
REPORT TO:	HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 13
DATE OF MEETING:	9 th OCTOBER, 2003	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	HOUSING MANAGER	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	DAWN DAWSON (Ext. 5797)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT - DECENT HOMES STANDARD - THEMATIC REVIEW	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members note the report and the progress made on the Decent Homes Standard Thematic Review.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To update Members on the progress of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Decent Homes Standard - Thematic Review.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Decent Homes Standard group, was established in April 2003, and has consisted of Officers from Housing, Environmental Health, Policy and Best Value, Economic Development and Finance.

- 3.2 A baseline assessment was drawn up and from this a summary of key issues was established (attached at Annexe A).

- 3.3 Many strengths have been found with the way that South Derbyshire District Council is working towards implementing the Decent Homes Standard. Some examples of these are:

- The procurement and use of dedicated asset management software.
- An inclusive Business Planning approach.
- Good involvement of tenants in service development.
- Extensive stock condition survey.
- An integrated Disabled Adaptation service.
- The authorisation to select partners.

- 3.4 Some areas where there were gaps in service were identified as;

- ❑ No housing maintenance and improvement procurement strategy.
- ❑ No established asbestos register.
- ❑ Minimal inclusion of tenant aspirations.
- ❑ No vision for Decent Homes.
- ❑ Poor partnership working.

There were poor links with some partner strategies, no formal linkages between departments, limited securing of additional available resources and poor links between the Housing Strategy and other strategies.

- 3.5 Members of the group consulted staff, TACT and Contractors to test out the findings and discover whether there were any other areas for improvement that should be built into an improvement plan.

Consultation Results

Staff

- (i) More work needs to be carried out to understand tenant aspirations, and how they can be built into a Decent Homes Strategy.
- (ii) More investigation needs to take place, to examine all possible sources of funding, e.g. Capital Receipts
- (iii) The Business Planning process needs to link more closely to the Decent Homes Standard, with a Procurement Strategy in place to deliver the Decent Homes Standard in the longer term.
- (iv) Monitoring Systems need to be better developed, in order to evidence performance.
- (v) Staff achievements in improving the service are not publicised enough.

TACT Members

- (i) TACT members felt that whilst the service was improving, there was no real sense of 'vision' in relation to the Decent Homes Standard.
- (ii) More investigation needs to take place in terms of the use of financial resources, especially capital receipts.
- (iii) Planned approaches across departments would enable better joint working.
- (iv) Better performance monitoring needs to be implemented, with it being better publicised.

Contractors

No responses to consultation with these groups have yet been received.

Next Steps

A draft Improvement Plan is being formulated which will then be circulated to all the previous consultees with a view to an adopted Improvement Plan being in place by the end of October, 2004.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 These will be assessed from the Improvement Plan, once finalised.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 These will be assessed when the Improvement Plan is adopted.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The Decent Homes Standard Review has identified considerable strengths in the way that the Council is working towards the Standard. The gaps in service are accepted by staff, who are keen to deliver further improvements to the service.

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