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Robert Hope     Acting Chief Executive

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3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009

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 11<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2009** at **6.00 P.M.**

### AGENDA

Page No.

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To consider the Minutes of the last Meeting of the Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 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 12<sup>th</sup> November 2008 as a true record. 1 – 3
5. To consider the Report of the meeting of the Housing Sub Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009 as a true record. 4 – 5
6. To consider a Community Department Service Plan implementation update for quarter 3 of 2008/09. 6 - 9
7. 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, Mews, Sinclair, J Shuttleworth, Stonehouse, Mrs Todd\*, Ward and Zair.

\*Ex-officio, non-voting capacity

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



## HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE

11 FEBRUARY 2009

Report of the Housing Services Sub Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

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### MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Councillors Mrs Burn, Mrs Carrick Gale, and Ward

### ALSO PRESENT

J Bailey, Councillor Wear Valley District Council  
P Chaffer, Chief Executive, Dale and Valley Homes  
C Cowan, Capital Projects Manager  
S Elliot, Administration Officer  
M Farren, Community Support Manager  
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  
N Stonehouse, Councillor Wear Valley District Council

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### ELECTION OF CHAIR

Members considered the nomination of Chairman to the Housing Services Sub Committee.

Councillor Mrs Burn, seconded by Councillor Carrick, nominated Councillor Mrs Bolam and Councillor Gale, seconded by Councillor Ward, nominated Councillor Mrs Burn as Chairman of the Committee.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Mrs Bolam, be installed as Chairman of the Housing Services Sub Committee, be approved.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

### APPOINTMENT OF WINDOW AND DOOR REPLACEMENT CONTRACTOR – PROGRESS REPORT

Members considered an update regarding the progress on the appointment of a contractor for the replacement of windows and doors.

Councillor Stonehouse asked when would the contract be awarded and if Officers were confident that the progression of the programme would be kept on track. He also asked how the legal action was progressing. In response the Capital Projects Manager stated that he hoped to come to Committee early December with the details of the successful bid and that the programme would be on schedule. The Acting Strategic Director for Community stated that the legal process was a long one but he would get back to Members as soon as he had an update.

Councillor Mrs Burn showed concern over the doors and windows fitted to homes still required remedial work, especially in pensioners homes with winter approaching. In response Assistant Director Development – Dale and Valley Homes is working to repair all bad fitting doors and windows under warranty. The repair of windows still waiting replacement, are to be treated as normal repairs.

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

**RECOMMENDED**

1. that the progress of the Door and Windows programme, as detailed in the report, be noted.
2. that Members receive regular updates on the Customer Satisfaction, as detailed in the report, be approved.

**CAPITAL BUDGETS AND EXPENDITURES REPORT**

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

Councillor Gale asked why the Stock Condition Survey will be available to Members. In response the Assistant Director Development – Dale and Valley Homes stated that the survey was two weeks behind due to the number of no access to properties, but would hope to have the report ready by the next meeting.

Councillor Gale, seconded by Councillor Ward, moved the report.

**RECOMMENDED**

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

**DECENT HOMES PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Members considered an update to Dale and Valley Homes' decent homes performance.

Councillor Stonehouse asked why the targeted number of properties had dropped on the second quarter. In response the Assistant Director Development – Dale and Valley Homes stated that the drop in target came from certain properties needing more work than was initially thought, and it was hoped to catch up by the end of the third quarter.

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

**RECOMMENDED**

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

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**Officer responsible for the report**

David Milburn  
Acting Strategic Director for Community  
Ext 379

**Author of the report**

Stuart Elliot  
Administration Officer  
Ext 341

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## HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE

11 FEBRUARY 2009

Report of the Housing Services Sub Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

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### MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Councillors Mrs Bolam, Mrs Carrick Gale, and Ward

### APOLOGIES

Councillor Mrs Burn

### ALSO PRESENT

J Bailey, Councillor Wear Valley District Council  
S Elliot, Administration Officer  
M Farren, Community Support Manager  
D Milburn, Acting Strategic Director for Community  
D Sanders, Director of Resources, Dale and Valley Homes  
A Senior, Director Development, Dale and Valley Homes

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### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

### DECENT HOMES PERFORMANCE REPORT

Members considered an update to Dale and Valley Homes' decent homes performance.

Councillor Gale asked to see a more complete breakdown of price comparisons in the report. In response the Director Development, Dale and Valley Homes stated that price comparisons came from the fact that they approached similar social housing providers from around the North East rather than companies. To publish this information would require the consent of the individual companies. Costings took into consideration a like for like comparison to what Dale and Valley Homes provided residents.

Councillor Ward wished to thank Dale and Valley Homes for the progress on the Decent Homes Programme. He had received good reports from residents about the standard of work and the attitude of the contractors on the Watergate Estate. This was also the wish of Councillor Bailey who had received similar reports from residents.

