

STRATEGIC HOUSING
PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Response to Audit Commission Housing Inspection 2005

April 2008 Update

Improvement Plan – Access/Customer Care/Consultation (Generic)

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments / update | <u>Resources</u> H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | <u>UPDATE</u> |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Develop an access strategy in conjunction with the corporate centre, based on research into footfall and need, which clearly identifies how the housing service will: improve access for customers; develop service standards; deliver mandatory customer care training; and use complaints, surveys and other forms of customer consultation to ensure access to services meets customer needs. | Medium | AB / Corporate | Key recommendation of report – to complete by March 1 st 2006 – Item referred to corporate centre | H / C | Homelessness Strategy addressed improvement of access to service. Will be fed into the corporate access strategy when developed. |
| Renew web pages | Short | PK | | H | Completed |
| Review web pages | Ongoing | JH | | H | Completed |
| Review homeless out of hours service | Medium | AB | | H/C | Completed |
| Review daytime homelessness service and service standards and need for a local rate or free phone telephone service (Previously identified) | Medium | JMW | i - Service reviewed to emphasise prevention and introduce soft split | H/C | Review completed – trial of free-phone number taking place at Thetford Customer Contact Centre |

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments / update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | UPDATE |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Review leaflet formats and consultation /participation arrangements for leaflets | Short | AB/GP | | H | Completed |
| Review housing service standards involving customers | Medium | AB/GP | | H | Completed |
| Review need for IT terminal in interview rooms | Short | AB/ Corporate | | H/C | Completed |
| Ensure full consultation on migration to customer services centre | Long | AB/ Corporate | | C/H | Migration of service on hold - Corporate |
| Deliver customer care training to staff | Medium | AB | | H/CON | Training to be held April 22nd |
| Develop a consultation strategy for Housing Services | Medium | AB | | H | Housing Consultation Plan for 06/07 developed. Annual Corporate Plan will be updated from 07/08 |
| Establish a complaints system for Housing Services | Short | AB/GP | | H | Completed |
| Communicate the key messages in the Housing strategy to residents. | Short | AB | | H/C | Completed |
| Review the housing strategy action plan and consolidate it with the ADP (involving partners in that process) | Medium | AB/ Corporate | | H/C | Completed |

Improvement Plan – Diversity (Generic)

| Action | Timescale/ Months : | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments/ update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Within six months, develop a diversity strategy in conjunction with the corporate centre, which includes: profiling of customers to inform service development; a comprehensive training package for housing staff to ensure behavioural compliance with good practice and which is tailored to housing specific service delivery issues; and a system for monitoring contractor compliance on equalities and diversity issues. | Medium | AB/ Corporate | Key recommendation of report – by March 1 st 2006. referred to corporate centre | H/C | BME housing research study completed. Norfolk Wide Action plan in development. |
| Review involvement in the East of England Regional Assembly equality network, the county wide Community Cohesion group, the Racial Equality Council or the BME (Black & Minority Ethnic) sub group of the county wide public involvement forum | Short | AB | | H | Completed |
| Investigate and address the needs of groups other than gypsies and Portuguese including the needs of HIV customers | Medium | AB Corporate | | H/C | Research completed. |
| Develop a BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) housing strategy and specifically take account of Houses Of Multiple Occupation | Medium | AB / GP | | H | In development |

Improvement Plan – Performance Management and Value for Money (Generic)

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments / update | <u>Resources</u> H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | <u>Completed</u> |
|--|--|-------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|
| Review protocols with partner agencies around case management and nominations to ensure improved services for homeless applicants during assessment and rehousing | Medium | AB | | H | Completed. |
| Use newly increased staffing resources as an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of appraisal, performance management, risk management and partnership involvement processes and embed in the way housing services are planned, delivered and monitored | Medium | AB | | H | Completed/ ongoing |
| Within six months, develop systems for involving partners, particularly in rural areas, and customers in monitoring performance and reviewing the continued relevance of strategies on a regular basis | Medium | AB/GP | Key recommendation of report – by March 1 st 2006 | H | Completed. |
| Identify a risk champion in the service | Short | AB | | H | Completed |
| Review the properties and shortcomings of ' FLARE' computer system | Short | GP | | H/C | Completed |

Improvement Plan – Housing Strategy and Enabling

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments/ update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--|--|
| Review the methodology for assessing housing need to include local needs survey information from parish councils or targeted research data on the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic, older or younger people. | Medium | AB | | H | Housing Market Assessment completed. |
| Assess the housing options available for young people Including supported accommodation | Medium | AB/PK | | H/Con | Assessment complete – bids in place |
| Review the decision made in 2002 housing <u>not</u> to adopt a policy recommended an affordable housing policy of 40 per cent on new build sites | Short | AB/PC/ Corporate | | H/C | Review of affordable housing policies currently being undertaken through LDF |
| Develop a strategy to deliver the required number of affordable housing units as defined by the housing needs study of 2003 for 600 units per year and assign affordable housing objectives to named individuals so as to assess success | Long | AB/ Corporate | | H/C | New Affordable Housing Policy to be developed by Q2 2008 following LDF consultation process. |
| Investigate other forms of funding for development | Long | AB/ Corporate | | H/C | Completed 07/08 |
| Adopt a formal 'preferred partner' system | Short | AB/ Corporate | | H/C | Completed |

