

**REPORT TO: Housing Committee 17 January 2005
Personnel Committee 17 January 2005**

REPORT ON: Review of Housing Department Management Structure

REPORT BY: Director of Housing and Assistant Chief Executive (Management)

REPORT NO: 775-2004

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To review the management structure of the Housing Department to meet the changing needs of the service and to take forward proposals to incorporate contact centre technology into housing service delivery.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that Housing Committee approves:
- 2.1.1. The introduction of a new management structure for the housing service.
- 2.1.2. The Director of Housing is remitted to set up Working Groups, as detailed in Appendices 2 and 3, to bring forward proposals to incorporate contact centre technology into service delivery for Lettings, Rent Recovery and Capital Contract Services.
- 2.1.3. DFTA and Trade Unions form part of the core membership of the Working Groups.
- 2.1.4. The Director of Housing to bring forward further reports on the staffing structures for the new Sections created through the review.
- 2.2. It is recommended that Personnel Committee approves:
- 2.2.1. The establishment of a post of Housing Investment Manager graded PO12-15 (£32,991-£35,343).
- 2.2.2. The establishment of a post of Housing Quality & Performance Manager graded PO12-15 (£32,991-£35,343).
- 2.2.3. The establishment of a post of Finance & Corporate Services Manager graded PO12-15 (£32,991-£35,343).
- 2.2.4. The establishment of a post of Housing Services Manager graded PO12-15 (£32,991-£35,343).
- 2.2.5. The deletion of the following posts:
- a) Principal Officer, Housing Renewal Unit graded PO7-10 (£29,313-£31,536).

- b) Principal Officer, Improvement & Maintenance Unit graded PO9-12 (£30,786-£32,991).
- c) Principal Officer, Housing Quality Unit graded PO7-10 (£29,313-£31,536).
- d) Principal Officer, Policy & Plans Unit graded PO7-10 (£29,313-£31,536).
- e) Principal Officer, Housing Finance & Administration Unit graded PO7-10 (£29,313-£31,536).
- f) Principal Officer, Tenancy Services Unit graded PO5-8 (£27,873-£30,060).

2.2.6. The regrading of the following posts:

- a) 3 posts of Area Housing Manager from grade PO9-12 (£30,786-£32,991) to grade PO12-15 (£32,991-£35,343).
- b) Principal Officer, Private Sector Services Unit from grade PO7-10 (£29,313-£31,536) to grade PO12-15 (£32,991-£35,343) and retitle Private Sector Services Manager.
- c) Principal Officer, Homeless Services Unit from grade PO5-8 (£27,873-£30,060) to grade PO12-15 (£32,991-£35,343) and retitle Homeless Services Manager.

2.2.7. The establishment of a new post of Principal Accountant graded PO12-15 (£32,991-£35,343).

3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1. The total costs of the proposals are £10,514 + on costs in a full financial year. This will be funded from the vacant posts within the structure. The post of Principal Accountant will be funded from savings in central administration recharges.

4. **LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1. None.

5. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1. None.

6. **BACKGROUND**

6.1. There have been a number of significant changes in the housing service over the last few years, including the creation of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Housing Repairs Centre.

6.2. New statutory responsibilities brought about through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003 have also led to the creation of new services and the expansion and realignment of key functions, such as our Homeless Service and Housing Support Team and

our preparations for Regulation and Inspection.

- 6.3. The provision of services within the private sector have also expanded in response to the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation legislation which introduced a mandatory duty on Local Authorities to implement an HMO licensing scheme to improve both physical and tenancy management standards. As a University City, HMOs provide an important and significant supply of housing and, whilst the majority of landlords provide good quality housing, there is a significant minority who are interested only in profit with minimum effort. This has brought increased duties and responsibilities to the Private Sector Services Team.
- 6.4. Against this background, the opportunity has been taken to reassess how the various functions within the Department should be managed to ensure the delivery of better co-ordinated and more efficient services.
- 6.5. The review process has, therefore, examined the following:
- a) Review of the number of Sections.
 - b) Reconfiguration of services within Sections.
 - c) Review of gradings to reflect additional duties and responsibilities.
 - d) Opportunities to bring forward new customer contact centres for the housing service.

