



Aire Valley Homes Annual Review For Executive Board.

June 2009

Following the successful Audit Commission inspection in June 2008 when we retained our two star status, we have continued to work in partnership with the Council, and other partner agencies, to improve our housing management services and improve the quality of live for residents within our communities.

We have continued to develop both strategic and operational improvements through the delivery of our six strategic objectives;

- To deliver excellent customer driven services.
- To provide decent, well maintained homes and environments.
- To support social inclusion and community regeneration.
- To empower colleagues and customers to achieve our mission.
- To be a well managed and efficient public service business.
- To seek new business opportunities that accord with our values and mission.

Our achievements, measured against the objectives identified within our Business Plan, over the last 12 months are identified below.

Governance

The Board continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis and is supported by two sub committees; The Resources, Performance and Risk and The Customer Services Sub Committee which meet in alternate months.

During the year we have successfully recruited to a vacancy for an Independent Board Member.

Local accountability and engagement is delivered through three Area Panels and 31 Registered Tenants Groups.

In line with the Human Resources strategy we have fully implemented phase 1 of the Job Evaluation process and have commenced phase 2 in partnership with the Council.

We have reviewed a number of our operational procedures including Health and Safety, Lone Working, Whistle Blowing and Vetting and Barring and are continuing negotiations around the Managing Workforce Change policy.

PKF were appointed as internal auditors to AVHL from 1.4.2008. and have developed an internal audit plan which identifies a total of 10 audits throughout the year. This covers strategic, financial, governance and operational activities as well as undertaking a number of best value reviews across the business.

To date 9 of the 10 audits have been completed, 5 have been reported to the Board and an action plan, incorporating any agreed recommendations, has been agreed. Reports for the other 4 have been received and reviewed by Senior Management Team and were presented to the Resources, Performance and Risk Sub Committee in June.

An additional audit report has been commissioned to look at the Capital overspend of £11.6M. This has led to a number of changes in the management and reporting of the capital programme, which have been agreed by the Council and reported to the Board.

Business Plan

AVHL has developed a 5 year Business Plan, based on the six strategic objectives, which is updated annually.

The overall Business Plan is underpinned by the following Strategies;

- Customer Involvement Strategy.
- Asset Management Strategy.
- VFM and Procurement Strategy.
- Access to Services Strategy.
- Human Resources Strategy.
- Performance Management Strategy.
- Equality and Diversity Strategy.
- IT Strategy.

These are further underpinned by the development of an annual Organisational Development Plan and Team actions plans.

AVHL delivered a Capital programme in excess of £32m during the year and is on target to achieve the decent homes standard by 2010.

The main challenge in delivering the annual Capital programme for 2008/09 was managing the impact of a £11.6M over spend, which has been reported separately through the Council's Leader Management Team in June 2009, including an action plan and recommendations.

The main elements of work were over 1,600 new kitchens, nearly 1,300 bathrooms, nearly 900 new central heating boilers and over 900 properties re-wired.

The revenue resources of £19.7m, received through the management fee, effectively delivered core housing management activity through income

management, allocations and lettings, tenancy management, void management, responsive repairs and environmental services.

Performance

There has been a mix in performance against targets throughout the year although many indicators have moved in a positive direction which has generated an overall incentive payment for performance.

The number of non decent homes has reduced from 34% to 13.66% which is 1.34% below target.

The overall arrears position remains challenging and, whilst our overall performance has improved over the last year, the impact of the current economic climate is beginning to have an impact on performance. This can be demonstrated by the increasing % of customers now in receipt of benefits and the increasing number of requests being received for money and benefit advice.

The overall turnaround time for empty properties continues to improve and has reduced from 43 days to 35 days.

The number of requests for adaptations continues to remain high with 881 cases being dealt with throughout the year. Major adaptations referrals are dealt with in 14 days and minor works in 7 days.

Responsive repairs is the service area that has reduced in overall satisfaction as the time taken to complete responsive repairs has fallen to 12 days which is below the target of 9 days.

A review of our complaints procedure has reduced the response target from 15 to 10 days. This has affected our overall performance although the number of complaints has reduced and the quality of our responses has improved.

If we consider the indicator that look at the overall satisfaction with landlord services AVHL performs well at 74%, which is below the target of 75% but above the City wide average of 71%.

Equality and Diversity

AVHL continues to work with the Council to deliver the strategic objectives of the Equality and Cohesion strategy and has achieved Level 4 of the Equality Standard.

Equality impact assessments continue to be delivered across all service areas through an action plan that has been approved by the Board.

Customer profiling continues to be a priority for AVHL across all localities as well as each individual service area. The information obtained through

customer profiling is fundamental in order to improve service, and redirect resources, in order to deliver our customers service priorities.

Current performance is around 48% overall, although some diversity strands are 100%, with a target to reach 60% in 2009/10 and 80% in 2010/11.

Resident Involvement

AVHL supports 3 Area Panels, 32 Registered Tenant Groups, of which 28 groups receive an annual support grant.

This equates to over 11,200 residents which is 58% coverage of our management area.

There are also a number of other structured ways in which we engage with residents;

- We facilitate 3 standard focus groups, who meet on a regular basis to review our service standards.
- We have a customer panel with 330 members
- We have 19 fully trained mystery shoppers

Achievements in 2008/09

- Achieved 2 star status following a positive Audit Commission inspection.
- Continued to improve performance against core services.
- Delivered capital improvement in order to achieve decency.
- Developed a partnership agreement with Job Centre Plus including the secondment of a member of staff
- Integrated joint surgeries with Children Centre service in South Leeds.
- Developed a Financial Inclusion strategy.
- Developed a Corporate Social Responsibility programme.
- Joint development of a number of Social Enterprise schemes.
- Engagement with the National Conversation through the Tenant Services Authority (TSA).
- Applied for development status with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).
- Applied as a management agent with the HCA.

Priorities for 2009/10

- Working with partners to secure alternative funding sources to minimise the impact of the 2009/09 capital overspend
- Managing the impact on services of a reduction in resources as a consequence of the capital overspend in 2008/09
- Continue to improve services to all communities within AVHL

- Continue to work in partnership with the Council to deliver the strategic objectives as identified within the Business Plans for both AVHL and the Council.
- Joint development of the Beeston Hill and Holbeck PPF1 project.
- Joint development of the Round 6 PPF1
- Joint development of the City's Affordable Housing Strategy.
- Delivery of the Middleton Regeneration Strategy.
- Partnership work with the Council and HCA to access funding to assist in the development of the Council's Affordable Housing Strategy.
- Work in partnership with the Council to develop a long term model for the future of council housing in Leeds.