

WORKSHOP FOR MEMBERS, TENANTS AND MANAGERS

1st OCTOBER, 2001

6.15p.m. - 7.45p.m.

(light refreshments will be available from 6.00p.m. in the Members Room)

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN

1. Introductions (Sandra Whiles)
2. Purpose and Background to the Workshop (Sandra Whiles)
3. What is a Housing Revenue Account Business Plan? (Chantelle Hayes)
4. Key Facts and Figures from South Derbyshire's HRA Business Plan (Chantelle Hayes)
5. What do we all want from the Housing Service? (Group Work)
6. Feedback and Discussion (John Morle)
7. Where Next? (John Morle)

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HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN

GROUP WORK

WHAT DO WE ALL WANT FROM OUR HOUSING SERVICE?

- A. Please work on your own and complete the attached sheets.

Housing Management covers:- Rent arrears through to eviction, breaches of tenancy conditions, neighbour disputes, the physical letting of properties, management of the gypsy site, boundary queries, requests by tenants for alterations, e.g. satellite dishes, fencing etc., rent queries, mutual exchanges, abandoned properties, introductory tenancy visits, pre-void inspections

Housing Lettings covers:- Housing advice, dealing with homeless applications and making appropriate decisions, administrations of the Housing Register, allocations, waiting list and allocations of garages, right to buys.

Housing Repairs covers:- Responsive repairs, planned preventative maintenance, improvements, health and safety matters, operation of the Housing DSO, tenants improvements compensation for the right to repair, landscaping, grass cutting etc.

- B. Everyone in the group will then feed back their answers. The group should discuss and agree which is the most important issue in each question (1a, 1b, 1c etc), for reporting back to the full group later, along with brief details of why it is the most important.
- C. If time allows, take an area for improvement from (3) and discuss in the group what needs to be done to improve things.

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GROUP WORK

WHAT DO WE ALL WANT FROM OUR HOUSING SERVICE?

1. *What is the best thing about the service now in relation to:-*

(a) Housing Management

.....

.....

(b) Housing Lettings

.....

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(c) Housing Repairs

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2. *What is the worst thing about the service now in relation to:-*

(a) Housing Management

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(b) Housing Lettings

.....

.....

(c) Housing Repairs

.....

.....

3. ***What do you most want to improve about the service in relation to:-***

(a) Housing Management

.....

.....

(b) Housing Lettings

.....

.....

(c) Housing Repairs

.....

.....

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NOTES FROM GROUP WORK

1. **BEST THINGS ABOUT THE SERVICE:-**

(a) Housing Management:-

Development of Tenant Participation
Tenant Liaison Officers have awareness of tenants and the neighbourhood they live in
Attitude of Senior Staff
Two way flow of information - chance to talk/listen
Responsive to change
Named contacts for queries

(b) Housing Lettings:-

Consideration to an individual's needs when offering accommodation
Points system

(c) Housing Repairs:-

Planned Maintenance
Attitude of staff in offices/DSO operatives improved

2. **WORST THINGS ABOUT THE SERVICE:-**

(a) Housing Management :-

- Speed of response to arrears
- State of properties
- No regular communication
- Speed of response to alterations
- Earlier reporting of neighbourhood problems required
- Tenants are too remote from Management
- Customer relations - more time required
- Constant firefighting
- Tenants are unclear as to who does what in the Offices

(b) Housing Lettings:-

- Allocation of people to inappropriate accommodation - mix of old and young not always successful
- No financial incentives to release larger properties for rent
- Under-occupation of properties - encourage tenants to move
- Waiting list priorities

(c) Housing Repairs:-

- Inequality of repairs
- Poor response to repairs
- No recognition of "good" tenants
- No appointments
- No deadlines
- No post-inspections
- No freephone
- No up-to-date information on Planned Maintenance
- Staff training
- Lack of liaison between tenants and staff

3. **WHAT IMPROVEMENTS ABOUT THE SERVICE ARE REQUIRED IN RELATION TO:-**

(a) Housing Management:-

Training staff to deal with "challenging people"
Customer Care
Focus on problem areas

(b) Housing Lettings:-

Overview of housing stock and waiting list
Assess an individual's needs as part of bigger picture

(c) Housing Repairs:-

Communication - tell tenants what is happening and why
Staff do not explain services, who does what etc.
No links between Housing Division and outside organisations, e.g. Social Services

