

**Committee:** COMMUNITY AND HOUSING

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 18 June 2009

**13**

**Title:** **AUDIT COMMISSION COMMUNITY  
HOUSING INSPECTION - UPDATE**

**Author:** Roz Millership, Head of Housing Services      Item for information  
(01799 510516)

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## Summary

- 1 This report provides an update on progress of the Action Plan drawn up and approved by Committee in June 2008 following the Audit Commission's inspection of the Community Housing Service in January 2008.

## Recommendations

- 2 To note the progress made in respect of the recommendations from the Audit Commission inspection of Community Housing Services.

## Background Papers

- 3 The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
  - The Council's Self Assessment Form
  - Audit Commission Final Report - the full report can be found on the audit commission website [www.auditcommission.gov.uk](http://www.auditcommission.gov.uk)
  - Action Plan
  - Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs): Access and Customer Care; Diversity; Strategy and Enabling; Allocations and Lettings; Homelessness and Housing Needs; Private Sector Housing Functions; Value for Money; Prospects for Improvement

## Impact

4

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Finance	None
Human Rights	None
Legal implications	None

Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

## Situation

- 5 In June 2008 the Committee approved an Action Plan as the means of monitoring progress towards implementing the recommendations made by the Audit Commission following the inspection of Community Housing Services.
- 6 Progressing the Action Plan has been a priority over the past year and many of the recommendations made by the Housing Inspectorate have now been successfully implemented.
- 7 The Lead Housing Inspector for the Eastern region, Mark Elsworth, recently visited the Offices to assess whether the Council had addressed the issues raised in the housing inspection report. He was impressed with the progress made against recommendations in the report, both corporately and within the service.
- 8 He confirmed that the service will be re-inspected in March next year. This will give officers time to build further on the good work that is being done and ensure that the changes made are properly embedded in service delivery.
- 9 Now that most of the recommendations have been completed officers need to turn their attention to other areas criticised in the Audit Commission report, including addressing weaknesses in the Council's Allocations Policy and Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Officers will use the revised Housing Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) to produce new self assessments in preparation for the re-inspection. This will involve a significant amount of work, but will be essential when it comes to the reassessment of the Council's performance.
- 10 The Action Plan has been updated with progress to date and appears in Appendix 1.

**Risk Analysis**

11

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Work to address weaknesses identified by the Audit Commission does not progress	1 unlikely	3 Failure by the Council to address the weaknesses set out in the audit commission report would be highlighted as failure within the Community Housing Service in the re-inspection next year	Work with members and tenants to address weaknesses identified in the audit commission report

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.