800
Receipts borrowed by General Fund - repaid 10/11	263,400	-	-
Unsupported Borrowing (Heatlease)	825,000	720,000	720,000
Private Sector and Other Grants	29,900	-	-
Home Owners	62,988	-	-
SL Decency Reserve RCCO 2008/09	72,600	-	-
RCCO's WNWHL	3,263,000	-	-
RCCO's WNWHL 5M Stonecliffes match fund LCC		700,000	-
RCCO's WNWHL 5M Stonecliffes - additional		237,000	-
RCCO's WNWHL 5M Woodbridges - additional		136,000	-
RCCO's HRAs	800,000	-	-
RCCO's HRAs 5M's Stonecliffes & Woodbridges		700,000	
Total	22,901,788	17,147,218	15,374,218

Table Four illustrates expected expenditure across capital programme works for the financial year 2011/12. The programme and expenditure for this budget is approved by the Board and monitored within the Service Performance and Finance and Resources Committee infrastructure.

Table 4

Budget Head	Budget £
Decency	4,162,611
Compliance	2,468,000
Capitalisation of Salaries	518,000
Adaptations	2,700,000
Non Traditional Properties	1,773,000
Voids	2,570,000
Other Essential Investment	2,740,500
Non Essential Investment	780,000
Total Proposed Investment	17,712,111
Total Funding	17,147,218
Level of Over Programming	564,893
Percentage of Programme	3.29%

West North West homes Leeds has projected that in 2011/12 it will maintain the Decent homes Standard to 96% of its stock (excluding the Little London PFI scheme which is scheduled to commence on site in 2011). Current performance stands at 95.8%.

Annual Tenants Satisfaction Survey Findings

In 2010/11 WNWhL, working in partnership with the Council and other Leeds ALMOs has conducted an annual tenant satisfaction survey which is based on the HouseMark Status Survey methodology.

Satisfaction with the Overall Service Provided:

- 70% of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord (74% in 2008).
- Tenants who are significantly less likely than average to be satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord include:
 - those aged 25-34
 - those of an other sexuality

The three most important services for tenants are:

- repairs and maintenance (83%) (80% in 2008)
- the overall quality of their home (57%) (59% in 2008)
- dealing with anti-social behaviour (40%) (40% in 2008).

General satisfaction and satisfaction with the way we deal with repairs and maintenance has dropped since 2008. WNWhL are still to analysis and benchmark these results with other providers to identify any similar trend patterns as one concern is that in the advent of new government public confidence in public services has declined and is reflected in tenant views of its public service providers. Within the repairs and maintenance section of the survey the worst performing areas were: the quality of the repairs, and the time taken before work started.

Only a third of tenants said they found it easy to afford to heat the home, with older tenants finding it harder to afford to heat their home. Satisfaction with advice services was generally poor, with satisfaction on moving home dropping significantly from 2008. Another advice service that performed badly was around support provided to vulnerable tenants.

In general, satisfaction Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) services was poor, in particular when contacting to report ASB, with satisfaction dropping for: ease of getting hold of the right person, finding the staff helpful, and staff being able to deal with the problem.

Satisfaction with taking tenants views into accounts has dropped since 2008. Managers within the Tenant Involvement team have drilled down into the results and have carried out a small survey, focusing on the least satisfied group of tenants.

The detailed results of our STATUS survey are being used by Managers to fully understand the areas for improvement. This is underpinned by further customer feedback work such as surveys, focus groups and sampling the demographics of the least satisfied. The Scrutiny Panel is also focussing it's attention on these areas of

work and a series of Service Improvement Plans have been established in response to these results.

In 2010 The Tenant Service Authority (TSA) established a requirement that Social Housing Organisations agree with customers a set of local offerings that matched their priorities and expectations.

In response, LCC completed a significant consultation exercise, the Leeds Conversation, which resulted in the Leeds Offer being approved as a set of consistent city-wide standards that customers could expect all ALMOs to meet.

WNWhL is committed to meeting the standards defined by the Leeds offer and going beyond them to meet the expressed priorities of our customers. To achieve this WNWhL engaged in a significant consultation exercise of its own to develop a suite of Local Service Standards. These offers now form part of our Performance Management Framework and have been used to direct our suite of revised strategies, ensuring our future business direction is focussed upon our customer priorities.

