REPORT TO: **COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE ON 28 MAY 2019**

SUBJECT: **HOUSING AND PROPERTY SERVICES – SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018/19**

BY: **CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To provide the Committee with a progress report on the Housing and Property Service Improvement Plan 2018/19 to 31 March 2019.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Sections III (A) (4) and (G) (15) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to public performance reporting; and developing and monitoring the Council's Performance Management Framework for the Communities Services.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Communities Committee considers and notes the progress that has been achieved in relation to the Housing and Property Service Improvement Plan for 2018/19, as set out in APPENDIX I.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (10 year plan) and the Corporate Plan 2023 were the key documents that influenced the development of the Housing and Property Service Improvement Plan 2018/19.

3.2 The Service Plan also took into account a range of other factors used by Managers to identify the changes required to services, i.e.

- Resource Changes;
- Legislative Changes;
- Council Policy Changes;
- Risk;
- Customer and Staff Engagement;
- Quality, Performance and Self Evaluation; and
- The wider financial challenges facing the Council at this time.

3.3 The Housing and Property Service Improvement Plan 2018/19 set out the

key priorities that the service would seek to achieve in the reporting year.

Key actions for the Service in 2018/19 were:-

- Increase housing supply and the industrial portfolio;
- Tackle and prevent Homelessness where possible;
- Implement actions to deliver financial sustainability;
- Assist in the Modernisation and Improvement Programme; and
- Manage assets effectively.

3.4   A total of 18 separate service priorities were included in the Service Improvement Plan in 2018/19. Of these, 16 were expected to have been completed by 31 March 2019.

3.5   **APPENDIX I** provides details of the progress achieved to 31 March 2019.

4.   PROGRESS TO DATE

4.1   A total of 7 actions have been completed by 31 March 2018, 4 of which were reported to this Committee on 5 February 2019 (paragraph 10 of the Minute refers). The 3 further actions completed in the final quarter of the year were:

4.1.1   The preparation of the Local Housing Strategy (LHS), a final version of which was approved by this Committee on 2 April 2019 (paragraph 6 of the Minute refers).

4.1.2   The termination of the contract at the Royal Hotel in Forres will ensure that the 2019/20 target savings for the reconfiguration of temporary accommodation will be achieved.

4.1.3   The review of the Housing Allocations Policy, the final version of this was approved by this Committee on 5 February 2019 (paragraph 9 of the Minute refers).

4.2   Significant progress has been achieved on the remaining 9 priorities due for completion in 2018/19 but they have not been fully achieved due to varying reasons:

4.2.1   At year-end, spend on the Moray Affordable Housing Supply Programme 2018/19 was £6.195m representing 78% of the £7.983m target. A separate report on the Committee agenda provides details of the outturns on the programme and the reasons for the slippage.

4.2.2   68 Council new build completions were achieved against the target of 70. At year-end, 50 houses were on site and a number of projects in the pipeline to start in 2019/20. A further 163 are programmed to complete by the end of 2020/21 in line with the target of 70 completions per annum.

4.2.3   Adjustments to the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) programme were made during the year which resulted in a revision to the target spend for 2018/19. Whilst progress was made on the delivery of energy efficiency improvements to the housing stock, close monitoring of the

programme and spend will continue into 2019/20 and beyond to ensure that EESSH is achieved by December 2020.

4.2.4   Good progress was made on the delivery of the Home Energy Efficiency (HEEPS) programme with the delivery measures now focussing on internal wall insulation rather than external wall insulation as in previous years. The rolling programme will continue into 2019/20. A report on programme progress will be presented to the next meeting of this Committee on 27 August 2019.

4.2.5   By year-end, Private Sector Housing Grants spend was £452k representing 77% of the £613k target. This is an improvement on the 60% of target achieved in 2017/18. A major reason for underspend continued to be the high number of late cancellations of works. The governance of this budget now sits with the Moray Integration Joint Board.

4.2.6   Agreement was reached with Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) on the terms of the purchase ground at Forres Business Park for industrial units. In view of the Council's budget position, the proposals to develop the site were postponed as non-essential spend for 2019/20 and removed from the capital plan. Inclusion in a future capital plan will depend on an improvement in the Council's budget position.

4.2.7   Of the Housing Investment Programme spend, 95% (£10.147m) of the target £10.7m was spent on reactive; planned; and cyclical work.

4.2.8   Of the non-Housing Capital Investment spend, 88% (£5.433m) of the target £6.15m was spent. Budget savings on planned projects impacted on the achievement of this target.

4.2.9   The review Out of Hours Service has been deferred to allow further consideration to be given to the implications for other Council services which use out of hours.

4.3   Significant progress was also made on actions due for completion beyond 2018/19:

4.3.1   Work on the implementation of the Property Asset Management Appraisal commenced following its approval by the Moray Council on 12 December 2018.

4.3.2   Significant progress was made on the the review of Property Services and Property Asset Management. This action is on programme for completion by 31 March 2020.

5.   **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a)   Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)
The Service Improvement Plan has been structured to support the Corporate Plan 2023 and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The main aims of the Service Improvement Plan is to promote economic development and growth, raise aspirations and to work towards a financially stable Council that provides valued services to our communities.

(b) Policy and Legal
Statutory requirements and Council policies are considered by Managers when preparing service plans for the year ahead.

(c) Financial implications
No additional financial resources are required to support the Service Plan.

(d) Risk Implications
Up to date risk registers are maintained and considered by Managers as part of the service planning process.

(e) Staffing Implications
Service Plans are vital to good management practice including identifying priorities and matching staff time to Council's priorities.

(f) Property
There are no Property implications arising from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact
Managers consider equalities issues for staff and service users when assessing current service delivery arrangements and future arrangements.

(h) Consultations
This report has been prepared in consultation with Service Managers and Tracey Sutherland (Committee Services Officer) who agree the content of the report where it relates to their area of responsibility.

6. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

6.1 The Service Improvement Plan explores different ways of delivering services more efficiently and effectively, whilst facing the tough challenges of reducing budgets and increased demands for our services. This report presents an update on the Service Improvement Plan 2018/19 at year-end on 31 March 2019. 7 out of 16 priorities due for completion by this date have been completed. The reasons for the others not completing are set out in the report.

Author of Report: Graeme Davidson, Acting Head of Housing and Property

Background Papers: With author
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