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Michael Laing Chief Executive

5th February 2008

Dear Councillor,

I hereby give you Notice that a Meeting of the **HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE, CROOK** on **WEDNESDAY 13th FEBRUARY 2008 at 6.00 P.M.**

AGENDA

Page No.

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of Interest

Members are invited to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests in matters appearing on the agenda and the nature of their interest.

Members should use either of the following declarations:

Personal Interest – to be used where a Member will be remaining and participating in the debate and any vote:

I have a personal interest in agenda item (...) regarding the report on (...) because I am (...)

Personal and Prejudicial Interest – to be used where a Member will be withdrawing from the room for that item:

I have a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item (...) regarding the report on (...) because I am (...)

Officers are also invited to declare any interest in any matters appearing on the agenda.

NOTE: Members are requested to complete the enclosed declarations form and, after declaring interests verbally, to hand the form in to the Committee Administrator.

3. To consider the Minutes of the last Meeting of the Committee held on 12th December 2007 as a true record.

Copies attached

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| 4. | To consider the Report of the Housing Services Sub-Committee held on 14 th January 2008. | to follow |
| 5. | To consider the work currently being undertaken within the Community Department in relation to Equality and Diversity. | 1 – 5 |
| 6. | To consider undertaking a Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey. | 6 – 8 |
| 7. | To receive an implementation update on the Community Department Service Plan. | 9 – 26 |
| 8. | To consider undertaking a Housing Needs Survey.* | 27 - 30 |
| 9. | To consider such other items of business which, by reason of special circumstances so specified, the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency. | |

*It is likely that item 7 will be taken in the closed part of the meeting in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006.

Yours faithfully



Chief Executive

Members of this Committee: Councillors Bailey, Mrs Bolam, Mrs Burn, Mrs Carrick, Mrs Douthwaite, Ferguson, Gale, Mrs Hardaker, Henry, Kay, Murphy*, Mrs Seabury*, J Shuttleworth, Sinclair, Stonehouse, Ward and Yorke.

*Ex-officio, non-voting capacity

Chair: Councillor Gale

Deputy Chair: Councillor Sinclair

TO: All other Members of the Council for information
Management Team

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM

| NAME AND DATE OF COMMITTEE | AGENDA ITEM NUMBER | NATURE OF INTEREST AND REASONS | PRINT NAME | SIGNATURE |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-------------------|------------------|
| | | | | |



HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE

13 FEBRUARY 2008

Report of the Strategic Director for the Community
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY UPDATE – COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT

purpose of the report

To inform Housing Services Committee of the work currently being undertaken within the Community Department in relation to Equality and Diversity and to seek approval for further work to be undertaken.

background

1. The Community Involvement Team has been established since July 2007 and part of the remit for the team is to oversee issues relating to access to services and equality and diversity within the department. To support the role of the team in addressing these issues, partnership working has been taking place with the Corporate Customer Care Officer and the Corporate Equality and Diversity Officer.
2. As the diversity of the local population is ever changing, it is imperative that all service providers ensure that all customers have equal access to the services they provide and that any barriers to participation arising from ethnicity, religion, geographic location, special needs, language differences, learning difficulties, sexual orientation, gender, age or disability are removed. Everyone should have equal opportunities to play a full part in their community.

community department service plan 2007-2008

3. The Community Involvement Team has a number of actions stemming from the Community Department Service Plan 2007-2008 relating specifically to access to services and equality and diversity. These action points are:

Culture 2.2 – We will implement the Council’s Access and Customer Care Strategy and accompanying policies.

Culture 2.11 – We will develop policies and strategies for engaging with hard-to-reach groups in activities and ensuring they have equal access to services.

Each of the above action points has an individual action plan which is monitored on a monthly basis to assess progress made against each action.

culture 2.2

4. The Community Involvement Team has made good progress against this action point and work regularly with the Corporate Customer Care Officer. The team has undertaken the following actions:
 - Contributed to the development of the Access and Customer Care Strategy via meetings with the Corporate Customer Care Officer;
 - Raised ideas as to how the ACC Strategy can be implemented in the department including staff workshops on community involvement and access and customer care which took place in December 2007;
 - Assisted in the development of the Customer Profile and joined the recently developed Customer Profile Project Team;
 - Ensured a link exists between the ACC Strategy, Service Standards and Performance Management Framework;
 - Joined the Access To Services Corporate Working Group;
 - Developed a Community Involvement Service Standard; and
 - Included an 'Access to Services' section in the new Community Consultation Guide and Community Engagement Staff Toolkit.
5. The team are dedicated to ensuring all services are accessible to customers and will continue to work alongside the Corporate Customer Care Officer and the Access to Services Working Group to ensure our customers' needs and expectations are met in relation to access and customer care.