Customer Profile

West North West homes Leeds has a diverse and vibrant customer base. By the end of March 2011 we have profile data on 87.4% of our tenants. This is invaluable information that provides us with a more comprehensive understanding of our customer priorities and has enabled us to shape our services to meet customers' needs at both strategic and operational level.

We use this data to strategically inform our decision making processes and manage our operations. We understand the demographics of our customers accessing our services and have used this to strategically inform our Access to Services review and in reviewing our suite of strategies, aimed at reducing inequality and gaps in service provision, enabling us to tailor our services to meet customer needs in anticipation of regional, national and global events such as the welfare reforms, forthcoming localism bill and the global economic climate.

Of particular focus has been preparing ourselves and our customers for the welfare reforms. The impact of the changes implemented already have been measured by customer group (see table below) and our approach to financial inclusion details further who different groups are affected.

Non dependant deductions	April 2010	April 2011
Aged 25 or over and on IS/JSA(IB), or aged 18 or over and not in remunerative work	7.40	9.40
In receipt of main phase ESA(IR)	7.40	9.40
In receipt of Pension Credit	nil	nil
Not in receipt of main phase ESA(IR) rate	nil	nil
Aged 18 or over and in remunerative work		
-gross income less than £122.00	7.40	9.40
-gross income not less than £122.00 but less than £180.00	17.00	21.55
-gross income not less than £180.00 but less than £234.00	23.35	29.60
- gross income not less than £234.00 but less than £310.00	38.20	48.65
- gross income not less than £310.00 but less than £387.00	43.50	55.20
- gross income not less than £387.00	47.75	60.60

The sensitivity impact of these changes suggest that 470 claims will be affected, resulting in WNWhL collecting an additional £105K from customers. There is likely to be a small number of customer who will no longer be entitled to housing benefits. Our Customer Accounts Team has undertaken a number of projection exercises and presented their findings and recommendations to the Board of Directors. WNWhL have already taken a proactive approach to contacting customers likely to be affected by the changes. We have reviewed our Financial Inclusion Strategy to reflect a keener focus upon debt prevention and early intervention, access to support and financial services and access to housing benefit and other welfare benefits.

Strategic Frameworks

West North West homes Leeds' Business Plan is supported by a number of key strategies which define our strategic approaches to overarching strategic objectives.

They scan the external policy and operating environment, research and reflect the position and impacts as per West North West homes Leeds customers and provide accompanying action plans.

Our strategic development is contained within the following strategic documents:

- Place Making Strategy (incorporating Community Safety and Environmental Matters)
- Social Inclusion Strategy (incorporating Worklessness, Vulnerability and Cohesion and Diversity matters)
- Financial Inclusion Strategy
- Customer Access Strategy
- Customer Involvement Strategy
- Human Resources Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Value for Money and Procurement Strategy
- Financial Management Strategy (Use of Resources, Capital Programme and Revenue Budget setting)
- ICT Strategy (LCC linked)
- Communications and Marketing Strategy

A Corporate Environmental Strategy is under development.

These strategies are underpinned by a robust suite of outcome focussed, SMART Service Improvement Plans, each established to deliver and contribute to the key business aims of this Business Plan.

