1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Initial Delivery Plan for Tower Hamlets Homes covers the period to 31st March 2009. Future Delivery Plans will be developed on an annual basis and will be subject to the approval of Tower Hamlets Homes Board and the Council.

1.2 The Council have established THH because it wishes to achieve continued improvement in its housing management services and to provide a route to achieve increased investment in its housing stock. In particular it wants to improve the housing outcomes for those tenants who want to retain council tenancies.

2.0 The vision of Tower Hamlets Homes

2.1 The Council’s own vision is set out in the Strategic Plan which is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets. The Council also has a distinctive and lead role in shaping the future of neighbourhoods in Tower Hamlets and THH will be an important building block in the place shaping agenda.

2.2 Within this context the Council has developed its vision for THH:

THH will work with the Council, our other strategic partners and our diverse communities to improve the quality of life for all our residents through providing excellent housing services and decent homes in decent neighbourhoods.

Underpinning the vision are a set of core values:

- Making sure that all our residents live in the decent homes within the decent neighbourhoods that they deserve.
- Tackling the consequences of poor housing on health and life chances.
- Continuously improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our housing management services.
- Implementing an effective investment programme which brings all our homes to at least the Decent Homes Standard.
- Operating in a flexible and responsive way that reflects our residents needs and aspirations.
- Providing value for money for our residents.
- Delivering excellent customer care and engaging residents in all aspects of our services.
3.0 Developing the Delivery Plan

3.1 The plan sets out the services to be delivered as well as the strategic aim and performance targets.

3.2 The key strategic priorities for the first year of THH are:

- Improving Housing Management Performance
- Improving resident focus
- Undertaking detailed planning for the delivery of a decent homes programme

3.3 The plan sets out how THH will support the Council and establishes its operational framework.

3.4 A major impetus during the life of this delivery plan will be improving and extending the involvement and engagement of residents in the work of THH.

4.0 Service Context

4.1 THH cannot operate in isolation from the Council or other public sector providers in the borough. Its services must therefore be seen within the context of the strategic direction set by the Council and the Local Strategic Partnership.

4.2 In particular THH will have a prominent role in implementing the Councils Housing Strategy and Housing Investment Strategy.

4.3 Against this back drop THH seek to deliver services that are responsive to community needs and to ensure that opportunities for resident participation reflect the needs and aspirations of the boroughs communities.

4.4 THH is committed to working in partnership with other agencies; it recognises the necessity to combat crime and anti social behaviour and will sign up to the Governments Respect Agenda. It is also committed to raising management standards and resident satisfaction and will help to implement the LAA priorities.

4.5 The performance of THH will also make a major contribution to the Comprehensive Assessment score of Tower Hamlets.

4.6 Value for Money underpins all aspects of THH Delivery Plan.

5.0 Services to be Provided

5.1 THH will initially manage 23,182 homes across the borough.

5.2 THH will be responsible for delivering the following functions:
Appendix 3A

- Tenancy Management
- Leaseholder Management
- Estate Management
- Income Collection
- Caretaking
- Responsive Repairs
- Planned Maintenance
- Administration of decent homes and other major investments programmes
- Monitoring and other client functions relation to TMO’s
- Resident involvement in management
- Administration of the sale of Council Homes
- Lettings, including administration of housing register offers and post offer administration
- ALMO business planning

5.3 Service Improvement

5.3.1 A primary aim of Tower Hamlets Homes is to provide excellent housing services with a target to achieve a minimum 2 star inspection rating from the Audit Commission in 2008 and to be delivering 3 star services by 2011.

5.3.2 A comprehensive review of the housing management service was carried out in 2006 using external assistance. As a result the Housing Management Improvement Plan was developed which is an ambitious and challenging programme that will improve the quality and responsiveness of our services. Of particular significance are those factors which go to the heart of service delivery and are resident focused such as customer care, service responsiveness, ease of access and effective communication.

