



Civic Centre,  
Crook,  
County Durham.  
DL15 9ES  
Tel: 01388 765555 Fax: 01388 766660  
Minicom: 01388 761515 e-mail: [g.ridley@wearvalley.gov.uk](mailto:g.ridley@wearvalley.gov.uk)

---

Gary Ridley      Acting Chief Executive

---

28<sup>th</sup> October 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 5<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2008** at **5.00 P.M.**

### AGENDA

Page No.

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To consider the Minutes of the last Meeting of the Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008 as a true record.
3. Declarations of Interest

Copies  
attached

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.**

4. To consider the report of the meeting of the Housing Sub Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2008. 1 – 2
5. To consider a Community Department Service Plan implementation update for quarters 1 and 2 of 2008/09. 3 - 6
6. 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.

Yours faithfully



#### **Acting Chief Executive**

Members of this Committee: Councillors Bailey, Mrs Bolam, Mrs Burn, Mrs Carrick, Mrs Douthwaite, Ferguson\*, Gale, Mrs Hardaker, Kay, Mairs, Sinclair, J Shuttleworth, Stonehouse, Mrs Todd\*, Ward and Zair + 1 vacant Independent seat.

\*Ex-officio, non-voting capacity

Please note that an Independent Member will be appointed to the vacant seat at the meeting.

Chair: Councillor Bailey

Deputy Chair: Councillor Mrs Carrick

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

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM

<b>NAME AND DATE OF COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM NUMBER</b>	<b>NATURE OF INTEREST AND REASONS</b>	<b>PRINT NAME</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>



## HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE

5 NOVEMBER 2008

Report of the Housing Services Sub Committee meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2008.

---

### MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Councillors Mrs Burn, Mrs Carrick, and J Shuttleworth

### ALSO PRESENT

J Bailey, Councillor Wear Valley District Council  
P Chaffer, Chief Executive, Dale and Valley Homes  
S Elliot, Administration Officer  
J Hurst, Assistant Director Development, Dale and Valley Homes  
D Milburn, Acting Strategic Director for Community  
D Sanders, Director of Resources, Dale and Valley Homes

---

### DECENT HOMES PERFORMANCE REPORT

Members considered an update regarding the progress of Dale & Valley Homes' Decent Homes Programmes Delivery Performance.

In response to Members questions Dale and Valley Homes staff commented on:

- The estimated cost against budget was less, as the work scheduled was reduced due to efficiencies in the Decent Homes work and the average price was reduced as the work required to bring them up to the required standard was not as extensive as first thought.
- If a resident were to request a walk-in shower a referral should be made to Social Services in order to see if residents were applicable for grants. Part of the assessment process unfortunately involved investigation into residents financial information. With this in mind Members had to be aware that bathing was a low priority as far as Social Services adaptations were concerned. Dale & Valley Homes were, however, fitting over bath showers.

Councillor Gale, seconded by Councillor Mrs Carrick, moved the report.

### RECOMMENDED

that the Decent Homes Performance Report, as detailed in Annex A of the report, be noted.

## **CAPITAL BUDGETS AND EXPENDITURES REPORT**

Consideration was given to the Capital Budgets and Expenditure for Dale and Valley Homes.

In response to Members questions Dale and Valley Homes staff commented on:

- The average price of new bathrooms varied from property to property, but the average is £2486 with a shower and £1775 without a shower. A shower was offered to all residents, not all took up the offer.
- If homes were to be brought up to the Decent Homes Standard prior to re-letting it would put back the availability of the home, subsequently putting back the re-let time. In general when spoken too, residents preferred to have homes brought up to the Decent Homes standard when the houses around were being upgraded.

Councillor Mrs Burn, seconded by Councillor Gale, moved the report .

### **RECOMMENDED**

that the Dale and Valley Homes – Capital Budget and Expenditure, as detailed in Annex B of the report, be noted

---

**Officer responsible for the report**  
David Milburn  
Acting Strategic Director for Community  
Ext 379

---

**Author of the report**  
Stuart Elliot  
Administration Officer  
Ext 341

---



**HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**5 NOVEMBER 2008**

Report of the Strategic Director of the Community  
**COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN – IMPLEMENTATION  
UPDATE – QUARTERS 1 & 2 - 2008/09**

**purpose of the report**

- 1 To provide Committee with a progress report about the achievements and outcomes of Housing related services arising from the department's Service Plan in the first 6 months of 2008/09.

