

REPORT TO: HOUSING, DUNDEE CONTRACT SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE 28 JUNE 2010

REPORT ON: HOUSING DEPARTMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

REPORT NO: 381-2010

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report on progress on the Improvement Plan agreed with the Scottish Housing Regulator.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- 2.1. It is recommended that Committee note the progress on the implementation of the Improvement Plan up to May 2010.
- 2.2. Agree that, as part of the commitment to Public Performance Reporting, this report be added to the plans and performance section of the Council's web-site.

3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

4. **MAIN TEXT**

The Scottish Housing Regulator agreed the Council's Improvement Plan in September 2009. This report identifies progress for those items which are due for completion on or prior to May 2010.

125 of the total 149 actions are due to be completed by May 2010.

Of those which are due for completion:

- 88 of the actions are now completed.
- 23 of the actions due for completions are 75% complete or greater.
- 10 of actions due for completions are 50% complete or greater.
- 4 of actions due for completions are less than 50%.

Details of the items completed since March 2010, the previous date of reporting to Committee are listed below.

The key recommendations along with the summary of action within the Improvement plan have been summarised in bold text. Those remaining actions with future completion dates are on target to be completed by September 2011.

Item 9:

Recommendation: No pro-active advice to people who may be homeless through letting service.

Action: Raise standards of advice and information by developing a training programme for front line staff:

Through staff training set out standards for dealing with lettings enquiries to foster consistent levels of advice.

Training programme for staff in place. All letting staff have received training on new letting system, prospects advice, top ten updates and proactive advice to customers who may be homeless. Advice & information and Housing Officers have also been briefed and trained on new letting system. New letting system went live on 1 March 2010.

Item 43:

Recommendation: Void process not closely managed and monitored.

Action: Void management process is being reviewed in a lean service review and as a result of the review the following action is being taken: Exercise for one month to check standards of houses which have been cleaned, against a specification drawn up by the review team. Results of this exercise will inform possible new cleaning specification for DCS. New process agreed with DCS where properties are awaiting materials.

Dundee Cleaning Services appointed to deliver new cleaning specification. This will commence 21 June 2010.

Item 55:

Recommendation: There are weakness in its approach to collecting satisfaction from tenants on investment works. Length written standard questionnaires which it only issues to tenant once work is completed. Relatively low response rate of around 33% of tenants surveyed. We saw little evidence that feedback directly and routinely influences changes or improvement in the programming and delivery of investment works.

Actions: New shorter Capital Programme survey has been drafted. Piloted by HIU rolled out 2009/2010 contracts. Contractors are carrying out satisfaction surveys on site during programme. Proposal to carry out telephone surveys by contact team as part of lean service review. Focus groups to be set up to discuss satisfaction survey. All satisfaction results discusses at client cluster and outcomes considered by board.

Telephone Surveys will be rolled out to HIU contact team for implementation.

Item 57:

Recommendation: Council has poor and contradictory management information on gas safety including the number of houses that have gas.

Action: New IT system in place and improvements made to enable information to be extracted at any time and allow easy following of process. Data cleansing exercise complete. Certificate numbers for all properties input for audit trail. System

presents info in clear and meaningful format. A mechanism to audit system and processes will be established.

This item is now complete. Effective audit arrangements have been developed and are now in place.

Item 71:

Recommendations: Tenants not provided written confirmation of repairs reported.

Actions: Explore various options of how to inform tenants of confirmation of repairs. Option paper on confirmation methods to be presented to Repairs Management Board. Consult with tenants on options.

The Repairs Management Board agreed that all tenants reporting repairs that qualify under the Right to Repair Scheme are to be issued with a receipt. This will happen by end of June 2010.

Item 95:

Recommendation: It has been slower to develop other discharge protocols. It is working with Tayside Community Justice Authority to develop a discharge protocol for HMP Perth and a through care and aftercare discharge protocol.

Action: Discharge protocol with HMP Perth in partnership with Shelter. Surgeries will operate fortnightly and will go live August 2009.

