

Your Homes Newcastle Board

9 May 2006

Improving the Housing Management Service

Report by: Chief Executive and Head of Housing Management

| | | |
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| For Decision | | |
|--------------|--|--|

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Board to decide on changes to the local housing management service following a review carried out in 2005/06.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Board is recommended to

- Receive the report and agree to implement the proposals as outlined in sections 5.2 to 5.5 of the report
- Remit the report to Area Boards for information
- Agree to receive further reports outlining progress in implementing the proposals when appropriate

3. Your Homes Newcastle Strategic Objectives

- 3.1 The review of the housing management service and the expected outcomes are linked to the following Your Homes Newcastle strategic objectives
- Excellent services
 - Run ourselves well
 - Be responsible to the community
 - Be recognised as a customer-focussed organisation
 - Increasing choice and expanding our business

4. Summary

- 4.1 Board received an initial report in February 2005 that set out the need for the review of the housing management service, in July 2005 members considered the findings of phase 1 of the review. In October and November 2005 four options were presented to Board and discussions were held in a workshop format to explore them in detail.

At the October meeting board agreed that the proposals that are common to all options should be implemented. In addition Board felt that option 1 should be discounted, as it would not enable Your Homes Newcastle to meet the aims of the review and provide the service that tenants want. However there were some issues, which required further debate before a decision could be taken and that the risks and benefits of options 2-4 should be highlighted. At the November meeting Board agreed that although it felt that option 1 was not viable consultation should take place on all four options.

Since November 2005, there has been comprehensive consultation, the results of which are outlined in section 6 of this report. In addition, the analysis of the questionnaires completed by people who attended the Roadshows is attached as appendix 1.

The consultation period ended late March and the time since then has been spent analysing the results of the consultation and developing the proposals for Board to consider.

4.2 Progress on common items

The common items agreed by Board have been developed as follows

- **Improved internet access using a staged approach.** YHN launched its new website on 1/4/06; part of this launch is a programme of introducing new services online.
- **Efficiency savings resulting from the use of community facilities.** Changes were made to the budget provision for community buildings resulting in savings. Further work is being carried out to ensure that community buildings are managed appropriately.
- **Establishment of a citywide sheltered housing service.** There has been consultation with staff and residents over the last six months. The service structure has been agreed and it is expected that it will be launched in June 2006.
- **Introduction of incentives for tenants taking up direct debit.** A scheme has been developed and agreed by Finance committee, it is anticipated that it will be implemented at the end of the first quarter of 2006/07.
- **Removal of the pay bar for estate based staff.** This has been completed.
- **Improved communication between housing management services and other Your Homes Newcastle divisions.** Action plans have been produced following consultation with managers from across all divisions in YHN. The actions within housing management division are being progressed first.

- **Improved customer service through additional training and the introduction of a consistent and uniform approach to use of the existing systems for telephony.** A new customer service training course has been developed and so far over 100 staff have taken part. A review of telephony use has resulted in operational changes at certain outlets in order to improve the availability of performance information. Costs have also been established to upgrade the existing system should this be required.

5. Options

The four options presented to Board in October were developed as a result of consultation with tenants, YHN staff, and stakeholders. In addition a great deal of work was done to gather internal information and details of best practice elsewhere.

The four options were

Option 1 – effectively stay as we are, with the exception of merging two offices

Option 2 – this proposed the closure of five offices

Option 3 – this option proposed closing nine offices

Option 4 – the proposal was to reduce the number of outlets to nine and have more services operate from city Council Customer Service Centres.

Options two, three and four also proposed that a feasibility study be carried out into the benefits of setting up a single telephone number for all housing enquiries.

All of the options proposed changes to staff roles to enable estate based staff to spend more time on estates and to free up officers from increasing administrative duties.

The Board meeting in October was run as a workshop where members were divided into groups and debated the benefits and disadvantages of the options. The groups were then asked to express a preferred option. There was no consensus as to the preferred option although each group ruled out option one.

5.1 Proposed changes

From November 2005 to March 2006, there has been wide ranging consultation with tenants, leaseholders, YHN staff, the city council and other stakeholders. Following the conclusion of the consultation period, a thorough analysis of the results was carried out and the option below is considered the most appropriate. The range of consultation carried out is explained in section 6 of this report.

During the consultation there was very little support from any source for option four, there was particular opposition to the proposal to merge four teams in the east end. It was felt that this would lead to a service that was too remote from tenants.

There was strong support from YHN locally based staff for option three, with the addition of an outlet on the West Road to support residents from the Elswick and Avison Street areas.

In addition, residents, YHN staff, community development workers and local councillors were keen to see the Fenham office retained.

The proposal is divided into four areas; the number and location of offices, staff roles, call centre feasibility and surgeries and use of community facilities

5.2 Number and location of outlets

Board is asked to approve the following changes to the existing outlet structure.