Strategic Priorities 2011-2014

1.	<p>Further improve customer satisfaction and services stretching the boundaries for excellence</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant co-regulation development • Use of Customer Intelligence and Feedback • Focus on improving repairs service quality • Focus on reducing no value repeat contact • Focus on improving anti social behaviour responses • Focus on improved customer communications • Focus on improved customer complaint handling • Focus on clean, safe estates work in partnership with LCC and Area Panels
2.	<p>Enhance access to services, particularly for vulnerable customers</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Access Strategy Action Plan • Social Inclusion Strategy Action Plan • Financial Inclusion Action Plan • Effective, high quality support planning and risk assessments • Strategic and operational use of our customer profile information
3.	<p>Maximise contribution to Social Inclusion and Place Making</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Inclusion Strategy Action Plan • Financial Inclusion Strategy Action Plan • Place Making Strategy Action Plan • Develop Partnership and Locality Working approaches
4.	<p>Ensure an integrated asset management framework is delivered</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement 2011 holistic asset management solutions and contracting arrangements • Increase levels of planned investment programmes based on repair requirements • Secure investment to non traditional housing stock • Ensure compliance and home safety – gas, electrics, fire • Home visits and property MOTs • Reduce repair recalls
5.	<p>Build on the culture that instils company pride, builds on staff empowerment and well being</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing the bid to host the ALMO business centre (delivering shared services) • Staff opportunities for involvement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop staff culture and behaviour charter and link to competency framework • Marketing and Communications Strategy • Human Resources Strategy
6.	<p>Ensure the strategic direction is focussed and challenging securing the long term viability of the organisation and embedding a value for money culture</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management Strategy • Value for Money & Procurement Strategy • Delivering £4.6m city wide savings (Future of Council Housing Review) • Reduction of revenue costs through process and resource reviews • Prioritisation of resources to frontline services • Reduce the company's carbon footprint • Promote energy efficiency initiatives to reduce cost for customers • Robust management of contracts and service level agreements
7.	<p>Ensure a robust financial framework for growth opportunities and inward investment ensuring compliance and viability</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management Strategy • Funding locator and Bid Development resourcing proposal • Locality delivery work with LCC • Partnership working e.g. joint working opportunities and relationships with funding organisations • Tenant led bids to external organisations • Increase risk, cost and benefit analysis of current operations and new business opportunities
8.	<p>Ensure ICT effectively delivers service objectives and improvements</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile ICT facilities • Improving staff access to ICT • Effective ICT training packages • Improved system integration • Data cleansing programmes
9.	<p>Support Directors and Staff to reach their potential</p> <p>Delivered by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in supporting staff attendance and sickness absence management • Policy reviews, process mapping and activity based costing arrangements • Improve quality of staff appraisal and support and supervision processes • Bespoke Training, support and development packages

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Realign service improvement work to strategic objectives to create clear focus
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West North West homes Leeds has a continuous improvement performance framework, including the annual Service Improvement Plan and annual Performance Targets.

The Service Improvement Plan provides a clear plan of activity to ensure sustained improvement across all areas of activity. Each Team within the organisation contributes to their Divisional Service Improvement Plan and the Divisional Plans are combined to be incorporated into the Business Plan.

Performance against the Service Improvement Plan is monitored by the management team, scrutinised by Board Champions and reported to the Service Performance Committee.

Working with Leeds City Council and Partners

Vision for Leeds

'By 2030, Leeds will be locally and internationally recognised as the best city in the UK'.

The Vision for Leeds supports the following aims:

- By 2030, Leeds will be fair, open and welcoming.
- By 2030, Leeds' economy will be prosperous and sustainable
- By 2030, All Leeds' communities will be successful

The Council is currently developing new strategic plans including the long term partnership for the City – the Vision for Leeds. The Vision for Leeds 2011-2030 – is the Leeds Sustainable Community Strategy which sets out the long term vision and aspirations for the city.

A key element of the city planning framework are the City Priority Plans 2011-2015 – these are new city-wide partnership plans which identify the key outcomes and priorities to be delivered by the council, and its partners, over the next 4 years. They replace the Leeds Strategic Plan and are aligned to the new Strategic Partnerships;

- Children's Trust Board
- Safer and Stronger Communities Board
- Sustainable Economy and Culture Board
- Regeneration Board
- Health and Wellbeing Board

These partnerships will be responsible for ensuring the delivery of a relatively small number of agreed priorities measured through a headline indicator.

Housing is a cross-cutting issue and can influence all partnerships however to achieve clear focus the Housing Partnership will report to the Regeneration Board.

Regeneration

The Housing Partnership supports Leeds City Council's regeneration priorities and WNWhL participate in the regeneration programmes and boards within their geographical boundary area; Leeds Bradford Corridor and West Leeds Gateway. Delivery of new and affordable housing needs to relate to and support other investment in places and to ensure understanding and connection to the Town and District Centre Programmes, investment through Private Finance Initiative (PFI Little London is within the WNWhL area) and neighbourhood renewal.

Locality Working

The Council is developing, in partnership with other sector partners, a Compact. Its purpose is to strengthen working relationships in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for the people of Leeds.

The Compact sets out seven principles to guide working relationships between organisations. These are:

- Working Together
- Involving Communities

- Sharing Information
- Allocating Resources
- Building Communities and Third Sector Capacity
- Promoting Volunteering
- Promoting equality, fairness and good community relations.