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments/ update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Prepare development briefs for sites to guide developers | Ongoing | PC/ Corporate | Subject to planning agreement | H/C | Planning target – achieved where appropriate |
| Assess the provision of shared or other low cost home ownership or market renting schemes. | Medium | AB/ Corporate | | H/C | Completed - Part of Housing Market Assessment |
| Establish a protocol with regeneration service areas to ensure that housing is firmly on the agenda | Short | AB/ Corporate | | H/C | Completed/ Ongoing – Growth Point status. |
| Assess the need for a direct lettings scheme in the private rented sector. | Short | PK | | H | Completed - service to be developed in 2007 with landlords forum. |
| Lead the development of a Norfolk wide physical and sensory disability strategy | Medium | AB | | H/CON | To be completed March 31 st 2008 |
| Whilst making use of the powers contained in the Housing Act 2004 as soon as they take effect, develop over the next twelve months a private sector housing strategy. This should be based on a revised stock condition survey | Long | AB/GP | Key recommendation of report – by September 1 st 2006 | H | Completed |

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (9) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments/ update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--|---|
| Review strategies including the empty property and fuel poverty strategies and the renewal policy | Medium | AB/GP | | H | In development – part of 08/09 STP. |

Homelessness and Housing Advice – Performance and Improvement Plan

Improvement Plan - Housing advice and Homelessness

| Action | Timescale/ Months : | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments / update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Monitor the number of homelessness presentations prevented through housing advice | Short | JMW | | H | Completed – ongoing (Best Value Performance Indicator) |
| Undertake a rough sleeper count. | Short | PK | | H | completed march 06 |
| Review protocol with Peddars Way regarding assessment and rehousing processes | Medium | AB/ JMW | Key recommendation of report – undertake as part of choice based lettings proposal - by March 1st | H | Completed as part of transfer of waiting list. |
| Review the budgetary provision for the rent deposit loan scheme | Short | AB/PK | Budget required – in star chamber bid | H | Completed budget increased |
| Review the position regarding a 'sanctuary' scheme to reduce homeless presentations after domestic abuse, | Short | PK | Budget required- in star chamber bid | H | Completed |
| Review the list of private lettings agents it provides to customers asking for help in obtaining private rented accommodation | Short | PK | | H | Completed |

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (12) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments / update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|---|---|-------------------------------|-------------------|--|--|
| Review the 95% target for the speed in assessing homelessness cases | Short | SHM / JMW | | H | Completed – reviewed and maintained |
| Within six months, develop a strategic approach to the provision of interim and temporary accommodation to ensure it is of appropriate quality and in locations which optimise the opportunity for customers to maintain existing support networks. | Medium | AB | | H | Completed |
| Review procedures and practices engaged in placing homeless people in interim accommodation | Short | JMW | | H | Completed |
| Review the level of support given to people placed in temporary accommodation | Short | AB | | H | Completed review of floating support finalised |
| Establish a programme to regularly check the quality of temporary or interim accommodation and review the need to adopt the Greater Norwich grading system for bed and breakfast accommodation, based on the fitness standard | Short | PK/AC | | H | Completed Regular checks undertaken |
| Assess the need to adopt the Government's hostel review toolkit. | Short | PK/AC | | H | Completed Desirable elements adopted |

Improvement Plan - Private Sector

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (12) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and Support) | Comments / update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|--|---|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| Undertake a stock condition survey to identify properties not achieving decent homes standard | Long | GP | | H/Con | Completed |
| Investigate the effectiveness of local Performance Indicators and consider identifying further ones. | Short | GP/AB | | H | Completed |
| Amend e mail contact provided on web site from principal housing officer | Short | GP | | H | Completed |
| Realistically assess the risks inherent in inspecting only 30 Houses of Multiple Occupation per year in a district. | Short | GP/AB | | H | Completed new target adopted |
| Reinvigorate the landlord forum and task it to :- Develop its terms of reference Establish an accreditation scheme | Short | GP | | H | completed |
| Establish systems to ensure housing associations in the district achieve 100 per cent decent homes standard by 2010. | Short | GP | | H | Monitoring system in place via annual reporting mechanism. |
| Review the use of intervention strategies to target disrepair in the private sector | Short | GP/AB | | H | To be undertaken as integral part of development of private sector housing strategy in 07 |

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (12) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments / update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|--|---|-------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| Establish a system to prioritise work on the worse cases of empty properties or properties in disrepair | Short | GP | | H | Completed |
| Review the application of small grants and loans, under the 'Enhance' and Domicile schemes, to help tackle disrepair. | Short | GP/AB | | H | Completed |
| Complete discussions to transfer 'safeguard' inspections and customer support role on grants and loans to the Home Improvement Agency. (HIA) | Short | GP/AB | | H | Completed |
| Identify resources required to focus on Home Energy Act work and education to ensure 'Enhance' is well used for heating installations. | Short | GP/AB | | H | Completed budget agreed |
| Establish consultative proposals for the implementation of the 2004 Housing Act. | Short | GP | | H | Completed |
| Agree arrangements with partner housing associations to manage Empty Dwelling Management Orders, | Short | GP | | H | Completed |
| Examine how the enabling role is used in respect of adaptations | Short | GP/AB | | H | To be considered as part of development of Physical Disabilities Strategy |
| Establish a district wide register of adapted properties to allow all agencies to 'work smarter' in exploring rehousing options. | Medium | GP/AB | | H/RSL'S | As above. |

| Action | Timescale/ Months : Short (3) Medium (6) Long (12) Ongoing | Lead Officer (and support) | Comments / update | Resources H = Housing C = Corp Con = Consultant | Completed |
|---|---|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Review and improve target timescales allocated to dealing with DFG's | Short | GP/AB | | H | Review completed – timescales on priority 1 cases have improved. |
| Agree with partners a system for reporting performance i.e. Home Improvement Agencies and Occupational Therapists | Short | GP/AB | | H | Agreed. |

Key

AB – Anita Brennan

GP – Gordon Partridge

PC – Paul Cason

PK – Polly Kane

JMW – John Walker

AC – Adrian Cherry