Throughcare/Aftercare Protocol in place. Prison surgeries in place from November 2009. Tayside Prison Discharge Protocol now signed off by all partners. Protocol adopted by Housing Committee 24 May 2010. Protocol Launch due 25 June 100% complete.

Item 114:

Recommendation: No overall control of s5 and nominations to set targets, priorities and no monitoring.

Action: The Council will move towards the Letting Centre making all S5 referrals and nomination to RSLs thereby standardising the process and having overall control of RSL target lets.

Prior to handover to Lettings Centre Homeless Service Unit will continue to produce quarterly performance data which will be reported through Performance management Framework.

A Report will be produced and discussed annually with RSLs.

Nomination and section 5 Agreements to be reviewed and incorporated with individual targets into design of letting System I.T Screens constructed for RSLs to input empty houses/search facility for applicants. This will generate a list of applicants for nominations.

Training for letting staff/RSL staff for new system.

New Nominations and Section 5 Agreements to be drafted and agreed with each RSL in Dundee to reflect operation of the new letting system.

Quarterly Liaison Meetings with RSLs to be set up to discuss operation of nominations and Section 5 arrangements.

Nominations and Section 5 agreement agreed. Quarterly liaison meetings happening. IT system in place for RSLs to standardised process, gather performance data, set and allocate 50%/50% quotas/targets for referrals/S5.

Item 115:

Recommendation: The Council's service plans demonstrate clear links to its corporate strategic objectives, LHS objectives and, where appropriate its homelessness strategy.

However, it does not support these service objectives with SMART action plans, although it regularly monitors and reports progress against most, but not all, of its service plan objectives.

Action: Housing Service Plan to be reviewed through a Golden Thread Health Check with Solace Enterprises. Objectives in housing plan to be reviewed and SMART objectives defined.

Solace Enterprise will assist in - Devising/reviewing the performance management framework including; Establish a structure of performance indicators; Agree what information should be evaluated; Agree who and what regularity the information will be evaluated; Establish how to integrate the corporate plan monitoring database with the department's strategies, the key results and the close estimates; Agree appropriate measurements for the key objectives; Identifying business priorities.

A revised service plan and performance framework was developed with the assistance of Solace Enterprises was agreed in November 2009. This service plan has been reviewed in line with required corporate service plan guidance for approval at June Housing committee. To support the Service Plan each unit has its own plan and these are devolved to Team/Unit Plans to assist implementation of the Departments Performance and Development Review system which will be implemented in June. Performances reviewed through monthly issue of a Performance Report which is scrutinised at monthly meetings of the Housing Department Management Team and Unit Manager. This can be evidenced by the Housing Service Plan, monthly Performance Reports and monthly HDMT minutes.

Item 116:

Recommendation: The Council had previously identified a number of weaknesses in its service delivery we highlight in this report, but it has failed to drive improvements in spite of this awareness. We saw a real disconnect between its strategic improvement work and its operational work.

Action: Additional resources have been implemented in key business areas such as the Lettings Centre to drive and support necessary change in developing new systems and ways of working to improve service delivery. Project Team has been established. HDMT will define clear vision and values and lead by example demonstrating appropriate behaviours. HDMT will institute a review of existing performance management systems and introduce new performance management frameworks linked to team action plans and individual performance agreements.

A new HR post will be created to ensure improved systems for staff induction, appraisal and performance. Consideration will be given to enhancing support for

staff in implementing these changes by coaching and mentoring and team building. Competencies will be defined and standards set for job roles. Within the context of the council's approach to BV2, the Housing Department will prioritise and phase services for self assessment using the PSIF. The outcomes from these assessments (along with an improvement plan which will be inserted into the Housing Service Plan and monitored using the council's on-line monitoring database) will be scrutinised by the Council at committee. Pilot assessments to be completed. Programme of further assessments agreed.

Housing Department vision and values agreed in April - awareness raising road shows during June. New performance management framework (linked with service plan) is being implemented and scrutinised through monthly performance reports to HDMT. A schedule of PSIF assessment is agreed; an assessment of the Private Sector Services Unit has been completed and an improvement plan is being developed. Service Improvement Teams have been developed with assistance from the Scottish Housing Best Value Network. Evidence: vision and values, HDMT minutes, road shows, performance reports, PSSU assessment, Service Improvement Team minutes and framework reports.

Item 120:

Recommendation: We found confusion over roles and responsibilities, in part due to its recent restructuring of services.

Action: New Starts will be fully briefed in their role and responsibilities by Developing and Implementing a service specific Induction Training programme.

Induction Pack has now been completed and will be implemented from 1 July. This provides detailed information on induction and level of information to be devised. Will be supported by the Finance and Corporate Services Unit. Departmental Induction commenced 15 June 2010 which will provide new staff with information on department service plan, values, structure along with carrying out training on child protection and health and safety

Item 124:

Recommendation: We found confusion over roles and responsibilities, in part due to its recent restructuring of services.

Action: A system of Staff Appraisal to be implemented. Audit of staff skills to take place to ensure that all staff has the necessary knowledge to do their tasks. Appraisal system agreed. HDMT to complete 360 Degree, Unit Managers to complete 360 Degree Appraisal. Team Leaders to complete 360 Degree Appraisal. All staff appraisals completed. All Personal Development Plans completed. Appraisals will be undertaken annually.

360 Degree Appraisal has been completed for all HDMT, Unit Managers and Team Leaders. Performance and Development review implemented April 2010 and will be completed by housing staff June 2010.

Item 129:

Recommendation: The Council is poor at acting on the information it has to effect real improvements.

Although it gathers a lot of performance information, it does not analyse and use it effectively; as a result, it does not fully appreciate the significance of its poor

performance in some areas.

Action: Agree appropriate measurements for the key objectives.

Review and agree indicators which are published ensuring these are measurable and relevant. Agree framework where indicators will be analysed. Framework to incorporate an explicit requirement to identify areas for improvement from indicators reported this will include - Who will review indicators; Mechanism for continuous improvement to be identified; Implement improvements; Track progress of improvements; Monitor that improvements have been implemented. Areas for improvement will also be addressed through the Housing Service Plan. The Performance Management Framework will force a stronger link between performance, supervision, staff appraisal and training. Managers and Supervisors to receive training and guidance in implementing the new system. All staff to be briefed in their role in the process and the framework.

Revised Performance Report has been implemented with agreed timescales for input, review by HDMT then highlighting areas of poor performance or trends moving away from targets. QPU to review and provide external scrutiny of results and support units to make improvements.

Details of progress of items not complete are listed below.

Item 3:

Recommendation: Housing Options Guide to be made available beyond web.

Action: The Housing Options guide will be printed and distributed to partner agencies and be made available in main council receptions and libraries. Constantly updated and reviewed every 2 years. The effectiveness of the guide will be measured by: Monitor number of Hits on website. Survey applicants and partner agencies on information provided.

Updated Housing Options guide is currently with Design Services for final design will go to printers week beginning 7 June for printing.

Item 4:

Recommendation: No free-phone facility for letting service.

Action: Consider a free phone number for the letting service. Option appraisal to be carried out as part of the Council's corporate strategy for Customer Care.

Option appraisal report being prepared for Best Value Group August 2010.

Item 5:

Recommendation: Not all of its front line staff is given housing options and advice training.

Action: Raise standards of advice and information by developing a training programme for front line staff:

Homepoint training complete, planned team building and customer care complete.

Level 2 CIH Training completed with 14 staff, second session underway due to complete June 2010. Management Development Training for Unit Managers and Team Leaders

complete. Training plans are now being completed as part of the Employee Performance and Development Review Process.

Item 6:

Recommendation: Common Housing Register to be operational in 2009/10.

Action: Implementation of a Common Housing Register (CHR) linked with the development of the Letting IT system to enable implementation of the Council's lettings policy. CHR module is Phase 2 of the IT project.