A rapid self assessment of the Compact for Leeds 2010 is currently underway to determine gaps and future work programmes.

Supporting Housing Strategy and the Local Investment Plan

WNWhL support strategic housing development and delivery through participation in the Leeds Housing Partnership and the Affordable Housing Strategic Partnership Board.

The Partnership support the development of housing and planning policies and strategic housing market assessments

The Council's Local Investment Plan is under development. It will compliment the Leeds City Region Investment Plan which focuses on the investment priorities for new and affordable housing within the regeneration priorities of the City. It also identifies the investment requirements for private sector renewal within the concept of 'place'.

Following the reduction of Government funded housing investment programmes directed through the Homes and Communities Agency, the nature and level of funding to Leeds will significantly reduce and therefore more proactive and productive relationships are required with internal and external partners to attract and maximise investment through use of assets and development of new financial models.

Leeds Strategic Market Assessment

A strategic assessment of the Leeds Housing Market has been commissioned by the Council and undertaken by external consultants' edge analytics and GVA.

Draft emerging findings were provided to the Council in February 2011. Further work and sensitivity analysis is being undertaken but there is a view that there will be a moderation of housing requirements in the short term and annual demand for new housing over the next five years could be circa 3,500 dwellings per annum.

The Localism Bill

The Council has submitted a formal response to the Communities and Local Government consultation on the Bill 'Local decisions: a fairer future'.

The consultation response highlighted that there was little information on how the Localism Bill interrelates to the proposed Welfare Benefit Reforms which introduces Universal Benefit and changes to local housing allowances and housing benefit.

Leeds City Council welcomed the increase in Disabled Facilities Grants and additional funding to be made available for Social Care by 2014/15.

The Council prepared a separate consultation response in relation to planning reforms and the proposed introduction of The New Homes Bonus which has been introduced to incentivise housing growth.

The Council does not offer support in relation to proposals within the Bill to create new tenancy flexibilities and is unlikely to introduce them at this time but will develop a strategic tenancy policy.

The Council supports the proposed reforms of the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy System to the introduction of a self financing system and is currently reviewing the impact this will have on resource availability.

The Council and ALMO are interested to understand the impacts of the proposed shift of regulatory functions from the Tenant Services Authority to the Homes and Communities Agency.

The Council also asks questions in respect of how the proposed changes to the housing ombudsman service will operate in practice.

Affordable Housing Sites

During 2011-12 WNWhL will receive a small but significant number of new council owned affordable homes to manage.

The Council's House Build Scheme in partnership with Keepmoat Homes will deliver 25 new council houses across 3 sites in West Leeds for over 55s. The sites are Evelyn Place (handover April/May), Silver Royd Hill (handover June/July) and Waterloo School Site (handover September).

As part of the development agreement Keepmoat Homes endeavour to provide training and employment opportunities for young people across all three sites. 5 of the 16 sub contractors used are from the Leeds area.

Option Appraisal: The Future of Council Housing Stock and Self Financing

Working with the Council's Environments and Neighbourhood Department, WNWhL considers and appraises options for small elements of its managed stock which is unpopular and suffers from low customer demand or high investment requirements.

Through WNWhL's Asset Management Strategy we have identified our priorities for investment and disposal and work with the Council to reach a joint decision on this stock's future through a comprehensive assessment of its potential.

Through the Future of Council Housing Project an assessment of Council Wide asset investment needs for the next 30 years has been completed and currently future mapping of investment needs against resources enabled through the review of the Housing Revenue Account national subsidy system and move to self financing is underway.

Adaptation Services

WNWhL supports the delivery of the Council's newly developed Adaptations Strategy. We are active members of the Adaptations Strategy Group and working

alongside the Council's Adaptations Coordinator we deliver the requirements of the Adaptations Strategic Action Plan which supports improving customer outcomes, internal processes and value for money.

Energy Efficiency

The Council is supporting a range of initiatives to support the improvement of energy efficiency within all Leeds homes, particularly within the rented sector and owner occupiers on low incomes.