PROPOSALS

- 6.6. The outcome of the review proposes that the number of Sections within the Department are reduced from 12 to 9 and the functions realigned as outlined in Appendix 1.

It is proposed that four new Sections are created on the structure:

Housing Investment Unit.
Housing Quality & Performance Unit.
Finance & Corporate Services Unit.
Housing Services Unit.

The following Sections will be deleted from the structure:

Housing Renewal Unit.
Improvement & Maintenance Unit.
Policy & Plans Unit.
Housing Quality Unit.
Tenancy Services Unit.
Housing Finance & Administration Unit.

- 6.7. The creation of the Housing Investment Unit will bring together the functions of capital investment and community regeneration and will link the Scottish Housing Quality Standard delivery plan with the demolition and wider regeneration strategies. Key to this approach is the role played by Communities Scotland and registered social landlords in this process. This unit will be led by the Housing Investment Manager who will report to the Housing Strategy Manager.

- 6.8. The proposed Housing Quality & Performance Unit will ensure a co-ordinated approach to service planning and will enable the Department to fully respond to the demands of Regulation and Inspection. This unit will be led by the Housing Quality and Performance Manager who will report to the Housing Strategy Manager.
- 6.9. The Finance & Corporate Services Unit combines the functions of rent accounting and financial management. This approach provides a less fragmented and more streamlined approach to financial management and budget planning within the Department. This post will report directly to the Director of Housing. This unit will be led by the Finance and Corporate Services Manager. A new post of Principal Accountant will also be established to provide a comprehensive financial support service to the Housing Department. These two posts will report directly to the Director of Housing.
- 6.10. The Housing Services Unit brings together the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Housing Support Team and recognises the inter-relationship between these Teams. The Housing Services Unit will also be responsible for managing the Housing Repairs Centre and developing and managing further contact centres for Lettings and Rent Recovery, as outlined in Appendix 2. This unit will be led by the Housing Services Manager who will report to the City Housing Manager.

RECRUITMENT

- 6.11. The post of Housing Services Manager will require detailed knowledge of frontline service functions in order to implement the customer contact centres. It is proposed, therefore, to second an Area Housing Manager, on a temporary basis, to this post for a period of two years.

Appointment to the remaining new posts will be on the basis of restricted advert to all third tier Housing Principal Officers who meet the person specification.

Those officers who do not secure a job through the recruitment process will be slotted in at their current grade to the structure.

- 6.12. The review also proposes the regrading of the following posts to reflect additional duties and responsibilities arising from legislative changes:
- a) Area Housing Managers regraded from PO9-12 to PO12-15.
 - b) Principal Officer, Private Sector Services Unit regraded from PO7-10 to PO12-15.
 - c) Principal Officer, Homeless Services Unit regraded from PO5-8 to PO12-15.

Current postholders will be matched to these posts.

HOUSING CONTACT CENTRES

- 6.13. Following the successful introduction of the Housing Repairs Centre in April, 2004, the Housing Department intends to extend the contact centre approach to other frontline services.

The following core services generate significant levels of telephone contact and could achieve similar efficiencies through the use of contact centre technology. It is proposed that three contact centres are established for the Lettings, Rent Recovery and Capital Contract functions

It is proposed that three Corporate Working Groups are established to progress the implementation of the contact centres. Membership will include a Prince2 qualified project manager, officers from Housing, Finance, Personnel, Corporate Planning Departments and representatives of DFTA and the Trade Unions.

The Repairs Review benefited from the involvement and contributions made by tenants. DFTA ensured that the revised service met the objectives and standards expected by our customers. The experience DFTA have developed through implementation of the Housing Repairs Centre will be invaluable to the progress of this new work.

The three Corporate Working Groups will report on progress to the Customer Contact Centres Overview Group which will meet on a quarterly basis. Membership is detailed in Appendix 3. It is anticipated that the Working Groups will report to Committee within 12 months with a finalised implementation plan.

