
REPORT TO:	COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 14
DATE OF MEETING:	18TH JULY 2002	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	HEAD OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	OPEN PARAGRAPH NO:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	DAWN DAWSON (Ext. 5797)	DOC S:\Hsg_Lais\Admin\WP Myfiles\HOUSING\Dawn Dawson\Committee Report - Sheltered Housing Services.doc
SUBJECT:	SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICES	REF: DD/LS
WARD(S) AFFECTED:		TERMS OF REFERENCE: CS 01

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members note the improvement actions undertaken in relation to the Sheltered Housing Service.
- 1.2 That Members consider proposed further improvement actions.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To inform Members of the progress of the Sheltered Housing Service Improvement plan and suggest further improvement actions.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Sheltered Housing Service underwent it's Best Value Inspection during June 2001, with a further Inspection carried out during February 2002.
- 3.2 The Inspection resulted in a 'no star unlikely to improve' rating, with the second Inspection identifying some improvement, but also noting areas of inaction, particularly around Health and Safety issues.
- 3.3 The Sheltered Housing Service was re-structured during November and December 2001, with a new Sheltered Housing Team Leader in place from March 2002, and a new Advice, Liaison and Sheltered Housing Manager from April 2002.
- 3.4 The Best Value Inspection prompted management and Members to re-examine the Housing Service in a wider context, via the commissioning

of Pennington's Consultancy Services, to undertake a diagnostic of Housing Services as a whole.

- 3.5 Following consideration of Pennington's Diagnostic Report, a Change and Improvement Programme was formulated, with Members endorsing the Programme at Community Services Committee in May 2002.
- 3.6 Community Services Committee in June 2002 endorsed the allocation of £223,000 to support the Change and Improvement Programme.
- 3.7 On 26th June 2002, an additional £85,000 of Capital spending for the Sheltered Housing Service was pre-approved, subject to full approval by Finance and Management Committee on 25th July 2002.
- 3.8 Members, Management and Officers have fully committed to the Programme, securing noticeable achievements. Some key achievements are;
- Fire and Warden call testing regimes in place
 - Out of hours and bank holiday cover regime in place
 - Monitoring arrangements in place
 - Equitable service delivery established
 - Increased networking and consultation with key partners
 - Procedures issued
 - Programme of internal signage upgrades commenced
 - Cleaning contract in place
 - £80,000 secured over 2 years to replace locks
 - £20,000 secured for the installation of fire doors
 - £65,000 secured for the upgrade of warden call equipment
 - £40,000 secured for physical scheme improvements
 - £100,00 secured to re-model Willoughby House
- 3.9 Members are advised that in order to achieve an improved rating from the Audit Commission, there remain key areas to be addressed. Some examples of these areas are;
- The development of Scheme specific charges
 - Complete the options appraisal of hard to let Schemes
 - Consider the re-designation of hard to let Schemes
 - The development of a Strategic Vision for the service
 - Further investment required to bring accommodation up to standard
 - Connect door entry systems to Central Control
 - The development of a Sheltered Housing Tenant Participation Strategy
- 3.10 Annex A details progress against the Interim Challenge Recommendations and incorporates additional Improvement Actions (shown in bold italics) for endorsement by Members.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Member's have approved the allocation of £220,000 to deliver improvements.
- 4.2 Finance and Management Committee will consider the allocation of an additional £85,000 at Committee on 25th July 2002.

5.0 Community Implications

- 5.1 The Improvements aim to ensure appropriate use of the Housing stock, to maximise the amount of appropriate affordable housing available.
- 5.2 The Improvements aim to provide a safe and pleasant environment which meets the needs of customers.