culture 2.11

6. Those actions detailed under this section of the Service Plan are currently on-going. These actions relate to the development of an Equality and Diversity Strategy for the department and the development of impact assessments for each service area. The Community Involvement Team have met with the Corporate Equality and Diversity Officer where a recommendation was made that the development and completion of equality impact assessments be undertaken prior to the development of the Equality and Diversity strategy. The results of the equality impact assessments will inform the development of the strategy and the action plan contained within it.

work undertaken so far

7. There has been much work undertaken in relation to equality and diversity within the department. Work which has been undertaken is detailed below:
 - An Equality and Diversity 'Champion' has been nominated to lead on equality and diversity issues within the department;
 - Equality impact assessment guidance and forms have been circulated to all staff;
 - A central folder has been created to store all completed impact assessments;

- The department's Equality Statement and translations are now included on all documents produced by the department including letters, leaflets, newsletters and customer guides etc;
- An impact assessment action plan has been circulated to service managers;
- The department has two representatives attending the Corporate Equality and Diversity Working Group on a two weekly basis;
- Impact assessment training for service managers is being co-ordinated by the Corporate Equality and Diversity Working Group;
- Currently 5 impact assessments have been completed for the department;
- The recruitment of local residents to Future Aspects currently underway is ensuring that membership to the Panel is representative of the local population;
- Meetings have been held with the Corporate Customer Care Officer to discuss engaging with our hard-to-reach groups;
- The Neighbourhood Arrangements Team are ensuring that all sections of the local community have input in to local service provision and the decision making process; and
- The Neighbourhood Arrangements Team is working with the Corporate Equality and Diversity Officer and 2D to undertake research in to ethnic communities living within the district.

work still to be undertaken

8. Although much work has already been undertaken in respect of equality and diversity, there are still two main pieces of work to be undertaken by the department before March 2008. These are:
 - Full completion of impact assessments for all service areas (on-going)
 - Development of Equality and Diversity Strategy (yet to commence)

The completion of these pieces of work will aid the Council in achieving level 2 of the Equality Standard.

proposal

9. It is proposed that the on-going implementation of equality impact assessments quickens pace in order for service areas to have been fully impact assessed by March 2008. The process of undertaking impact assessments will aid in the development of the subsequent Equality and Diversity Strategy and action plan for the department.

financial implications

10. Financial implications will be minimal in relation to the development of the proposals outlined above. The training to be arranged for service managers to aid in the implementation of impact assessments will incur expenditure although the development of the Equality and Diversity Strategy will be

undertaken in-house. Expenditure in relation to the impact assessment training will be taken from corporate and/or departmental training budgets.

human resource implications

11. There will be human resource implications in relation to the development of the proposals detailed in paragraph 9. The Community Involvement Team will lead, as part of their role, on the development of the Equality and Diversity Strategy and will work jointly with service managers to ensure impact assessments are completed for each service area.

legal implications

12. The Council has a legal duty under the Race Relation Act 1976, the Race Relation Act (Amendment) 2000, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986 legislation and codes of practice, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and related codes of practice to ensure their services, facilities and resources are equally accessible, useful and fair to all.

It implications

13. There are no IT implications in relation to the development of the proposals outlined in paragraph 9.

crime and disorder implications

14. There are no crime and disorder implications regarding the development of the proposals detailed above. However, ensuring all residents in Wear Valley have equal access to services and are treated equally and fairly may reduce the number of Race Hate Crimes in the district. The Council has a statutory obligation to promote community cohesion and integration.

equality and diversity implications

15. The Community Involvement Team and indeed the Community Department as a whole is committed to ensuring all customers are treated equally and fairly and that all services are accessible. The development of an Equality and Diversity Strategy for the department will confirm this commitment. The Council wants to reduce any disadvantage experienced by residents in Wear Valley by making its services responsive to different community and individual needs. We want our services, facilities and resources to be accessible and useful to every citizen regardless of gender, age, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religious belief, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or any other individual characteristic which may unfairly affect a person's opportunities in life.

summary

16. The Community Department has undertaken much work in relation to access to services and will continue to be an influencing factor in this service area. There has also been much work undertaken in relation to equality and diversity, however, there is still work to be undertaken in this service area which will emphasise our commitment to ensuring we meet the needs of the local community.

RECOMMENDED

- 1 Committee notes the report and approves the development of the proposals detailed in paragraph 9.

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|---|
| Officer responsible for the report |
| Michael Laing |
| Strategic Director for the Community |
| Ext 281 |

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|-------------------------------|
| Author of the report |
| Corinne Gardner |
| Community Involvement Manager |
| Ext 303 |



HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE

13 FEBRUARY 2008

Report of the Strategic Director for the Community
PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STOCK CONDITION SURVEY

purpose of the report

To seek the approval of Housing Services Committee to undertake a Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey.

background

1. A robust and detailed understanding of our Private Sector Housing Stock is essential in addressing the future needs of our customers. At present there are an estimated 2200 vulnerable people living in non decent properties within the private sector. The Government, under its PSA7 target has stipulated that by 2010 70% of vulnerable people will live in a decent home.
2. To achieve this target and to ensure the correct targeting of Council Capital resources and resources obtained from other areas such as the Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP) we must understand which properties fail this standard and how we will address the issue in a pragmatic way.
3. A stock condition survey was completed in 2002, however this was an external only survey and is dated and at an end of its statistical validity period.

