

REPORT TO SOCIAL WORK AND HOUSING COMMITTEE – 10 November 2016

(There will be a short presentation by Houseability to accompany this Report)

Disabled Persons Housing Service - HOUSEABILITY

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note and comment on the work carried out by the Disabled Persons Housing Service Houseability for 2015/16.**
- 1.2 Approve the recommendation that the future development and progress of Houseability continues to closely align and support the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and the Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership (AH&SCP) in delivering the strategic priorities as discussed in the report.**
- 1.3 Agree that this report be submitted to the IJB meeting on 23rd November 2016 for information.**

2 Background / Discussion

- 2.1 The Scottish Government's Strategy and Action Plan for Housing: 2011-2020: Homes fit for the 21st Century, recognises the requirement to ensure the needs of disabled people are reflected within national and local planning and housing investment processes.
- 2.2 Following a tendering exercise in 2014, Houseability were awarded the contract to provide a Disabled Persons Housing Service for a 3 year period commencing 1 April 2015. The terms of the agreement allows for the Council to extend the contract for a further 2 years, either singly or in phases after the expiry of the term and based on the performance of Houseability, including the availability of budget and the requirements of the Council. During any extension period, the Council is entitled to terminate the Contract at any time by three months written notice.
- 2.3 The Disabled Persons Housing Service, HOUSEABILITY provides help and support to disabled people with housing needs throughout Aberdeenshire. The service provided reflects the diversity of the requirements of disabled people and is subsequently a 'One-stop shop' with a comprehensive service providing good quality information, advice, assistance and signposting including advocacy where required. The service works to reduce health inequalities and promote equality for all disabled people by ensuring Houseability clients are empowered and enabled to find solutions to their housing needs and live more independently, directing the course of their own lives.
- 2.4 Housing's contribution to Health and Social Care integration is delivered through the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and the ongoing development of the housing contribution is articulated in the Housing Contribution Statement which forms part

of the strategic plan for the Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership and the actions contained in the Implementation and Change Plan for 2016/17.

- 2.5 The availability of appropriate good quality housing and housing services makes an important contribution to improving health and wellbeing outcomes and to the success of integrated health and social care. Outcome 2 of the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework acknowledges the important role which housing plays in people's lives:
"People, including those with disabilities, long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community."
Housing contributes to all 9 of the National Health & Wellbeing Outcomes.
- 2.6 Houseability contributes to the strategic priorities of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and in particular the Particular Needs strategic outcome statement:
'People with an identified particular need will have access to appropriate affordable housing and support to allow them to sustain and improve their health to live as independently as possible.'
Houseability also contributes to and supports the Aberdeenshire H&SCP in fulfilling the NH&WB outcomes and the strategic priorities of the (Implementation and Change Plan) (2016-17) .
- 2.7 The service has met and exceeded its targets and details of the fulfilment of Contract terms and additionally the contribution to the LHS and the AH&SCP are provided at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.8 The Service Development Officer continues to work closely with the Houseability Board and the Particular Needs Strategic Development Officer to develop and progress the service.
- 2.9 The Head of Finance, the Monitoring Officer with Business Services and the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development have been consulted on the contents of this report and any comments have been incorporated.

3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

- 3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out for this report and is included at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.2 There are no staffing implications arising from the content of this report. Officers have worked jointly to ensure that any changes will be met from existing resources.

