



Internal Management Plan (IMP)

April 2004 – March 2007

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Equal Opportunities Statement

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a duty on Registered Social Landlords to carry out their functions in a manner which encourages equality of opportunity and meets requirements laid down in other legislation.

Equal Opportunities is defined legally in the Scotland Act 1998 Schedule 5 as “..... the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on the grounds of sex or marital status, or racial grounds, or on grounds of disability or social origin or other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions”.

Linstone is committed to developing an organisational culture which values people from all sections of the community and the contribution which each individual can make to that community.

In all areas of our work we will strive to:

- : promote equality for all
- : eliminate unlawful discrimination
- : treat everyone – staff, committee and customers – fairly and with dignity and respect
- : provide services which achieve equality and diversity across all activities

We will take appropriate action to address any incidences of discrimination experienced by staff, committee or customers.

1. Background Information

In preparing this document, Linstone has taken into account the following:

- Committee/Senior Staff “Away Day” on 2/4/04 and a follow up session on 7/4/04. Appendix I
- Staffing Structural Review implemented during 2003/04. Appendix II a
- Staff Feedback Questionnaire Appendix II b
- Feedback from Customers
 - Customer Satisfaction Survey Action Plan Appendix III a
 - Tenant Conference 7/2/04 Appendix III b
 - Tenant Participation Questionnaire Appendix III c
- Budget for 2004/2005 Appendix IV
- Consultation with Partners/FLAIR/Council Appendix V
- Actual Performance 2003/2004 Appendix VI

In addition we referred to the following documents:

- 30 Year Business Plan
- Life Cycle Costings Review 2003/04
- Communities Scotland’s Performance Standards
- Management Accounts

2. SWOT Analysis

A Committee & Senior Staff Planning Day was organised on 2nd April 2004, the purpose of this “Away Day” was to identify Linstone’s short and longer term priorities, with a view to preparing this Internal Management Plan. A further session took place on 7th April 2004.

On both of these occasions a “brainstorming” session helped assess our strengths; weaknesses; opportunities and threats. The analysis appears on the following page.

2.1 Strengths

- a) Good Investment in Stock.
- b) Strong, enthusiastic Committee.
- c) Committed and professional Staff/new Management Team.
- d) Good relationship between Committee and Senior Staff.
- e) Financially sound.
- f) Well developed Policies/Procedures.
- g) Staff Restructure – tailored to meet business needs.
- h) Effective Partnership with FLAIR; Council etc.
- i) Effective Partnership with Mowlem – main Contractor.
- j) Large stock base.
- k) Supportive MP; MSPs; Councillors.
- l) Good relationship with Bank/Communities Scotland.
- m) CHR -potential improvement to service
- n) increased demand.
- o) Agreement with Council ASIST team.
- p) First new Development completed successfully at Brown Street.
- q) A number of Tenants & Residents Groups.
- r) Completion of Life Cycle Costings Exercise.
- s) Good IT system/website.

2.2 Weaknesses

- a) High level of Current Tenant/Owner debt.
- b) Lack of control of Housing Benefit process.
- c) Poor perception of Linstone as Factor/Feu Superior/Landlord.
- d) CHR – resource implications both financial and people.
- e) Staff Restructure – skills/training/ motivational issues.
- f) Irregular use of Media/other PR opportunities.
- g) Implications of Care Commission.
- h) Age profile of Committee.
- i) DTL problems.
- j) Unpopularity of property types/appearance of estates.
- k) Non exploitation of IT system potential.
- l) Health & Safety issues.
- m) Performance Indicators require development/improvement.
- n) Customer Care quality of service.

2.3 Opportunities

- a) Development opportunities.
- b) Develop FLAIR opportunities – procurement.
- c) Stock Transfers from Council.
- d) Mergers with smaller Associations.
- e) Housing Benefit
 - Take over and offer service to others if reform of HB introduced.
 - Service Level Agreement.
 - Ongoing Verification Exercise.
- f) Use MPs; MSPs; Councillors for Publicity/Communication.
- g) Tenant Participation.
- h) New Staff Structure
 - Improvement to service.
 - Staff development/turnover.
- i) Greater efficiency through IT usage/other training.
- j) Technology – remote access; home working; hand held computers.
- k) Investors in People.
- l) Feudal Reform.
- m) Choice Based Lettings.
- n) Separate Company to service Owners – links with Bridgewater.
- o) More efficient/effective Performance Monitoring.
- p) Political/Legislative changes.
- q) Remove Floating Charge.
- r) DTL Strategy.
- s) Services to other Providers.
- t) Care Commission/Housing Support Services.
- u) CHR – increased demand

