

ACTIVITIES / OBJECTIVES SCORED AS HIGH RISK

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION & LEISURE

Development Control



1. Objective: **Maintain or improve the level of fee income.**

Score: (15) Likelihood = **Very Likely** x Impact = **Significant**

**Reason:** Impact of current economic conditions.

**Existing Controls:** Monthly monitoring with performance on fee income reported to Management Team. Need to maintain 'critical mass' of staff in order to run existing system and to be able to respond immediately to economic recovery.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & HOUSING

### Housing



**2. Objective: (Enabling new affordable housing) - Secure a continuing supply of affordable housing and work to prevent homelessness.**

**Score: (15) Likelihood = Very Likely x Impact = Significant**

**Reason:** Economic downturn. Lack of suitable development opportunities. Lack of capital funding. Lack of demand for shared ownership tenures. Unfavourable change to national policy framework.

The key risk is that the Council will fail to secure an ongoing supply of new affordable housing and as a result there will be less affordable housing to meet the needs of households in Tonbridge and Malling. The likelihood has been judged as high because of the economic downturn and because of changes to the national policy framework which has seen a significant decrease in the amount of capital funding available for new housing development.

**Existing Controls:** Levels of housing need quantified in 2008 SHMA. Clear policies for the provision of new affordable housing identified in LDF. Core Strategy (CP17) and Affordable Housing SPD. Preferred partner RP's selected for their proven track record in delivering new affordable housing. Performance monitored as part of an on-going and open dialogue. Strong relationships with developers, landowners, parishes, support providers and Homes & Communities Agency. Use of alternative tenures during the economic downturn. Active participation in HCA's 2011-15 Affordable Homes Programme. Kent wide Tenancy-Strategy principles. T&MBC strategy currently out to consultation (as at Dec' 2012) with anticipated finalisation in January 2013. Kent Housing Group working with HCA to develop new models for the delivery of both social and affordable housing from 2015.

## Housing



**3. Objective: (Tackling homelessness) - Secure a continuing supply of affordable housing and work to prevent homelessness.**

**Score: (15) Likelihood = Very Likely x Impact = Significant**

**Reason:** Economic downturn. Loss of CLG funding. Loss of key staff. Lack of suitable temporary accommodation. Lack of suitable private rented accommodation, due to rising rents and increasing numbers of private landlords who are reluctant to offer accommodation to benefit-dependent households. The introduction of flexible tenancies and the proposed new mandatory power for possession. RPs reluctance to accommodate homeless households that have a history of rent arrears/ASB. Increasing demand for affordable housing from low priority applicants including transfers. Increasing number of requests for a review of priority, including medical. Increased demand from private sector tenants affected by changes to the Housing Benefit system. The introduction of direct payments to social housing tenants and other aspects of welfare reform. Unfavourable change to national policy framework. Errors in the processing of housing application for Kent Homechoice. Inability to promptly answer customer telephone enquiries. Reform of homelessness legislation which will allow local authorities to discharge their homelessness duties by providing private rented accommodation. An increase in the number of fraudulent applications for social housing

**Existing Controls:** Strategic approach to homelessness prevention identified within current sub-regional Homelessness Strategy. Implementation and monitoring of key strategic objectives undertaken in partnership with key stakeholders including other West Kent authorities. Voluntary agencies, health and social care sectors and support providers. Track record of stock-holding RSLs in housing homeless families closely monitored. Ongoing dialogue with private landlords both informally and through the West Kent Private Landlords Forum. Review of Rent Deposit Scheme - procedures updated to minimise financial risk to Council. Admin' functions being streamlined. Strategic policy on tenancies to become a requirement for all local authorities.

## Housing



**4. Objective:** **Improve sub-standard housing and the energy efficiency of existing and new housing provision.**

**Score: (15) Likelihood = Very Likely x Impact = Significant**

**Reason:** Economic downturn. Loss of CLG funding. Loss of key staff. (including those within outsourced HIA). Commitment exceeds available resources resulting in overspend. Raised public expectation of resources/services available. Failure by the Supporting People Programme to successfully re-tender the HIA contracts.

