

CESTRIA COMMUNITY HOUSING ASSOCIATION
REPORT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10TH September 2008.

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to:

1. The progress Cestria has made in delivering Offer Document Promises
2. The progress Cestria has made in delivering on the Staff Pledge.
3. General performance update from Cestria covering the whole range of service issues, including comparative information with other housing associations.
4. How Cestria plans to develop its community role.
5. What plans Cestria has and the timetable for the improvement programme.

2. Offer Document Promises

2.1 The Offer Document contained a total of 50 promises (although for the purpose of this exercise some have been combined together giving a total of 48 promises) that were developed jointly by the Council and Cestria in the pre-transfer period. These promises were the basis on which tenants voted for the transfer. Cestria has 5 years to deliver on all the promises.

2.2 The table set out below summarises the progress made on delivering Offer Document promises. The detail on each promise is set out at Appendix I at the rear of this report.

2.3 The Housing Corporation (the body that regulates all housing associations) in March 2007 issued a Technical Note setting out how it will monitor the delivery of Offer Document promises to tenants by Stock Transfer Associations.

2.4 The monitoring process is set around 6 different themes as set out below:

1. The delivery of home improvements.
2. Service improvements.
3. Affordable rents.
4. Tenant participation in decision making.
5. Regeneration.






6. Sustainable communities, including crime prevention and anti social behaviour.

2.5 The Board has decided that Cestria will follow the monitoring arrangements set out in the Technical Note from the Housing Corporation.

2.6 The monitoring framework is in 2 parts:

1. A high level "traffic light" approach.
2. The detailed monitoring report which is set out at Appendix I at the rear of this report.

Table 1 - Offer Document Promises




| Description | Colour Code | Theme 1 | Theme 2 | Theme 3 | Theme 4 | Theme 5 | Theme 6 | Total | Percent |
|------------------------|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| Number of Promises | | 14 | 10 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 48 | 100% |
| Number Complete |  | 0 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 29% |
| Number on Target |  | 7 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 25 | 52% |
| Number at Risk |  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Number Failed |  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Number not yet started |  | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 19% |

2.7 With 29% of Offer Documents delivered in the first 6 months and a further 52% on target for delivery this can be regarded as a key success.

3. Staff Pledge

3.1 Cestria and the Council jointly developed a Staff Pledge in the pre-transfer period. The table below sets out the summary of achievements to date with details contained at Appendix 2.

Table2 - Staff Pledge Update

| Number of promises | Number complete  | Number on Target  | Number Failed  |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| 22 | 17 | 5 | 0 |
| 100% | 77.2% | 22.8% | 0% |

3.2 The only items remaining to be delivered include:

1. The Association agreed to provide salary increases in line with national NJC Agreements. As there is a trade dispute with local authority employers no salary award has been made for 2008. Once the dispute has been settled the agreed award will be made.
2. The Association would sign Trade Union Recognition Agreement. Discussions are progressing on the Agreement.
3. The Association would fund appropriate levels of training and development. A Development and Learning Assessment is currently being carried out and an appropriate training plan for staff will be drawn up later in the year.
4. The Association would provide a non-contributory health care scheme. A draft scheme has been approved by the Board and is currently out to consultation.

4. General Performance of Cestria

4.1 On transfer, Cestria Community Housing moved from a local authority regulatory framework of Best Value performance indicators to the housing association sector which requires a broader range of measures to monitor the performance of the organisation.

4.2 Cestria is in the process of developing a Balanced Score Card of performance indicators that cover a total of 116 separate indicators and 5 different aspects as follows:

1. Regulatory – it is a requirement of the Housing Corporation that these indicators are collected and reported on. These are called key Performance Indicators and can be used to compare the performance of Cestria with other housing associations. Data systems are in place to report on all key performance indicators.

There are a total of 20 Key Performance Indicators.

5. Customer satisfaction. The Association will collect a combination of strategic satisfaction information through an annual tenant survey and operational satisfaction information at the point of service delivery. The majority of these data systems are not yet in place. The Association will be carrying out its first annual tenant survey later this year. All systems to capture operational tenant satisfaction information will be in place from April 2009.

It is proposed that there will be a total of 36 indicators to measure customer satisfaction across every service area.

6. Finance. This suite of indicators will measure how financially robust the Association is and whether value for money is being achieved. Systems are in place to report on all finance performance indicators.

There are a total of 19 indicators on efficiency and value for money.

7. Internal Business. These indicators will measure how efficient and effective service delivery is. Systems are in place to report on all internal business indicators.

There are a total of 29 indicators to measure efficiency and effectiveness.

8. Innovation and Learning. These indicators will attempt to measure the extent to which the organisation is able to innovate and learn from past experience and others.

There will be a total of 12 indicators to measure innovation and learning.

- 4.2 To date systems are in place to record and report on only 88 of these indicators. This is because some of the indicators can only be reported on an annual basis at year end and some indicators can only be reported after the completion of the annual tenant survey, which is scheduled for the turn of the year.

Complaints

- 4.3 Cestria has a formal complaints policy that was approved by the Board in the pre-transfer period. The policy is similar to the one used by the Council.