Stephen Archer
Director of Infrastructure Services

Contract requirements:-

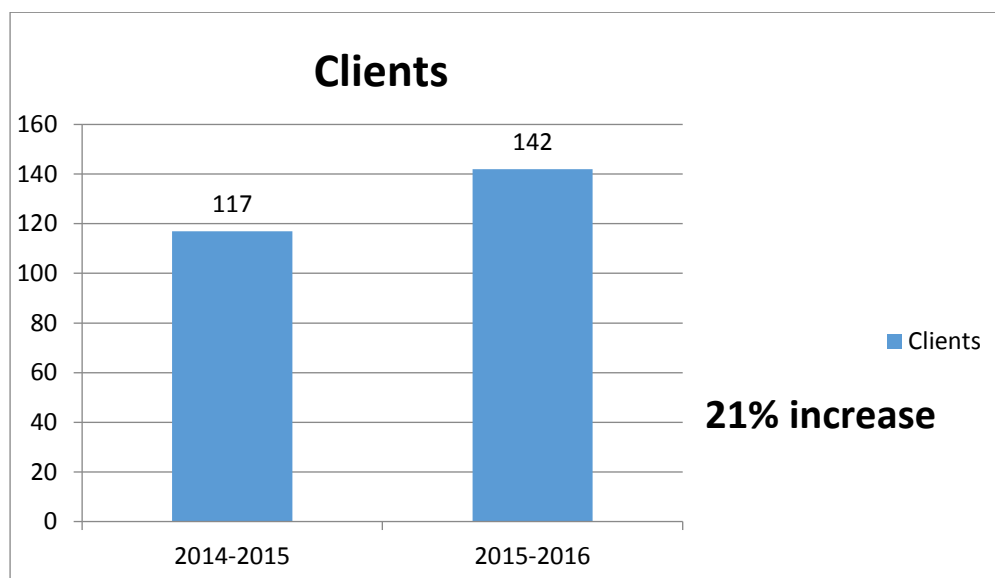
- 120 Clients per year to be provided with advice and information in relation to queries, for example, housing options or disabled adaptations;
- Enquiries from Clients to be responded to within 7 days of the enquiry being received;
- Should a home visit be required a visit should be made within 14 days of the request being received;
- A minimum of 75 household visits should be carried out per year;
- Customer satisfaction questionnaires should be sent out within 7 days following each case allowing 21 working days for a response. Non replies will be followed up after the 21 working day period expires;
- 70% and above satisfaction required for Clients;
- Provision of an advocacy service for Clients when required.

Reporting requirements:-

Detailed reports on activity will be provided to the Council quarterly and an annual report collating the information for the 4 quarters will be provided at the end of each year. This will include information on performance targets which will be used to gauge effectiveness.

Contract fulfilment:-

- Houseability has exceeded the target of **120** Clients per year and has worked with **142** Clients. This shows a **21%** increase on last year's total of **117**.



- Analysis of the data provided by Houseability evidencing an increase in enquiries and referrals to the service and in particular enquiries regarding Housing Options supports the emphasis placed on the diligent marketing of the service through surgeries and presentations at local libraries and Housing offices. Likewise the evidence supports the emphasis placed on working to

improve delayed hospital discharge from visits to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Huntly Hospital and the GP Unit at Ellon improving communication and ensuring comprehensive housing options advice is available to Clients to support **Priority 13** of the **AH&SCP** commissioning and change plan *'Timely, well managed discharge from hospital to home or homely surroundings.'*

- The data also evidences an increase in enquiries regarding housing adaptations and homelessness supporting ongoing work within the LHS concentrating on these areas.
- The increase in enquiries from Clients with mental health conditions equally supports the priority given by Housing to increase mental health awareness in the Review of the Allocations Policy and the subsequent action now contained within the AH&SCP Commissioning and Change Plan.
- Although the greatest number of referrals remain in the Buchan area, a member of staff was seconded from DPHS Aberdeen for 6 hours a week in January 2016. She has been working as a Housing Advisor and covering the South and Central areas of Aberdeenshire. Subsequently there has been an increase in referrals since she has been in post.
- The **'Tenure Required'** data appears to evidence as would be anticipated the large requirement for affordable housing from both the Local Authority and the RSL's. Houseability has worked closely with the Affordable Housing team to ensure other housing options such as mid-market rental and Low Cost shared equity (LCSE) are brought to the attention of Clients.
- All new referrals and queries were responded to within 7 days of receipt except in circumstances such as staff leave or illness. All visits were carried out within 14 days unless there were reasons such as stated above or due to the clients' wishes. A total of **116** home visits were made over the year, some clients required more than one visit due to exceptional circumstances.
- Information was collected over the year and a total of 78 questionnaires were sent out. The response rate has been 40% with a total of 31 questionnaires returned. All but one client responded positively and stated that they found the service excellent, very good or good. The one client that gave negative feedback was contacted and the person advised that they had confused Houseability with another service which had not provided good service. Of the clients that responded to the questionnaire, responses show that the 97% were very pleased with the service exceeding the target of 70% stated in the contract with Aberdeenshire Council.
- Advocacy has been requested and provided in 90% of the total of cases.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Appendix 2