**Existing Controls:** Strong relationship with "In Touch" HIA, with performance against objectives regularly monitored  
Regular monitoring/reporting on spend against budgets, with redistribution of funding secured where appropriate  
Customers kept informed of progress with individual initiatives and resources available  
Working with partners to identify future funding opportunities  
Careful control of promotion of and commitment against Housing Assistance Policy to ensure control of allocated budget, including a stop on new enquiries at the appropriate time to control customer expectations  
Recycling of funding taking place with most housing assistance being repayable grants  
Agreement in place with Russet Homes to significantly increase the amount of funding that is available for adaptations  
Review of Housing Assistance policy in line with available future funding  
Close working with the Supporting People Programme and neighbouring authorities to secure a favourable outcome for the borough following the re-tendering of the HIA services. This is ongoing  
Promote and support the NLA Landlord Accreditation Scheme to private sector landlords in the borough  
Close working with KCC to minimise delays in the OT assessments of adaptations for children.

## Food & Safety



**5. Objective:** Ensure that all Services are procuring contractors and service providers with appropriate consideration to health and safety and ensure that all Services are managing contractors with proportionate consideration to health and safety issues.

**Score: (16)** Likelihood = **Likely** x Impact = **Critical**

**Reason:** A failure to properly consider H&S of contractors at all stages from selection/procurement through to monitoring of a contract could lead to accidents or injuries to staff and third parties, potential damage to property and civil claims. An external audit highlighted a weakness in our safety management system and this was reinforced by a HSE investigation into one of our major contracts. This has prompted a corporate review of how we manage our contractors.

**Existing Controls:** Health & Safety Policy and Guidance Notes. Adoption of KCC procurement List. Monitoring of progress within Services by Health & Safety Officer. Identification of Services that require further assistance in this area.

## Finance & Transformation

### Benefits



**6. Objective:** Design and implement replacement local scheme for Council Tax Benefit.

**Score: (16)** Likelihood = **Likely** x Impact = **Critical**

**Reason:** If not adopted in time there will be a financial cost to using the default scheme. Potential negative impact on c/tax collection rates and challenges on equality grounds.

**Existing Controls:** Ensure the project remains on track evaluating and re-evaluating risks along the way.

## **Benefits**



**7. Objective:** Calculate correctly, entitlement to benefit.

**Score: (18) Likelihood = Almost inevitable x Impact = Significant**

**Reason:** Insufficient, fully-trained staff. Malfunctioning database used for assessment of claims. Up-to-date and legislatively-compliant software not available for, or installed on, the database used for assessment of claims. Insufficient training resources. Insufficient technical support within Financial Services. Constantly changing legislation. The risks will increase during 2013/14 because of the introduction of the local council tax reduction scheme and the application of the over-accommodation rules to those below pension age in the social rented sector. Furthermore, from summer 2013, the benefit cap will be introduced followed shortly thereafter by the phased introduction of universal credit.

**Existing Controls:** Refer to IT Services. Post of Training & Systems Officer in Finance. Post of Systems Administrator within Finance. Finance Disaster Recovery Plan. Training budget. Ability to use agency staff

## Revenues



**8. Objective:** Increase the proportion of income due to the Council collected in respect of local taxes.

**Score: (15) Likelihood = Very likely x Impact = Significant**

**Reason:** That any action we take to increase income could be counterbalanced by factors over which we have no control, e.g. national, economic conditions). Unwillingness of Magistrates to commit debtors to prison. Listing delays in the County Court. Presumption against use of bankruptcy (see Ombudsman reports). From 2013/14, there is a risk that the reduction in 'benefit' resulting from the localisation of council tax benefit will increase arrears as we will be collecting from residents who previously had nothing to pay as well as collecting more from those who have 'lost' benefit.

**Existing Controls:** Regular monitoring of the situation. Liaison with neighbouring councils, promotion of the rate deferral scheme and small business rate relief schemes for businesses, promotion of the availability of council tax benefit, encourage the use of debt counselling services, endeavour to reach mutually agreeable and realistic arrangements with taxpayers for the payment of debts.



## Internal Audit



**9. Objective:** **Avoid duplication of effort with the External Auditor (unable to agree plan with new external auditor).**

**Score: (16) Likelihood = Likely x Impact = Critical**

**Reason:** Lack of liaison between internal and external audit staff.

**Existing Controls:** Audit plans are discussed at an early stage and regular quarterly update meetings take place between IA and EA. Copies of all IA reports are provided to EA.