proposal

4. It is proposed that the Council undertake a stock condition survey of their private sector housing stock. This will ensure the issues highlighted are addressed and a robust private sector housing picture is developed.
5. The Council have been developing and working with consultants to ensure the Dale and Valley Housing Stock is subject to a stock condition surveys and the information relating to the stock has been essential in addressing homes which fail the decent homes standard.
6. The Council previously tendered to carry out a stock condition survey on the Council stock. This tender was awarded to Property Tectonics. This company have proven to demonstrate excellent value for money and have ensured that the system can give detailed information relation to stock condition.
7. Negotiations and discussions have taken place with Property Tectonics to extend their remit to cover the whole of the District to address the private sector housing stock. This has a number of benefits, mainly a reduced price due to

economies of scale. Additionally there will be one system of stock condition for both public and private sector properties. This will assist in addressing Decent Homes across tenures and enable a pro-active method of intervention.

8. The cost of this work has been estimated at £120,000. The finances for this scheme will be funded through Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP) funding and will not be at a cost to Wear Valley District Council.

financial implications

9. The cost of a full stock condition survey to be undertaken on private sector properties within the district has been estimated by Property Tectonics as being in the region of £120,000 depending on the response rates and co-operation of our customers to allow an independent inspection of their home.
10. This amount will be funded through Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP) monies. The decision to waiver standing orders has been discussed and agreed by the Strategic Director of Resource Management.

human resource implications

11. The scheme will be overseen by the Housing Strategy Manager.

legal implications

12. The decision to waiver standing orders has been discussed and agreed by the Assistant Director of Admin and Legal.
13. The appointment of Property Tectonics is to be based on a similar scheme that was won in competition within the last two years. Standing Order Clause 8.2 allows negotiations on this basis, and it is proposed that the project, delivered by Property Tectonics for council owned properties is used as a basis of negotiation on this report.

i.t. implications

14. There will be ongoing IT support requirements with regard to the stock condition software.

crime and disorder implications

15. There are no identified Crime and Disorder implications.

equality and diversity implications

16. There are no equality and diversity implications.

timescale

17. It is important to ensure the scheme is progressed, therefore a robust timetable will be obtained from the contractor.

summary

18. An updated stock condition survey for the private sector is essential in addressing and targeting properties and areas of poor housing condition and vulnerability. This project will allow better forward planning and can become the basis for future government bids to address private sector stock condition.
19. The thoroughness of the stock condition survey carried out for Council owned properties by Property Tectonics has been essential. Property Tectonics were awarded the original contract through a competitive tendering process. By extending the remit of Property Tectonics will ensure that the two systems are joined up and this in itself will be beneficial for forward planning.

RECOMMENDED

1. Committee approves the appointment of Property Tectonics to undertake a private sector stock condition survey for Wear Valley.

Officer responsible for the report
Michael Laing
Strategic Director for the Community
Ext 281

Author of the report
Richard Roddam
Housing Strategy Manager
Ext 294

HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE

13 FEBRUARY 2008

Report of the Strategic Director of the Community
COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN – IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

purpose of the report

To provide Committee with a progress report about how the department's Service Plan was implemented between October and December 2007.

background

1. The Community Department's Service Plan was approved at Housing Services Committee on 5 July 2007.
2. The Service Plan included an action plan, detailing actions to be implemented to achieve the work of the department during 2007/08.
3. The department established a new performance management framework in July 2007. Within this was a requirement to provide a six-monthly update to Committee, advising on progress made in implementing the Service Plan.
4. Committee received a 6-month implementation report, covering the period April – September 2007, on 24 October 2007.
5. Members at the meeting on 24 October 2007 requested that Committee receive a quarterly implementation report.

progress update

6. The table in Annex A of this report highlights the progress made against relevant actions within the Action Plan between October – December 2007.
7. Each milestone is colour coded to indicate progress made. Green actions indicate that the action has been completed, while yellow indicates that progress is ongoing but work is progressing well. Members should be pleased to note that none of the indicators are coloured red, which would indicate that no action had been taken.

conclusion

8. The progress made feeds into achieving the aims of the service plan for the department and ultimately the council plan. This report highlights work done to date in the department's wide and varied service areas.

RECOMMENDED

1. Committee notes the progress made towards implementing the Community Department Service Plan and instructs the Strategic Director to provide year end performance against the service plan.

