

# WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

**TO: HOUSING COMMITTEE - 25TH JANUARY 2000**

**SUBJECT: HOUSING SERVICE PLAN TO MARCH 2000**

**FROM: COMMISSIONING DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF HOUSING**

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise Members of the results of the monitoring of the Housing Service Plan.
- 1.2 To seek Members' approval of the performance indicators which will be offered for inclusion in the Local Performance Plan.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The service plan to March 2000 has been approved by Committee and Appendix 1 provides a detailed monitoring report of the first seven months of the plan.

## **3 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- 3.1 Section 5 outlines key performance indicators. This section will be superceded in March 2000 by the Local Performance Plan.
- 3.2 Appendix 2 lists performance indicators which may be included in the Local Performance Plan, which is currently being developed.
- 3.3 The indicators are based upon national historical indicators. Local indicators are likely to be developed, following consultation with tenants.

## **4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To approve the monitoring report for the period from 1st April to the 30th November.

Jeanette McGarry,  
Commissioning Director.

Derrick Dyas,  
Head of Housing.

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**Background Papers:** Housing Service Plan to March 2000

**Contact Officer:** Jeanette McGarry, Commissioning Director.  
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**Areas in District Affected:** All

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**HOUSING BUSINESS UNIT**

**Final Monitoring Report on Service Plan**

The following paragraph numbers refer to the paragraph numbers in the Service Plan and give details on performance achieved against the agreed indicators.

**Section 1 : Service Standards**

The Service Standards as laid down in Section 2 have been adhered to.

**Section 2 : Resources**

2.4 Savings Options

| <u>Option</u>                               | <u>Target 1999/2000</u> |          |
|---|-------------------------|----------|
| Withdraw grant to Mayday Trust              | £2,500                  | Achieved |
| Additional rent at William Wallsgrove House | £6,000                  | Achieved |
| Increase legal charges to HRA               | £7,400                  | Achieved |
| <u>Total</u>                                | <u>£15,900</u>          |          |

**Section 3 : Service Delivery**

Services provided directly by the Business Unit are:-

- Service Strategy and Regulation
- Other Housing Property
- Housing Associations
- Homelessness
- Sheltered Housing
- Client - Housing Management
- Contractor - Housing Management

Services which the Business Unit provides through contractors are:-

- Repairs and Maintenance - various
- Concierge Services

- Management of Shops (via Property Services)

The Unit prepared well for CCT. A great deal of honing down has taken place.

The Unit has concentrated on benchmarking in preparation for the Best Value regime. Indeed, two exercises with Arthur Anderson were conducted in preparation for CCT:

- (i) Benchmarking with 25 Local Authorities; and
- (ii) Mixture of Local Authorities and Housing Associations.

The Housing Business Unit has joined the 'HouseMark' benchmarking group. A report on the Business Excellence Model is being presented to this Committee.

#### **Section 4 : Quality**

The Unit is working towards the development of a robust Tenants' Compact. Evidence of this includes:

- tenant representatives on committee
- User Group established to monitor CCT contract and other Housing services
- tenants federation supported

The Unit is now addressing the User Group's agenda, e.g. specification for repairs, the rate of return of the repairs comment cards.

4.2.3 Staff have received Health and Safety training but would now benefit from a refresher course.

4.2.4 Staff have received training in Equal Opportunities. Staff have also received additional race awareness training.

4.2.5 Recruitment training and guidance has been complied with.

4.2.6 One member of staff has taken advantage of the Voluntary Reduced Time policy.

4.2.7 Environmental training is on target. The Unit is awaiting further guidance from the Commissioning Team.

#### **4.3 Communication**

The communications element of the service plan is monitored by the Chief Executive.

#### **4.4 Specification**

4.4.1 Consultation:

The Housing Act requires the Unit to consult on changes to policy and practice. The following exercises commenced during 1999:

- Fallow Hill
- Crown Way
- Spinney Hill
- BGOP Sheltered Housing Visioning Workshops
- Tenants Satisfaction Survey

The service plan requires that a pilot project involving the public in the choice of services and service standards be undertaken. The Unit complied by establishing:

- User Group
  - Developing Pilot Estate Agreement
  -

4.4.2 The Business Unit will be fundamentally reviewed in 2001. Many tools are in hand:

- HouseMark
- Business Excellence Model
- Consultation

4.4.3 Regular monitoring meetings with contractors take place.

4.4.4 The leaflets are on file as evidence.

4.4.5 A draft EMAS Programme has been prepared.

4.4.6 The outcomes of the Tenant Compact Survey and Lettings Policy have all been shared with tenants.

4.4.7 Complaints and details of remedial action are reported regularly to this committee.

#### 4.5 **Delivery**

4.5.1 The systems and procedures to ensure that the required service is correctly delivered are in place. However, the CCMS Section have not yet completed the re-draft of the procedures manual. An audit plan is in place.

