
REPORT TO:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:	13
DATE OF MEETING:	13TH MARCH 2003	CATEGORY:	DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	HEAD OF COMMUNITY SERVICES	OPEN PARAGRAPH NO:	NA
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	BEVERLY WAGSTAFFE Ext 5822	DOC:	
SUBJECT:	STRATEGIC HOUSING - HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (HIP)	REF:	BW
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:	CS01

1.0 Recommendations

1.1 Members are asked to note the report.

2.0 Purpose of Report

2.1 To inform Members of feedback from the Government Office for East Midlands (GOEM) on the 2002 Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan arrangements for the 2003 submission.

3.0 Detail

3.1 As Members are aware, each year the Government Office for East Midlands (GOEM) assesses the Council's performance in delivering its strategic housing role. Since 1998 the Council has been assessed as being "below average". As a consequence of the changes and improvements made during 2002 the Council's performance has improved with an "average" assessment being obtained this year. Annexe A shows the recent GOEM feedback.

3.2 The Housing Policy statement "The Way Forward for Housing" stressed the importance of authorities strategic housing role. The strategic housing role concerns all the activities intended to ensure that the citizens of an area have access to decent quality, affordable housing. It embraces the assessment of the local housing situation, the co-ordination of services to meet needs and demands, and monitoring and enforcement activities. Although part of the role involves the production of a written strategy, the strategic role is essentially about action. Annexe B sets out the strategic role of the local authority as discussed in the DETR/DSS Housing Green Paper

3.3 The Housing Policy statement made it clear that Councils should have clear and separate objectives for its strategic and landlord functions. This is reflected in the separate feedback for the Housing Strategy and the Business Plan.

3.4 **Housing Strategy - key areas for action:**

- Impact of the authorities work on the Regional Housing Statement
- Developing cross boundary links
- Greater emphasis on meeting the Decent Homes Standard.
- More detailed consultation and monitoring throughout the year.
- Strengthen the authority's enabling role.
- Update private sector stock condition survey
- Assess the needs of special needs categories (elderly, black, minority and ethnics and young people, etc.)

3.4.1 Annexe C sets out the progress made against the priority action identified in the Current Housing Strategy.

The key areas of progress are:

- Capital funding has been secured to carry out a private sector stock condition survey and to assess special needs.
- External consultants are researching the needs of older people in the district. This will feed into the work currently being carried out on developing the vision for the sheltered housing service.
- Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Liaison Group meets quarterly. Six of the nine RSL's are represented as well as the Derbyshire Supporting People Team. Social Services and the Housing Corporation are to be invited to future meetings. The main aim of the group is to increase housing investment in the district and to exchange good practice.
- Customer Charter for the Council's Housing Services has been published.
- Developing cross-boundary links. Arrangements are being made to visit neighbouring authorities at 6 monthly intervals to exchange housing needs issues, best practice and to consider possible partnership arrangements to meet housing needs.
- Consultation and monitoring. Arrangements are in place for a District Wide Strategic Housing Forum to be held twice a year (formerly the Housing Strategy and Planning Group). The aim is to consult with all stakeholders on housing needs for the district and provide feedback on progress made in delivering the priority action areas identified in the current Housing Strategy. A Core Strategic Housing Group is to be established to monitor progress throughout the year. The group will meet bi-monthly. Membership will be the key strategic officers including representatives from Local Plans, Housing Management and Private Sector Housing.

3.5 Business Plan – Key areas for action:

- Concerns are mainly around the lack of known information not included. E.g. benchmarking against neighbouring authorities.
- Need to put a sound performance management system in place.
- Greater emphasis on meeting the Decent Homes Standard.
- Monitoring arrangements.

3.5.1 Progress against key areas for action:

- Officers are working to address the shortfalls identified in the Business Plan.
- Performance Indicators are monitored and published on a monthly basis.
- A Council house stock condition survey has been completed. Planned maintenance works have now been refocused to ensure the stock will meet the decent homes standard by 2010.
- Monitoring. Arrangements are being put in place to monitor the priority action areas identified in the Business Plan.

3.6 On the basis that we will need to submit this year's housing strategy and HRA Business Plan by 30 July the arrangements for the 2003 submission are:

- Meeting of the Core Strategic Housing Group will be held on 11th March 03 to monitor progress made delivering the priority action areas and to agreed action to meet any shortfalls. The group will also discuss the feedback received from GOEM.
- Meeting with GOEM on 21st March 03 to discuss their feedback.
- District Wide Strategic Housing Forum is to be held in early May to identify housing needs for the area.
- Core Strategic Housing Group will meet in May to agree a 3-year priority action plan.
- The Housing Partnership and Strategy Manager will be working closely with the Core Strategic Housing Group to produce the Housing Strategy in June.
- The Advice, Liaison and Sheltered Housing Manager will be working closely the, the Finance Services Manager and the HRA Business Planning Group to produce the HRA Business Plan in June. Given the vacant key posts in housing, external specialist support may be required.
- Statistical appendices completed in July.
- Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan reported to Members Committee in July.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 The information for the Housing Investment Programme is of relevance to planning, housing, private sector housing and economic development services.

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 The Governments assessment affects the capital funding received for investment in the community.

