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**REPORT TO:** COMMUNITY SERVICES  
COMMITTEE

**AGENDA ITEM:** 23

**DATE OF  
MEETING:** 11 APRIL 2002

**CATEGORY:**

**REPORT FROM:** HEAD OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

OPEN

**MEMBERS'  
CONTACT POINT:** SANDRA WHILES (Ext. 5712)

**DOC:**

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02\bvreview-housingservicesw.doc

**SUBJECT:** BEST VALUE REVIEW -  
HOUSING SERVICES

**REF:**

**WARD(S)  
AFFECTED:** ALL

**TERMS OF  
REFERENCE:**

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**1.0** Recommendation

- 1.1 That Members note progress on the Housing Best Value review as detailed in the report
- 1.2 That Members accept the key issues identified for improvement in relation to housing strategy/housing needs and private sector housing services as detailed at 3.4
- 1.3 That Members agree the action plan attached at Annexe A.

**2.0** Purpose

- 2.1 To advise Members of the progress made to date with the Best Value Review of Housing Services.

**3.0** Content

- 3.1 Community Services Committee agreed the scope for the review at its meeting on the 10 January 2002.
- 3.2 Since the last report to Community Services Committee the following activity has occurred:
- the Review Team has met four times
  - two sub groups of the Review Team have developed consultation and benchmarking/comparison strategies for the review
  - two training events have been held for the Review Team, staff and the Tenants Advisory and Consultation Team on Best Value and Housing Finance
  - baseline assessment information has been produced and challenged by the Review Team for the strategic housing/housing needs and private sector housing functions

- this challenge has led to four key issues for improvement being identified on which the remainder of the review will focus

Attendance at Review Team meetings continues to be good with valuable input being provided by the external stakeholders and TACT representatives.

However, there has been limited input from Social Services so far to the review apart from their participation in the full day challenge exercise.

3.3 The work on the Baseline Assessment for the review has been organised in the following sub categories :

- Allocations and the Housing Register
- Homelessness and Housing Advice
- Housing Strategy and Housing Needs
- Private Sector Housing

3.4 The Baseline Information on Housing Strategy and Housing Needs and Private Sector Housing was challenged by the Review Team at its meeting on the 12 March 2002. External challenge was provided through the involvement of two tenants representatives, the CAB, Social Services Walbrook Housing Association and the Deputy Chief Executive.

This meeting identified the following key issues for improvement from the review :

1. Achieving an integrated service for property adaptations for disabled people
2. Effective measurement and use of housing needs and community needs information to develop and deliver prioritised housing programmes
3. Prioritising and targeting resources to achieve effective regeneration of areas
4. Achieving effective strategic and operational housing partnerships

Because of current staffing absences in the Housing Divisions the baseline assessment and challenge exercise for Allocations and the Housing Register Homelessness and Housing Advice. It is expected that this work can be brought back in line as shown in the updated action plan at Annexe A.

3.5 The Review Team developed consultation and benchmarking/comparison strategies. These strategies were produced by two sub groups who then presented their work to the wider Review Team.

3.6 The complementary work on the HRA Business Plan is progressing through the work of the HRA Business Planning Working Group. This group has now met on 6 occasions and has developed draft Housing Management, Financial and some Maintenance/Repairs objectives for the HRA.

3.7 The updated action plan for the remainder of the review is shown at Annexe A.

4.0 **Financial Implications**

4.1 None