4.5.2 The business plan has been reviewed and updated for 2000.

4.5.3 Performance indicators are monitored and a corporate report concerning those set by the Audit Commission was presented to the Performance Review Sub-Committee during 1999.

4.5.4 The Unit is a member of a benchmarking club and displays commitment to the process of continuous improvement.

4.5.5 Revised service level agreements with the Legal and IT Business Units are in place. The Commissioning Director has been provided with copies.

4.5.6 The business plan describes the process for external communications.

## 5.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

|     | Objective   | Measure  | Comments  |
|-----|---|--|---|
| 5.1 | To fully prepare for Housing Management Contract CCT to ensure that the best tenderer is appointed. | (i) To continue the preparations for CCT in Housing Management throughout 1998/99 in accordance with the action plan.<br>(ii) To continue to develop mechanisms and procedures to ensure that there is close working between client and contractor by April 1999.  | Completed Regular minuted Client/ Contractor meetings.  |
| 5.2 | To review the Housing Contract in terms of Best Value.  | (i) To develop a mechanism to incorporate the Best Value principles within the Housing Management Contract by October 1999.<br>(ii) To look at the evaluation of the contract price in relation to Best Value by December 1999.<br>(iii) To review the Housing Management Contract on a quarterly basis with the internal monitoring team. | Perf. Man. User Group Arthur Anderson Benchmark-ing Scheme. Revisit.<br><br>2 levels of monitoring: client/ contractor bi-monthly, internal team monthly. |

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| 5.3 | To ensure that services provided through all contracts and including the (notional) Housing Management CCT Contract are of the specified quality and accord with the Council's policies. | To produce for Committee reports about contracted services which identify contractor performance against targets (for every other Committee cycle).  | In process of con-solidating.   |
| 5.4 | To benchmark the housing service.  | To develop a programme to benchmark the key service areas and to have identified benchmark partners by October 1999.   | HouseMark<br>Arthur Anderson<br>Work Partners<br>not identified.  |
| 5.5 | To ensure that Housing contribute to the Corporate Strategy and the Key Issues Strategies.   | To support other Business Units in delivering the following actions under the K.I.S. within prescribed timescales:-<br>CO2, 3, 4, 5<br>ED1, 3, 4, 7<br>EN2, 3, 4, 7<br>EQ9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20<br>JW3, 8, 11, 12   | BGOP Visioning Exercise,<br>Kenilworth Connection,<br>Anti-Poverty Strategy,<br>CRE Standards,<br>Community Against Racism,<br>Crime and Disorder,<br>Grassroots - EMAS,<br>GAP, CHAIN,<br>Old Town Working Party,<br>Parish Charter:<br>Rural Initiatives. |
| 5.6 | To review Housing Policies.  | (i) To keep up to date the Schedule of Housing Policies.<br>(ii) To produce a rolling programme/proposals by October 1999 to review the Policies.<br>(iii) To consider by June 1999 whether specific groups are excluded from the Housing Register.<br>(iv) To review by June 1999 whether the Council wishes to | Schedule on Intranet -Nov. Cttee.<br>Commenced Cttee Report - Nov .1999.<br><br>Nov. Cttee decided NOT to exclude.  |



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|      |   | <p>adopt 'Intro. Tenancies'.</p> <p>(v) To consider by June 1999 whether the Housing Benefit Regulations can be used to encourage the movement of tenants from larger to smaller properties.</p> <p>(vi) To review by December 1999 the option for decorating homes for the Elderly and Disabled.</p>  | <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Welfare Reform Bill includes reference to this. Seeking clarification.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> |
| 5.7  | To provide additional support services to target groups for whom the Business Unit has some responsibility. | <p>(i) To carry out a feasibility study regarding provision of a gardening service for the elderly by September 1998. (Commissioning Team)</p> <p>(ii) To review the Service Level Agreement with the Young Homeless Project each year.</p> <p>(iii) To review Service Level Agreements with those agencies that provide "supported" or "move on" accommodation each year.</p> | <p>BGOP Action Plan.</p> <p>Reviewed Report -June Cttee.</p> <p>Reviewed Report -June Cttee.</p>             |
| 5.8  | To comply with the statutory framework to produce the Housing Investment Programme.                         | <p>(i) To ensure that by the due date the Annual Plan and Operational Information is completed.</p> <p>(ii) To ensure that by the due date the Strategy Statement is produced.</p>   | <p>On target.</p> <p>On target.</p>  |
| 5.9  | To develop strategic liaison between Social Services and Health.  | <p>(i) To identify key players within Social Services and Health and set up a regular liaison by December 1998.</p> <p>(ii) To produce an initial report to Members on the outcomes of that liaison by October 1999.</p>   | <p>Completed.</p> <p>Report -January Committee</p>   |
| 5.10 | To consider the future of the Sheltered Housing Service at Warwick District                                 | <p>(i) To develop written procedures for Elderly Services. Control and mobiles - Dec 1998 Sheltered and very sheltered -</p>   | <p>Not completed. On hold due to operational issues.</p>   |