Officer responsible for the report
Michael Laing
Strategic Director for the Community
Ext 281

Author of the report
Alex Smith
Policy and Performance Officer
Ext 461

ANNEX A

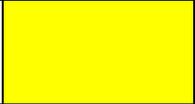
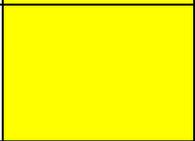
| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|---------------|
| <p>1.1 We will pursue a programme of development and accredited qualifications through the Community Sport programmes, facilities and arts development programme.</p> | <p>Develop a Training Plan to achieve listed outcomes</p> | <p>October 2007</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 volunteer walk leaders have received First Aid training. | <p>Yellow</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 FA courses completed with 37 volunteers achieving their FA Level 1 coaching badges. | <p>Green</p> | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 participants doing a UK Cricket Level 2 Coaching course | <p>Yellow</p> | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Badminton course with 12 places scheduled for February / March 2008. | <p>Yellow</p> | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 community volunteers and 10 leisure professionals have received walk leader training. | <p>Yellow</p> | | |
| | <p>Contract and fund Arts Awards delivery</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives from Willington Youth Theatre and Jackass Youth Theatre have attended Youth Arts Award training. | <p>Green</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jackass Youth Theatre has initiated activity and anticipates putting c 20 people through bronze and silver awards before the end of the year. | <p>Green</p> | | | |
| <p>1.3 We will work with B/A College and schools to continue referring young people to NVQ Football and Sports Academy.</p> | <p>Continue to monitor the number of referrals to NVQ Football and Sports Academy</p> | <p>March 2008</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 young people referred to Bishop Auckland college | <p>Green</p> |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|----------|
| 1.5 We will maximise use of Council's fixed facilities from all Wear Valley outreach programmes. | Contribute to the development of a Leisure Involvement Plan for outreach services in fixed facilities | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of December 2007, 19 new WOW! members also became new members of fixed facilities. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Wear Walking for Health programme uses fixed facilities at Crook (Glenholme and Peases West) and Bishop Auckland as a base for walking opportunities | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CPAC project uses the Visions Leisure Club at Woodhouse Close on a weekly basis | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between October-December 2007, usage was ahead of target by 2,744 users. Between April-December 2007, usage was ahead of target by 3,094 users. | |
| 1.9 We will contribute to the reduction of health inequalities within Wear Valley by working with external partners | Continuation of current programme. | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth bid submitted to run the Wear Walking for Health programme in 2008/09. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for Cardiac Rehab service confirmed for 2008/09. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awaiting response from PCT for funding for Exercise Referral programme for 2008/09. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding confirmed for Positive Futures – 2008/09 | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 1.9 (Cont.) We will contribute to the reduction of health inequalities within Wear Valley by working with external partners | Review partnership with PCT to re-establish links in line with PCT reorganisation and funding opportunities | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible extra funding available for 1 year from April 2008 to develop out reach programme – awaiting confirmation of this and also ‘core’ funding arrangements from April 2008. | |
| 1.10 We will ensure WOW has coverage across the district to enable people to start physical activity | Undertake review of the service to examine future provisions | November 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting in January 2008 to look at a countywide WOW! project from Sept 2008 – 2011. Possible funding contributions from Sport England and the PCT. Future delivery is dependent on the success of the growth bid. | |
| | Continuation of current programme to meet health agenda | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the referral scheme will see the programme expand into the community using the WOW! legacy sites as facilitators | |
| 1.11 We will maintain levels of provision for cardiac rehabilitation and exercise referral | Continuation of cardiac rehabilitation service | March 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Courses programmed between April 2008 – March 2009. | |
| 1.12 We will identify services, which contribute to the health agenda and introduce relevant activities and services | Continue to deliver innovative projects to meet health agenda and diversify these services in accordance with changes to local need | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leisure service working with agencies and other Council services, such as Street Wardens to deliver targeted opportunities in areas of the district, e.g. Eldon Lane, West Auckland. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellence in Weight Management award received in November 2007, from the National Obesity Forum – scheme had 72 users in its first year | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|----------|
| 1.12 (Cont.) We will identify services, which contribute to the health agenda and introduce relevant activities and services | Continue to deliver innovative projects to meet health agenda and diversify these services in accordance with changes to local need | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheme has applied for a 'Partnering with Health Services' award, from the Municipal Journal Achievement Awards. | |
| | Identify funding opportunities to deliver services | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive futures funding confirmed for 2008/09 | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding from Dept of Health and Communities for Health funding (£50K) confirmed. | |
| 1.15 We will investigate the need and where appropriate, provide growth bids to mainstream remaining externally funded posts. | Submit a growth bid for mainstreaming posts | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth bids re-submitted for budget round. Decisions announced in February 2008. | |
| 1.16 We will develop and implement Community Sports Networks/ Sporting Hubs | Undertake partner consultation on recommended options | October-December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSN Plan developed after consultation with key partners in November 2007 | |
| | Submit bid for Council funding of CSN Managers post | November 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 1 CIF (Sport England) bid submitted in December 2007 (including post of Adult Participation in Sport Officer). | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|--|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 2.1 We will develop challenging Service Standards in partnership with service users and stakeholders, which are tailored to meet local need | Draft standards produced | July 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to other service leaflets, the Community Involvement Team's leaflet was produced. This was done in consultation with the Customer Panel and Residents Associations. | |
| | Standards published | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printing target date missed but leaflets were available in Council offices from December 2007. | |
| | Review service provision against standards | January 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of service standard performance reviewed and amended to be more customer-focussed. | |
| 2.2 We will implement the Council's Access and Customer Care Strategy and accompanying policies | Contribute to development of Access & Customer Care Strategy | August 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Customer Care Strategy approved. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Services Working Group established to monitor the implementation of the strategy. | |
| | Prepare report on how to be implemented in the department | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff training, about the Community Involvement Team and customer care issues delivered in December 2007. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further sessions to be scheduled in the new year. | |
| | Link to service standards and PMF and implement | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community customer-care service standards aligned with corporate standards. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment for the Citizens' Panel started on 27th December 2007. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mystery Shopping Scheme being developed | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity Menu and Consultation Guide printed. | | | | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|---|
| 2.2 (Cont.) We will implement the Council's Access and Customer Care Strategy and accompanying policies | Update website with progress against the priorities update; Complaints monitoring update, i.e. 'you said, we did' page; | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIT webpage established, designed in partnership with customers. |  |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page includes a 'You said, We did' section |  |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Services Working Group established to review information about complaints and access |  |
| | Articles in WVDC Matters | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most recent articles include 'Name for Citizens' Panel Chosen' and 'Community Involvement in Wear Valley'. |  |
| 2.3 We will develop the website and a series of leaflets to guide access to services, provision of services and timeliness of services | Website updated | November 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaflets to be available online from January 2008. |  |
| 2.4 We will develop a customer profile | Support and liase with C. Gardner to review how profile info is gathered, stored and used: Decide what are we trying to identify and if we already have info | August 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Profile Project Team established. |  |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mosaic Package has been purchased and the licence for its use has been received. |  |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data collection from existing databases and analysis underway. Aim is to have access to information at a household level to tailor service delivery. |  |