The common housing application form is complete and now in use. Access to the waiting list for housing associations for nominations is included in the new Lettings IT system. Housing associations have expressed an interest in using the Council's new system as a CHR and discussions are continuing.

Item 26:

Recommendation: The Council does not make appointments with tenants to carry out new tenant visits, nor does it consistently monitor its performance in completing new tenant visits.

Action: New tenant visits have been built into new Letting system. At sign up, an appointment will be made with tenant, and a letter will be sent out to remind tenant.

This will generate a reminder for the Housing Officer to visit. A new tenant visit will be carried out for new tenancies within 4-6 weeks of signing tenancy.

Manual systems in place to set new tenant visits and to monitor performance. System has been process mapped and specification developed to automate processes for NTV appointments, and monitoring performance. Phase 2 of new letting system will generate an appointment at sign up.

Item 31:

Action: The Council does not have procedures for managing occupancy where it does not recover vacant possession of a house after it has been granted a repossession order.

Recommendation: Procedures for ending tenancies where decree is not enforced to be amended. IT system (Key book and Rent Contact Centre Systems) to be corrected as there is no manual process which can be introduced for this. Staff to be trained.

IT work plan solution assessed - this is due to commence September 2010.

Item 37

Recommendation: Doesn't check tenant's entitlement to HB before perusing legal action. Doesn't carry out financial assessments prior to repayment agreement, doesn't tailor approach to individual tenants needs.

Action: We will continue staff training in Welfare Rights. Welfare Rights training to be included as a core competency for rent recovery staff. Supervisor case check on Court enrolments.

Financial Assessment requires an IT solution to interface Housing Dept, online pro

forma with Welfare Rights poverty index returns to Scottish Government. Phone Coaching training for RRC.

SWD welfare rights training and phone coach training completed. All court enrolments checked by supervisors.

Item 39:

Recommendation: The Council has a relatively high level of former tenant arrears and has written off substantial amounts of these in the last three years. It reserves the right to pursue FTA's for up to 20 years. The council told us it will review this when responsibility transfers to its contact centre in 2009.

Action: FTA decrees being reviewed. RRC will assess once responsibility transfers to them.

The transfer of the former tenant arrears has been delayed due to IT restrictions. Currently decrees have a legal lifespan of 20 years therefore it is in the Councils interest to pursue any debts until the decree is no longer valid. This will maximise the value of revenue coming into the Housing Department. Debts not covered by decree will be written off under prescription legislation and cannot be pursued.

Item 44:

Recommendation: No relet standard and review relet expenditure. The standard of re-let is poor and houses dirty.

Action: A working group is to be set up to develop and implement a relet standard:

- **Set Standards**
- **Develop practice across the service to ensure void properties are dealt with efficiently and effectively**
- **Consult with tenants groups and staff on relet standards**
- **Develop staff training programme**
- **Produce Information on leaflet/internet of set standards.**

Draft Relet Standard is being consulted upon until 18th June 2010. To be evaluated and implemented in July 2010.

Item 49:

Recommendation: No evidence of it using robust option appraisals to inform decision on sustainability and disposal of its own stock. Option appraisal remains underdeveloped.

Action: Review of SHQS option appraisal undertaken which included turnover demand, management cost, repairs and maintenance, investment needs. These will be considered in context of need demand study for option appraisal. Analysis of waiting list of void, turnover and investment need. Factors are weighted to identify most vulnerable stock to lack of demand. Link from stock info database into other corporate systems. Need Demand Study used as guidance on future demand. Consult with tenants/focus groups.

Updating from roof roughcast surveys, ECM work, heating, kitchen, bathroom programme surveys and work completed.

The initial phase of the SHQS Review is currently being finalised and a report will be made to Committee in August 2010. Resubmission of the standard delivery plan to the Scottish Government will be Autumn 2011.

Item 51:

Recommendation: Does not carry out regular tenant surveys to determine investment priorities.

