

REPORT TO: Housing Committee – 21 August 2000

REPORT ON: Housing Service Plan – Performance Report

REPORT BY: Director of Housing

REPORT NO.: 534-2000

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform elected members of the performance against targets set in the Housing Department's Service Plan 1999-2002.
- 1.2. This report will also detail how the department aims to improve performance against targets in this financial year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that:
 - i. Committee notes the performance against targets set in the Housing Service Plan 1999-2002 (see Appendix 1).
 - ii. Committee approves the Service Plan targets set for April 2001 (see Appendix 1).
 - iii. Committee notes actions proposed to improve upon performance during the 2000/2001 financial year (see Appendix 2).

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. All associated costs are covered in Housing Revenue Account Budgets and Capital Estimates and incur no additional expenditure.

4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. All sections of the community are empowered to participate in decision making via tenant and service user input to the service planning process.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. A commitment is made to involving and consulting target groups upon all issues which affect them.
- 5.2. There is wide recognition of the way in which the City Council conducts, promotes, publicises and communicates its activities to the diversity of Dundee's citizens.

6. BACKGROUND

- 6.1. The Housing Department's Service Plan was agreed at the Housing Committee meeting on 15 November 1999.
- 6.2. The Housing Service Plan consists of a definition of key housing services and performance indicators are set for each of these services. Each service is set within a three year budget covering the period 1999-2002. It is also a requirement to report to the public on performance, against targets set.

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE REPORTING

- 6.3. The Housing Department reports performance against the Service Plan in its Annual Report, which is sent to every citizen. Performance against targets set for 1999/2000 will be detailed in this year's annual report, which is scheduled to be distributed in September.
- 6.4. On 28 March 2000, a public meeting chaired by the Housing Convener was held in the Central Library to explain the Housing Service Plan and explain tenant and service user involvement.

Approximately forty people attended this meeting which was followed by a lively and informative debate upon Housing Services. The Housing Department will continue to use methods such as this to achieve effective involvement in service planning.

- 6.5. Within the Service Plan, a number of "Best Value Reviews" were identified which were to be approved in the 1999/2000 financial year. These reviews and their associated continuous improvement items can be seen at Appendix 2.

Housing staff have been diligent in the review process and a large number of continuous improvement items have been identified. This exemplifies the thoroughness and commitment to improvement of all staff involved.

- 6.6. Best Value reports which are scheduled for 2000/2001 (including those carried over from last year) can be seen at Appendix 2.

PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS

- 6.7. The Housing Department's performance against targets set for 1999/2000 and targets for 2000/2001 can be seen at Appendix 1. The Housing Committee is asked to note performance and new targets.

The Department will continue to set itself challenging targets to ensure that we achieve Best Value in financial terms and in customer or tenant satisfaction.

DUNDEE FEDERATION OF TENANTS' ASSOCIATIONS PRIORITIES

- 6.8. Every year the Housing Department consults with the D.F.T.A. to identify issues of concern which the Housing Department agrees to pursue. During 2000/2001, the DFTA and Housing will deal with the priorities from last year, noted below, with the exception of items (ii) and (v).
- 6.9. D.F.T.A. priority items agreed last year and actions taken by the Housing Department are noted below:

The Housing Department and the D.F.T.A. are both committed to cultivating mutual understanding and developing services in the interests of tenants (for example through the Joint Working Group on Anti-Social Behaviour). Continuous liaison and joint planning with the D.F.T.A. will be pursued through the coming year.

- i. Always issue repair receipts – identified as continuous improvement item to be implemented 2000/2001.
- ii. Pilot scheme for new tenants' visits – all new tenants are now receiving visits, effective from May 2000.
- iii. Conduct a Relet Repair pilot (see Appendix 2).
- iv. Promote use of Direct Debit and Outdoor Rent Collection.
- v. A scheme for explaining the missives of let has been addressed within Good Neighbour Charter.
- vi. Produce a set of Tenants' Entitlements – tenants entitlements are to be found in the Housing Plan, also leaflets on services. Leaflets on repairs to be revised 2000/2001.
- vii. Actively promote a Complaints System – Housing Quality Unit to ensure proper implementation of corporate complaints procedure and devise monitoring arrangements during 2000/2001.
- viii. Investigate establishing an appointment system for the repairs service.

7. **CONSULTATION**

- 7.1. The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Support Services and Chief Corporate Planning Officer have been consulted on the content of this report.

8. **BACKGROUND**

Report to Housing Committee, 15 November 1999, Report No. 532/1999.