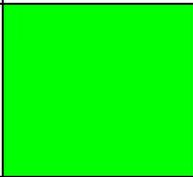
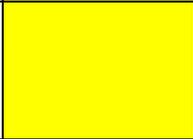
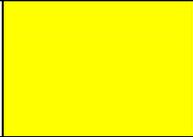
| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| 2.5 We will establish systems to collect analyse and use information gathered by the customer profile and share the information with managers, staff and Councillors | How the information is stored will affect how easy the information is to update, analyse and use: Undertake benefit analysis of all available mechanisms for collection / storage and choose best option | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profile information will be stored on the Mosaic Package, to utilise its in-built reporting system, and the CRM and other similar customer databases. | |
| | Develop procedure guide for storing Customer Profile info | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedure guide delayed until the Mosaic Package has access to profile information. Meeting scheduled for January 2008 to discuss progress. | |
| | 2.10 We will enhance partnership working by helping communities to manage assets, review participation in partnerships and sharing resources | Appoint Neighbourhood Arrangement Officers | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Arrangements Team in place as of November 2007. |
| Work with CDU to complete partnership evaluation | | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocol for partnership working agreed with CDU. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership database provided with procedures in place for updating. | |
| Meet with community groups | | October 2007 – March 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CIT have visited all but two Residents Associations. Meetings scheduled for January/February 08. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback was encouraging from local residents about the CI service and the new Citizens' Panel. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotional activities to be scheduled throughout 2008. | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|--|--|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 2.11 We will develop policies and strategies for engaging with hard to reach groups in activities and ensuring they have equal access to services. | Carry out impact assessments | September – October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Equality and Diversity Working Group established to oversee the implementation of impact assessments across the Council. | Green |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact assessment training being arranged for all service managers | Yellow |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of December 2007, 4 impact assessments completed. Schedule is on target. | Yellow |
| | Strategy written in partnership with the above – to include action plan | September – October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality & Diversity Strategy will be written once the outcomes of impact assessments are known. | Yellow |
| | (See Action on p.30) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of recruitment for the Citizens Panel, plans in place to visit King James school in Bishop Auckland and Wolsingham Community College in January 2008. | Yellow |
| 2.13 We will regularly update service improvement plans to assess progress and outcomes for residents | Report Service Plan progress to DMT / Committee 6-monthly. | October 2007 May 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First update received by Housing Services Committee on 24 October 2007 and Community Services Committee on 7 November 2007. | Green |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee requested updates quarterly. | Green |
| 3.2 Update the Housing Needs Survey (HNS) following the completion of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. | Initiate a Housing Needs Survey following the completion of the Housing Needs Survey | June 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Need Survey tendered and awarded to ARC4. | Green |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project to commence January 2008. | Yellow |
| 3.3 We will bid to develop and fully implement a Landlord Accreditation and Empty Property Scheme. | January 08 full implementation. | January 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landlord Accreditation Scheme fully endorsed by Housing Services Committee in December 2007. | Green |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official Launch on 7th January 2008. | Yellow |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|--|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 3.7 Commission private sector housing stock condition survey | | March 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stock condition survey to commence in January 2008 by Property Tectonics. | |
| 3.8 Progress DHS to vulnerable households in the Private Sector. | Revision of Housing Grants Policy to reflect Decent Homes rather than fitness standards as waiting list progresses | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of December 2007, the Home Improvement Agency have completed 2 Housing Grants to achieve Decent Homes in the Private Sector. From January 2008, this function will return to the Private Sector Housing Team. | |
| | Explore additional and alternative funding sources for homeowners not eligible for repair grant | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing funding applications submitted to charitable organisations for relevant and suitable clients. | |
| 3.9 To bring all Public Sector Properties up to DHS | Revise Housing Grants Policy to reflect decency rather than fitness standards | November 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Grants Policy revised and implemented. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional £100K capital allocated to support existing budgets. | |
| 3.12 We will respond to all complaints of anti-social behaviour cases effectively | Develop a Tackling Anti Social Behaviour Plan in partnership with sections across the department | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan written and circulated to relevant officers. | |
| 3.14 We will reduce violent crime | Establish a Town Centre Neighbourhood Group to examine violent crime, town centres and night time economy issues | March 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop held and action plans drafted. | |
| | Develop a Strategy to reduce violent crime in town centres | March 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plans being considered by partners. | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 3.15 We will reduce the hidden crime status of domestic abuse | Continue to deliver training and awareness raising of domestic abuse and its affects | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of December 2007, 6 training sessions and 14 awareness talks have been delivered | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helpline cards are replenished to agencies when needed | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaflets and posters are sent out to both statutory and voluntary agencies when needed. | |
| | Examine and improve performance (statistics) monitoring systems | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A domestic abuse statistics sheet, updated monthly, is available for Community staff. | |
| | Strengthen existing partnerships to improve the service and raise the profile (availability) of the service | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened links with Children's Centres across Wear Valley, the Police and Housing. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with other service providers to develop stronger links. | | | | |
| 3.16 We will reduce repeat victims of domestic abuse by 10% | Review numbers of service users going on to become repeat victims and identify trends | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between April - December 2007, 10 former clients of the service were re-referred. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awaiting response from Durham Constabulary after a request to review their methods of monitoring repeat victims was made. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service is assessing its relationship with repeat victims to better understand why repeats occur and what can be done to reduce them. | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 3.16 (Cont.) We will reduce repeat victims of domestic abuse by 10% | Develop an appropriate service improvement plan identifying opportunities for service diversification | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A volunteer programme is being considered, in addition to the volunteer counsellors, managed by the service. | |
| | Contribute to a review of victim recording procedures in partnership with the police | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several meetings have taken place so far; next meeting scheduled for February 2008. | |
| 3.25 We will refocus the work of the Street Warden Scheme | Street wardens work to be aligned with greener, cleaner, safer agenda. For street wardens to deal with enforcement issues on litter, dog fouling, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles. | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From January 2008, weekly foot patrol schedules will be introduced to cover every street. | |