Funding of £40k has been secured to undertake an aerial fly-over mapping of the city to gather information using thermal imaging cameras to identify heat loss from homes. This exercise will conclude in March 2011. The information gathered will identify areas of properties with inadequate insulation and will be made available to the ALMO, the public and to commercial building operators to encourage investment and activity to enhance insulation.

A pilot scheme aims to test an approach to provide free solar photovoltaic system in advance of a much larger scheme approved by the Council's Executive Board. The pilot scheme provides vulnerable private households with free systems and income generated from the feed in tariff will be returned to the Council to support the capital outlay. The larger scheme will focus on public sector homes and is expected to start on site in May 2011, but will also provide free systems for private sector householders wishing to join the scheme.

WNWhL's approaches to energy efficiency can be sourced within its asset management strategy and its emerging corporate environmental strategy.

ALMO Business Centre

At its November 2010 Executive Board meeting, the Council approved the proposals linked to its Review of the Future of Leeds Council Housing.

This review recommended the continuation of 3 ALMO organisations operating within the city but with 2 key reforms:

1. The establishment of a Partnership Strategic Governance Board, to consider city wide policy issues and;
2. The establishment of a shared services arrangement to provide central services to all Leeds ALMOs and generate savings of £4.6m

The services within the scope of the shared services vehicle (now named the ALMO business centre) are listed in brief below:

Corporate Support	Operational Support	Asset Management Support
Finance	Choice Based Lettings	Procurement
HR	Paralegal (possible secondment only)	Contract Administration
ICT	Leasehold management	Commercial Asset Management
Service and Performance Standards	Disrepair	HRA assets – small land / gardens, miscellaneous property leases
Governance		Technical Monitoring
Marketing		Contract Compliance
Procurement		Contract Management
Housing Applications Support Team (Strategic Role around Systems to remain at Leeds City Council)		Investment Planning

The Chief Executive of West North West homes will take responsibility for the design and implementation of the ALMO Business Centre and 2011-12 will be the formation year. The ALMO Business Centre will operate as part of the West North West homes Leeds business but with standalone performance and improvements targets and clearly identifiable financial account arrangements.

Performance Management

West North West homes Leeds performance management framework is embedded from the top through the Business Plan, Corporate Scorecard and Service Improvement Plan; through to staff team members individual and team targets. This allows West North West homes Leeds to focus on areas that are essential to the success of the entire organisation, recommending corrective action where required. The Board has a Service Performance Committee and Service Improvement Scrutiny Panel in recognition of the importance it places on effective performance management.

Realistic but challenging targets have been negotiated and agreed through a robust process. This includes an annual performance review which considers customer satisfaction, current performance and national benchmarking levels for top performance.

Target setting is reflected in each staff member's annual performance and personal development appraisal and plan.

Each month the Management Group reviews performance against its scorecard measures and the Local Performance Frameworks. The Senior Management Team meet monthly to review financial and operational performance and to discuss cross cutting issues which act as barriers to performance achievements.

West North West homes Leeds is developing its tenant co-regulation arrangements through the establishment of a tenant scrutiny board. This is at early stages of formation, with recruitment and training taken current priority but with a view to an agreed programme of activity and interaction with the Board commencing from summer 2011.

Our Service Improvement Groups, other Focus Groups and Customer Sounding Boards are West North West homes Leeds' current vehicles for discussing policy and performance issues with our customers and leaseholders. They link to all our major areas of service.

In addition to these groups West North West homes Leeds has a formally constituted Tenants Federation (CINEC). This is an umbrella group made up of representatives from Tenant and Residents Associations. The group campaigns for improved services and works closely along the Leeds City Tenants Federation.

Current Performance

West North West homes Leeds performance against corporate scorecard measures for 2010/11 are set out in appendix A.

Our balanced scorecard of key performance indicators contains 24 measures. Each have been set stretching targets, with our vision being to improve our benchmarking position by one quartile each year if realistic to do so. A number of our indicators and measures are subject to a penalty and incentive scheme. Over 2010/11 we have met 46% of our targets, and received £667K financial incentive.

A refreshed corporate scorecard will be devised in 2011/12 based upon the key priority areas identified through our City and Local Offers consultation exercise.

Council Monitoring and Assurance

The Council believes fundamentally that effective monitoring of the ALMO is best undertaken by its Board and customers. However the ALMOs work and performance feeds into the Council's own assessments of performance and our respective organisation's work are co-dependant in achieving the Council's stated aims and objectives.