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

SIGNED

DATE

APPENDIX 1

SERVICE – COLLECT INCOME

Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline at 1999	Actual April 2000	Target April 2001
Current Tenant Arrears	7%	8.7%	8.6%	7%
Total Former Tenant Arrears	£648,592	£695,843	£736,132	£725,031
Former Tenant Arrears – Written Off During Year	£510,788	£559,816	£601,478	£588,406
Void Loss as a % of Gross Debit	5%	5.68%	3.7%	4%
Customer Satisfaction with Advice on Rent Payment Difficulties	75%	84.6%	84.2%	84.2%

SERVICE – LETTING COUNCIL HOUSES

Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline at 1999	Actual April 2000	Target April 2001
Percentage of Houses Let:				
• less than 2 weeks	30%	33%	31.8%	30%
• 2-4 weeks	30%	N/A	31.1%	30%
• more than 4 weeks	40%	N/A	37.1%	40%
Percentage of Property Let	95%	96.1%	96.2%	96%

SERVICE – IMPROVE COUNCIL HOUSES

Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline at 1999	Actual April 2000	Target April 2001
Capital Expenditure as a Percentage of Income	100%	100.2%	99.98%	100%
CFCR & Planned Maintenance as a Percentage of Income	100%	130.8%	107.26%	100%

IMPROVE PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSES

Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline at 1999	Actual April 2000	Target April 2001
Percentage of Grant Applications Receiving Full Payment	90%	N/A	99%	90%
Average No. of Days to final Payment	28 Days	N/A	9 Days	28 days
Applicants Receiving Formal Notice of Approval	85%	N/A	65%	85%
Average No. of Weeks to Formal Approval	16 Weeks	N/A	16 Days	16 weeks

SERVICE – REPAIR COUNCIL HOUSES

Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline at 1999	Actual April 2000	Target April 2001
Responsive Repairs:				
• out of hours emergency	99%	99.75%	99.88%	99%
• day time emergency	97%	92.48%	93.21%	97%
• 3 day (urgent)	90%	86.35%	86.94%	90%
• 10 day (priority)	90%	83.69%	84.25%	90%
• 10 day (empty house)	90%	92.25%	93.35%	90%
• 15 day (normal)	90%	87.14%	81.91%	90%

SERVICE – REMOVING UNWANTED COUNCIL HOUSES

Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline at 1999	Actual April 2000	Target April 2001
Number of Identified Surplus Houses Demolished	644	670	382	644

SERVICE – SELL COUNCIL HOUSES

Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline at 1999	Actual April 2000	Target April 2001
Average Time Taken to Complete a Sale				
• up to 26 weeks	75%	82%	53%	N/A
• 27 weeks plus	25%	18%	47%	
• Up to 20 weeks				55%
• 21-26 weeks				25%
• 27-32 weeks				10%
• 33 weeks plus				10%

DELIVERING A HOMELESS SERVICE

Performance Indicator	Target	Baseline at 1999	Actual April 2000	Target April 2001
Average Length of Stay in:				
• Hostels	30 Days	20 Days	23 Days	30 days
• Furnished Accommodation	95 Days	114 Days	130 Days	95 days
• Bed & Breakfast	30 Days	82 Days	58 Days	30 days

N/A – Not available. Awaiting Audit Commission advice.

APPENDIX 2

BEST VALUE REVIEWS – CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT ITEMS TO BE IMPLEMENTED DURING 2000/2001.

A. Best Value Reviews Approved During 1999/2000

1. Building maintenance.
2. Building maintenance (Housing Management).
3. Cash flow (cash collection and lost rents).
4. Housing and related services to people with a physical disability.
5. Homelessness (N.C.H. Stopover).
6. New tenancies (relets and allocations).
7. Private Sector Services (Right To Buy).
8. Overheads (Legal Services).

B. Continuous Improvement Items to be Implemented During 2000/2001.

1. Consider use of commercial outlets for cash collection.
2. Introduce swipe cards.
3. Issue rent statements every 6 months.
4. Adopt improved performance targets.
5. Promote use of direct debit and outdoor collector.
6. Comply with void management procedures.
7. Earlier approval of surplus stock.
8. Issue repair receipts.
9. Review possibility of appointment system for repairs.
10. Implement communal cleaning pilot.
11. Investigate possibility of extending caretaking service (caretaking plus).
12. Ensure new tenant visits carried out.
13. Pilot alternative letting mechanism (Property Shop).
14. Conduct relet repairs pilot.
15. Consider use of direct inputting of applications.
16. Examine work coding.
17. Carry out internal Benchmarking.
18. Viewing and signing checklist to be investigated.
19. Review Right to Buy process time.
20. Review Right to Buy procedures.
21. Establish monthly monitor review meeting.
22. Introduce customer satisfaction survey.
23. Produce information leaflets.
24. Establish working group of Housing/EDO/Legal to review informal offer stage.
25. Consider possibility of Housing staff carrying out certain legal duties.
26. Review communication between Legal Department and Housing.
27. Improve staff training.
28. Consider outposting Legal Department staff to Housing.
29. Develop greater understanding between customer and service provider.
30. Technical training for Area Offices.
31. Consider revision and simplification of Schedule of Rates.
32. Improve information flow.
33. Investigate increased use of pre. and post inspection.
34. Review emergency repairs service re. scope and cost.
35. Increased flexibility in expenditure queries.
36. Increased property based expenditure queries.
37. Minimise time lag between job completion and billing.
38. Produce and issue information leaflet at briefing stage of window/roof projects.