2.4 Threats

- a) Transfer of Development Funding to Council.
- b) Right to Buy sales increasing.
- c) Council Stock Transfer.
- d) Lack of Qualified Contractors – GHA implications.
- e) CHR – Demand on financial/people resources.
- f) Competition from other housing providers.
- g) Inability to retain/attract staff.
- h) Ineffective management of restructuring.
- i) Structural deterioration of multi storeys.
- j) Office location/condition of shopping centre.
- k) Demographic changes.
- l) Political/Legislative changes.
- m) Litigation “culture”.
- n) Homelessness Protocol.
- o) Housing Benefit situation/financial implications.
- p) Care Commission/Care Standards.

3.0 Pressures for Change

In carrying out our SWOT Analysis we also took into account a number of other topical issues which will influence our future direction/performance.

Amongst these the following areas of change were identified:

**3.1 Demographic:
Source: Local
Housing Strategy
(LHS)**

- 3.1.1 Change in age structure of local population.
 - Share of population under 30 years – reduced from 41% in 1991 to 36% in 2001.
 - Share of population over 75 years – increased by 14% between 1991 and 2001.
 - Projected decline in 30 – 44 year age group – 30% between 2000 – 2016.
- 3.1.2 Projected growth in lone parent households.
 - Up 29% from 5800 (2000) to 7400 (2014).
- 3.1.3 Projected growth in single person households.
 - Up 31% from 24800 (2000) to 32500 (2014).
- 3.1.4 Projected decline in 2 adult + one or
 - Down 41% from 15800 (2000) to 9400 (2014).
- 3.1.5 Projected increase in older age groups expected over the period 2000 – 2016.

**3.2 Economic:
Source: Local
Housing Strategy**

- 3.2.1 Decline in:
 - Manufacturing
 - Distribution
 - Hotels & Restaurants
 - Construction
- 3.2.2 Strong growth in
 - Transport

- Communications
- 3.2.3 Lower growth in:
 - Banking
 - Finance
 - Insurance
- 3.2.4 Positive economic outlook with growth in employment levels in Renfrewshire expected.
- 3.2.5 Increase in local employment levels estimated to increase at a faster rate 5% than the West of Scotland (4%) or the UK (3%)
- 3.2.6 Areas of substantial economic and social disadvantage remain. Eleven SIP areas where residents are more likely to experience poverty; deprivation and problems with the physical environment.
- 3.2.7 Four areas of Renfrewshire appear in a list of 100 most deprived areas in Scotland. Johnstone Cochranemill is included. This covers Linstone's estates of Sandyflats; Ryefield; Corseford.

3.3 Legislative:

- 3.3.1 Homelessness – new roles for Housing Association and Local Authorities.
- 3.3.2 Planning – proposed amendments to regulations.
- 3.3.3 Housing Benefit Legislation.
- 3.3.4 Disability Discrimination.
- 3.3.5 Feudal Reform

3.4 Policy:

- 3.4.1 Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

3.5 Regulatory Framework:

- 3.5.1 Changes to Assessment/Performance Audit Guidelines.
- 3.5.2 Emphasis on Self Assessment.
- 3.5.3 Stock Transfer Compliance.

3.6 Role of Local Authority:

- 3.6.1 Local Housing Strategy (LHS).
- 3.6.2 Development Funding.

3.6.3 Improvement Grants.

3.7 Funding:

3.7.1 Changes to Housing Association Grant (HAG).

3.8 Procurement:

3.8.1 Changes within Construction Industry
Long term partnering?

3.8.2 Procurement changes.

4.0 Our Vision

Linstone; your First Choice Housing Provider – through Investment; Involvement and Partnership.

5.0 Strategic Direction

5.1 Maintain Quality Housing.

5.2 Encourage Quality and Meaningful Participation and Partnership.

5.3 Provide Excellence in Service.

5.4 Maintain Financial Viability.

5.5 Establish Future Direction.

6.0 Current Issues

As part of our regular review of our business especially on Financial Viability; Risk Management and Performance we have identified a number of current issues.

