

Report

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Report to:	Housing and Technical Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 September 2009
Report by:	Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

Subject:	Outcome of Inspection of Sheltered Housing and Homelessness Services by the Care Commission
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise on the outcome of the 2008/09 annual inspection of sheltered housing and homelessness services

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the outcome of the 2008/09 annual inspection of sheltered housing and homelessness services by the Care Commission be noted.

3. Background

3.1. The Care Commission has carried out annual inspections of homelessness and sheltered housing support services since 2006, under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001.

3.2. A new self-assessment and grading system was introduced in April 2008, which changed the way care services are inspected. Under the revised arrangements, the Care Commission awards a grade between 1 (unsatisfactory) and 6 (excellent) across 3 quality themes:-

- quality of care and support
- quality of staff
- quality of management and leadership

3.3. In conjunction with the new approach to inspection, the Care Commission also introduced proposals to reduce the frequency of inspection of certain care services. It has now been confirmed that housing support services will be subject to a minimum of one inspection every 36 months.

3.4. The key aims of the new system is to provide service users with clearer information about the quality of care services and help the Care Commission to develop a more risk-based, proportionate and targeted approach to inspection.

4. Self-assessment and grading

4.1. Under the new arrangements, a comprehensive self assessment will be required to be completed by each sheltered housing and homelessness support service for the 3 quality themes, (see 3.2 above).

- 4.2. The Care Commission use their risk assessment tool, the Regulation Support Assessment (RSA), and the outcome of previous inspections to inform how frequently they will inspect a service and what aspects they will look at.
- 4.3. Both homelessness and sheltered housing support services were attributed a low RSA for the 2008/09 inspections, meaning there were few, if any, risk indicators identified.

5. Care Commission Findings and Recommendations

- 5.1. The Care Commission completed its 2008/09 inspection of the Council's sheltered housing and homelessness support services in May 2009, which focused on the following areas:-
- service user participation
 - responding to service users' needs using person-centred values
 - professionalism, training and experience of staff
 - quality of management and leadership
 - workforce involvement in determining the direction and future objectives of the service
- 5.2. The Care Commission's overall assessment was extremely positive, with the following grades being awarded:-

Quality theme	Grade awarded	
	Sheltered Housing	Homelessness
Quality of care and support	5 - very good	4 - good
Quality of staffing	5 – very good	5 - very good
Quality of management and leadership	5 – very good	4 - good

- 5.3. The Care Commission carried out a separate inspection of our sheltered housing service in each local area and the grades awarded were consistent across all four areas.
- 5.4. These compare well with the Care Commission's publication 'Gradings so far', which provides a summary of the first grading results for 298 housing support services inspected between 1 April and 5 November 2008. Only 12% of housing support services provided by local authorities had, at that stage, received grades 5 or 6 across all quality themes, with only 0.5% being assessed at level 6 across the themes.
- 5.5. The Care Commission's reports highlighted a number of key strengths across our homelessness and sheltered housing services, including:-
- strong commitment to service-user involvement and action taken in response to customer feedback
 - continued investment in staff development and training
 - opportunities for staff to discuss practice, contribute to service development, and good examples of staff views being acted on
 - high quality policies, procedures and record keeping arrangements
 - introduction of a robust audit programme for sheltered housing

- improvements in assessing and meeting the needs of homeless households as a result of the reconfiguration of homelessness services, especially the relocation of housing support officers to local offices
- good joint working arrangements with partners in meeting service users' needs

5.6. The inspection reports identified no formal requirements, ie, enforceable actions to comply with legislation, for either service area, however, made some recommendations for service development which are summarised below:-

- specific suggestions were made regarding improving feedback from service users, carers, staff and other stakeholders such as social work and health
- the current review of working routines in sheltered housing should ensure appropriate cover for absence and vacancies
- consideration should be given to ways service users could be involved, or their views taken account of, in the recruitment and selection process for new staff
- good progress in working towards ensuring all homeless applicants with medium/high support needs have an in-depth assessment and support plan should be continued
- improvements could be made in information sharing and communication with social work and health, particularly in terms of reviewing service users' needs

5.7. Work is in progress to address the above recommendations and action plans setting out clear timescales and responsibilities were submitted to the Care Commission in June 2009.

5.8. Progress in achieving key actions is monitored through the Area Services Service Plan.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. None.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. None.

8. Other Implications

8.1. None.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

9.2. Consultation with service users and staff was a key aspect of the inspection process and is reflected in the inspection reports.

Jim Hayton
Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

20 August 2009

Link(s) to Council Objectives and Values

- ◆ Improve lives of vulnerable children, young people and adults
- ◆ Develop services for older people
- ◆ Improve the quality, access and availability of housing

Previous References

- ◆ Report – 17 December 2003 – Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 – registration of housing support services
- ◆ Report – 20 September 2006 – Inspection of sheltered housing and homelessness support services by the Care Commission

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Care Commission Inspection Reports:-
 - ◆ Sheltered Housing – Clydesdale
 - ◆ Sheltered Housing – East Kilbride
 - ◆ Sheltered Housing – Hamilton/Larkhall
 - ◆ Sheltered Housing – Rutherglen/Blantyre
 - ◆ South Lanarkshire housing support service (previously called TAMU)

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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