| 3.27 We will take robust enforcement action to tackle Anti Social Behaviour | Train Street Wardens in the use of fixed penalty notices | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Wardens, except for new starters, have been trained to issue FPN's. | |
| | Ensure all Street Wardens are accredited by the Police Reform Act to enforce minor offences e.g. alcohol misuse, confiscating cigarettes from under age users. | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An accreditation schedule for each warden is monitored, with applications for updating accreditation made as necessary. | |
| | Recruit an extra 3 Street Wardens | November 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 extra wardens in place. Plans for recruiting a further 5 wardens to be discussed in January 2008. | |
| | Purchase "body cams" to record anti social behaviour and collate evidence | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body Cams were used on a trial basis during October and November. Negotiations with supplier are underway to finalise orders. | |
| | Continue to implement the Community Safety Strategy | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed a successful clean up week in West Auckland in October 2007. | |
| | Train in investigation of fly tipping | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training completed. | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|---|----------------------------|--|---|
| 3.33 We will develop a set of strategic aims and objectives for the development and management of local landscapes / neighbourhoods | Workshop to identify strategic objectives and action plan | November 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plan developed to ensure the Neighbourhood Arrangements project is delivered and that local issues, in particular, in Super Out Areas, are addressed to reduce deprivation. |  |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three launch events/workshops have been arranged for March 2008. |  |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three geographical areas agreed. |  |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness to be raised through local publicity and briefings for elected members. |  |
| 3.34 We will enhance green space provision and quality | Produce plan for Glenholme Park | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public meetings held by Groundwork during December |  |
| 3.35 We will develop a local Waste Management Plan (collection) | Undertake a feasibility study of implementation of alternative week collections – Committee Report | November 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings held with Abitibi and Marley to discuss options for recycling services. |  |
| | Use findings of feasibility study to determine future options for service improvements in line with Waste Strategy for England 2007 | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members briefing session held in December 2007 to consider twin bin proposal. Feedback due in January 2008. |  |
| | Review progress with County Council Waste Strategy | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Waste Strategy is out for consultation until mid January 2008. Co. Durham Waste Management Partnership meetings are ongoing. |  |
| | Reconsider the focus of the collection service with emphasis being placed on the collection of recyclables and compostables | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenders for 'green' vehicles to be distributed in January 2008. |  |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|--|---|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 3.36 We will continually improve recycling rates | Reconsider the focus of the collection service with emphasis being placed on the collection of recyclables and compostables | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase of 3 new recycling vehicles to improve capacity. Tenders to be received in January 2008. Plans being implemented for the promotion and distribution of 200 free compost bins to residents in the Dales. | |
| | Continue to deliver education, school assemblies' etc to raise awareness of recycling and waste minimisation. | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between October – December 2007, recycling promoted at a school assembly and 3 community events, involving Bishop Auckland College, Asda and Durham County Council. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raised awareness with 9 press releases, wheeled bin stickers and a Christmas card to all residents | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idea of a Modern Apprentice to provide admin support to the Recycling Officer to be considered in January 2008. | |
| | Continue to benchmark the service against that of other authorities to examine best practice | Review in December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visited Mid Beds in October 2007; showed that although their number of households is double ours, cost per household was proportionate to ours. Differences in VFM, e.g. larger bins, more bring sites; | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking into arranging a visit to Hartlepool and Derwentside in 2008. | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|--|--|--|----------|
| 3.36 (Cont.) We will continually improve recycling rates | Updating the recycling bring facilities in the district with new signage and refurbished banks | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New 'recycling site' directional signs installed. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can recycling banks passed internal inspection. | |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Xmas tree recycling to be available at 5 locations in January 2008 for 1 week. | |
| | Introduce new banks for a wider range of recycling materials | July 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New banks installed and operational at the HWRC at Romanway Industrial Estate, Bishop Auckland. | |
| 3.37 We will seek options for the delivery of the refuse and recycling services to improve VFM and performance | Undertake a procurement exercise to find alternative disposal options for recycling | March 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expressions of interest have gone out and are available on our website. | |
| | Provide training in Customer Care and the importance of recycling for recycling staff | August 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All PRADs completed. | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer-care training to be delivered in February 2008. | | |
| | Review value for money of using agency staff | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tender exercise proposed for one agency provider, from January 2008. | |
| 3.40 We will update the current Recycling Plan | Review the Recycling Plan actions and incorporate into Waste Management Strategy | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant in place to develop the Council's Waste Strategy, including a new recycling plan. | |
| 4.1 We will use WVDC Communications and Consultation Strategy to develop a departmental consultation plan that employs a variety of techniques. | Develop a departmental consultation plan – link to Customer Profile database, service standards and involvement menu | November / December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departmental and Future Aspects Consultation Plans drafted and to be reported to DMT in January 2008 for approval. | |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|---|--|----------------------------|---|----------|
| 4.7 We will develop and implement a plan to achieve the requirements of "Arts at the Strategic Centre". | Develop a Plan to achieve the requirements of Arts at the Strategic Centre | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed partnership agreement and progress against priorities with the Arts Council. | Yellow |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly Funded Organisation through new partnership agreement with Arts Council for 2008/09 confirmed. | Green |
| | Identify groups that wish to undertake arts award in 2007/08 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two groups have attended Youth Arts Award training | Green |
| | Contract and fund Arts Awards delivery | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WVDC will refund costs of training, applying and monitoring youth arts award costs provided groups apply for awards and submit portfolios for accreditation in 2007/08. | Green |
| 4.8 We will develop a marketing strategy to promote the services provided by the department. | Leaflets printed | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service leaflets available in Council offices from December 2007. | Green |
| | Website updated with quick wins | October 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> System of updating webpages established. | Yellow |
| 4.9 We will develop risk assessments and equalities impact assessments, which will be applied to policies and strategies. | Contribute to development of Equalities and Diversity Action Plan | Sept – Oct 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan approved by DMT in December 2007. | Green |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality statement circulated and included on all documentation. | Green |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk update to be reported to P&SD on 23 January 2008 | Yellow |