- 4.4 Cestria has dealt with 132 complaints since transfer as set out in Table 3 overleaf. In the first few months after transfer complaint levels were high due to the impact of the local government elections. The organisation struggled to deal with such a high complaint work load at the same time as it was trying to move offices but complaint levels have settled down and in July and August 2008 all complaints were dealt with in target times.

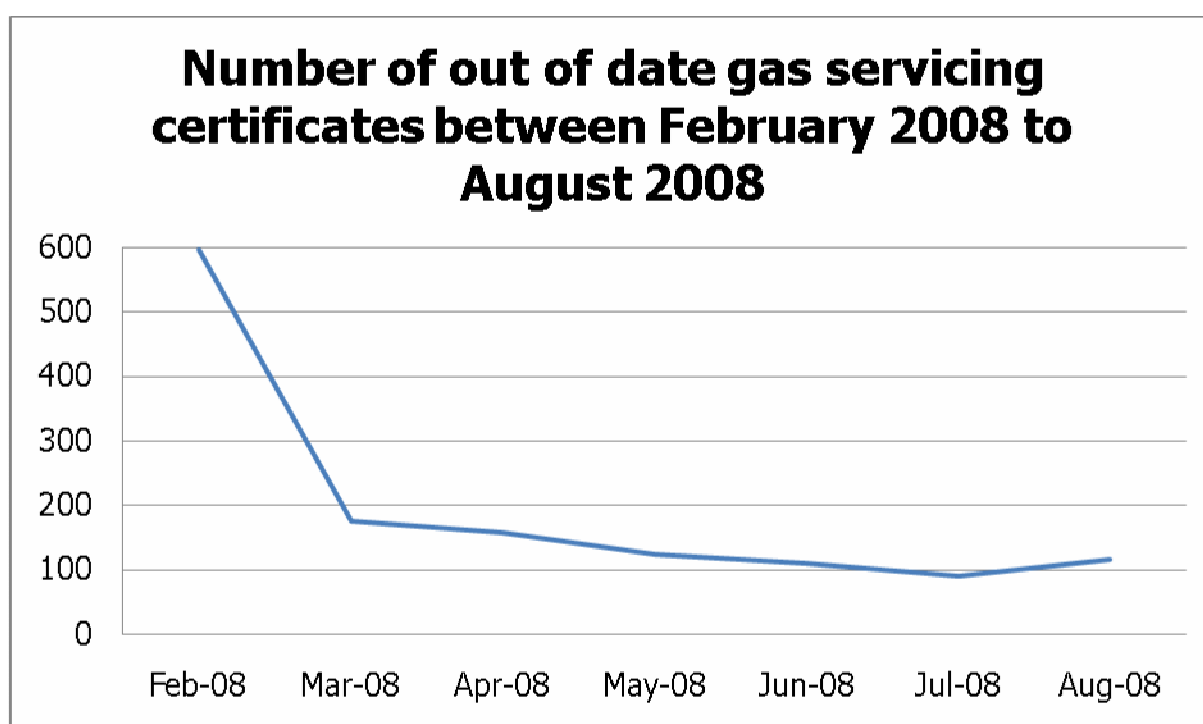
Table 3 - Complaints Profile

| Months | Board Member | | Councillor | | Member of Public | | MP | | Police | | Tenant | | Grand Total | |
|-------------|--------------|---------|------------|---------|------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| February | | 0% | | 0% | | 0% | 11 | 69% | | 0% | 5 | 31% | | 16 |
| March | | 0% | 8 | 27% | 2 | 7% | 14 | 47% | | 0% | 6 | 20% | | 30 |
| April | 5 | 12% | 13 | 31% | 2 | 5% | 8 | 19% | | 0% | 14 | 33% | | 42 |
| May | | 0% | 1 | 6% | 2 | 13% | 7 | 44% | 1 | 6% | 5 | 31% | | 16 |
| June | | 0% | | 0% | 1 | 13% | 3 | 38% | | 0% | 4 | 50% | | 8 |
| July | | 0% | | 0% | | 0% | 6 | 55% | | 0% | 6 | 55% | | 12 |
| August | | 0% | | 0% | 1 | 13% | 5 | 63% | | 0% | 2 | 25% | | 8 |
| Grand Total | 5 | 4% | 22 | 17% | 8 | 6% | 54 | 41% | 1 | 1% | 42 | 32% | | 132 |

Gas Servicing

- 4.4 On transfer there were 597 dwellings without a valid gas safety certificate. For a further 400 properties the gas safety certificate expired before the 31st March 2008. This presented Cestria with a significant early operational risk.
- 4.5 The Board had in the pre transfer period agreed to bring this work back in house due to the poor performance of the Council's external contractor. The additional work load presented the in-house team with a considerable early challenge.
- 4.6 This work is now being undertaken to a satisfactory standard by the in house team as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1
Gas Safety Profile



ICT

- 4.7 The organisation has invested heavily in ICT hardware and software in order to maximise operational efficiency. This has involved:
1. A new Finance system.
 2. A new Personnel system.
 3. A new Performance Management system.
 4. A new Knowledge Management system.
 5. A new web site.
 6. A new intranet.
 7. New PC's for all staff.

8. The introduction of mobile working technology for Building Services, Housing Management, Income Management and Cestria Care.
9. New software systems.

Building Services

4.8 The Building Services Team is performing well. The average time taken to process repair requests is shown below. These are well below the target times Cestria promised to deliver in the Offer Document. As a result complaint levels about Building Services have reduced to about 1 per month.

