

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	7.
Date:	9 th January 2011	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Housing Department – Quarterly Progress		
Report by:	Head of Housing		
Other Officers Involved	Housing Innovation Officer Housing Enforcement Manager Responsive Repairs Manager Asset Management Officer		
Director	Director of Neighbourhoods		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor K. Bowman, Portfolio Holder for Housing Management		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

COMMUNITY SAFETY – Ensuring that communities are safe and secure
CUSTOMER FOCUSED SERVICES – Providing excellent customer focused services
ENVIRONMENT – Promoting and enhancing a clear and sustainable environment
REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities
SOCIAL INCLUSION – Promoting fairness, equality and lifelong learning.
STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation.

Please specify how the proposals help to deliver the corporate aims.

TARGETS

The Housing Department contributes to a range of corporate targets, these are referred to within the body of the report.

VALUE FOR MONEY

This report illustrates how the Housing Department is functioning efficiently, and makes reference to a range of projects that had individually been accepted as they provide VFM.

THE REPORT

This report contains the quarterly report for the Housing Department. The statistical report contains information up to September 2011, but the text makes reference to more recent events.

a. Rent Arrears

Rent arrears progress closely echoes the pattern established in previous years. This means that arrears have remained flat throughout the year, and we can expect an improvement in the last quarter. This is largely due to the impact of the rent free weeks.

Rent arrears are a target within the corporate plan. There are concerns that welfare reforms will have an impact on rent arrears, and a more detailed report will be presented to Members at a future meeting.

b. Former Tenants Arrears.

Progress on FTA's remains challenging, throughout this period the administrator post has been only partially filled on a part time basis, but at time of writing the post has been advertised. It is hoped that once the post is filled more progress will be apparent. The reduction of FTA debt is a corporate target.

c. Repairs Issues.

The repairs service continues to perform well both in terms of speed and quality with high ratings for satisfaction. There are some issues around the measure for Right First Time. There is no clear definition of how Right First Time is measured, and Bolsover has adopted a strict definition which means we appear to be performing less well when compared with others (within the repairs benchmarking group) who have adopted a different definition. We are currently working with others to develop a standard definition.

d. Mobile Working

As previously reported the vast majority of repairs are dealt with through mobile working, and this has worked well since June 2011. However, the project continues with the aim of utilising the system for all operatives. The project is currently on target to introduce text messaging for tenants (a corporate target designed to reduce missed calls) and for voids work before the end of December. The final module is gas servicing, this currently works well on a database, and requires more work to transfer information onto the Academy system and then mobile working. Due to the importance of the module and the specific regulations for the control of landlords' records this module will be introduced at the end of the financial year.

e. Choice Based Letting.

There is a Corporate target to introduce CBL by the end of December. The system was in place by the end of November with training and awareness sessions being offered for officers, Members and customers. The system will be fully available to customers during January 2012.

f. Mutual Exchanges.

It is a requirement of the Government's new national housing strategy for every council to have subscribed to an online mutual exchange system. One of the recognised providers of such a scheme is Abris who supply the new CBL system. Officers have negotiated a reduced price for this system and the cost can be contained within the existing CBL budget. This scheme will be launched in two phases, a basic system will be offered with CBL with an enhanced version being introduced in the next financial year.

g. SP Contracts

The Supporting People Team have confirmed their wish to extend our current contracts for mobiles wardens, sheltered housing and alarm monitoring. We continue to work with Chesterfield and South Derbyshire to develop an option to compete for the county-wide monitoring contract when advertised.

h. Capital Programme.

The Housing Stock Group in December agreed changes to the capital programme. This made sufficient savings to allow the purchase of 21 replacement bungalows at Langwith.

ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The contents of the report.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial: Not directly
Legal: Not directly
Human Resources: Not directly

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the information in this report is noted.

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

To update Members on the Housing Department performance.

ATTACHMENTS: **N**
FILE REFERENCE:
SOURCE DOCUMENT: