

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 16TH AUGUST, 2004
REPORT ON: BEST VALUE REVIEW OF SHELTERED HOUSING WARDEN SERVICE
REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
REPORT NO: 532-2004

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for a Best Value Review of the Sheltered Housing Warden Service.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee agrees:-

- (i) that a member/officer review of the Sheltered Housing Warden Service be added to the list of best value reviews previously approved by the Policy and Resources Committee.
- (ii) that the review group be chaired by the Chief Executive and that member representation consist of three members from the Administration, two from the SNP Group and one from the Conservative Group.
- (iii) that the scope, objectives, membership and consultation processes of the review be as detailed in Section 6 of this report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, funding of the warden service will be one of the key issues for the review group to consider.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

Through consultation with stakeholders during the review process, this report will have an impact on the following Local Agenda 21 theme:

- all sections of the community are empowered to participate in decision-making

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

The review will focus particularly on the needs of older people and people with disabilities.

6 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 A number of issues require to be considered in relation to the Sheltered Housing Warden Service, and it is recommended that the best way to address these would be through a Member/Officer Best Value Review, tasked to consider what changes are required to the service to ensure that this provides best value.
- 6.2 In particular, it is suggested that such a review should, as a priority:
 - (a) review and update the information previously reported to Committee on the current and anticipated demand for sheltered, very sheltered and care housing, taking into account national and local policy trends in community care and support for older people; funding arrangements; needs and aspirations of older people; the nature of the present sheltered housing stock; and the wider context of housing in the city;

- (b) consider the level of the existing warden service (including the ratio of wardens to tenants) the cost of the service, how this is funded and how reductions in cost could be achieved, all in the context of developments such as the community alarm service, the expansion of home care and the current and potential use of communal facilities.

As a second phase, the review group should go on to:

- (c) consider the way in which sheltered housing is currently allocated, the extent to which this does or should relate to other processes for assessing the needs of older people, and any implications of changing allocation policies and procedures. This could also include a review of the possible use of sheltered housing for other groups eg younger people with learning disabilities or who are prematurely older because of dementia or mental illness.
- (d) consider how any changes to the service should be managed by the Housing and Social Work Departments, including consultation with staff and tenants, implications for jobs (and related issues such as tied housing) staff development issues, rehousing policies and the future of any de-commissioned properties.

6.3 It is recommended that the Chief Executive should chair the review group and that member involvement should be on the basis of the previously agreed formula for best value reviews ie three members from the Administration Group, two from the SNP Group and one from the Conservative Group. Officers taking part would include the Chief Executive and Managers from Housing, Social Work and Finance, and it is also proposed to invite representatives from the trade unions, the NHS and the voluntary sector.

6.4 As with all best value reviews, consultation with stakeholders will be a key part of the review process. It is proposed that the group be remitted to consider a programme of surveys/meetings with sheltered housing tenants and wardens, and discussions with representative bodies such as the Dundee Federation of Tenants' Associations and the organisations represented on the Older People Strategic Planning Group.

7 CONSULTATIONS

The Depute Chief Executives and the Directors of Housing and Social Work have been consulted on this report.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Alex Stephen
Chief Executive

(date)

9 August 2004