Action: Areas forums meeting twice a year will present forthcoming investment priorities. Meet with RTO's for project meetings on individual programmes before work is undertaken. Review of SHQS Delivery Plan consultation with tenants and focus groups. Focus groups after satisfaction surveys returned in investment properties.

Tenant conference scheduled for June 2010.

Item 52:

Recommendation: The Council's reliance on information cloned across similar house types to cover the remaining 70% of the stock is a risk. The Council has no other firm plans to increase the coverage of its stock condition information.

Action: Stock condition data is updated on completion of contracts on the stock information database. In excess of 1500 properties will be updated per annum. An IT brief will be completed on links to corporate systems.

Updating from roof roughcast surveys, ECM work, heating, kitchen, bathroom programme surveys and work completed are ongoing. Real information form programme completions will improve efficiency of the stock information database.

Item 54:

Recommendation: The Council has not been effective in projecting spend to meet programme targets in each of the last 3 years.

Action: Capital spend is monitored on monthly basis by the Housing Capital Monitoring Team. The partnering framework is moving towards more predictable cost by the development of unit rates.

The SHQS project board monitors implementation of the SHQS standard delivery plan quarterly. Capital spend is reported to committee monthly.

Initial findings from the pilot unit rate contracts are that larger contracts are required to best utilise labour. Final analysis not available until June 2010.

Item 56:

Recommendation: Cyclical maintenance programme does not focus on areas where work most needed - a review of the approach is being undertaken.

Action: Cyclical maintenance review group set up -

- **Look at priorities**
- **Stock info database**
- **Review the operation of cyclical maintenance to highlight critical maintenance items on a shorter cycle**

- **Re-evaluate developments in the City to provide larger contracts and hence improved value for money.**

ECM Review group meeting in June to confirm progress and results of Process mapping exercise.

Item 67:

Recommendation: Asbestos - The Council has not surveyed all common areas of its housing, but plans to ensure it has this done by 2010.

Action: A common areas survey programme is underway, linked with ongoing external cyclical maintenance (ECM) programmes as well as stand alone surveys. Proactive surveys in areas where it is suspected that asbestos exists.

Surveys are being carried out as part of ECM and Controlled Entry Programme. Common area surveys are underway in targeted areas.

Item 68:

Recommendation: The Council is considering extending ways to report repairs to include e-mail and text messaging.

Action: Repairs can be reported through the website by e-mail direct to the Housing Repairs Centre.

An options paper will be prepared for the Repairs Management Board with options for reporting repairs, text messaging to be included.

Amendments have had to be made to the options paper. As a result it will now go the Repairs Management Board in June 2010.

Item 80:

Recommendation: We found no evidence that the Council had formally considered alternative contractor options for the procurement of its maintenance service or tested if it represents value for money.

Action: Direct comparison with private sector providers has been made, compared with other benchmarks (APSE). The procurement policy was reported to Housing Committee on 1 July 2009.

**Developing a procurement model for future partnering.
Market testing across range of contracts by tender.
Establish method to benchmark costs against peers.
Develop unit rates, pilot with 2 contractors on kitchen programme, to be reported May 2010.**

Annual procurement report demonstrating value for money to be provided to Committee in June 2010.

Further develop supply chain partnering (obtaining improved value for money from suppliers) for kitchen and bathroom selection process.

We will review the service level arrangements and fees with Architectural Services.

Pilot unit rate contracts have been on site and concluded in April 2010, the evaluation is currently being finalised. Justification for contract acceptance in place. SLA benchmarking spreadsheet produced and enquiry to SHBVN network.

Item 82:

Recommendation: Increasing proportions of response repairs as emergencies - It has not analysed the reasons for this nor does it have clear plans in place to address this.

Action: The following options will be investigated to look at the reason for the number of emergency repairs: Training and induction for staff will be investigated to ensure staff are correctly informed on what is an emergency. Repeat repairs are also being investigated and work carried out to ensure repair is repaired at the first visit where possible. Repairs Development Group is also looking at what the Department currently classes as an emergency and reviewing this list. The Group also has involvement from tenants.