**background**

- 2 The Community Department's Service Plan for 2008/09 was approved at Committee on 21 July 2008.
- 3 The Service Plan included an action plan, detailing actions to be implemented to achieve the work of the department during 2008/09.
- 4 As part of the department's performance management framework, there is a requirement to provide a quarterly update to Committee. Due to the department's performance reporting schedule and committee's meeting schedule, it was felt better to provide members with a 6 monthly update on progress made in implementing the Service Plan.
- 5 It is proposed that Committee will receive further updates on a quarterly basis.

**progress update**

- 6 The table in Appendix A of this report highlights the achievements and outcomes against actions for housing related services within the Action Plan in the first 6 months of 2008/09.

## RECOMMENDED

- 1 Committee notes the progress made towards implementing the Community Department Service Plan in the first and second quarters of 2008/09.

---

---

**Officer responsible for the report**

David Milburn  
Acting Strategic Director for the Community  
Ext 281

**Author of the report**

Alex Smith  
Policy & Performance Officer  
Ext 461

---

## APPENDIX A

No	Objective	Achievements and outcomes
33	We will assist in the production of a County Durham Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final document to be presented to Durham Housing Neighbourhoods Group (DHNG) in October 2008.</li> </ul>
34	Update the Housing Needs Survey (HNS).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Need Surveys complete and final report scheduled for 1 November 2008.</li> </ul>
35	We will continue to develop and fully implemented Landlord Accreditation scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A target of 52 additional accredited properties for the year has been set. At end of Quarter 2 a total of 19 additional properties have been accredited with a further 60 going through the accreditation process. The overall scheme is picking up good momentum.</li> </ul>
36	We will continue to reduce the number of empty properties throughout the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target of bringing a property a week back into use has been set. At the end of quarter 2, 27 properties had been brought back into use.</li> </ul>
37	We will develop an Affordable Housing Strategy in partnership with the LSP's Housing Thematic Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Need Surveys complete and report due in November 2008. Second phase will be to consult with the Planning section and to produce an affordable housing strategy in line with the LDF process.</li> </ul>
38	Commission private sector housing stock condition survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed, findings to be presented in report format.</li> </ul>
39	Progress DHS to vulnerable households in the Private Sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of quarter 2, 18 Major Repair Grants were delivered; those properties now meet the Decent homes Standard.</li> </ul>



No	Objective	Achievements and outcomes
40	We will continue to contribute to the County Durham Homeless Action Partnership (HAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submission to CLG for funding to develop an Advanced Housing Options Service across the county. Decision expected possibly in October 2008.</li> <li>• Sub Regional Homelessness Strategy being developed and will be submitted to the Housing LGR work stream.</li> <li>• Development of county-wide Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme is ongoing (See 41 below).</li> <li>• Service standards being developed, which would formalise homeless prevention in relation to loss of tenancies in the RSL sector</li> <li>• Development of a list of 'approved' providers of emergency housing given concerns about the inherent vulnerability of most 16/17 year olds</li> <li>• CLASP approved by committee and now in operation throughout County.</li> </ul>
41	We will help prevent homelessness by offering high quality housing advice and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear Valley individual strategy to be replaced by the County Durham Sub Regional strategy</li> <li>• Procedural framework for the Rent Deposit Scheme has been slightly delayed due to issues around the contract for the administering organisation. Scheme is now expected to be launched in November 2008.</li> </ul>
42	We will work with the ALMO to ensure all housing landlord functions are delivered effectively and that all housing stock is brought up to the Decent Homes Standard by 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per updates from Dale &amp; Valley Homes to Housing Sub-Committee that show progress is on target. Last report, on 22 September 2008, showed that the number of properties completed against the decent homes programme was ahead of target, customer satisfaction was rising, the number of defects was reducing and expenditure was also on target.</li> </ul>