7. SUMMARY

Following agreement of these proposals, three Working Groups will be established, assisted by Corporate Planning Department to bring forward the contact centre proposals.

Further reports will be brought forward to Housing Committee which will establish the staffing structures for the four new Sections created through this review.

8. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Trade Unions and Dundee Federation of Tenants' Association have been consulted regarding the contents of this report.

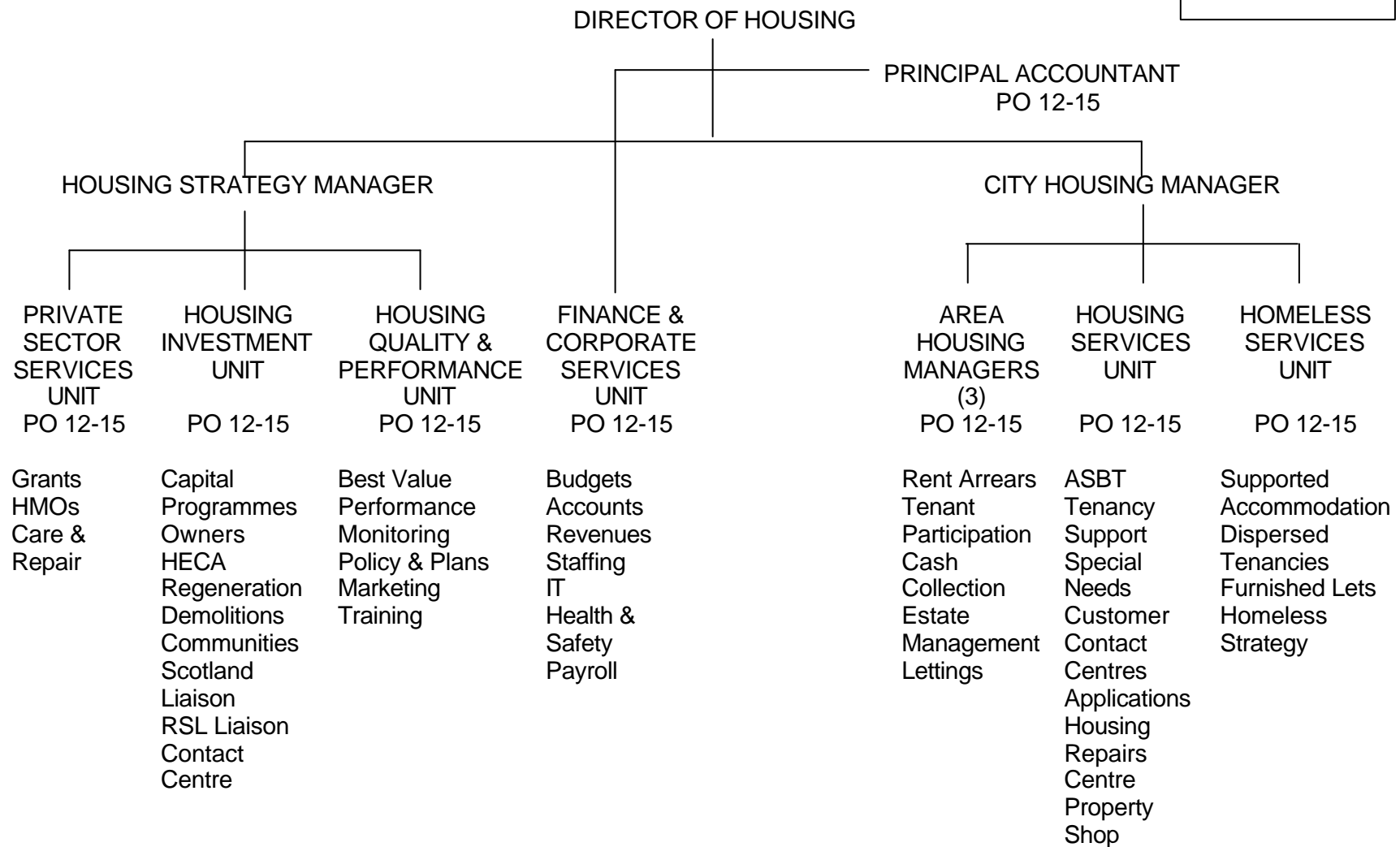
ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