- ✦ Emergency repairs (0.6 days)
- ✦ Urgent repairs (1.2 days)
- ✦ Routine repairs (4.8 days)

4.9 Building Services are now undertaking all adaptation work for the Association.

4.10 Building Services are now undertaking all gas servicing for the Association.

4.11 From January 2009 Building Services will deliver an Estate Caretaker service for the new Association including grounds maintenance.

Adaptations

4.12 Since transfer Cestria has:

1. Completed 57 major adaptations.
2. Completed 131 minor adaptations.
3. Appointed an Occupational Therapist to help with adaptation assessments.

Housing Management

4.13 Since transfer Cestria has:

1. Opened a One Stop Shop
2. Visited all tenants to deliver a new Tenancy Agreement and tenant handbook
- 3 carried out 42 estate inspections
4. sent out 497 garden letters requiring the tenants to comply with their Tenancy Agreement
5. Referred 145 owner occupier issues to the Chester-le-Street District Council.
6. referred 180 issues to Durham County Council

7. Appointed Tenant Inspectors to monitor the grounds maintenance service.
8. Removed 41 incidents of graffiti.

Cestria Care

4.14 The Care Line service has been re-launched as Cestria Care. The service has recently been informed by the Supporting People Team that it is currently the highest performing service in the county (this followed an independent review of all providers in the County).

4.15 Cestria Care has in the first quarter:

1. Dealt with 26,011 alarm or other calls to Cestria Care
2. Supported 125 Cestria Care clients who have fallen.
3. Responded to 74 smoke detector alerts
4. Responded to 220 out of hours calls
5. Made 157 referrals to GP's on behalf of Cestria care clients.
6. Called the ambulance for 197 Cestria Care clients
7. Wished 750 tenants a "Happy Birthday".
8. 80 Cestria care clients now using Telecare
9. 1,299 support plans updated and in place.
10. 5,299 equipment checks
11. 8,051 routine client visits made.

4.16 Cestria Care about to market its services across the whole of the County area.

Energy Saving Initiative

4.17 Cestria has undertake insulation works at all its sheltered courts which we estimated will save each tenant £40 per year in heating bills.

4.18 Cestria has funded the installation of a new gas main at Nettlesworth that will see homes in that area being given the choice to convert to gas central heating. We estimate this will reduce heating costs for tenants by £415 per annum and reduce CO2 emissions by 341 tonnes per year.

Allocations

- 4.19 The Housing Register (people on the waiting list) has increased from 1,971 to 2,348 at the end of August 2008 as shown in Table 4 below (a 19% increase).

**Table 4
Housing Register Profile**

| Description | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | July |
|---------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Main List | 1409 | 1462 | 1504 | 1519 | 1603 | 1714 |
| Pensioner List | 531 | 540 | 545 | 555 | 576 | 613 |
| Transfer List | 106 | 106 | 106 | 106 | 106 | 108 |
| Total | 1971 | 2033 | 2080 | 2101 | 2205 | 2348 |
| Percentage Increase | | 3% | 2% | 1% | 5% | 6% |

- 4.20 The Association has let 136 dwellings since transfer.
- 4.21 The Board has undertaken a formal review of the Allocations process and has concluded that all allocations are in accordance with the Joint Allocation Policy.

Homelessness

- 4.22 The Association has interviewed a total of 125 cases under the homeless legislation on behalf of the Council as set out in Table 5 below. The outcomes and activity levels are similar to those achieved by the Council.

Table 5 - Outcomes of Decision making

| Month | Referrals | Not Eligible | Not Homeless | Not Priority | Intentional Homeless | Accepted | Percent Accepted |
|----------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|----------|------------------|
| February | 17 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 24% |
| March | 13 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 38% |
| April | 20 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 20% |
| May | 28 | 0 | 1 | 13 | 4 | 8 | 29% |
| June | 20 | 0 | 10 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 35% |
| July | 16 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0% |
| August | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 125 | 6 | 24 | 32 | 7 | 28 | 22% |

Table 6 - Comparative Performance (April to June)

| Month | Chester-le-Street (First Quarter 2007) | | | Cestria 9 First Quarter 2008) | | |
|-------|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Number of Applications Received | Number of Applications Accepted | Percent of Applications Accepted | Number of Applications Received | Number of Applications Accepted | Percent of Applications Accepted |
| April | 19 | 6 | 32% | 20 | 4 | 20% |
| May | 21 | 5 | 24% | 28 | 8 | 29% |
| June | 31 | 8 | 26% | 20 | 7 | 35% |
| Total | 71 | 19 | 27% | 68 | 19 | 28% |

5. Delivery on Action Plans

5.1 Every team in Cestria has developed a Team Action Plan made up of the following actions:

1. Actions to help the association meet compliance with the regulatory code. All housing associations must comply with a regulatory code, which is produced by the Housing Corporation. The regulatory Code covers matters relating to:
 - i. Governance
 - ii. Management
 - iii. Viability

During the first 12 to 18 months of operation all new housing associations are continually assessed against the regulatory code. At the end of that period the association will be provided with a set of green amber or red traffic lights. Those associations not achieving a full set of green lights are placed into intervention.