The Council operates a Penalty and Incentive scheme based on a range of performance indicators closely linked to council's objectives. The annual targets set in partnership with the council for WNWhL to deliver are attached at appendix B.

Service Standards

The Council wants to ensure that ALMO tenants throughout the city a consistently high level of service and in consultation with tenants, a city wide set of service standards has been set for ALMOs to achieve. They are accompanied by clear performance measures that the ALMO must report to the Council on.

During Winter 2010/11 West North West homes Leeds has undertaken extensive consultation with a representative cross section of all of its tenants and leaseholders to determine their local service priorities and have developed a set of local service standards which incorporates the city offer requirements. They refer to the Home Standard, Community and Neighbourhood Standard, Tenancy Standard, Involvement and Empowerment Standard and Value for Money Standard as set out in Tenant Services Authority guidance. Again clear outcome measurements accompany these standards of service delivery and will be incorporated into the ALMOs Performance Frameworks. *The WNWhL Local Service Standards (incorporating City Standards) are attached at appendix C(i) & C(ii).*

The Council receives copies of its commissioned Assurance Framework Audits which are discussed at quarterly strategic performance meetings. As the sole member, the Council will also receive West North West homes Leeds' Annual Report and Annual Accounts each year.

Supported Housing Services are monitored through the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) and Service Review procedures, in addition to West North West homes Leeds' local performance monitoring.

Continuous Improvement

West North West homes Leeds seeks continuous improvement and uses a number of mechanisms to ensure its success. These include:

- Benchmarking services and performance and sharing best practice using external benchmarking services such as HouseMark, Housing Quality Network and informal regional and local benchmarking clubs.
- Undertaking annual internal audits across key service areas using our appointed internal auditors – Leeds City Council Internal Audit Services
- Implementing service improvement groups, customer sounding boards and tenant inspector programmes to ensure services are competitive, provide value for money and reflect customer priorities
- Listening to customer feedback and providing a menu of different customer involvement opportunities. This allows customers to get involved in scrutinising services and performance through methods such as policy reviews, area panels, mystery shopping and tenant scrutiny with more detail contained in our customer involvement strategy.

