
REPORT TO:	Community Services Committee	AGENDA ITEM:
DATE OF MEETING:	18 July 2002	CATEGORY: DELEGATED/ RECOMMENDED OPEN/EXEMPT PARAGRAPH NO:
REPORT FROM:	SANDRA WHILES, HEAD OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	DOC:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	CHANTELLE HAYES	REF:
SUBJECT:	PROGRESS WITH THE CHANGE AND IMPROVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME FOR HOUSING	TERMS OF REFERENCE:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that members note the contents of this report.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 The report sets out progress made by the housing service in implementing significant changes in accordance with the change and improvement programme previously reported to members.

3.0 Executive Summary

3.1 The housing service has made significant changes to working practices over the last two months, focusing on establishing policies and procedures that will ensure consistency of services provided and bring practices up to date in line with legislation and good practice.

3.2 These changes have included a more team-based approach to work, with a specialist voids team being established and now operational. Managers and staff have worked closely with the Head of Community Services and Pennington Consulting, the company providing management support and project managing the Change Programme.

3.3 Monitoring arrangements have been put into place to ensure members enquiries and complaints are dealt with, and used to provide valuable feedback on services. A residents' panel has been established, and sample reality checks are underway.

3.4 The stock condition survey results are expected at the end of June 2002, and will provide a wealth of information that needs to be considered, and which will enable a programme of works to bring properties up to the decency standard to be prepared.

3.5 Work continues to address longer-term issues such as a new integrated IT system, and to consider how to cost effectively provide wider access to services for tenants in the future.

3.6 The Council has increased staffing levels for front line services, with a new Tenant Liaison Officer now in post.

4.0 Change Management Programme

4.1 As members will be aware the housing service embarked on a 12-month improvement programme in May 2002, following external and internal reviews of the housing service that identified the need for improvements.

4.2 The improvement plan was based around the recommendations to deliver service improvements for the future made in the service diagnostic work commissioned by the Council and reporting in April 2002, feedback from the Housing Inspectorate and internal housing service reviews. The report presented to the Committee at its June meeting set out the issues and recommendations made.

4.3 The improvement plan identified actions required within one, three, six and twelve months, and this report confirms progress made against these areas identified for change.

Progress against the change management plan

4.4 The table below sets out the actions identified for the first six months of the programme, and progress made during the first two months:

	Within 1 month	Within 3 months	Within 6 months	Target achieved? Comments
Improved management and information				
Set up interim management support	√			√
Member enquiry central service set up	√			√
Set up performance monitoring	√			Set up and report to committee July 2002
Regular team meetings for all staff		√		√
Improvement task teams established for IT, housing services and asset management		√		√
Review the complaints procedure and set up a database		√		System in place and staff briefings held
Arrange access to staff diaries for appointments		√		System in place and reality checks arranged
Set interim service standards and customer charter		√		Customer charter agreed and report to Committee July 2002, service standards being drafted
Service policies and procedures review process		√		Timetable agreed
Finalise supporting people budget issues		√		Work required identified and will

				be completed by end July 2002
Written procedures for all areas of work			√	Will follow work on policies
Devolved budgets to officers			√	Being piloted with maintenance staff
Developing a clear vision for housing in the district				
Set up a housing strategy and partnership group to develop 2002 strategy		√		Meeting held June 2002 to develop draft strategy
Cross departmental working group to develop housing strategy		√		√
Plans for surveys 2003/4 in housing needs, demand and private sector stock condition				Demand and housing needs brief in draft
Submit HRA business plan and Housing Strategy/HIP return		√		On target for end July submission
Area tenants meetings to consider stock options		√		Meetings programmed for September, to be held with tenants after Working Group recommendations
Formal independent external challenge of the housing strategy best value review		√		To be carried out in August or September
Keeping the housing stock in good condition				
Set up dedicated voids and allocations team	√			√
Review voids procedures	√			Drafted and with relevant staff to agree changes
Regular budget briefings and monitoring		√		√
Improved reception services		√		Staff able to book appointments for tenants,
Review long term sheltered voids and lettings incentive		√		Incentive proposals prepared for approval by committee
Assess decent homes standard		√		Stock survey results due end June 2002
Option appraisal for Basses, Smallthorn and Pine Grove		√		Demand information awaited to complete reports
Draw up procurement policy and tendering procedures		√		Being prepared by Improvement Task Team July 2002
Review/improve information to tenants on repairs and planned works		√		In asset management strategy
Pilot multi-skilling of inspectors and clerk of works			√	

All repairs to be logged and more accurate diagnosis		√		This will be focus of work in July 2002 this is not yet achieved
Review DSO scheduling of works		√		Appointment system introduced to be tested July 2002
Review role of inspectors and check variation orders		√		Work to be completed July 2002
Water testing programme established		√		√
Develop asset management strategy			√	√
Review planned works programmes in light of stock survey			√	To consider in August 2002
Area tenants meetings to consult on repair issues			√	September tenants meetings to be used for rent restructuring and options information
Review gas safety audit contract			√	
Cost benefit analysis of increasing DSO skills base			√	
Rent collection and control				
IT system identified to implement rent restructuring		√		Rent increases likely to be calculated outside system next year and input. Brief for new integrated IT system to be agreed July 2002
Rent restructuring implementation options considered		√		√
Review and update arrears policy			√	
Risk appraisal on supporting people arrangements on Council			√	
Human resources				
Arrange cover for vacant posts	√			√
Monitor adherence to absence policy	√			√
Complete PDR's and training plans for staff	√			√
Staff training and development programme running		√		Managers training programme started
Monthly updates to all stakeholders on progress		√		√
Fill vacant posts (TLO and homelessness officer)		√		√
Set up area teams			√	To start in August or September 2002
Agree new staff structure			√	To commence in autumn 2002
Research work related stress issues			√	

Listening to our customers				
Set up customer panels and reality checks		√		Reality checks underway, customer panel established (94 households)
Promote the funding and support to resident groups			√	
Local action plans to support TP compact and increase involvement			√	
Decision on tenants voting rights			√	Issues paper to be prepared for Committee autumn 2002
Allocations and demand				
Review allocations policy and existing IT system		√		Allocations policy to be drafted July 2002, waiting list database being established
Marketing strategy for allocations		√		To follow review of allocations policy

4.5 Sheltered housing progress has not been included as this is the subject of a separate and detailed report.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no additional financial implications as a result of this report.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 The change management work assists the Council in delivering its corporate objectives and policies, and minimises the potential risks faced by the Council as a result of failing to address issues within the housing services.

7.0 Community Implications

7.1 The change management programme seeks to ensure a consistent service to tenants that is more accessible and appropriate to their needs, it involves tenants, members and staff in decisions and reality checks.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 The change management programme gives staff the opportunity to influence change and delivery of services, and many have grasped this with enthusiasm. It provides the Council with evidenced information about its service, and checks actual delivery of services to tenants through a variety of ways. This will assist in future best value reviews and in appreciating the value of services from a tenant's perspective.

9.0 Background Papers

9.1 Committee report on Change Management Programme June 2002