A significant number of new associations are placed into intervention during the first 18 months.

2. Actions to ensure that Cestria complies with the various circulars produced by the housing association which set down service standards.
3. Actions to ensure that all Offer Document promises are kept.
4. Actions to ensure that all Staff Pledges are met.
5. Actions to ensure that the corporate priorities set by the Board in the Corporate Plan are met. The Board has not agreed its first corporate plan as yet – this is likely to be published later in the year.

5.2a During the first quarter of 2008/2009 the Association set itself a total of 173 actions to complete. It completed or started 96% of all planned actions. Only 7 actions were not started or completed on time.

Table 7 - Quarter 1 Action Plan Profile

| Description | Number | Percent |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Actions to Complete | 173 | |
| Number Completed | 105 | 61% |
| Number In Progress But Not Completed | 61 | 35% |
| Number Outstanding | 7 | 4% |

6. How Cestria Plans to Develop Its Community Role

6.1 In the first year Cestria recognised that it would take time to:

1. Formally establish the new Association.
2. Move into new premises.
3. Recruit additional staff (23 new staff recruited to date).
4. Make a positive start to deliver on Offer Document Promises.

6.2 Cestria recognised these priorities would limit, in the first instance, the wider community activities that the organisation could engage with as effort would by necessity have to be directed to consultation and engagement around the capital programme..

6.3 Cestria was also already aware of the proposed local government re-organisation and wanted to work positively with the new county unitary in agreeing how it could contribute to the development of sustainable communities in the longer term. Cestria was aware of how disruptive the re-organisation of local government was likely to be and how much officer and elected member time would be taken up in just setting up the new council. Therefore we understood that any longer term initiatives would need to be 'car parked' until such time as the new council had been fully established.

6.4 Cestria was also acutely aware of the emerging worklessness agenda at national levels and wanted to play its full part once the policy had been fully thought through. We wanted to take our time and see what was working well in other areas before deciding how we could develop any initiatives locally.

6.5 Taking all of the above into account the Association still wanted to undertake some innovative community focused activity during its first year of operation. This has taken the form of a partnership initiative with Sunderland AFC Foundation linked to:

1. Promoting active citizenship.
2. Promoting family learning.

6.6 The initiative is centred in the Sacriston and Chester West areas.

6.7 Cestria will want to positively engage with the new county council, parish councils, and relevant partners in supporting the development of sustainable communities in Chester-le-Street.

6.8 Cestria will want to be active member in support of any Area Partnership the new county may establish.

6.9 We already have 2 communal rooms and a further 7 communal rooms will be transferring to Cestria shortly. We will be carrying out detailed consultation with local communities on the potential future use and management of these communal rooms.

7. What Plans Cestria Has and the Timetable for the Improvement Programme

7.1 In the pre-ballot period the Board undertook detailed consultation with tenants on how the capital programme should be procured. The results of that consultation showed that:

1. Tenants did not want whole modernisations. They had visited other areas and seen the disruption that whole house modernisations can cause and were wholly opposed to this approach.

This resulted in the development of a component replacement programme where individual components were replaced one at a time (more or less). Tenants wanted priority to be given to windows and doors and wanted all windows and doors to be replaced in the first 2 years. Tenants also said they wanted their heating systems upgrading at the same time so that they would get the benefit of lower heating costs.

2. Tenants wanted fair system of deciding who goes first. They accepted that not everyone could be in Year 1 of the programme but they wanted the worst doing first if at all possible.

7.2 Given that only 1 in 4 houses had been surveyed in the pre transfer period, as part of the stock transfer programme, the Board had to allow time for the carrying of detailed pre-works surveys before some parts of the improvement programme could be tendered.

7.3 The programme that was developed by the Board and supported and approved by tenants is set out below:

Table 8 - Improvement Programme

| Description | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
| Door and Window Programme | | | | | | |
| Heating Replacement Programme | | | | | | |
| Kitchen and Bathroom Replacement Programme | | | | | | |
| External Fabric Upgrades | | | | | | |
| Environmental Programme | | | | | | |

7.4 The Board decided that Building Services would not be allocated any works from the improvement programme in the first instance and that all works would be subject to an EU tendering exercise. Building Services will be undertaking a programme of Planned maintenance and a report is likely to go to the Board in October 2008 approving that programme.

7.5 Following an EU tendering exercise local companies have been appointed to undertake the UPVC Door and Window Replacement Programme (SEKURA) and the Heating Replacement Programme (Sunters).

- 7.6 Both programmes commenced within the first month after transfer and are on target to deliver within the contract periods, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 overleaf.
- 7.7 To date 1,029 properties have already been improved since the transfer took place.
- 7.8 Tenders are out for the delivery of the kitchen and bathroom replacement programme and contractors are due to commence on site in January 2009. Out of 7 contractors invited to tender, 3 are local companies. Detailed pre works surveys of all these homes have been carried out in preparation for the commencement of works
- 7.9 Works will commence on upgrading the external fabric of the houses in January 2010. Pre works surveys will be carried out during 2009 to allow this work to be properly programmed.
- 7.10 Works will also commence on the environmental improvements to estates in January 2010. This will allow plenty of time for consultation with tenants. Pre works surveys will be carried out during 2009 to allow this work to be properly programmed.