39. Investigate inability of users to contact key service delivery personnel.
40. Review future satisfaction results re. roofing priorities.
41. Maximise size of window/roof contracts.
42. Time taken to complete adaptations revised to 100% within 3 months.
43. Reduce time taken for minor adaptations by ordering through HOURS System on a 10 day priority.
44. T.S.U. stage of grant process to be removed.
45. Comprehensive data base to be developed.
46. Code of practice and procedures manual to be developed re. Committee for Rehousing People with Physical Disabilities.
47. Continuous monitoring of time taken to complete adaptations.

Progress to Date

Building Maintenance Works

As responsive repairs and relet repairs are carried out by D.C.S. It was decided that a number of continuous improvements identified for 2000/2001 would be best progressed through the Relet Repairs Pilot (see following item).

Discussions have taken place with D.F.T.A. on the proposals for repair receipts and a repairs appointments system. Draft proposals will be put to D.F.T.A. for further discussion later this financial year.

A review of the ECM programme, which will address the continuous improvements highlighted, is approaching conclusion.

Consultation with the Education Department re. responsive repairs is ongoing with specific recommendations relating to the continuous improvements expected before the end of this calendar year.

Relet Repairs

It was agreed that a relet pilot was undertaken designed to address the continuous improvement items. A Task Group has been set up comprising Officers from the Housing Department and Dundee Contract Services. The relet pilot is focussing on those relet repairs instructed by the Happyhillock Area Housing Office. It will run for 3 months concluding at the end of August 2000. A report on the findings will be produced September/October 2000, for consideration.

“Right to Buy” Scheme

Work on the continuous improvements from this review was started ahead of schedule. As a result significant progress has been made.

Work has been completed on producing a cost floor monitor. This has been scrutinised and is now on-line, allowing immediate contact between the Improvements & Maintenance Unit and the Quantity Surveyors.

The Finance Department have recently amended their procedures relative to Council loans. They should see the target of a 14 day reduction in the timescale achieved.

A “family” of leaflets all related to “Right To Buy” will be available towards the end of the year.

Housing and Related Services to People with a Physical Disability

Completion of 100% adaptations within 3 months has been incorporated as a Key Performance Indicator for year 2000/2001.

Ordering minor adaptations through HOURS System has been implemented. This is already resulting in improvements in service delivery.

A code of practice and procedures manual for the Committee for Rehousing People with Physical Disabilities is being developed.

Cash Flow (Low Rents)

The promotion of internal void management procedures is being addressed via an internal task group and is now subject of a Best Value Report for 2000/2001. Action has been taken to let houses faster through amendments to internal procedures.

Earlier approval of surplus stock by Housing Committee is being secured via an 18 month rolling programme that is now in place and being actively pursued.

Cash Flow (Housing Management)

A report on negotiations with commercial outlets on cash collection is being addressed corporately.

The introduction of Swipe Cards was completed on target in April 2000.

Quarterly Rent Account Statements are now in place, effective from 1st quarter 2000/2001.

A report will be prepared by the end of September 2000, on the reduction of internal transaction costs to below £1 in Ardler/Kirkton and Happyhillock/Whitfield Area Offices.

Improved accuracy targets were introduced in April 2000. Performance in the 1st quarter April – June show significant improvements.

All payment methods now allow processing within 3 days. In addition, systems are now in place to allow payment of all Council accounts at all Housing Offices where each is collected.

The Direct Debit and Outdoor Collection Services were extensively advertised during the first quarter of 2000/2001. This will be repeated in the last quarter. Additionally, the Direct Debit information leaflet was updated in May 2000, and both were extensively mentioned in a letter to all tenants in July 2000.

Window/Roof Projects

The production of a leaflet at briefing stage in window/roof contracts will be a feature of future projects.

The results of this year's Customer Satisfaction Survey will be analysed when available and appropriate action will be identified and taken as necessary.

Steps are taken each year to maximise the size of window/roof contracts and this will continue. It is anticipated, however, that window replacement contracts will be completed within 18 months.

C. Best Value Reviews to be completed in 2000/2001.

1. External Cyclical Maintenance.
2. Estate Management (Concierge).
3. Estate Regeneration (Demolitions).
4. Front Line Services.