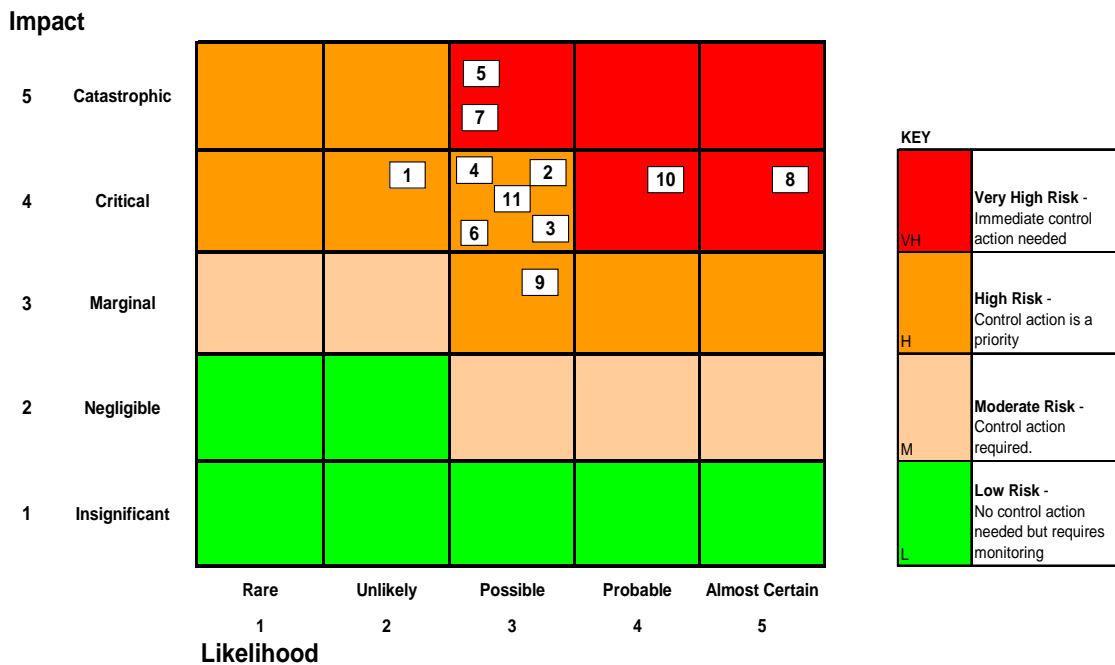
Risk Management

West North West homes Leeds operates a risk framework that effectively identifies and then manages risks that could prevent the organisation meeting its objectives. The Corporate Risk Heat Map and Register below identifies key risks and how they are managed. It is complimented by a risk log which includes controls and mitigating actions. The Board of Directors through its Governance, Risk and Audit Committee regularly reviews activities to assess risk and teams throughout the organisation complete local risk maps to identify service area risks that feed into the corporate risk map and mitigation work and the Council's risk mapping arrangements.

Within each report presented to the Board there is an assessment of risks related to the proposals and options for consideration.

Corporate Risk Heat Map

(June 2010 version – to be updated April 2011)



Corporate Risk Register

Risk No	Risk Description	Grade	Owner
1	Failure to implement service improvements recommended by external bodies (Audit commission, Internal Audit, etc) - Leading to consistently failing service and significant reputational damage.	High	SMT
2	Weak supplier/contract management – Poor services not challenged, contract terms not enforced and lack of accurate information to challenge contractors.	High	SMT
3	Financial viability for remainder of Management Agreement - A number of potential causes including impact of revenue income/ recharge decisions by LCC; loss of incentive income due to performance failure; lack of cost control, etc.	High	SMT/ Board
4	Failure to deliver Decent Homes Standard - Two main potential causes include (a) availability of investment funds and (b) accuracy of stock condition survey data.	High	SMT/ Board
5	Service failure significantly harming a client – Affects a number of key areas e.g. gas servicing, fire safety in multi-storey flats, care services etc. Potential lack of assurance on standards of care, H&S and general risk present throughout the organisation.	Very High	SMT/ Board
6	Future of Council Housing in Leeds – Uncertainty of post-Agreement structure prevents long-term planning in staffing and operations.	High	SMT/ Board
7	Investment & Repairs Contracts procurement – Selection of contractor(s) (2011) able to evidence solid delivery record and financial viability to ensure maintenance service to tenants in Leeds is not at risk and LCC's reputation not jeopardised.	Very High	LCC
8 New	Threat to maintaining delivery standards in the face of economic pressures in the wider sector - Increased demand for homes; Government proposals for tenancies; abolition or failure of other agencies; behavioural consequences from impact of austerity measures.	Very High	SMT/ Board/ LCC
9 New	Failing customers by setting targets and standards to meet compliance levels only – Potential lost opportunities to set aspirational targets and embrace best practice.	High	SMT
10 New	Impact of pension liability following this year's actuarial valuation – Potential that future provisions to the scheme may be unsustainable by WNWhL alone.	Very High	LCC
11 New	Loss of key skills – Lack of succession planning can cause disruption to service, prevent talent from developing a career path and potentially causes a disadvantage from lost knowledge and forged relationships.	High	SMT

Audit

West North West homes Leeds operates a comprehensive three year internal audit programme. The programme has been established linked to our assessed key business risks. This is complimented by an annual programme of Council commissioned audits under their assurance requirements. The Assurance Framework Audit Arrangements are determined each year by the Council based on their assessment of risk and ALMO performance expectations.

Conclusion

The core aims of West North West homes Leeds must continue to be:

- Maintaining homes to Decent Homes Standards
- Providing high quality, efficiently delivered services to residents
- Acting as a key partner with Leeds City Council

Central to the future of West North West homes Leeds is the extent to which Leeds City Council has the resources to support its aims. West North West homes Leeds sees itself as having a viable future, under a continuing regime of cost reductions and quality improvements and through the effective delivery of shared services through its ALMO Business Centre work stream.

We will continue to work with national housing organisations such as the Chartered Institute of Housing, National Federation of ALMOs, the National Housing Federation and the Northern Housing Consortium to understand the national policy context and its impacts for the organisation and its customers.

The Business Plan has been assembled within a clear corporate framework and is designed to offer support to the organisation in dictating its strategic vision, aims, and priorities.