Figure 2 - Door and Window Replacement Programme

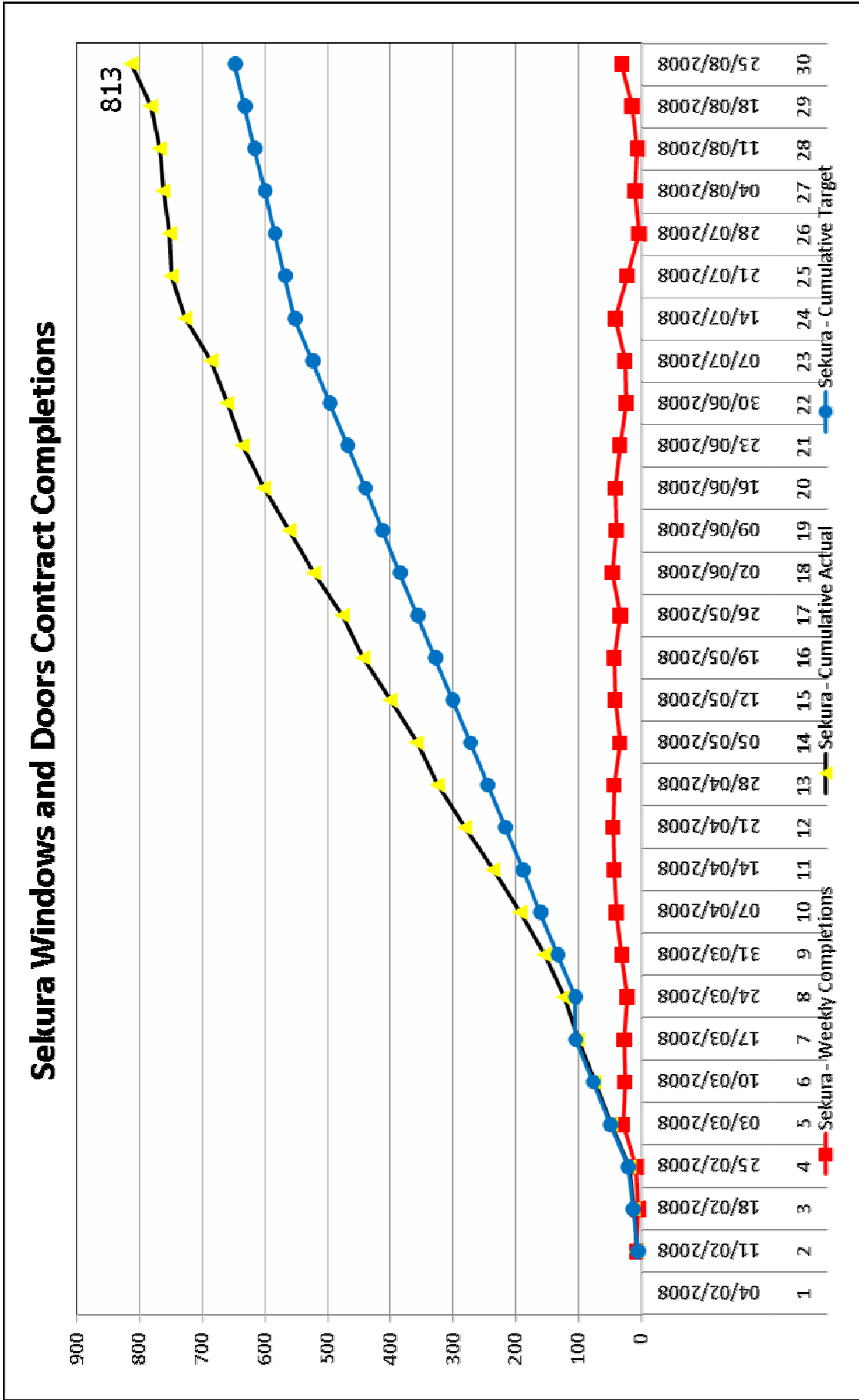
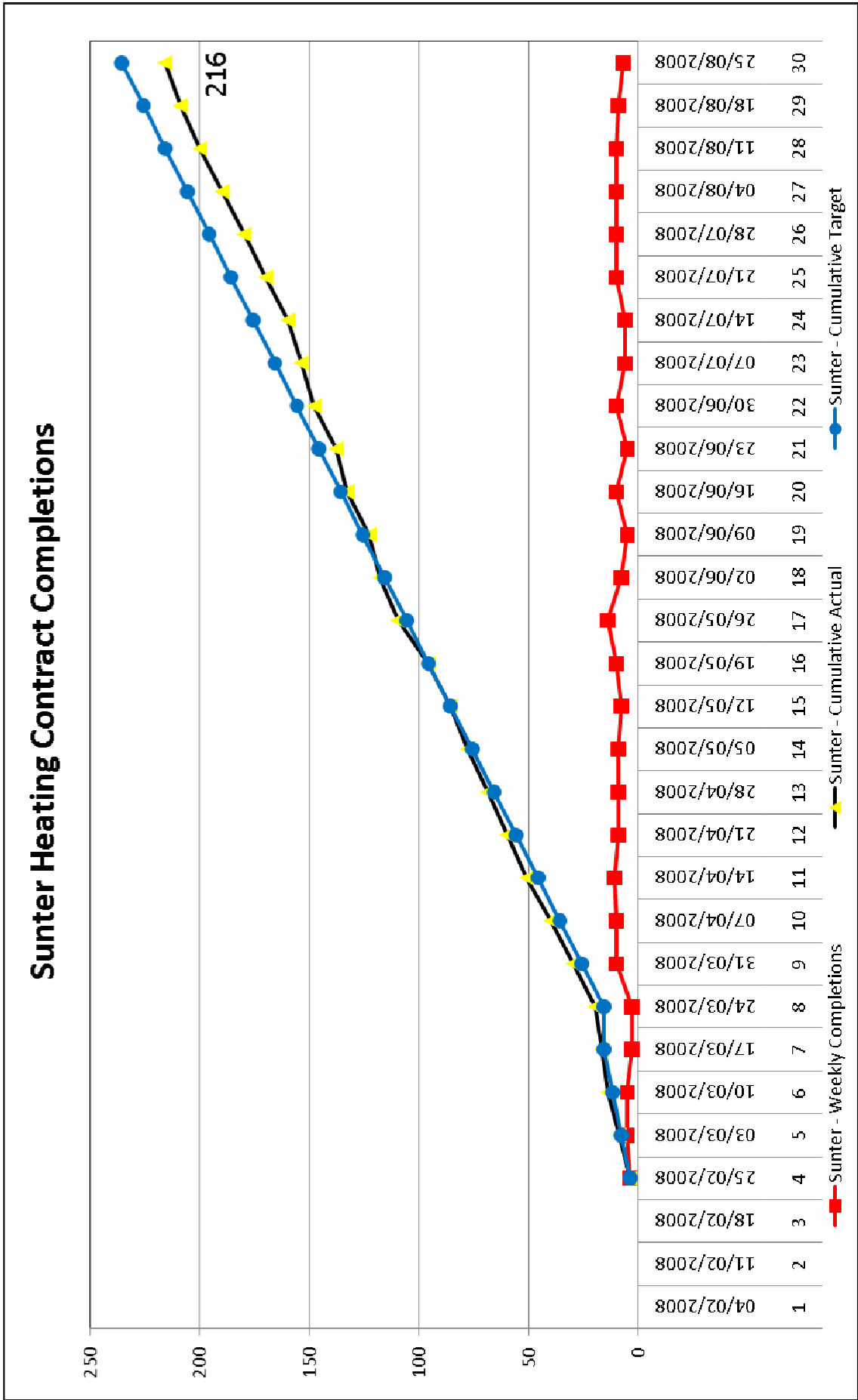


