

HRA Service Plan 2007/2008 - Outturn

Analysis

Achievements during 2007/2008

1. Specific achievements during the period include:
 - The council Executive approved the Discus Board recommendation for the partnership of Tees Valley / Southdale Homes and York Housing Association to be the developer partners. The partnership is currently finalising designs for the submission of a planning application by end of June 2008, this is later than originally anticipated due to changes required to the extra care scheme to meet planning requirements. Temporary moves are being organised for residents that wish to move back into a new bungalow and further consultation is ongoing with residents and the wider community.
 - The council, as part of the North Yorkshire Housing Partnership, successfully bid for CLG funding to implement a sub regional choice based lettings scheme. A Board has been established and a Project Manager will be employed to deliver the scheme
 - The contract for the redevelopment of Peasholme has started on site and is due for completion in January 2009. The project will need to vacate the current Peasholme Green location by the end of August to allow for the Hungate redevelopment
 - A monitoring system to assess the mobile working pilot is in place and early indications are that the tablets have improved the quality of information given to customers in their own home or at remote access advice points
 - Protocol in place for working with prisons and probation regarding the housing of ex offenders
 - We have in place revised procurement arrangements for tenants choice- the contract for supplying materials (baths and kitchens) has been re tendered using a consortium approach to procurement – through a reverse e-auction whereby CYC post what want to buy and contractors compete to submit the lowest price
 - The Gas Servicing contract arrangements have been reviewed, resulting in NSO taking on the gas maintenance and servicing citywide as part of the repairs partnership.
 - A revised approach to re-letting of empty properties is commencing in May 2008 following the end to end review, with a dedicated void property repairs team in Neighbourhood services. A revised void standard is also in place giving customers clarity about what they can expect when they move in to a council new home.
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- All new lettings are being recorded using the national CORE system from April 2007.
 - The assessment of the impact of the 2006 changes to the Allocations Policy is underway however the scope and timetable of this work needs to take into account progressing the sub-regional choice based lettings project (CBL) with partners in North Yorkshire.
 - Removal of hard wire warden call from 'street sheltered properties' to allow for more flexibility in letting and optimise the ability of council stock to meet housing needs. Wider discussions are taking place across the directorate on the future management of extra care and other housing options for older people
 - Work started on self assessments against 2 further KLOEs – income management and tenancy services.
 - End to end review of the repairs service has been progressing with a core group of staff involved in the service. This Systems Thinking approach has been through a 'check' process and a pilot is due to start in June applying revised ways of working
 - Housing Services have recently accessed the Learning and Skills Council 'train to gain' funds to run Customer Service NVQ level 2. In cooperation with Yorkshire and Humberside Training based in York a pilot group of Customer Service assistants have been selected who are eligible for funding. Skills audits have been completed by all front line teams within housing operations
 - Housing Improvement Plan has been reviewed and reported to HSMT in November. Monitoring system now in place mirrors the Housing Strategy and reported on an exceptions basis. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
 - A system has been established to improve the monitoring of nominations made to Registered Social Landlords for vacant properties. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
 - A group has been established to develop a Value for Money (VFM) strategy. Work has started on a self assessment against the VFM Key Line of Enquiry, and a gap analysis of current practise. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
 - HASS Project Management Toolkit has been launched in Strategy and Enabling and staff will review current projects in line with the principles of the tool kit. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
 - Work continues on the Caring for Customers / Working with Colleagues standards which are being rolled out across Housing. A staff group is being established to monitor and evaluate progress. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
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- A process has been established for revising procedure documents, and for updating staff when revisions occur. A system is also in place for staff to suggest changes and improvements. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
- A self assessment has been carried out against the Commission for Equalities Race Equality Standard for Housing and a gap analysis produced identifying areas for improvement and development, and team and project managers in housing have received training in carrying out Equality Impact Assessments *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
- All staff attended the annual Staff Conferences held in October and the results of the staff satisfaction survey were fed back to staff. Themes of the day were customer care and staff involvement in development and improvement of the service. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
- The annual staff survey for 2006 showed an increase in overall satisfaction by housing staff with their present job and an increase of 21% on the 2005 result. In 2006 72% of staff were very or fairly satisfied. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
- All Group and Service Managers now booked on the 'Future Leadership' programme, which is specifically tailored, for local government *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
- A training newsletter is now being published bi monthly and a staff forum has been established as a 'sounding board' for training and development in housing. The Training Plan for HASS including specific actions for housing. This is based on information from recent information from PDRs and skills – over 95% of PDR's have been completed across the service. *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans).*
- Some progress with sickness absence measures *(this achievement relates to both HRA & Hsg general fund service plans)*
- Creation of the Customer Panel Coordinators post to develop tenant engagement in service improvement
- Development of bi monthly surveying of responsive repairs as part of the Partnership commitment to service improvement