| Service Plan Ref. | Milestone | Work plan milestone target | Update | Progress |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|----------|
| Planning, development and implementation of Citizens Panel – link to PMF | Analysis of volunteer data to ensure representation of district | December 2007 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment process started on 27 December 2007, with 3,000 local residents receiving a newsletter and recruitment form. | Green |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results expected by 28th January 2008. | Yellow |
| | Develop name / aims / objectives / terms of reference / constitution / code of conduct for Citizens Panel | January 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizen Panel named as 'Future Aspects: The Voice Of Wear Valley'. | Green |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terms of reference developed for the Panel, approved by DMT. | Green |
| | Develop schedule of consultation activities (surveys, topics, focus groups etc) | January 2008 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future Aspects Consultation Schedule produced and will go to DMT for approval in January 2008. | Yellow |
| | | | | |



HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE

13 FEBRUARY 2007

Report of the Strategic Director for the Community
HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

purpose of the report

To seek the approval of Housing Services Committee to undertake a Housing Needs Survey for Wear Valley.

background

1. The development of a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) is an essential part of the Housing Strategy process, to ensure we understand the housing needs and aspirations of our customers.
2. A HNS was completed in 2002 and has proven to be extremely useful in terms of highlighting housing need and affordability issues within the district. This survey is coming towards the end of its statistical validity period and therefore needs to be reconsidered.

Proposal

3. In November and December 2007 a formal tendering exercise was completed to commission a revised HNS. As part of this process 3 consultants were given the opportunity to tender, these were:
 1. Fordham Research (£39,435.00)
 2. Arc4 (£37,064.00)
 3. Northern Housing Consortium (£35,102.05)
4. The tenders were all opened on the 20th December 2007 and each tender was evaluated based on its price and the quality of the submission. This evaluation is attached as Annex B.
5. Although Arc4 were not the most competitive in terms of cost, their submission was extremely all encompassing and gave excellent details of ways to maximise the response rate and how a more innovative approach can be applied to this project.
6. As part of the tender exercise, Arc4 have also made a recommendation that a more enhanced service would be beneficial to ensure the data is extremely robust and can stand up at any possible future public enquiry.

7. Their recommendation will, instead of a sample of customers being asked their views on the scheme, allow for a full survey to be conducted and every household in Wear Valley to receive a questionnaire. This will ensure all households can have a say and this in turn will ensure a comprehensive review of the needs and aspirations. This will directly assist in the development of an Affordable Housing Strategy and will feed into the Local Development Framework.

financial implications

8. The cost of the basic service outlined by Arc4 is £37,064. They have indicated that the enhanced service will be at a cost of £49,602. The tendering exercise asked all tenders to give details of any ideas to ensure better statistical validity, Arc4 were the only tender to grasp this concept. The enhanced service at a cost of £49,602 is the preferred option.
9. This amount will be funded through Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP) monies.

human resource implications

10. The scheme will be overseen by the Housing Strategy Manager.

equality and diversity implications

11. The report has undergone an equality and diversity impact assessment. The results have demonstrated that there are no adverse aspects of the report that would cause any issue of non compliance with equality and diversity.

timescale

12. It is important to ensure the scheme is progressed, therefore a robust timetable will be obtained from the contractor with a projected completion date of May 2008.

summary

13. This is an extremely important piece of strategic housing work which will give us an excellent set of baseline information which reflects the housing needs of our customers.
14. It is highlighted that the enhanced service would be an excellent opportunity to obtain a robust overview of the district. Whilst this service is at an additional cost, there is the finance available through SHIP funding.

RECOMMENDED

1. Committee approves the appointment of Arc4 to undertake the enhanced Housing Needs Survey for the District.

Officer responsible for the report
Michael Laing
Strategic Director for the Community
Ext 281

Author of the report
Richard Roddam
Housing Strategy Manager
Ext 294

| | Tender 1 (Arc4) | Tender 2 (Northern Housing Consortium) | Tender 3 (Fordham Research) | Comments |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| Price | £37,064 (Score of 90/100) | £35,102.05 (score 100/100) | £39,435 (Score 60/100) | 10 Points deducted per £1k over cheapest tender |
| Quality of Submission | Excellent Overall Tender, including good pre-analysis of the needs of Wear Valley and highlighting good methodology (Score of 100/100) | Good Methodology, limited analysis and scope, little innovation to maximise response rate (Score of 80/100) | Excellent quality of submission, good overview of proposals and how scheme will be implemented and developed. (100/100) | Quality of all tenders were of a good quality, however it was evident that some stood out above the other submissions |
| Scope to develop the scheme based on the criteria within the tender requesting consultant to provide details of innovation to address statistical validity | Excellent overview, excellent recommendations to develop the scheme further to ensure its statistical value is enhanced (Score 100/100) | Good overview of the scheme as per the tender, however limited in terms of innovative ideas. (Score 75/100) | Good overview of how the scheme can be developed to ensure maximum response rates, however little innovation in terms of response rate maximisation (score 85/100) | An important aspect is how the scheme will be developed, a lack of innovative ideas detailed in the tenders, however tender 1 grasped these concepts |
| Timeframe | Timeframe Acceptable (Score 100/100) | Timeframe Acceptable (Score 100/100) | Timeframe Acceptable (Score 100/100) | All within timetable |
| Quality of Similar Studies | Excellent Overall Quality of similar studies (100/100) | Very Good quality of similar studies (90/100) | Excellent quality of similar studies (score 100/100) | All good quality studies, with some studies being of a better quality. |
| Overall Score | 490 | 445 | 445 | |