Figure 3 - Heating Replacement Programme










Appendix 1 Monitoring of Offer Document Promises







Theme 1 Home Improvements

| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|----------------|---|---|--------|
| 1 | A £67 million improvement programme in the first 5 years following transfer. | | ● |
| 2 | New UPVC door and window programme in first 5 years for approximately 3,400 homes. | . | ● |
| 3 | New kitchens and upgraded bathrooms for approximately 1,800 | Due to commence in January 2009 | ● |
| 4 | Fuel efficient central heating with an insulation package for approximately 3,000 homes | | ● |
| 5 | Rewiring or electrical upgrades to approximately 2,000 homes | Some properties re-wired as part of the Heating Replacement Programme. Main re-wiring programme due to commence as part of the Kitchen and Bathroom Replacement programme in January 2009 | ● |
| 6 | Re-roofing work to approximately 1,000 homes | Due to commence in January 2010 | ● |
| 7 | Estate environmental treatment such as boundary walls and fencing for approximately 1,500 homes | Due to commence in January 2010 | ● |





Theme 1 (continued)

| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| 8 | Off street car parking for approximately 800 homes | Due to commence January 2010 |  |
| 9 | Extensive package of security measures for sheltered schemes including new / upgraded communal door entry schemes and security locks and improved lighting installed as part of the modernisation programme. | Due to commence in January 2010 |  |
| 10 | Programme of security work and new double glazed windows where required at the sheltered schemes. | UPVC windows to be replaced before march 2010 |  |
| 11 | Programme of modernisation and improvement to common rooms and communal areas at sheltered schemes. | Only 2 communal rooms transferred to Cestria to date. Working Group established to carry out option appraisal process on all the communal rooms |  |
| 12 | New digital TV reception for sheltered schemes to enable tenants to have a wider choice of TV channels. | No progress |  |
| 13 | To provide secure storage and battery re-charging at sheltered units for mobility vehicles. | Storage and charging facilities installed in No 2 of the sheltered courts. |  |
| 14 | During the modernisation programme offer support to tenants where needed including the provision of temporary accommodation. | On going |  |






Theme 2 Service Improvements

| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|----------------|---|---|---|
| 15 | Convenient local offices situated in the district. | Move to new offices at Bowes 6 th May 2008 Open One Stop Shop |  |
| 16 | Introduce a freephone repair line service | In place from 6 th May 2008 |  |
| 17 | £7 million spent in responsive maintenance in the first 5 years. | On track to deliver this level of expenditure |  |
| 18 | Improving response times for responding to repair requests and offering appointments for all non urgent repairs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Emergency repairs – attended to within 2 hours and made safe within 24 hours ✦ Urgent repairs – attended and completed within 3 to 5 working days ✦ Non Urgent Repairs – completed within 25 days | Targets achieved during Quarter 1 |  |
| 19 | Introduction of a painting programme | No progress |  |
| 20 | Employment of an Occupational Therapist | An Occupational Therapist has been appointed |  |