Stage 1: Title and aims of the activity (“activity” is an umbrella term covering policies, procedures, guidance and decisions).	
Service	Infrastructure Services
Section	Housing Strategy
Title of the activity etc.	Disabled Persons Housing Service (Houseability)
Aims of the activity	Annual Performance report on Disabled Persons Housing Service (Houseability)
Author(s) & Title(s)	Jennifer Stewart, Particular Needs Strategic Development Officer

Stage 2: List the evidence that has been used in this assessment.	
Internal data (customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).	Local Housing Strategy (2012-17); Annual report from Houseability and statistical information 2015-16; Quarterly monitoring of reports from Houseability and Customer satisfaction surveys.
Internal consultation with staff and other services affected.	Ongoing consultation with the following:- Social Work; NHS Grampian; Housing Options and Homelessness; Housing Tenancy Management Services; Private Sector Housing Team.
External consultation (partner organisations, community groups, and councils).	Scottish Government; Registered Social Landlords; NHS Grampian; Apply 4 Homes Partnership; Grampian Community Charitable Trust; Housing Options Scotland; Inspire; Cornerstone.
External data (census, available statistics).	The Keys to Life: Improving quality of life for people with learning disabilities (Scotland’s Learning Disability Strategy); Homes fit for the 21 st Century: The Scottish Government’s Strategy and Action Plan for housing in the next Decade:2011-2021; Housing Statistics for Scotland: Housing for older people and those with disabilities
Other (general information as appropriate).	

Stage 3: Evidence Gaps.	
Are there any gaps in the information you currently hold?	None

Stage 4: Measures to fill the evidence gaps.		
What measures will be taken to fill the information gaps before the activity is implemented? These should be included in the action plan at the back of this form.	Measures:	Timescale:

Stage 5: Are there potential impacts on protected groups? Please complete for each protected group by inserting "yes" in the applicable box/boxes below.				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unknown
Age – Younger			X	
Age – Older	YES	X	X	
Disability	YES	X	X	
Race – (includes Gypsy Travellers)			X	
Religion or Belief			X	
Gender – male/female			X	
Pregnancy and maternity			X	
Sexual orientation – (includes Lesbian/ Gay/Bisexual)			X	
Gender reassignment – (includes Transgender)			X	
Marriage and Civil Partnership			X	

Stage 6: What are the positive and negative impacts?		
Impacts.	Positive (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)	Negative (describe the impact for each of the protected characteristics affected)
Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on those with protected characteristics you have highlighted above. Detail the impacts and describe those affected	Disability – The service is specifically for people with a disability to promote independence and empower individuals to make informed choices regarding the correct housing solution for their individual circumstances. The activity provides a service for a Client group who may be potentially vulnerable or disadvantaged.	
	Older People impacted by disability as a consequence of ageing- The service is specifically for people with a disability to promote independence and empower individuals to make informed choices regarding the correct housing solution for their individual circumstances. The activity provides a service for a Client group who may be potentially vulnerable or disadvantaged.	

Stage 7: Have any of the affected groups been consulted?

