



## Corporate Restructure – position of Housing and Advice Services

### SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed positioning of Housing and Advice Services within the new Council structure, agreed at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting of 4 November 2009

### RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the part of Housing and Advice Services engaged in delivering enforcement activity within the private rented sector and associated activities, be located within Environmental Health and Trading Standards, in the newly created Neighbourhoods Department.
- 2.2 That the remaining Housing and Advice Services be located in the Adults and Health Department.
- 2.3 To note that further consideration may be needed following the decision on the future of Derby Homes, after its contract expires in March 2012.

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Extraordinary Full Council meeting of 4 November 2009 agreed to the new Council Structure at 1<sup>st</sup> tier officer level. However, there was debate about the positioning of Housing and Advice Services within the structure and requested a further report on the issue. Chief Officer Group have now had opportunity to consider this issue.
- 3.2 Housing has clear linkages with Environmental Health in relation to standards in the private rented sector. Indeed, it is mainly Environmental Health Officers who carry out this function. This regulatory function used to be based in Environmental Health, but was moved to housing at a time when enforcement activity lead to a grant entitlement to the landlord, which had a significant impact on the Housing Capital budget. The linkage between enforcement activity and grant aid no longer exists and the Chief Officer Group consider this function can move back to Environmental Health.

3.3 Chief Officer Group consider the rest of the services within Housing and Advice Services should be located within Adult Services and Health, for the following reasons:

- The overall balance of service across the departments is improved. Neighbourhoods is already large and will provide a wide range of services; Adults and Health is a large but single service which would benefit from being located strategically with another important service
- Having moved the regulatory services to Environmental Health, the remaining services are the strategic housing services, which have always benefited from a corporate position within the organisation. They do not operate directly at the Neighbourhood
- There are clear linkages with Adult Social Care in relation to:
  - Extra Care housing
  - Telecare services
  - Disabled Facilities Grants
  - Supporting People
  - specific housing provision and support for particular vulnerable groups, such as learning disabilities, mental health, dementia, frail elderly, physical disability and older people.
- There are also clear linkages between Housing and Health in relation to:
  - drug and alcohol misuse
  - mental health
  - Primary Care Services – particularly in relation to homelessness
  - winter deaths and other ill health due to poorly insulated housing and rough sleeping.
- The Council's strategy in relation to Advice Services has been to bring services together, with the creation of Derby Advice and the Community Legal Advice Centre, to provide a seamless service for customers. Advice surgeries are, however, provided within the priority neighbourhoods.
- It is important that services such as homelessness, housing allocation and Supporting People commissioning have a citywide strategic remit to ensure consistency and equality of service.

3.4 Derby Homes provides housing management services within the neighbourhoods and further consideration may be needed following the decision of the future of Derby Homes after its contract expires in March 2012. Whatever the nature of that decision it is accepted that housing management has to have robust and effective links with neighbourhood management.

<b>For more information contact:</b> Name, Telephone, e-mail
<b>Background papers:</b> None
<b>List of appendices:</b> Appendix 1 – Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. None directly arising from the report.

**Legal**

2. None directly arising from the report.

**Personnel**

3. None directly arising from the report.

**Equalities Impact**

4. None directly arising from the report.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

5. The proposals set out in this report will support the delivery of all the Council's priorities.