Theme 2 (continued)



| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| 21 | Provision of a Handy Person Service | Commenced July 2008 |  |
| 22 | More priority to improving services for older people such as gardening and home decorating. | Consultations underway on provision of new gardening service. |  |
| 23 | Clear Customer Care and Complaints procedure and an officer responsible for making sure all comments and complaints are speedily dealt with. | Customer Care and Complaints Policy adopted by the Board Customer Services Manager appointed |  |
| 24 | Cestria to take over current Home Contents Insurance scheme. | Transferred as part of Transfer Agreement |  |

Theme 3 Affordable Rents




| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| 25 | Rent increases in line with Government rent re-structuring formula. | Being implemented |  |
| 26 | New tenants after transfer to pay target rent. | Implemented |  |
| 27 | Annual increase on service charges over next 7 years not to increase £1 a week and detailed breakdown of service charges to be provided. | Service charge increase for 2008/2009 in line with Association's Policy |  |
| 28 | Payment of water rates with rent if Water Company agrees. | Implemented |  |
| 29 | Same rent payment methods as with the Council. | Tenants can use the same payment methods that were available when they were a Council tenant. |  |

Theme 4 Tenant involvement in decision making








| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|
| 30 | 5 Tenant Board Members selected following open advert and interviews. | 5 Tenant Board Members in place |  |
| 31 | Increase staffing and support for tenant engagement including looking to provide Community Development Officers to work alongside young people and residents. | Community Development Team established. Community development work underway through Sunderland AFC Foundation. |  |
| 32 | Development of a comprehensive Customer Involvement Strategy, including a revised Tenant Participation Compact and support for Estate Agreements. | Discussions underway with Tenants Reference Group |  |
| 33 | Work with tenant representatives to develop new and better ways of involving tenants in developing the service. | The Cestria Reference Group meets monthly and are regularly consulted upon Cestria's services. Up to 90 tenants are active through this group |  |
| 34 | Actively support local Tenants and Residents Groups including a budget for such support. | Discussions underway with Tenants Reference Group. All Resident Associations written to and some visited |  |
| 35 | Support for a formal Tenants Panel and work with tenant and residents groups to ensure panel is representative of tenants as a whole. | The Cestria Reference Group has been established and to date we have 90 tenants as members. |  |

| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|-----------------------|--|--|---|
| 36 | Programme of Estate Inspections with resident representatives. | Estate Walkabout programme published |  |
| 37 | Encourage Tenants' and Residents' Groups to become involved in monitoring performance. | Tenant Inspectors appointed for the Grounds Maintenance Service. |  |

Theme 5 Regeneration

| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| 38 | Using the £67m modernisation programme to create local job opportunities and boost the local economy. | 2 local companies appointed to undertake the Heating Replacement Programme and UPVC Door and Window Replacement programme |  |
| 39 | Creation of training placements and apprenticeships through Building Services | We have one apprentice who has just completed his first year in Building Services About to advertise for 2 more apprentices 1 for Building Services and 1 for Grounds maintenance |  |
| 40 | Provision of new homes following the completion of the major modernisation programme. | No Progress. |  |








Theme 6 Sustainable Communities









| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| 41 | Develop partnership working to support communities and tackle problems on estates. | Community Development Initiative to be launched with Sunderland Foundation on 23 rd May 2008. |  |
| 42 | Employment of a specialist Benefits Advisor. | All staff in the Income management Team trained on Welfare Benefits Advice. |  |
| 43 | Provision of a Community Caretaker Service and speedy action to deal with graffiti, dumping, litter etc. | Community Caretaker Service due to be in place in January 2009 |  |
| 44 | Dedicated enforcement team to deal with ASB and full use of powers available. | Two full time Anti-Social Behaviour Officers are in post and are utilizing the new powers available to tackle and resolve anti social behaviour. |  |
| 45 | £1.5 million set aside for adaptations in first 5 years to enable elderly and disabled people to remain in their own homes including provision of handrails to steps where they are needed. | Estimated spend of £500,000 on adaptations in 2008/2009 |  |
| 46 | Fund a Tenants Resource Centre and support a Sheltered Users Forum. | The Tenant Reference Group being consulted on Tenants Resource centre |  |
| 47 | Working in partnership with Social Care and Health to deliver assistance to elderly and vulnerable households. | Telecare Pilot being undertaken in conjunction with Supporting People. |  |

| PROMISE NUMBER | NATURE OF WORK | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|-----------------------|--|--|---------------|
| 48 | Continuation of Careline community alarm service and provision of a wide range of support to ensure individual independence can be maintained. | We are continuing to offer this service to private tenants. The Customer Care Manager is developing a marketing strategy to expand this service. | ● |




