

# **Report to Housing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 27 April 2006**



**Subject: Best Value Service Review of Housing Services -  
Six-Monthly Progress Report on Service Development Plan**

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Committee Secretary: Adrian Hendry, ext.4246**

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## **Recommendation:**

- (1) That the fourth Six-Monthly Progress Report on the Housing Service Development Plan, attached as an appendix, be noted; and**
- (2) That, in view of there only being a small number of outstanding tasks, no further progress reports be considered by the Scrutiny Panel, and that the completion of the remaining tasks be monitored by the Head of Housing Services through the Housing Services Special Projects Plan, which is updated bi-monthly.**

## **Background**

1. On 25 March 2004, the former Overview and Scrutiny Committee (1) recommended to the Cabinet that:
  - a) the report of the Housing Service Review Panel, formed to oversee the comprehensive Best Value Service Review of the whole of Housing Services, be endorsed;
  - b) the associated Service Development Plan be adopted; and
  - c) progress with the Service Development Plan be monitored on a six-monthly basis by this Committee and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation.
2. The Committee's recommendations were subsequently agreed by the Cabinet on the 24 May 2004.
3. The first and second Six-Monthly Progress Reports on the Housing Service Development Plan were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (1) in September 2004 and March 2005 respectively. Under the new scrutiny arrangements, the responsibility for monitoring the Progress Report then passed to the Housing Scrutiny Panel, and forms part of the Panel's Terms of Reference. The Scrutiny Panel considered a Progress Report in September 2005.
4. The latest Progress Report is attached as an Appendix. A summary of progress, as at 1 April 2006, is given below (the stars relate to the priorities attached to the tasks within the Service Development Plan):

		***	**	*	Total	Total (%)
😊	Improvement Achieved	16	32	29	77	83 %
😊	Improvement No Longer Required	0	1	1	2	2 %
😐	Not Yet Due / Target Revised	2	5	7	14	15 %
😞	Improvement Not Achieved	0	0	0	0	0 %
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>93</b>	

5. As can be seen, the majority of improvements (83%) have been achieved, and none has not been achieved. Moreover, nearly all (89%) of the highest priority achievements have been completed. The two highest priority improvements that have not yet been achieved both relate to increasing affordable housing through the Alterations to the Local Plan, which cannot be completed until the outcome of the Public Inquiry is known, which is expected shortly.

6. A further analysis of the achievements not yet achieved has been undertaken, and fall into two main categories:

- Improvements that cannot yet be achieved - either because they are in progress and cannot be undertaken quicker (e.g. the Alterations to the Local Plan) or because they are dependent on other improvements being achieved.
- Improvements that have been delayed, primarily because of a lack of staff resources or due to other more urgent work needing to be given priority

7. The following table summarises the position for the 14 tasks that have not yet been achieved, by priority rating.

	***	**	*	Total
Improvements that cannot yet be achieved	2	2	2	6
Improvements that have been delayed	0	3	5	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>

8. The Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation is due to consider the Progress Report at their meeting scheduled for 26 April 2006. Any views expressed will be reported orally.

9. This is the fourth six-monthly progress report presented to members; the Service Review itself was completed over two years ago. Since there are now only a small number of outstanding tasks, the extent of the monitoring that the Scrutiny Panel is able to undertake is very limited. Therefore, it is suggested that no further progress reports be considered by the Scrutiny Panel and that the completion of the remaining tasks be monitored by the Head of Housing Services through the Housing Services Special Projects Plan. This is a Projects Plan, managed using Microsoft Project, which is updated and monitored bi-monthly, and includes details of progress with all ad-hoc tasks and projects being undertaken by Housing Services at any one time.