

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 September 2010

Subject: Annual Report to Tenants – Wiltshire Council Housing Management

Cabinet Member: Councillor John Brady, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Housing

Key Decision: No

Executive summary

The Annual Report to tenants by Housing Management is a statutory requirement of the regulatory authority for social landlords, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). Cabinet's approval of the Annual Report is sought before it is published by the required date of 1 October 2010.

Proposal

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Annual Report for publication.

Reason for proposal

The proposal is made so that the Council can meet the statutory TSA requirement of publication of the Annual Report by the deadline of 1 October 2010.

GRAHAM HOGG

Service Director - Housing
Department of Neighbourhood & Planning

Wiltshire Council

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Purpose of report

1. The Annual Report to Tenants by Housing Management is a statutory requirement of the regulatory authority for social landlords, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). Cabinet's approval of the Annual Report is sought before it is published by the required date of 1 October 2010.

Background

2. The TSA is the new regulatory authority for social landlords, and this is the first Annual Report to be produced to meet their statutory requirements. One of these is that the Report must be published by 1 October.
3. The Annual Report has been prepared in consultation with a number of volunteer tenants who have provided feedback, and considered by the Tenants' Panel at their meeting on 6 September 2010. Early drafts of the report were also circulated for comment to the relevant Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Planning and Housing, and to the "three star" housing organisation, Poole Housing Partnership, to seek peer review.

Main considerations for the council

4. The Annual Report sets out the Council's performance in delivering its service to tenants during the financial year 1 April 2009 - 31 March 2010. In view of its recent Audit Commission inspection of Housing Management's landlord services, and the Improvement Plan arising from it, the Housing Management section is keen to ensure that it meets the 1 October 2010 publication deadline.
5. It should be noted that due to the timescale for publication of the Annual Report, and the deadlines for circulation of this Cabinet report, the version of the Annual Report attached **is a first proof rather than the final version.**

Environmental impact of the proposal

6. CO₂ emissions from council housing are not included in the Council's carbon footprint; however, they make a contribution to Wiltshire's carbon footprint as a whole. The Annual Report outlines how the Council is promoting energy efficiency with its tenants and what it is doing to improve the SAP rating of its housing. Wiltshire Council housing is currently in the second quartile for energy efficiency nationally, but improvements are being made to enable it to reach the top quartile for energy efficiency by 2012.
7. The environmental impact of publishing the Annual Report itself mainly arises from its printing and the volume of paper required to produce copies (32 pages) for all 5,373 tenant households, and the transport emissions arising from its physical distribution. After careful consideration and consultation with other housing organisations about how they intend to publish their reports, it has been decided to publish the Annual Report on the Council's website, and to print 400 copies to be available to tenants and other interested parties on request, with their availability publicised in the magazine "Housing Matters" which is distributed to every tenant.

Equalities impact of the proposal

8. The Annual Report will be made available in other formats on request and this is advertised in the usual accessibility statement on the back page.

Risk assessment

9. There is a risk if the Annual Report does not reach tenants by the TSA deadline of 1 October 2010, that this will have an adverse affect if there is a re-inspection of the Council's landlord services, as the Council wishes to demonstrate improvement in this area.

Financial implications

10. The Annual Report sets out the performance of Housing Management in running its service during 2009-2010 and contains financial information on the Housing Revenue Account, including information on income management, expenditure on planned and responsive maintenance, and overall management costs in running the service. The Finance section had only minor comments on a couple of details in the Annual Report which will be incorporated.

Legal implications

11. The publication of the Annual Report to tenants by 1 October 2010 is a legal requirement of the TSA. There are no other specific legal or Human Rights considerations, and the Legal section had no comments to make on the Annual Report.

Conclusions

12. The publication of the Annual Report is a requirement of the TSA and an essential part of the Council's management of its housing stock.

GRAHAM HOGG

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Report