Councillor Ward, 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.

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

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

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## **HOUSING SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**11 FEBRUARY 2009**

Report of the Strategic Director of the Community  
**COMMUNITY DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN – IMPLEMENTATION  
UPDATE – QUARTER 3 - 2008/09**

### **purpose of the report**

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 third quarter (October-December) of 2008/09.

### **background**

1. The Community Department's Service Plan for 2008/09 was approved at Committee on 21 July 2008.
2. The Service Plan included an action plan, detailing actions to be implemented to achieve the work of the department during 2008/09.
3. As part of the department's performance management framework, there is a requirement to provide a quarterly update to Committee. Committee last received a progress report on 5 November 2008, highlighting progress made over the period April-September 2008.

### **progress update**

4. The table in Annex A of this report highlights the achievements and outcomes against actions for housing related services within the Action Plan in the third quarter (October-December) of 2008/09.

### **RECOMMENDED**

1. Committee notes the progress made towards implementing the Community Department Service Plan in the third quarter (October – December) of 2008/09.

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|---|------------------------------|
| <b>Officer responsible for the report</b>   | <b>Author of the report</b>  |
| David Milburn                               | Alex Smith                   |
| Acting Strategic Director for the Community | Policy & Performance Officer |
| Ext 281                                     | Ext 461                      |

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## ANNEX 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>• Document completed.</li> </ul>  |
| 34 | Update the Housing Needs Survey (HNS).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final report completed and reported to Committee in December 2008.</li> </ul>   |
| 35 | We will continue to develop and fully implemented Landlord Accreditation scheme.                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landlord Accreditation scheme continues to be expanded throughout the district. A target of 52 additional accredited properties for the year has been set. By the end of Quarter 3, a total of 41 properties have been accredited.</li> </ul> |
| 36 | We will continue to reduce the number of empty properties throughout the district                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An ambitious target of bringing a property a week back into use has been set. By the end of Quarter 3, a total of 44 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>• Development of an affordable housing strategy is ongoing, in line with the LDF process.</li> </ul>  |
| 38 | Commission private sector housing stock condition survey  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed and presented to Housing Committee</li> </ul>   |
| 39 | Progress DHS to vulnerable households in the Private Sector.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme progressing, budget fully committed. By the end of Quarter 3, 26 private sector properties have been brought up to the Decent Homes Standard, improving living conditions to the most vulnerable of our society.</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 was accepted; negotiations are ongoing with CLG to develop an implementation action plan.</li> <li>• Sub Regional Homelessness Strategy has been renamed as the County Durham Homelessness Strategy; will be submitted to unitary members in February 2009 for approval.</li> <li>• Housing and Returning Prisoners (HARP) Protocol to be re-launched in 2009</li> <li>• Negotiations ongoing to harmonise the Common Assessment framework and the joint protocol for 16-17 year olds</li> <li>• Officer attending Team around the child, which is a new national initiative, looking to focus services on children.</li> <li>• Homesafe launched in November 2008, which is a holistic floating support service and will be the main admin body for the proposed Rent Deposit Scheme. The Rent Deposit Scheme was approved in December 2008 and Supporting People are leading on developing SLAs.</li> <li>• To date, 2 formal Care Leavers Accommodation and Support Protocol (CLASP) panels have met; system is working well.</li> </ul> |
| 41 | We will help prevent homelessness by offering high quality housing advice and support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of Quarter 3, Overall customer satisfaction with the service is 84%</li> <li>• By the end of Quarter 3, 99% of cases were seen within 3 working days and 99% of cases were decided within the 33 working days target</li> </ul>   |

| No | Objective   | Achievements and outcomes   |
|----|---|---|
| 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>• Mock inspection completed in December 2008; scored the service as 2 star, good, with promising prospects for improvement; individual services were rated as:<br/>Resident Involvement; Income Management – Strong / Good<br/>Access and Customer Care; Gas; Aids and Adaptations; Estate Management; Allocations and Lettings; Supported Housing – Good<br/>Responsive Repairs; Void Repairs; Capital Investment; Tenancy Management; VFM – Fair / Good<br/>Diversity – Fair</li> <li>• By end of December 2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 40% of indicators are on or exceeding target; 38% are performing within 10% of target and 20% are more than 10% off target</li> <li>- Decent Homes programme made 488 properties decent against a target of 458</li> <li>- Dale &amp; Valley Homes rated as top performing ALMO for rent arrears</li> <li>- Improvements in response times for emergency and routine repairs</li> <li>- The amount of repairs classed as emergency is increasing (YTD 19.6% against a target of 9.5%) and therefore, average cost of responsive repairs is rising</li> <li>- Time taken to re-let homes is increasing (YTD 29.8 days against a target of 24).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |