
REPORT TO: COMMUNITY SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM: 6 | 7

DATE OF MEETING: 17 FEBRUARY 2003

CATEGORY:
RECOMMENDED

REPORT FROM: HEAD OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

OPEN

MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT: SANDRA WHILES
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reports\housing & community
services\6 feb 2003\housing bv review
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SUBJECT: HOUSING SERVICES BEST VALUE
REVIEW – STRATEGIC AND
LANDLORD/TENANT

REF:

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

TERMS OF REFERENCE: G

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 That Members note the report.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To inform Members of the current position of the Housing Services Best Value Review.

3.0 Detail

3.1 As Members are aware, the review has been focussing so far on the Council's strategic housing role and has identified and confirmed eight areas for improvement. These have been reported in detail to previous meetings.

3.2 Officers have taken the approach that improvements to service should be built into the Council's ways of working as the review proceeds and not left until the end of the review.

3.3 As a consequence the following changes to service have been implemented:-

- The establishment of a unified property adaptation service for disabled customers within the Environmental Health Division from April 2003
- The establishment of a private sector partnership with the Good Shepherd Trust for the delivery of the Council's temporary accommodation and support services to homeless people
- Improvements to the processes used for developing, monitoring and delivering the Housing Strategy
- Partnership work with an external specialist on assessing housing needs and the housing market

- 3.4 The Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) assesses the Council's performance in its strategic housing role each year. The Council has previously been assessed as being "below average", since at least 1998. As a consequence of the changes and improvements during 2002 the Council's performance has improved with an "average" assessment being obtained. Annexe A shows the recent GOEM feedback on the Housing Strategy. This feedback gives clear indicators of where further improvement work should be concerted. These tie up with many of the areas for improvement identified in this Best Value Review.
- 3.5 The framework for Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) includes proposals for a cross cutting review of strategy housing work – namely "Balancing Housing Markets." For Council's who retain their housing stock a further review of the delivery of Decent Homes programmes will be done as part of CPA.
- 3.6 A review of the current Best Value work on the strategic housing role is planned for the 17 February. This will overlay the likely "Balancing Housing Markets" CPA assessment over our work to date so that any extra work can be built into the review in preparation for CPAs.
- 3.7 The Council has been invited by the Housing Best Value inspection service to work with them in April to pilot their Decent Homes CPA inspection. This will help us prepare for CPA.
- 3.8 The timing and programme of future formal Best Value reviews will depend on the Council's approach to preparing for CPA. At this stage preparatory work has done on the review of the Landlord/Tenant Housing Service. The exact timing and nature of this review will be reported to Members once direction has been received on CPA preparations.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 None.