

## **FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:**           **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:**                 **WEDNESDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2013**

**REPORT BY:**         **HEAD OF HOUSING**

**SUBJECT:**            **HOUSING SERVICE PLAN**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 Seek member endorsement of the 2013-2014 Housing Service Plan.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 The Housing Service Plan reflects both the Flintshire County Council Improvement Plan and the Community Services Directorate Plan. The service plan sets out the housing service's priorities and key actions to secure continuous improvement in 2013-2014.

2.02 The importance of housing related issues are reflected in housing featuring as one of the Improvement Plan's top priorities, with Economy and Enterprise; Living Well; Poverty; Environment; Safe Communities; Skills & Learning; and, Modern and Efficient Council.

2.03 The housing service remains focused on achieving further performance improvements but in addition the service plan also details a range of further service improvement and other key activities that will provide the main focus during 2013-2014. The housing service has continued to make progress in improving performance over the course of 2012-2013 and it maintains the ambition of securing top quartile performance. There are still significant challenges that need to be faced by the service.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The service plan is broken down into the following Improvement or Development areas:

1. Housing Service – All Areas
2. Neighbourhood Housing Management
3. Housing Asset Management
4. Community Based Support and Supporting People
5. Housing Renewal
6. Housing Strategy

3.02 The following provide a summary of the challenges faced by the

service during 2013-2014 and the opportunities for change and improvement:

- Develop a 30 year plan for the HRA which will maximise investment to achieve the WHQS
- Improve performance in void management
- Enhance management of ASB
- Maintaining improvements in the performance of the repairs service
- Implement a revised staffing structure to compliment improved and more efficient and customer focused working in asset management
- Introduce a new repairs ordering schedule and extended service hours for housing asset management
- Continue to develop opportunities for independent tenant assessment of service quality
- Work towards delivery of a regional allocations policy and housing register
- Improve sickness absence rates
- Build on the success of the empty homes initiatives and increase the number of properties brought back into use
- Maximise investment in energy efficiency to help to address fuel poverty
- Deliver projects and initiatives to mitigate the effect of Welfare Reform
- Continue to develop and deliver a holistic homeless prevention service
- Increase the range of housing provision for those at risk of or who are, homeless
- Use (reducing) SP budget innovatively to prevent homelessness
- Plan for implementation of the changes to the Homeless legislation
- Develop service offers to encourage the growth of the private rented sector
- Contribute to the development of Flintshire Connects
- Expanding provision for Gypsies and Travellers
- Deliver the Flint Regeneration Housing scheme

3.03 Links between the Housing Service Plan and the priorities set out in the Council Improvement Plan are shown in appendix 1 of this report.

3.04 Progress will be reviewed by the Housing Senior Management Team and the Directorate Management Team and a summary of progress will be incorporated within the regular quarterly performance reports on an exception reporting basis.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 The committee is asked to endorse the Housing Service Plan 2013-2014

## **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 The actions in the 13/14 Service Plan can be funded from existing budgets.

## **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 The provision of advice and support services is proactively targeted at households at most risk as a consequence of Welfare Reform. In addition improvements include actions to reduce the heating bills of owner occupied, social rented and private rented housing.

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 Actions to reduce the heating bills of owner occupied, social rented and private rented housing will also contribute towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 Actions within the service plan reinforce the service's commitment to the council's diversity and equality policy to promote equality for every one. Promoting equality will help to increase customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

Changes in service provision will bring about changes in working practices as new ways of working are established.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 No further consultation is planned.

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Consultation with a range of customers and stakeholders was undertaken as part of the development process.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Housing Service Plan Improvements & Developments Summary

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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