

# **Social Justice and Regeneration Committee**

**SJR(2)-03-07(p.2)**

**Date: Thursday 15 February 2007**

**Venue: Welsh Assembly Office Rhydycar Merthyr Tydfil**

**Title: Housing for Older People: Second update on Implementation of Recommendations**

## **Purpose**

As stated in my report to Committee on 17 November 2004 I promised to keep you informed on progress on implementing the recommendations of this important policy review. The first update was given on 12 January 2006; this report represents the second update.

## **Summary and Recommendations**

Annex 1 describes progress made on all the recommendations. Members will wish to note the progress.

## **Background**

- The Social Justice and Regeneration Committee's Policy Review on Housing for Older People was launched on 8 July 2004. It represented the first such review by the Committee and emanated from the Welsh Assembly Government's Strategy for Older People in Wales, published in January 2003.
- The report of the policy review made twenty-six recommendations, which were cross-sector in scope and covered housing, health and social care. The Committee examined a number of important issues including independent living, joint provision of services, occupational therapy, sheltered housing and extra care schemes as well as the valuable contribution made by the voluntary sector to service provision.
- The review was debated in plenary on 29 September 2004. The subsequent Written Statement, published on 1 October 2004 indicated that nearly all of the recommendations were accepted by the Welsh Assembly Government and are now being implemented.

## **Consideration of Progress Made**

Progress continues to be made on implementing the policy review's report recommendations under the direction of the Health, Social Care and Housing Officials Group. The latter was established as a result of the review and has a pronounced cross-cutting remit.

**Among those areas where greatest progress has been made are:**

- Completion of a wide-ranging review of disabled facilities grants and the implementation of its recommendations;(rec. 8)
- Further advances made in the practical application of new technology and telecare (rec. 5)
- Continued support for Care and Repair (recs. 4 & 6)
- The introduction of a funding stream to support innovative projects at the intersection of health and housing (rec. 10)
- Co-ordination of schemes on security, safety and energy efficiency (rec. 11)
- Establishment of pilot loan agencies including equity release (recs. 13 & 14)
- Completion of a baseline study and strategic review of sheltered housing (recs. 18 & 19, linked with recs. 2 & 3)
- Current consultation exercise on all-Wales therapy services (rec. 7)
- Launch of extra care guidance and increased financial support for schemes (rec. 21)
- Progress on retirement villages (rec. 22)

Specifically in relation to recommendations 4, 16, 25 and 26 the Strategy for Social Services is being developed in collaboration with local government and partnership agencies and is expected to be available for consultation by April 2007. The paper will embrace children and adult groups and aims to set out a vision and future direction for the next 10 years. It will focus on social services and its key partnerships with other agencies, especially housing and be complementary to Designed for Life. More fundamentally, the paper will address the many sustainability challenges that services face. In relation to older people it will, recognising demographic changes, carry forward the recommendations of the Wales Care Strategy Report and older peoples wish to remain in their own homes and is likely to draw on developments in telecare to extend opportunities for housing-based care services. The paper will reflect the shared strategic agenda with more emphasis on prevention and changing the pattern of services to enable people's wish to remain in their own home and the need for a balanced approach to managing the overall needs of the community not just targeted help for the most dependent. The stronger strategic emphasis will highlight the key role of commissioning and the importance of managing the market now the majority of social care is delivered through the independent sector.

In relation to Recommendation 3 the need to establish a Task and Finish Group to take forward Recommendation 2 concerned with sheltered housing, enhanced sheltered housing, extra care etc was dependent on the research commissioned as a result of Recommendations 18 & 19, being completed (Accommodation for Older People in Wales: the Foundations for the Future). The latter, which is extensive and detailed, has recently been completed and a copy of the synthesis report has been provided for members and will be placed on the Assembly's website as will several supporting documents. Attention will now be turned to advancing the Task and Finish group in order to take forward the recommendations made in the research. The Task and Finish group will work in close conjunction with the Health, Social Care and Housing Officials Group.

## **Compliance**

There are no issues of regularity or propriety relating to the provision of this information.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications in respect of this report at this stage.

## **Cross Cutting Themes**

- As already stated the nature of the policy review and a number of the recommendations made are cross-cutting in scope, particularly health, social care and housing. The composition of the Health, Social Care and Housing Officials Group represents this interface.
- The National Housing Strategy (Better Homes for People in Wales) along with the outcomes of the National Housing Debate on Independence and the Housing Needs of Older People interact sharply with allied strategies in other sectors such as the Strategy for Older People in Wales, Designed for Life and the proposed Strategy for Social Services in Wales. Making the Connections and the taking forward of the Beecham Review will add momentum to this process as will the continued work on implementing the SJ&R Committee's policy review.
- There was a strong equal opportunities thrust to the policy review and several of the recommendations (notably those dealing with disability, telecare, extra care and community support services) highlight this.

## **Action for Subject Committee**

Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and the proposed further action.

Name: Mrs Edwina Hart

Minister for Social Justice & Regeneration

Contact Officer: Mr Jeff Childs, Private Sector Unit, Housing Directorate

Tel: 029 2082 5219