Appendix 2

Staff Pledge Update

| NO | PROMISE | DESCRIPTION OF PROMISE | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|----|--------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1. | Terms and Conditions | Contractual terms and conditions to be protected on transfer | There have been no changes, other than voluntary, to the terms of conditions of those staff that have transferred. Transferring employees were asked to complete a schedule of their terms and conditions to ensure we could meet this promise |  |
| 2. | Pensions | Pension arrangements to remain the same – Cestria to apply for admitted body status | Cestria successfully gained admitted body status to the Local Government Pension Scheme and pension deductions have continued for those employees who are members |  |
| 3. | Salary | Salary to be paid in the same way and on the same day | The payroll has been outsourced to an external company and pay has been processed to the same timescales. A small number of staff are paid weekly and this has continued, although consultation will begin shortly to discuss moving them to monthly pay. As part of the Single Status agreement, it is likely this would have happened had they remained with the Council. |  |
| 4. | Salary | Pay , including increases, to remain in line with National Joint Council pay scales and negotiations | Incremental progression has remained the same and staff have received increments as they would have done with the Council. The pay award has not yet been implemented this year as it is still been negotiated by the NJC and trade unions. |  |
| 5. | Continuity of employment | Service with Chester-le-Street Council to be counted as continuous | This is covered by TUPE Regulations and continuous start dates are recorded on the HR system. |  |
| 6. | Trade Union Recognition | Trade Unions would be recognised in the same way and a recognition agreement would be developed | The same trade unions are recognised by Cestria. A recognition agreement has been drafted and is being considered at regional level |  |
| 7. | Working Hours | Working hours to remain the same | There have no changes to working hours unless these have been requested by individuals. The flexible working hours scheme remains in place. |  |

| NO | PROMISE | DESCRIPTION OF PROMISE | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|-----|--------------------------|--|---|---|
| 8. | Annual Leave | Annual leave entitlement to remain the same | Annual leave entitlement remain the same. Extra days awarded for service are now calculated annually, meaning staff no longer have to work the full five years to receive this benefit. This was implemented following a suggestion made in the staff survey. |  |
| 9. | Sick pay | Occupational sick pay to remain the same | This entitlement has remained the same. |  |
| 10. | Car allowances | Car allowance to remain the same | Car allowances have remained in line with the rates determined by the National Joint Council |  |
| 11. | Notice period | Contractual notice periods to remain the same | Contractual notice periods have not changed. |  |
| 12. | Training and Development | Employee's to have annual appraisal and training budget in the region of £200 per employee | Staff Appraisal scheme not yet developed. Likely to be fully implemented by April 2009. Training budget approved in line with Staff Pledge. Learning and Development programme in course of development. |  |
| 13. | Craft Workers Agreement | Craft workers agreement to be protected | There have no changes to the Craft Workers Agreement. |  |
| 14. | TUPE Protocol | Formal protocol to be developed to assist with transfer | The TUPE protocol was developed and agreed by the Board and the Council. The protocol was followed by both organizations, ensuring the transfer of staff went smoothly. |  |
| 15. | Contractual Policies | All contractual policies to remain broadly the same | Contractual policies have remained broadly the same and have been approved by the Board. |  |

| NO | PROMISE | DESCRIPTION OF PROMISE | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|-----------|--------------------------|--|--|---------------|
| 16. | Non Contractual Policies | Range of policies to be developed for consideration by the Board | The Board has already approved several non-contractual policies and the remainder are included on future forward plans | ● |
| 17. | Accommodation | High quality offices within the District that meet the needs of disabled people, free car parking to be provided, non-smoking offices, appropriate desks, good quality seating, adequate storage, heating and lighting, kitchen and rest room to be provided | The move to Bowes Offices was completed successfully and staff have commented on how well it was managed. There are ample car parking spaces and disabled access to public areas. Staff were involved in choosing the furniture and additional storage has been ordered where required. There are several small kitchen areas and a large canteen. | ● |
| 18. | Health and Safety | Free uniforms, good quality PPE, free eye tests, tea and coffee making facilities, showers, lockers, loan worker safety arrangements, trained first aiders | Uniforms have been provided, the provision of free eye sight tests is being investigated and there are ample facilities to make tea and coffee. Showers are available and lockers will be provided in the new stores. A health and safety audit has been completed and action plans have been developed to address the issues including lone working. Four first aiders have been trained and there are plans to train further volunteers | ● |
| 19. | IT Systems | Good quality systems, work station assessments, laptops and other portable computer devices to be provided | Staff have complimented the quality of the IT equipment provided. There have been some issues with the IT systems particularly Microsoft Software. Third party systems are functioning to the effect that tenants are not inconvenienced. The remaining issues are currently being investigated and will be resolved as soon as possible. Laptops and portable computer devices have been provided to those that need them. Work station assessments will be addressed as part of the health and safety action plan. | ● |

| NO | PROMISE | DESCRIPTION OF PROMISE | PROGRESS TO DATE | STATUS |
|-----|---------------|---|---|---|
| 20. | Transport | Tracker alarms to be fitted, vehicles to be air conditioned and pre-racked vans to be provided | The staff were consulted on the issues of transport and decided that the priority was having pre-racked vans rather than air conditioning or tracking. |  |
| 21. | Communication | Staff intranet to be available, team meetings to be held regularly, staff conferences to be held at least quarterly | The provision of a staff intranet has been discussed and suppliers are currently being appraised. A process of team meetings have been established, flowing from the weekly Executive meeting. Staff conferences have been held monthly since the transfer. |  |
| 22. | Health Care | Reduced contribution health care to be offered | Scheme approved by the Board and out for consultation |  |