6.1 Staffing Restructure

A major staffing restructure was introduced during 2003/2004.

The changes affected every section and imposed new practices and responsibilities on almost all staff from 1st April 2003.

The new structure has taken longer to “bed in” than anticipated. On reflection it may have been more effective to introduce the changes in stages.

A recent survey staff highlighted a number of areas where further training was required.

An intensive programme of training is planned for the early part of 2004/05.

6.2 Factoring Debt

Owner Occupiers number around 2500. Over the past year a concerted effort has been made in relation to the reduction of the outstanding debt.

This has reduced consistently over the past 6 months. Our aim is to continue this progress. It currently stands at £342,506.

6.3 Arrears Debt

The staffing structure has had a major impact on our Housing Management team. Their numbers were reduced by three and their Housing Officer role became generic.

This together with the issues surrounding the Council and Housing Benefit payments have seen current arrears climb to 8% of rent receivable.

An improvement in performance through a reorganisation of the team, led by a new Housing Services Manager is anticipated throughout 2004/05.

6.4 Deprived Areas

As can be seen from the statistics earlier in this Plan some of our Johnstone Estates have high incidences of poverty and deprivation.

Even in areas which do not “officially” fall into this category, such as Johnstone Castle there are a range of management problems – anti social behaviour; difficult to let properties with a high void rate and other social problems such as drug and alcohol abuse.

Ryefield has a high level of empty properties with little demand and ongoing incidences of vandalism.

Tackling the DTL problem and preparing an Options Appraisal for Ryefield are both priorities for 2004/05.

7.0 Business Objectives 2004/2005

- 7.1 Invest Appropriately in Stock.
- 7.2 Progress Tenant Participation Strategy.
- 7.3 Contribute to Regeneration of Communities.
- 7.4 Exceed Current Standards and Performance.
- 7.5 Develop System of Robust Organisational Planning.
- 7.6 Increase Efficiency in Management.
- 7.7 Produce and Implement Training and Development Plans.
- 7.8 Implement Appropriate Legislative Changes & Regulatory Requirements.
- 7.9 Deliver Effective Risk Management Strategy.
- 7.10 Deliver Aspects of 30 Year Plan.
- 7.11 Develop Strategy to Meet Business Needs.
- 7.12 Ensure “best value” is achieved.

8.0 Departmental Objectives/Plans 2005/2006

Chief Executive

Ensure that the Association is well prepared for Performance Audit by implementing the agreed Action Plan within the specified timetable.

Carry out review of appropriate Policies within timescales and according to the Policy Review Plan.

Deliver an Options Appraisal to Committee by 31st August 2005 on the Ryefield Estate.

On receipt of Consultant's report prepare a Paper for Committee on future direction of Owner Occupier Service. This to be completed by 31st October 2005.

Finalise the re-structuring of the Warden Service in liaison with the Operations Director with a view to introducing this new Service by 30th September 2005.

Review the responsibilities and structure within the Finance Directorate prior to the appointment of the new Finance Director with a view to more equally distributing the work load of the Directorates.

Liaise with Corporate Services Director to identify and progress a range of new Reporting topics and mechanisms within the Dept by 31st July 2005.

Common Housing Register –

- a) Liaise with Partners to effectively deliver “pilot CPU” by agreed date – provisionally 31st May 2005.
- b) Assess throughout the “pilot” year the success or otherwise of the CPU, with a view to making an appropriate recommendation to the Committee on the future of CHR by 31/3/05.
- c) Following “Collaborative Away Day” assess with FLAIR Directors the options for a collaborative approach to specific projects/functions and make recommendations to Committee by 31/3/05.

Corporate Services Director

- 1) Ensure that your Dept is well prepared for Performance Audit by implementing the agreed Action Plan within the specified timetable.
- 2) Carry out review of appropriate policies within timescales and according to Policy Review plan.
- 3) Common Housing Register

Following launch of CPU, undertake

- Comprehensive review of staffing structure/duties within Customer Service Team, with a view to making any recommended changes/improvements to Chief Executive by 31/3/06.
 - Continue to attend Steering Group meetings as required, particularly taking the lead role in liaising with Council re the Anite/new IT issues.
- 4) Develop by 31/3/06 a series of Corporate Reports for Chief Executive and Committee to meet Performance Standards; Best Practice etc.
 - 5) Analyse the findings from our Customer Satisfaction Survey and prepare an Action Plan by 30/9/05 for implementation by all directorates.
 - 6)
 - a) Analyse the Training Needs Assessment recently completed by Committee and prepare a Training Plan by 30/9/06.
 - b) Analyse the training needs of staff on completion of Appraisal process and prepare a Training Plan by 30/9/06.
 - 7) Prepare and implement a PR Action Plan with a view to identifying critical items and timescales for publication. Plan to be in place by 31/10/06.