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|      | Council.   | <p>March 1999.</p> <p>(ii) To develop Performance Indicators for the Sheltered Housing Service by December 1999.</p> <p>(iii) To review the recommendations of the "Shared Vision" and other research material and to develop a future strategy by April 2000.</p>   | Members tolerance required.  |
| 5.11 | To carry out an analysis of the Housing Needs Survey.            | <p>(i) To consider the findings of the Survey and report to Committee on its implications by August 1999, incorporating those implications in the 1999 H.I.P. Strategy.</p> <p>(ii) To consult with other R.S.L.s as appropriate by June 1999.</p>   | Incorporated elements of rec. within the Strategy. Report to January Committee. Completed.   |
| 5.12 | To review the system of allocations at Warwick District Council. | <p>(i) To further develop the strategy for Rough Sleepers by June 1999.</p> <p>(ii) To consider by December 1998 whether the District should be more proactive in its support following the Centre-point study on Youth Homelessness.</p> <p>(iii) To consider the introduction of a District-wide Housing Forum by March 1999.</p> <p>(iv) To review the implications of the Friendship Report on Minority Ethnic Issues and formulate specific proposals to action by June 1999.</p> <p>(v) To carry out a thorough analysis of trends and to formulate specific proposals for action, particularly with regard to the Homeless, by June 1999.</p> | <p>Homeless Action Prog.</p> <p>June Committee.</p> <p>June Committee.</p> <p>Position Statement - June 1998 Committee. Ethnic Minority Strategy to be prepared. Monitoring but not reported to committee. No obvious trend.</p> |

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| 5.13 | To consider the issue of Safer Estates.  | In conjunction with the Police, to develop a Safer Estates Agreement for Committee by October 1999.  | Meeting with Super-intendent Cake -report to Strategy Committee.                  |
| 5.14 | To develop Joint Commissioning with the Housing Corporation.   | (i) To work with R.S.L.s and the Housing Corporation to develop Joint Commissioning, including developing Performance Standards and criteria for the selection of R.S.L.s by specific sites.<br>(ii) To work with R.S.L.s and the Housing Corporation to define "affordable" housing.<br>(iii) To implement Joint Commissioning with effect from April 1999. | Addressed in HIP Statement.<br><br>Definition created by WMLGA.<br><br>Completed. |
| 5.15 | To produce an Exit Strategy to ensure the continuing decrease in private sector empty properties after April 1999. | To produce a report for Housing Committee in 1998 detailing the practical steps required to achieve the Exit Strategy.   | Completed. No ongoing work.   |
| 5.16 | To review the lessons learned from the Floods Disaster of Easter 1998.   | (i) To consider whether a Tenants Insurance Scheme should be developed by June 1999.<br>(ii) To update the existing Radio System in conjunction with other Business Units to ensure consistency of service and adequate and swift communication by April 1999.   | Report to January Committee.<br><br>Ongoing -out to tender January 2000.          |
| 5.17 | To review the management for high rise accommodation in the District.  | To identify proposals for the future management of the high rise stock by June 1999.   | Ongoing.<br>Gathering data.   |
| 5.18 | To consider the housing implications of the Spinney Hill   | To report, in consultation with the appropriate Commissioning Director, on the implications of   | Opened 14th June 1999.  |

