

# Item 5

## REPORT TO HEALTHY BOROUGH WITH STRONG COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2008

### REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

#### Housing Services Portfolio

#### HOUSING DEPARTMENT SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

##### 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In March 2006 Cabinet considered, and approved, a report by the Director of Housing detailing the need to produce a comprehensive Service Improvement Plan (SIP) for the housing landlord functions. Following approval of the methodology for the production of that plan officers from the Housing Department have worked with key stakeholders to review the landlord Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE's), and develop the SIP.
- 1.2 The plan was developed along with associated costings. It covers a four-year period and requires additional funding for the first two years of £340,000, which was to be met from Housing Revenue Account reserves.
- 1.3 Cabinet approved the SIP and recommended that this committee oversee its delivery.
- 1.4 Members will recall that they considered areas of implementation against the plan at its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2007 and this report seeks to update them of progress since then.

##### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the report be received.

##### 3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The Service Improvement Plan (SIP) was developed in response to the 'No' vote delivered by a tenants' ballot in respect of LSVT. A great deal has happened since then that has had a significant impact on the SIP.
- 3.2 The Council has sought and implemented a partnering arrangement for construction services and is seeking a positive result from a tenants' ballot on stock transfer.
- 3.3 Both of these events have had a significant effect on the SIP not only in terms of resources but their impact on the detail within the plan.

- 3.4 An example of this is item 1.9 of the plan (see Appendix 1) that refers to the implementation of hand-held computers for all areas of repair and maintenance. The partnering arrangement now places the means of service delivery within the hands of Mears and therefore the introduction of technological advances is for them to determine rather than ourselves, provided that the need for improvements in service quality are not compromised.
- 3.5 Also in Appendix I is an outline of those areas of the SIP impacted upon by the events outlined in 3.1 whilst Appendix 2 identifies those areas that have progressed since the last report.
- 3.6 Areas of particular note are the implementation of the Construction Industry Training Board's Construction Skills Card Scheme throughout the craft workforce together with relevant white-collar staff.
- 3.7 The development and implementation of a comprehensive training plan.
- 3.8 A complete review of the door to door rent collection service and methods for making payments has been undertaken.
- 3.9 A review of standards across all areas of the service has been undertaken to address issues such as equality & diversity and customer focus.
- 3.10 A detailed programme of works to achieve Decent Homes Standard and Asset Management Plan has been developed together with a medium term Capital Works programme for beyond 2010 and an outline programme for beyond 2015.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Cabinet approved the additional expenditure identified in the SIP and authorized the use of HRA balances. Sums amounting to £70,000 have been identified for use in 2008/09.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 Members, tenant and staff representatives have been consulted regarding the actions detailed within the KLOE's and the Service Improvement Plan.

#### **6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

##### **6.1 Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications to be addressed as a consequence of this report.

## 6.2 Asset Management

The issues of Repair and Maintenance and the movement towards the Decent homes Standard contributes towards maintaining the integrity of the Council's housing stock.

## 6.3 Risk Management

There are no risk management issues that should be addressed as a consequence of this report

## 6.4 Health and Safety

There are no health and safety issues that should be addressed as a consequence of this report

## 6.5 Sustainability

Sustainability is not in issue in these circumstances.

## 6.6 Information Technology

There are no I.T. implications.

## 6.7 Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity are not prejudiced in this report.

## 6.8 Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder issues raised in this report.

## 6.9 Human Rights

No human rights issues are addressed in this report.

## 6.10 Social Inclusion

There are no implications for social inclusion raised in this report.

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**Wards:**

All Wards

**Key Decision Validation:**

Yes

**Background Papers:**

Not applicable

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