Finance Director

- 1) Take organisational lead in progressing the monitoring preparation for Performance Audit.
- 2) Ensure that your Dept is well prepared for Performance Audit by implementing the agreed Action Plan within specified timescales.
- 3) Carry out review of appropriate Policies within the agreed timescales and according to Policy Review Plan.
- 4) During 2005/06 review External Audit practices of Finance Team; introduce appropriate changes to ensure compliance and that deadlines are met.
- 5) Review/re-organise the systems for recording information and presenting the Management Accounts by 31/3/06.
- 6) Familiarise the financial information held on the system, with a view to streamlining this.
- 7) During 2005/06 review work/responsibilities of Finance Team and by 31/12/05 make appropriate changes.
- 8) Review financial information presented to Committee, including viability.

Operations Director

- 1) Ensure that your Dept is well prepared for Performance Audit by implementing the agreed Action Plan.
- 2) Carry out Review of appropriate policies within timescales and according to Policy Review Plan.

3) Housing Support Service

- Complete review and introduce modernised service by 30/9/05.
- Complete Supporting People Audit/prepare and implement action plan by 31/12/05.
- Ensure that preparations are in place for Care Commission inspection due 7/7/05.
- Complete items identified within HSSRG action plan within agreed timescales.

Housing Management

- Current non tech arrears levels 6.25% GRI.
- Void loss 4.5% GRI.
- DTL strategy/initiatives.

Anti Social

- Contribute to development of Renfrewshire ASB strategy and negotiate appropriate use of ASIsT services.

CHR

- Progress development of CPU/CHR as appropriate.

Tenant Participation

- Ensure HM comply with the terms of the TP strategy.
- Progress registration of T&R groups.
- Implement Customer Satisfaction Action Plan.
- Continue to liaise with Council at a Strategic level to improve Housing Benefit.
- Represent Linstone on Homelessness Implementation Group and continue to assess success of protocols.

Technical Services Director

1. Ensure that your Dept is well prepared for Performance Audit by implementing the agreed Action Plan within the specified timetable.
2. Carry out review of appropriate policies within timescales and according to the Policy review plan.
3. In consultation with the Chief Executive, review the options for Ryefield and prepare a report for Committee by 30th August 2005
4. Introduce an asbestos management plan by 31st July 2005
5. Draft a Health and Safety Action plan 2005/06 by 31st August 2005 and liaise with Chief Executive to implement agreed actions within the specified timescale.
6. Achieve a site start at the Kinnaird/ Cairn development by 31st August 2005
7. By 30th September 2005, audit the Right to repair and compensation systems with in Linstone to ensure that we are fully compliant with current legislation.
8. Carry out a review of the future major repair programme. Produce a five year plan, including budget figures, by 31st December 2005
9. Complete all major repair projects within budget and by 31st March 2006.
- 10.** Ensure that Standard Delivery Plans are submitted on time i.e. by 29/4/05.

9.0 Performance Monitoring/Review

This document is intended to provide a mechanism for use by Senior Staff in measuring outcomes/performance and for updating Committee on progress.

The following methods will be used in the monitoring process:

- Individual meetings between Chief Executive and Directors.
- Management Team Meetings and Senior Staff Meetings.
- Committee Reporting – Links to IMP to be included in all Reports.
- Dept Performance/Individual Performance/Appraisals.
- Customer Feedback – various sources.

Strategic & Business Objectives

See attached

Appendices

- I. Committee Meeting 7/4/04
Management Team/Committee Planning Day 2/4/04**
- II. a) Executive Summary from Kirklee Report
b) Issues from Staff Questionnaire**
- III. a) Satisfaction Survey Action Plan
b) Conference Report
c) Tenant Participation Questionnaire**
- IV. Budget 2004/05**
- V. Consultation with Partners**
- VI. APSR – Appendix 6 2003/04**