A report on the findings of this review will go to the Repairs Management Board in June 2010. The report on the introduction of a Repairs Induction Training Scheme is still in progress and it is anticipated that it will be reported to the Repairs Management Board in July 2010.

Item 83:

Recommendation: No firm plans to reduce number of repairs cancelled due to no access. The Council does not monitor on the number of repairs it varies.

Action: The option of contacting tenants by telephone or letter will be investigated before repair is cancelled to establish whether repair is still required.

The pilot exercise was extended into April 2010. As a result the report detailing the conclusions of the pilot exercise will go to the Repairs Management Board in June 2010.

Item 85:

Recommendation: Lack of knowledge about corporate procurement strategy & strategy unclear about procurement for housing assets and maintenance. It is not embedded throughout its operations and that staff awareness of it across the Council's services is limited.

Action: HRA Capital programmes procured under Council Partnering Framework. Update HRA capital works procurement processes under the partnership agreement. Increase % of programme subject to market testing and examine mechanisms for benchmarking. Corporate procurement team does not currently have a role in procurement of HRA capital works. Work with Corporate procurement team as role develops. Arrange training for appropriate staff. For repairs and maintenance the Repairs Partnership Agreement is based around cost, quality, efficiency and value for money.

All procurement carried out in line with council procurement policy. Capital Programme now subject to market testing from which unit rates will be set. Benchmarking with neighbouring authorities is underway. Revised Target Date of October 2010 for all except Corporate Procurement which should be revised to March 2011.

Item 86:

Recommendation: Council held little information to demonstrate how or why contractors or partners successful in procurement exercises, lack of evidence of best value - significant weakness.

Action: Procurement cluster as part of partnering framework will look at: Procurement policy, Audit trails, Transparency, Option appraisals to Committee, Pilot new selection process. Develop a system of unit rates linked to capital works to ensure best value and predictability for forward planning.

Procurement policy, audit trail, justifications are all in place for capital programme.

Item 99:

Recommendation: We also found the Councils housing management teams do not refer tenants it intends to evict to its homeless service. This is an area of significant weakness.

Action: Referral processes are to be reviewed and training delivered to area office staff and housing association partners.

A manual referral system is in place with the Rent Recovery Centre (RRC) from July 2009. Weekly lists of tenants enrolled in court are being sent to the Prevention Team Leader by RRC Supervisor. The system to be computerised as part of RRC ongoing IT development.

Item 110:

Recommendation: Not able to give reliable information on level or use of temp' accommodation (including partners) and time spent. Undermines confidence in B&B figures.

Action: The Council will develop its IT system to record when and where placements are being made in the voluntary sector. The Council will also monitor the number of placements and average length of stay in individual agency accommodation to assess the demand and throughput in all forms of temporary accommodation. Until further IT development time arranged existing IT will be used to record temporary accommodation placement. Negotiations with temporary accommodation providers to use the IT system will be completed.

Item to be addressed through Homeless IT system. IT development commenced April 2010. Completion date for this action is the end of August 2010.

Item 117:

Recommendation: The Council had previously identified a number of weaknesses in its service delivery we highlight in this report, but it has failed to drive improvements in spite of this awareness. We saw a real disconnect between its strategic improvement work and its operational work.

Action: A Programme of Lean Service Reviews will be implemented and informed by the Service Assessment Programme.

The supply chain process on kitchens has been completed. The Lettings Lean Service Review assessment process has been reported to the Best Value Review Group.

A programme of PSIF assessments and service improvement teams are being introduced to drive continuous improvement.

Item 121:

Recommendation: We found confusion over roles and responsibilities, in part due to its recent restructuring of services.

Action: Ensure that all Job Descriptions are reviewed and specify core training/induction requirements for the job.

Progress continues to be made on reviewing job descriptions with 2 units completing the review and another well underway. Due to the volume of job descriptions this task has taken longer than anticipated and will now be completed by December 2010.

Item 122:

Recommendation: We found confusion over roles and responsibilities, in part due to its recent restructuring of services.

Action: Conduct a Training and Development Review of all staff together with skills audit.

Review of training database has been completed; update information on training needs and planned training will be taken from performance and development system being implemented in April 2010 and due to complete June 2010. CIH Level 2 successfully completed with 14 members of staff, the second class is due to complete June 2010. Unit Managers/Team Leaders Development Training completed.

Item 127

Recommendation: Housing Department staff, in comparison with the Council as a whole, were less likely to agree they have an effective management team and do not feel that change contributed to improvement or that encouragement and recognition given. (Staff survey).

Action: Staff Charter to be reviewed through a staff representative forum (including consideration of staff suggestion scheme and staff recognition scheme). Measures of success to be devised and monitored through Performance Management Framework. Focus Group Recruited. Staff Charter to be agreed. Review of success. Staff survey. 360 Degree appraisal to be implemented for Managers and Team Leaders.

Housing Department aims and values have been developed in April, awareness among staff is being raised through 'road shows' during June 2010. A staff communication group has been asked to develop a mutual respect initiative by August 2010 and to review the staff awards scheme (which was introduced at the Housing Department staff conference in 2009). A housing Department staff survey was completed in May 2010; this showed that staff felt a significant positive change in contributing and encouraging improvements at work and staff feel more valued and that recognition is given. A staff suggestion scheme (Open House) was launched in May 2010 and quarterly reports will be discussed by the Housing Department Management Team. Evidence staff survey results, open house publicity and monitor, 360 degree appraisals, Housing Department values, action plans, presentations and minutes from HDMT. Elements of the staff charter which have not been incorporated into the 'values' will be reviewed by the staff communication group.

Item 132:

Recommendation: We found it difficult to get accurate performance information from the Council and we were often given contradictory information.

Action: Service managers to bring forward proposals for a review of accuracy and continuous checking of information systems for: Homeless System.

Proposal is to ensure that HSU Strategy Team have the ability to obtain and analyse HL1 figures prior to submission to Scottish Government, this will ensure that performance information is accurate and will avoid contradictory information being supplied. Item to be addressed through Homeless IT system. IT development commenced April 2010. Due to be completed by December 2010. 50% complete.

Item 133:

Recommendation: We found it difficult to get accurate performance information from the Council and we were often given contradictory information.

Action: Service managers to bring forward proposals for a review of accuracy and continuous checking of information systems for: Repairs System.

The report will now go to the Repairs Management Board in June 2010.

Item 134: Monitoring

Recommendation: Monitoring and reporting on service standards to be implemented.

Action: Service Standards to be reviewed through Focus Groups and appropriate methods of measurement to be implemented. Publish our standards in a SMART format. Review existing standards. Develop new SMART standards. Set up system to report performance of standards.

A comprehensive review of service standards is nearing completion. Consultation now ongoing on final draft with tenants groups and this was completed in mid June.

Item 137:

Recommendation: Tenant groups generally unhappy with Council's approach to consultation and participation - too much reliance on DFTA.

Action: A revised Tenant Participation Strategy which addresses issues raised in the Peer Review and Inspection has been agreed by the Council. Implementation of this will be overseen by a group of key Housing staff and tenants' representatives. The strategy includes:

A consultation Strategy which timetables major consultation events.

An annual survey of tenants groups to gauge satisfaction with our approach to tenant participation.

At least one tenant led inspection per year.

A minimum of two Area forum meetings per year.

Annual consultation on Rent and Service Charges.

Production of a Code of Practice on Communication with umbrella groups, tenant organisations, individual tenants.

Joint assessment of resources required for RTOs and training plan for tenants and

RTOs.

Tenant Open Day and Forum and minimum of 2 Tenant Bulletins published per year.

Quarterly meetings between Director, Management Team and DFTA.

Set up of Senior Staff/ Tenants' Reps monitoring Group.