5.4 Planning the Decent Homes Programme

5.4.1 The Delivery Plan has been drawn up in advance of additional resources being secured to bring all council homes up to the Decent Homes Standard. The Plan sets out the arrangements for delivering the current five year investment programme and details the work that is being undertaken in preparation to deliver the Decent Homes Programme, this includes:

- Exploring the potential for comprehensive refurbishments to be carried out using a lead contractor from amongst existing elemental contractors
- Piloting the use of the existing general build repair contractors to undertake kitchen and bathroom work
• Arrangements beyond 2012 and 2014 which are the end dates for the current repair or major works contracts
• Exploring the potential for maximising economies of scale through collective purchasing and procurement clubbing

6 Improving and Managing Performance

6.1 The Delivery Plan establishes the performance framework, which is designed to measure and scrutinise performance on a number of levels to ensure all stakeholders including Members, council officers, the Tower Hamlets Homes Board and residents are provided with appropriate performance information.

6.2 Performance indicators fall broadly into four main categories:

• Best Value Performance and Comprehensive Performance Assessment indicators – set by the Audit Commission with targets to be agreed annually between Tower Hamlets Homes and the Council
• Local Performance indicators (including those agreed in the Local Strategic Plan) – to be agreed annually between Tower Hamlets Homes and the Council
• Financial indicators - to be agreed annually between Tower Hamlets Homes and the Council
• Management indicators – management information requirements to be determined annually by Tower Hamlets Homes

6.3 The overall performance of THH is to be measured against a suite of delivery plan indicators agreed annually with the Council. In addition, the progress THH makes in implementing an annual improvement plan will also be monitored.

7.0 Financial Monitoring and Resources

7.1 The financial framework for THH is integral to the overall Delivery Plan. THH will have responsibility for substantial resources and is determined to demonstrate that its stewardship of these will be marked by a strong emphasis on value for money, efficiency and probity. In summary THH homes will:

• Ensure full compliance with professional financial standards and with Companies Act requirements
• Alert the council promptly to any financial problem emerging from its management accounts and cash flow forecasts
• Adopt the Council’s Procurement Procedures and financial Regulations and Procedures for all matters relating to the delegated budgets
• Approve its Board Regulations and Procedures which will govern all other financial transactions
• Institute a system of internal controls including segregation of duties and appropriate authorisation levels.
• Maintain appropriate internal audit arrangements

7.2 The Plan also summarises the resources employed to achieve the required levels of performance set out within the Delivery Plan. These include:

• Organisational structure
• Customer access arrangements
• Arrangements for the provision of information and communication technology
• Procurement of support services from the Council under service level agreements (SLAs)

7.3 All service level agreements will be subject to formal value for money review within the first year of operation.

8.0 Governance & Monitoring

8.1 The plan also sets out the overall framework for the governance of Tower Hamlets Homes. This includes membership which, comprises of five residents, five Council nominations and five independent board members.

8.2 The Board will have responsibility for ensuring that the company complies with its constitution, with company legislation, and with the obligations placed on it by the Management Agreement.

8.3 The Board will also be responsible for approving the Delivery Plan on behalf of the company and for ensuring that the services are delivered and targets are met.

8.4 The Council will have a key monitoring role. The monitoring framework is summarised below:

• Monthly financial and service performance reporting on key performance indicators by THH to its Board and to the Council in an agreed format and to an agreed timetable. They include complaints and Members Enquiries as well as satisfaction ratings derived from on-going feedback arrangements and progress on THH service improvement plan;
Appendix 3A

- A Monthly Review Meeting between service heads of THH and the Client Officer of the Council to discuss the detailed finance and service performance reports;

- A Quarterly Review Meeting between THH Chief Executive, Head of Finance and Head of Performance and the Council’s Director of Development and Renewal and Client Officer to discuss overall performance to date;

- An Annual Review Meeting between THH Chair and Chief Executive with the Council Leader for Housing and the Director of Development and Renewal to review the previous years performance, review the current years performance to date and to set targets for the following year; and

- Periodic reporting by THH covering the normal internal audit programme of THH