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|      | Drop-in Centre.  | this by March 1999.  |  |
| 5.19 | To formulate proposals for dealing with hard to let properties.  | <p>(i) With effect from December 1998, to advise the Housing Committee of each property that has been empty for 12 weeks or more, outlining the reasons and the action taken.</p> <p>(ii) To formulate a strategy for dealing with those properties that are hard to let by June 1999.</p> <p>(iii) To come up with specific proposals to market hard to let properties or to bring forward proposals to make them more 'desirable' by October 1999.</p> | <p>Report to Committee - ongoing.</p> <p>Dealt with on scheme by scheme process. Pre-dominantly properties for older people.</p> |
| 5.20 | To protect empty properties from illegal occupation.   | To ensure that by December 1998 a procedure exists with practical actions to minimise the risk of illegal occupation, including sub-letting.   | Pilot exercise. Spot checks on 44 properties revealed 2 queries. Report to Jan. Cttee.   |
| 5.21 | To assess tenant satisfaction with the Housing Service and ensure good communications between tenant and Unit. | <p>(i) To undertake customer satisfaction surveys biennially, amongst a representative sample of tenants.</p> <p>(ii) To develop a Tenants Suggestion Scheme by March 1999.</p> <p>(iii) To produce an annual report to tenants and leaseholders, giving information and performance data by September each year.</p> <p>(iv) To review publications throughout 1998/99 to ensure that they reflect changes brought about by new legislation.</p>        | <p>Completed and reported to committee.</p> <p>Published in Home News.</p> <p>On target.</p> <p>On target.</p>                   |
| 5.22 | To review the involvement of Residents in Housing  | (i) To hold the Quality Event on 17th October 1998 and to deliver the outcomes in the  | Completed.   |

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|      | Management.  | <p>Quality Brief.</p> <p>(ii) To establish a Tender Evaluation Panel, including Residents, Officers and Members, with a view to evaluating the tender by January 1999.</p> <p>(iii) To establish a User Group to formally monitor the Housing Management Contract on a quarterly basis from June 1999.</p> <p>(iv) To review the Residents Association Charter and produce a Tenant Participation Compact by March 2000.</p> | <p>Completed.</p><br><p>Completed.</p><br><p>On target.</p>   |
| 5.23 | To develop Estate Management Agreements.   | <p>(i) To agree and establish an Estate Management Agreement by March 2000.</p> <p>(ii) To examine the potential for other Estate Management Agreements in the District and to report by March 2000.</p>   | On target to cover Fallow Hill and Crown Way.   |
| 5.24 | To participate in and help evaluate the Government for Older People Pilot Project. | <p>(i) To participate in joint working and initiatives that assist our customers i.e. tenants, applicants and users of the Community Care Management system.</p> <p>(ii) To provide the Council's Evaluator for the Pilot providing support to the Member Evaluation Team.</p>   | <p>Participation in BGOP Officer Working Group ongoing.</p> <p>Officer support for first year of programme.</p> |

### **Performance Plan 2000**

Estimate figures for 1999/00 ("and is now.....") have not been included it is proposed that these be calculated from year end figures. The comparisons with district council averages and best councils is based on the latest (1997/98) top 25 percentile and averages provided by the Audit Commission.

| PI  | Historical | Target | Notes |
|---|------------|--------|-------|
| BVPs where we have prior information (defined |            |        |       |

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| as being previously ACPs where we have to set targets)   |   |  |  |
| The Average time that a Council property (that does not need major works) is vacant before reletting | The Council has been working diligently to reduce the time that it takes to relet properties from a high of 5 weeks in 1997/98, it was 4.3 weeks in 1998/99 and is now down to..... | The top performing councils are able to achieve this within 4 weeks, but the Council has set harder the target of 3.5 weeks to bring it in line with the best district councils  | New Target   |
| The average weekly amount spent on managing your homes   | The Council aims to keep management costs (part of the rent) to a minimum. In 1998/99 this was £7.72 per home per week and is now.....  | In 1997/98 we were £1.50 under the district council average and very close to the best district councils. Our target for this year is.....   | New Target<br><br>This target requires setting based on this years rent and estimates, then increased with inflation |
| The average weekly amount spent on repairing your homes  | The Council aims to keep repairs costs (part of the rent) down, but at the same time achieve repairs quality. In 1998/99 this was £9.54 per home per week and is now.....           | In 1997/98 repairs costs were £3 per home per week cheaper than the average for district councils. We were one of the countries best performing district councils and our target for this year is to maintain our position | New Target   |
| Proportion of rent collected   | The council aims to reduce rent arrears to the minimum practical. The proportion of rent collected in 1998/99 was 98.9% and is now.....   | Our performance here is about average for district councils. In order to achieve top performance we should aim to collect at least 99.9%, our new target.  | New Target   |
| Tenant Satisfaction with the Housing Service   | The Council carries out a biennial survey of tenant satisfaction. The 1999 survey indicated that 81% are satisfied with the overall Housing Service.                                | Market Research UK bench marking indicates tenant satisfaction is likely to be higher than the district council average. Our target is 95%   | (CCT) Target   |
| Tenant satisfaction with arrangements for tenant participation                                       | The survey also indicated that 70% of tenants were satisfied with the arrangements for involving tenants  | A new target will be set at 75% but may be subject to change in line with the Best Value Indicators and the  | New Target   |