Review of Strategy.

Consultation strategy completed and to be reviewed in June 2010. Survey results 2008/2009 - 90% satisfaction. Tenant led inspection in Relets in progress and one in estate management commenced in March 2010. Tenant Fayre held in July 2009 and a tenants meeting on rent consultation held December 2009. Code of practice completed in 2009. Assessment of resources for RTO's completed as part of rent consultation. A training plan is to be completed by August 2010.

Item 141:

Recommendation: Staff were reluctant to provide information or help to get info in areas that were not related to their own immediate responsibility.

Action: This will be tackled by a combination of the implementation of a new performance management system, induction training, customer service training and ongoing training and awareness sessions.

Competency framework has been completed and is part of the Performance and Development Review Scheme due to be completed June 2010. CIH Level 2 was completed by 14 staff in April 2010, second course is due to complete June 2010, with this programme being rolled out to front line staff in coming months. Support and coaching skills have been delivered to Unit Managers and Team Leaders. Job Shadowing is also being implemented as part of the Level 2 CIH along with staff using this as a mechanism for development.

Item 143:

Recommendation: Poor communication between different teams.

Action: Staff rotation/shadowing scheme to be considered. Improve communication and working relationship between teams. Clarify roles and responsibilities. Examine the relationship of cross teams and develop positive working practices.

Job Rotation has been completed by students completing the Level 2 CIH which has improved team working and communication. As part of the Performance and Development Review staff are being asked to consider Job Shadowing and clarification will be provided on roles and responsibilities. Recent Housing Survey has shown improvement in communication.

Item 144:

Recommendation: Weaknesses in SHQS Delivery plan and repair/investment programmes don't demonstrate value for money.

Action: Review our SHQS Delivery Plan. The Review will demonstrate value for money and include risk assessment/option appraisal to plan for contingencies.

Establish benchmarking through - SHBVN, neighbouring authorities, RSL's, LA Contacts.

Item 146:

Recommendation: Generally poor service outcomes and variable levels of satisfaction. No clearly articulated VFM or efficiencies strategy for the housing service.

Action: Improvements in service outcomes are planned by the actions outlined within the improvement plan and Department Service Plans. Value for money and Efficiencies Strategy - a working group to be set up to investigate the scope and outputs of such a strategy. This to be built into the department's Service Planning Framework.

Service Plans and Unit Plans have been completed with monitors in place being reported monthly/quarterly. Service Improvement Team have been developed to review specific services/operations in the housing team. Value for Money and Efficiencies Groups have been set up for SHQS programme looking at Unit Rates and marketing testing due to be rolled out in June 10. Benchmarking work is also underway and includes services provided by architects.

Item 147:

Recommendation: The Council does not have a clearly articulated contingency position if risks in its planned funding strategy for the SHQS materialise.

Action: Review our SHQS Delivery Plan. The review will demonstrate best value and include risk assessment/option appraisal to plan for contingencies.

A risk management matrix and processes are now in place and monitored by the SHQS Project Board. Risk management will be addressed within revised standard delivery plan. SHQS Project Board scrutinises risks quarterly.

Item 149:

Recommendation: Council cannot demonstrate a focus on VFM in procurement for repairs or investment.

Action: Value for money and Efficiencies Strategy - a working group to be set up to investigate the scope and outputs of such a strategy. This to be built into the department's Service Planning Framework.

Service improvement teams have been set up to look at key areas part of this includes value for money. Housing Investment Unit have been completing work on unit rates, marketing testing and benchmarking to establish VFM. Repairs partnership performance report has been reviewed and is going to include target and benchmarking information. Efficiency Statement has still to be prepared to collate savings in all units. Due to be implement September 2010.

It is recommended that Committee note the revised timescales for completion and the remedial actions proposed.

5. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Assessment.

There are no major issues.

6. **CONSULTATIONS**

The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Director of Finance, all other Chief Officers and the Housing Best Value Review Group have been consulted in the preparation of this report. No concerns were raised.

7. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

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