Critical Success Factors (CSFs)

Remain on Target to meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010

2. Remain on track to meet decent Homes by 2010 with an annual review of the business plan costs.
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Improved Performance across all landlord functions

3. The rent collected as a % of the actual debt has achieved the target of 97.86%. This is comparable with last years outturn of 97.46%.
4. Void management has continued to show an improvement in performance with the cumulative void turn around time down from 24 days in 06/07 to 19 days in 07/08. There are still some elements of the new voids process that need to be implemented and these will be rolled out in June.
5. 90% of urgent repairs were completed within government timescales in 07/08 compared with 83.56% in 06/07 showing an improvement in service to customers.

Improve tenant satisfaction and opportunities for participation

6. The Tenant Compact has been launched at the annual Federation event in October. This event was organised by the Federation which itself has been re launched following the recent capacity building work that has recently been completed. The results from the annual housing monitor carried out in Autumn 2007 show an increase in the proportion of tenants very or fairly satisfied with opportunities for participation in the Housing Service to 64% from 57% in 2006 and 55% in 2005
7. Delivery of the Neighbourhood Management Unit (NMU) work plan in relation to tenant involvement is monitored on a monthly basis. An audit of Resident Association (RA) activities has recently taken place and NMU are now working with resident groups on an action plan and training programme to address the findings of the audit and build capacity amongst the RAs

Sign up to the RESPECT standard for Housing Management

8. A gap analysis has been completed on the 6 commitments and work is starting around targeting estate improvement and using estate walkabouts to identify community priorities. The main gaps identified have been around a coordinated corporate approach and methods of consultation
9. The Anti Social Behaviour Steering Group is to be reconvened as a Task Group and the ASB strategy is to form part of the councils wider Sustainable Communities Strategy. Discussions are currently on going within the council and Safer York Partnership to consider options for improving joint working.

Roll out Customer Service and Working with Colleagues standards across housing, and embed in induction, training and monitoring

10. Work continues on embedding the standards into the culture of the service with a review of standard letters and having a standardised approach to email. A staff group is being established to monitor and evaluate progress with the working with colleagues standard. A member of staff has been seconded on
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the development of DMS (Document Management Systems) across the service.

Areas for Improvement

11. Further work still needs to be carried out to ensure that the repairs partnership results in eradicating duplication within the service. Repairs Review pilot to consider changed ways of working from June 2008 and evaluate progress in the autumn
12. The project to implement a revised rechargeable repairs process is underway, but an IT solution has not yet been agreed upon. Work on a corporate debt strategy has been delayed due to workloads, however it is an action to be taken forward as part of the homelessness strategy

Financial Summary

13. The table below sets out the variations in accordance with the financial regulations

	Approved Budget £'000	Variation £'000	Variation %
Repairs and Maintenance			
Jobs General – the overspend is mainly due to increase on repairs partnership works (+£382k) and gas maintenance due to high number of remedial works and additional contractor uplift for extension of contract (+£81k). These overspends are offset by savings due to delay in introducing scheme to release under occupied housing (-£46k), reduction in damp/condensation works due to better education of customers (£-21k) and delays in subsidence projects(-£28k)	4,465	+351	+7.86
Projects – due to a higher than expected increase in the cost of work carried out	923	+16	+1.73
Estate Improvements – lower than forecast requirements from residents	242	-43	-17.77

	Approved Budget £'000	Variation £'000	Variation %
Decoration Allowance – change in the purchasing of vouchers has resulted in a saving	102	-35	-34.31
Rechargeable Repairs – lower value of rechargeable repairs offset by reduction in accounts raised	47 -47	-26 +28	-55.32 +59.57
General Management			
Tenant Support and Information – mainly delays in work with RA's due the change in the EIG process(see carry forward request)	50	-12	-24.00
Job Evaluation contingency – not required in 07/08	159	-159	-100.00
Property Recharge – additional charges incurred for housing projects, mainly the discus bungalows project	178	+32	+17.98
Recharges – Underspends in several areas throughout HASS have resulted in a reduction in the amount charged	1,144	-103	-9.00
Housing Operations – saving mainly on staffing due to vacancies and lower expenditure on temporary staff (-£101k). In addition there are underspends on legal fees (-£30k), consultancy (-£17k), golden goodbye incentive scheme (-£15k) and IT/communication costs (-£12k)	2,493	-187	-7.50
Energy Costs – lower than forecast costs due to difficulties with forecasting whilst billing issues are resolved.	54	-11	-20.37
Peasholme Hostel – mainly savings on staffing costs due to a vacant post.	416	-13	-3.13

	Approved Budget £'000	Variation £'000	Variation %
Temporary Accommodation – mainly due to underspend on staffing (-£39k) offset by increased expenditure on repairs (+£27k)	647	-15	-2.32
Discus Bungalows – expenditure on disturbance/homeloss payments, to be repaid to the HRA from receipt generated from sale of site(s)	45	+176	+391.11
Grounds Maintenance – underspend due to lower demand for garden/day to day service	360	-18	-5.00
Caretaking - saving due to employee vacancy	204	-32	-15.69
Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts – due to rent arrears levels for current tenants and write offs being lower than forecast in the budgeted provision (-£17k). In addition an increased provision for rechargeable repairs bad debt is required (+£7k).	152	-10	-6.58
Housing Subsidy Payment – Sum set aside for changes to grant claim after audit not required offset by decrease in subsidy receivable due to lower than forecast interest rate and reduction in rental constraint allowance	5,354	-10	-0.19
Debt Management Expenses – a change in allocation method has resulted in a reduced charge	25	-22	-88.00
Rents – Reduction in RTB sales (-£18k), increased income from Peasholme hostel (-£20k) due to high occupancy levels	-23,939	-38	-0.16
Non dwelling rents – higher than forecast income from garages and shops	-543	-21	-3.87

	Approved Budget £'000	Variation £'000	Variation %
Charges for Services and Facilities			
Legal fees – reduction in income from fees (offset by a reduction in expenditure, see housing operations)	-85	+17	+20.00
RSL management fee – fee recovered higher than forecast	-64	-12	-18.75
Sheltered Housing – mainly due to a reduction in HRA contribution for transitional SP customers	-456	-12	-2.63
Cookers – fewer cookers being rented than forecast	-111	+29	+26.13
Leaseholders – additional income recovered for repairs completed	-87	-12	-13.79
Supporting People – service reviews still being completed and implemented therefore effect of expected funding reductions not realised in 07/08.	-825	-60	-7.27
Loan interest – reduction in interest payable due to lower than forecast interest rate	1,131	-10	-0.88
Internal Interest – increase mainly due to higher balance brought forward from the previous financial year and higher average in year balance.	-212	-305	-143.87
Revenue Contribution to Capital programme – after financing the 2007/08 capital programme not all of the budgeted contribution is required. It will however be required in 2008/09 to support the capital programme	1,706	-351	-20.57
Other Minor Variations	842	-48	-5.70
Net change in working balance	-5,630	-916	-16.27

Balanced Scorecard

14. Details of performance against the targets set out in the balanced scorecard are set out below.

Customer Based Measures

Description	2006/7 Outturn	2007/8	
		Annual Target	Outturn
The proportion of non decent LA homes at start of the year	10.65	10.06	9.84
SAP ratings of LA dwellings	71	72	71
Urgent repairs completed within Government timescales	83.56%	98%	90
Average time taken to complete non-urgent repairs	9.68 days	8 days	7.97 days
Tenant satisfaction with the Housing Service	80%	89%	88%
Tenant satisfaction with the opportunities for participation in management and decision making	57%	76%	64%
% of external calls answered in 20 seconds	91.30%	100%	96%

Process Based Measures*

Description	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08	
		Annual Target	Outturn
Average time taken to re-let local authority housing.	24 days	21 days	19.37 days
% of minor adaptations installed within 20 days of assessment	67.27% (4 months data)	To be set once a full year data available	To be reported at the EMAP Meeting
% of major adaptation completed with 60 days of assessment	7.14% (4 months data)	To be set once a full year data available	To be reported at the EMAP Meeting

(*Local process measures are being developed by the Housing Services Management Team on gas servicing but quarterly data was not available in time for this report)

Finance Based Measures

Description	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08	
		Annual Target	Outturn
Rent collected by the authority as a proportion of rents owed on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings	97.46%	97.86%	97.86%
Rent arrears as a proportion of the rent roll	2.59%	2.05%	2.27%
Rent lost through voids	1.04%	0.90%	1.07%
Average weekly management costs	£13.43	£15.02	£14.59
Planned maintenance / responsive repair split	25.38%	26%	27.3%

Staff Based Improvements

Description	2006/07 Outturn	2007/08	
		Annual Target	Outturn
% of staff who have received full induction programme within 12 months of starting	95%	100%	82%
Staff appraisal in each functional area	46%	100%	95%
% of staff expressing satisfaction with their job	72%	92%	72% (CYC 72%, HASS68%)
Average staff sick days in each functional area meet standard (in days / FTE)	5.1 (Housing)	At or above the council average	.9 days (12.5 HASS 9.4 CYC)
Staff turnover	13.4%	At or above the council average	15%