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|   |   | Tenant Compact  |  |
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| ACPI's  |   |   |  |
| Repairs response  | <p>Number completed in local target time in 1998/99 was 87% and is now.....</p> <p>To complete:<br/> 95% of Very Urgent jobs within 24 hours<br/> 95% of Urgent jobs within 3 working days<br/> 85% of Routine jobs (category 1) within 8 working days<br/> 90% of Routine jobs (category 2) within 30 working Days</p> | In 1997/98 we performed average of 84% The current year but we would need to be with the best targets are based on of repair. These targets next year. in line with the indicators. | We should await further guidance and next years redefined figures before setting new Targets |
| Tenants owing 13 weeks rent arrears of £250 or over   | In 1998/99 almost 5% of tenants were in this category, this year it will be.....National comparisons show we are well below average.  | Our local target for this figure is to achieve 4% by 2001   | Existing Target  |
| Average number of homeless households in Bed & Breakfast  | In 1998/99 there were on average 7 households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, this year it will be.....   | Our local target figure is no more than 5 cases per month. We have half as many cases as the district council average   | Existing Target  |
| Homelessness  | Average time to process allocations was 24.8 days in 1998/99, this year it will be.....   | We are about average for district councils but intend to set rigorous targets based on the new Best Value indicators next year  | Develop Target   |
| Additional Local INDICATORS which reflect Tenant Priorities from the 1999 Best Value survey of all tenants. |   |   |  |
| Repairs satisfaction (cards)  | A repairs card is sent out with every repair and every year around 25% are returned. In 1998/99 97% of responses were from satisfied customers , and the figure for this year will be.....  | Our local target figure is 97% which we are achieving, however, we are seeking to encourage a larger return in conjunction with the Tenant User Group.                              | Existing Target  |
| Repairs satisfaction (survey)   | The tenant satisfaction survey reveals overall satisfaction by users to be 77%  | A new target of 80% will be set for satisfaction as measured by surveys.  | New Target   |
| Post inspection   | last year we inspected 12.5% of reported  | Our target is to post   | Existing (CCT)   |

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| levels                              | repairs after completion. This included 92% of jobs over £600, 59% of jobs over £400, 34% of jobs over £200 and 7% of jobs up to £200   | inspect 12.5% of reported repairs (which exceeds Audit Commission Guidance).  | Target   |
| Major repairs quality               | The tenant satisfaction survey revealed that 73% of users were satisfied with major repairs and maintenance.  | A new target of 75% will be set for satisfaction as measured by surveys, and work is under way to develop an indicator based on satisfaction cards returned (as with other repairs).  | New Target   |
| Advice on rent payment difficulties | The Council aims to assist all with genuine hardship and rent difficulties by providing helpful advice, and offering specialist money advice where appropriate, while maintaining a clear policy that rent arrears are not acceptable.  | Out target is to contact tenants within 10 working days of arrears first arising, and to undertake a personal visit where a notice to seek possession is issued. Further targets are to be developed in this area, for example, in terms of staff training. | Existing (CCT) Target                                      |
| Nuisance & racial harassment        | Nuisance and racial harassment is a serious concern within Council Housing. Last year 89% of non urgent nuisance cases were investigated within 28 working days. However, we investigated 100% of cases involving serious violence within 1 working day and 79% of urgent cases within 2 working days | Our target is to investigate 95% of non urgent cases within 28 days, but 99% of cases involving violence within 1 working day and 99% of urgent cases within 2 working days   | Existing (CCT) Target                                      |
| Neighbourhood security              | We aim to develop indicators in this area, principally establishing a procedure to respond to home security concerns reported by tenants within a fortnight, and around maintaining the budget for lighting, removing graffiti, and dealing with the results of vandalism.                            | Further developments will include targets for dealing with antisocial behaviour, and inspection of open spaces and garage areas, will be developed for 2001.  | Develop Target   |
| Housing allocations                 | 95% of application forms for housing have their points calculated within 10 working days of their receipt. Under the Common Housing Register we aim to nominate people to Housing Associations promptly and monitor Housing Association satisfaction with the scheme.                                 | Our target is to point 95% of application forms within 10 working days; we also aim to nominate applicants to Housing Associations within 48 hours of the vacancy being reported to us. We are on target for both.  | Existing (CCT) Target & Common Housing Register agreement. |
|                                     |   |   |  |