NOVEMBER 2004

J C PETRIE
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (MANAGEMENT)

NOVEMBER 2004

APPENDIX 1



LETTINGS WORKING GROUP

Remit

- To develop a Lettings Contact Centre bringing together the lettings functions currently delivered via the Applications Section in Tenancy Services, Area Office Lettings Teams and the Property shop, and to propose an appropriate structure and staffing complement.
- Area Offices to remain responsible for relet inspections and ensuring the property is fit to view, accompanied viewings by appointment and signings by appointment.
- Processes to be streamlined by the appropriate application of IT and Call Centre telephony.
- Area Offices to take on role of advertising properties, providing general lettings information via IT, etc. and notifying Lettings Centre of expressions of interest.
- Voids management via the Key Book/Voids Management System to be carried out in Area Offices but to be the centralised responsibility of the Lettings Centre Voids Manager.
- The benefits of the Property Shop to be transplanted into Area Offices and the Property Shop to close in due course.

Membership

Neighbourhood Services Co-ordinator (Chair)
Project Manager
Housing Lead Officer
Housing Officers
Finance Officers
Personnel Officer
DFTA (2)
Trade Unions (2)

Frequency of meetings – fortnightly/monthly.

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RENT RECOVERY WORKING GROUP

Remit

- To consider the establishment of a centralised and specialised rent recovery service based in a Contact Centre to allow greater focus on rent recovery and propose an appropriate structure and staffing complement.
- Contact Centre to manage the housing rent accounts enquiries and the arrears recovery process including – making agreements with clients; monitoring payments and adherence to agreements; referrals to appropriate sections/departments or agencies, e.g. SWD Access Team, Welfare Rights; pursuing non payers up to and including legal action.
- Contact Centre to manage recovery of former tenants arrears.
- Where necessary home visits will be initiated by the Rent Recovery Contact Centre but carried out by Area based staff.
- Cash collection and Verification Framework services to remain in Housing Offices.

Membership

Neighbourhood Services Co-ordinator (Chair)
Project Manager
Housing Lead Officer
Housing Officers
Finance Officers
Personnel Officer
DFTA (2)
Trade Unions (2)

Frequency of meetings – fortnightly/monthly.

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CAPITAL CONTRACT SERVICES WORKING GROUP

Remit

- To consider the formation of a customer focused Contact Centre to facilitate easy access to information and efficient response to customer enquiries.
- Contact Centre to manage and co-ordinate all contact with customers affected by capital contracts.
- Contact Centre to manage and co-ordinate all contact with customers regarding Council House Sales.
- Compile and distribute all customer invoices and respond to customer enquiries.
- Respond to telephone enquiries regarding progress of contracts, billing, house sales, land sales.
- Refer customers, as appropriate, to other Sections/Departments within the Council.
- Initiate, as necessary, home visits to be carried out by Investment Unit/Area Office staff.

Membership

Neighbourhood Services Co-ordinator (Chair)
Project Manager
Housing Lead Officer
Housing Officers
Finance Officers
Personnel Officer
DFTA (2)
Trade Unions (2)

Frequency of meetings – fortnightly/monthly.

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CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRES OVERVIEW GROUP

Remit

- To monitor the progress of the Corporate Working Groups.
- To make adequate resources available to achieve the implementation timescale outlined in the report.
- To ensure consistency of approach across all three service areas.

Membership

Chief Executive (Chair)
Director of Housing
Depute Chief Executive (Finance)
Corporate Planning Manager
Chair of Corporate Working Group
Councillors (6)
DFTA (3)
Trade Unions (3)

Frequency of meetings – quarterly.

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