<p>If yes, please give details of how this was done and what the results were. If no, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating steps?</p>	<p>Consultation through monitoring of service and customer satisfaction surveys; Tenant representation at Physical Disabilities Strategic Outcome Group and Learning Disability Strategic Outcome Group</p>
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Stage 8: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce negative impacts?		
<p>These should be included in any action plan at the back of this form.</p>	Mitigating Steps	Timescale

Stage 9: What steps can be taken to promote good relations between various groups?	
<p>These should be included in the action plan.</p>	<p>Promotion of the service across Aberdeenshire with Community engagement and through Housing services and other relevant and involved agencies such as Care providers.</p>

Stage 10: How does the policy/activity create opportunities for advancing equality of opportunity?
<p>The activity creates opportunity for people with a disability to access impartial advice, information and assistance which is intended to promote independence and empower individuals to make informed choices regarding the correct housing option for them. The adaptable nature of this service including the choice of advocacy and links with relevant agencies and services are designed to allow exploration of the individual and at times complex issues that can arise for people with a disability in accessing the appropriate accommodation.</p>

Stage 11: What equality monitoring arrangements will be put in place?

<p>These should be included in any action plan (for example customer satisfaction questionnaires).</p>	<p>A customer satisfaction questionnaire is sent to each Client of the service and is followed up to ensure a high volume of returns. The information is collated and evaluated on an individual basis to ensure quality and effectiveness of the service and monitored through an Advisory Board and by Council officers</p>
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Stage 12: What is the outcome of the Assessment?		
<p>Please complete the appropriate box/boxes</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>No negative impacts have been identified –please explain.</p>
	<p>There are no negative impacts from this activity as it is available for all people with a disability who wish to use the service.</p>	
	<p>2</p>	<p>Negative Impacts have been identified, these can be mitigated - please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen.</p>
	<p>N/A</p>	
	<p>3</p>	<p>The activity will have negative impacts which cannot be mitigated fully – please explain. * Please fill in Stage 13 if this option is chosen</p>
	<p>N/A</p>	

<p>* Stage 13: Set out the justification that the activity can and should go ahead despite the negative impact.</p>
<p>N/A</p>

Stage 14: Sign off and authorisation.		
<p>Sign off and</p>	<p>1) Service and Team</p>	<p>Housing Strategy/Infrastructure Services</p>
	<p>2) Title of Policy/Activity</p>	<p>Disabled persons Housing Service (Houseability)</p>

3) Authors: I/We have completed the equality impact assessment for this policy/activity.	Name: Jennifer Stewart Position: Particular Needs Officer Date: 4 th August 2016 Signature: <input type="text"/>	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
	Name: Position: Date: Signature:	Name: Position: Date: Signature:
4) Consultation with Service Manager	Name: Alexander MacLeod Date: 4 th August 2016	
5) Authorisation by Director or Head of Service	Name: Position: Date:	Name: Position: Date:
6) If the EIA relates to a matter that has to go before a Committee, Committee report author sends the Committee Report and this form, and any supporting assessment documents, to the Officers responsible for monitoring and the Committee Officer of the relevant Committee. e.g. Social Work and Housing Committee.		Date:
7) EIA author sends a copy of the finalised form to: eia@abdnshire		Date:
(Equalities team to complete) Has the completed form been published on the website? YES/NO		Date:

Action Plan						
Action	Start	Complete	Lead Officer	Expected Outcome	Resource Implications	
Community engagement with existing groups in the Community from the Physical Disability Strategic Outcome Group	February 2015	Ongoing	Particular Needs Strategic Development Officer	Improved understanding of the issues and requirements for people with a disability in accessing housing	No resource implications	
Identification of good practice in meeting housing need for people with a learning disability through involvement in Aberdeenshire Learning Disability Strategic Outcome Group	February 2015	Ongoing	Particular Needs Strategic Development Officer	Improved access to appropriate and affordable housing for people with a learning disability.	No resource implications	

