

# HOUSING CABINET MEMBER MEETING

## Agenda Item 67

Brighton & Hove City Council

|                         |   |  |                 |
|-------------------------|---|--|-----------------|
| <b>Subject:</b>         | <b>Draft Service Improvement Plan for the Housing Revenue Account 2009-2012</b> |  |                 |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b> | <b>12 November 2008</b>   |  |                 |
| <b>Report of:</b>       | <b>Director of Adult Social Care &amp; Housing</b>                              |  |                 |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b> | <b>Name:</b>  | <b>Nick Hibberd</b>                      | <b>Tel:</b> 29- |
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| <b>Key Decision:</b>    | <b>Yes</b>  | <b>Forward Plan No: HSG 2188</b>         |                 |
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>  | <b>All</b>  |  |                 |

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The Service Improvement Plan for the Housing Revenue Account 2009-12 sets out the programme for improving the management of council housing over the next three years. It has been developed with the overall objective of achieving excellent housing management services for council tenants and leaseholders in Brighton & Hove.
- 1.2 The Service Improvement Plan responds to the priorities of tenants and leaseholders and sets out the long term vision and strategic framework for the management of council housing in our city.
- 1.3 This report is to present the consultation draft of the Service Improvement Plan to the Housing Cabinet Member for approval. Consultation with staff and tenants on the draft will take place during November 2008 subject to approval.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Housing Cabinet Member approve the consultation draft of the Service Improvement Plan for the Housing Revenue Account 2009-2012 (Appendix 1)

#### 3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Service Improvement Plan sets out the programme for managing and maintaining our council housing over the next three years. It has been developed in response to feedback from tenant working groups over the last twelve months, with the overall objective of improving housing management services to an excellent standard. The plan sets out the strategic aims, and targets for each area of work and takes account of residents' priorities, interests and concerns.
- 3.2 Our vision for managing Council housing in Brighton & Hove is:

*"to provide excellent Housing Management services, with our residents at the heart of everything we do."*

Through the service improvement plan we aim to achieve excellence in Housing Management by focusing on 5 core strategic priorities:

1. Improve services to an excellent standard, with residents at the heart of everything we do
2. Improve the quality and sustainability of our homes and neighbourhoods
3. Deliver value for money services and a sustainable business plan
4. Make best use of our housing stock
5. Ensure that social housing provides a platform for reducing inequality and creating opportunity

3.3 Improvement planning is a vital tool to help us to achieve our vision. The plan aims to:

- Set out the authority's vision as a social landlord; our strategic objectives for the service; and the actions we will take to deliver our objectives
- Set out our medium term financial strategy to achieve a sustainable HRA business and retain the Council's housing stock
- Shape a new design for the Housing Management service with the aim of bringing staff together, increasing accountability and improving services.
- Help deliver a customer focused, performance-driven culture and ensure that staff are supported and developed to deliver excellent services
- Integrate with both the city's Housing Strategy and wider corporate objectives to place Council housing at the centre of a wider strategic approach to reducing inequality and promoting community well-being.
- Outline the role social housing should play now and in the future to improve people life chances, underpin social cohesion, and contribute to sustainable mixed income communities in Brighton & Hove.
- Introduce a wider cross-tenure, housing options approach to frontline tenancy management services to maximise the use of the housing stock, tackle worklessness, and promote greater social and economic mobility.

## 4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Over the last 12 months, we have involved tenants in a wide range of working groups to seek their views on how we can achieve excellence in service delivery. This business plan reflects the priorities that tenants have given us.

4.2 Listening to our residents is fundamental to our way of working. The Service Improvement Plan has been developed following a collection of processes involving residents over the last twelve months. As part of the planning process we have engaged with residents in the following ways:

- Adaptations Chairman's Working Group
- Allocations Chairman's working Group
- Tenancy Agreement Review Focus Group
- Estate Services Review Focus Group
- Sheltered Housing Tenants Focus Group and resident roadshows
- Estates Development Budget Working Group
- Asset Management Panel

We have also considered feedback given by tenants at Area Panels and at Housing Management Consultative Committee.

4.3 In July 2008, we carried out a full status survey of tenants and leaseholders, asking them for their views about the service we provide and their priorities for their homes and the area they live in. We have analysed the preliminary findings and have shaped the priorities for actions and key activities within this plan

4.4 The draft Service Improvement Plan will be consider by the Tenants' Citywide Assembly on 28th November and by staff at conferences during November 2008.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

5.1 Any financial implications arising from the implementation of the Service Improvement Plan will be included in the HRA Revenue and Capital Programme Budget Reports, as appropriate, which are reported annually to Housing Cabinet.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Sue Chapman 22 Oct 2008*

### Legal Implications:

5.2 The Council has wide powers under the Housing Act 1985 to provide and manage housing accommodation. The proposals in the improvement plan are compatible with those powers. The Council must take the Human Rights Act into account when exercising its powers, but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights Act rights would be adversely affected by the recommendation in this report.

*Layer Consulted: Liz Woodley 22 Oct 2008*

#### Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The service improvement plan has been developed along side the Housing Strategy as a staged process that has enabled us to engage with service users, service providers and the wider community to take into account their views, concerns and aspirations. An equalities impact assessment on the draft service improvement plan will be undertaken during the consultation period to identify any positive and negative impacts that our strategic objectives may have on service users, staff and the community .

#### Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Priority 4 of the service improvement plan is to *“Improve the quality and sustainability of our homes and neighbourhoods”*. The plan proposes to achieve this priority through a number of initiatives, including:
- Using our procurement processes to maximise opportunities for the improving sustainability and energy efficiency of our housing stock
  - Involving tenants in improving their neighbourhoods through the Estates Development Budget
  - Seeking to achieve the Cleaner Safer Greener Neighbourhood Kitemark

#### Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The Service Improvement Plan aims to strengthen the Council’s response to harassment and anti-social behaviour.

#### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 A risk and opportunity matrix is maintained for the housing revenue account business plan as part of the corporate risk register.

#### Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 This service improvement plan has implications for council tenants across the city. The HRA service improvement plan support the priorities in Brighton & Hove’s Corporate Plan 2008-2001

### **6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 6.1 The priorities and strategic actions contained in this plan were developed in response resident recommendations arising from a series of working groups over the last 12 months. Each working groups reviewed a specific area of the service and made recommendations for improvement.

### **7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The report considers the consultation draft of the service improvement plan for the Housing Revenue Account.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Draft Service Improvement Plan for the Housing Revenue Account 2008-2013

### **Documents In Members' Rooms**

1. None

### **Background Documents**

1. None