- Merge Benwell and Scotswood offices, which will move into the Benwell Customer Service Centre. The centre is due to open late 2007 / early 2008.
- Avison Street and Elswick to merge – it is proposed that the service will operate from an outlet on the West Road. This is a new proposal and has been the subject of strong support from local YHN staff, community development and the residents currently supported by the Elswick office.
- Gosforth and Fawdon to merge – it is proposed that the service will operate from the existing Gosforth office initially with a longer term aim to relocate elsewhere on Gosforth High Street. It is also proposed to operate a surgery from the Gosforth CSC when it opens. The city council have confirmed that the new CSC will not be large enough to accommodate the full housing service.
- Newburn and West Denton to merge – the closure of the Newburn office will be linked to finding a new site to operate a satellite office for Throckley and Newburn residents which will have reduced opening hours.
- Daisy Hill and Walker to merge– it is proposed to close the Daisy Hill office and operate the service from the Walker Centre.
- Heaton office to close – it is proposed to split the stock between Shieldfield and Gosforth offices, it is suggested that the Coast Road is the boundary of the split.
- Merge St Anthony's North and St Anthony's South – this will provide one office for the St Anthony's estate. The most appropriate location for the service needs further investigation.
- Newbiggin Hall – although none of the original proposals suggested any changes for Newbiggin Hall office analysis of the customer throughput exercises has shown that the number of people visiting the office is consistently low. Although it is felt necessary to retain a presence in the area it is proposed to reduce the office to a satellite, which would have reduced opening hours. This would free up officers to get out onto the estates more rather than be bound to the office dealing with the low numbers of customers who require a service.

It is also proposed to designate the Elswick and Scotswood offices to a satellite outlet prior to their merger with Avison Street and Benwell respectively.

The offices that are not affected by the proposals are Blakelaw, Byker, Cruddas Park, Fenham and Kenton. If agreed this will reduce the number of outlets from 20 to 12 plus two satellite offices at the end of the implementation period. The distribution of offices by area will be

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| East | Byker, St Anthonys, Shieldfield and Walker |
| Inner West | Benwell/Scotswood, Cruddas Park, Avison Street/Elswick and Fenham |
| Outer West and North | Blakelaw, Kenton, Gosforth/Fawdon and West Denton plus satellite offices for Newbiggin Hall and Throckley/Newburn |

The proposal will result in all of the main offices being open from 8.30am to 4.30pm. At present four offices are closed at lunchtime and only three open until 4.30pm.

As part of the implementation of the changes a plan would be drawn up to refurbish all of those offices that are to be retained.

5.3 Staff Roles and responsibilities

The number of staff employed in the local housing management teams is the same as the number ten years ago. During the same period the amount of stock has reduced by around 7,000 properties, of those around 4,000 were Right to Buy sales and the remainder were demolitions and disposals. Although the stock has reduced it should be remembered that the service has changed and improved significantly from that provided ten years ago.

There are a number of significant issues identified during the review which need to be addressed as part of the proposed changes to staff roles and responsibilities, these include

- The efficiencies to be gained from having larger staff teams
- The limited amount of time officers can spend on estates, particularly in smaller teams
- Specific recommendations of the Audit Commission in relation to tasks carried out by staff, for example, helping new tenants to complete housing benefit forms when they move home
- The need for clarity about staff roles and responsibilities
- The need to be clear about a career path for staff who wish to progress through the service
- Addressing the increased administrative work taken on by some staff groups

To address these issues the main features of the proposals in relation to staff are

- Revise the job titles of locally based staff to create a clear thread running from the current Housing Assistant post to the Community Housing Manager
- Create a new post of Senior Housing Services Officer. This post would provide support to managers and manage the Housing Assistants in offices where they are located. It is proposed to provide this post in nine of the revised offices
- Revise the job roles of the Estate Officers to free them up from as much of their administrative work as possible to allow them to spend more time on estates. It is

also proposed to create an extra 1.5 full time equivalent estate officers

- Focus the housing assistants on office based administrative tasks whilst allowing them to gain experience of estate based work and provide a link to tenants when estate officers are absent
- Utilise local facilities to provide surgeries for tenants who have a greater distance to travel to offices

Overall the staffing proposals will result in a reduction of 7.5 staff, it is expected that the job reductions in each of the job groups will be achieved through natural wastage over the period of the implementation plan. Details of the impact on staffing numbers and office mergers is attached as appendix 2.

5.4 Call centre feasibility

At present telephone access to local housing services is limited to 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday, with the exception of Wednesday when offices close at 3pm to allow time for staff meetings. Outside of these times customers receive an answering machine message advising them to leave their details and an officer will return the call when the office is open.

The review found that there is increasing use of the telephone by customers to enquire about housing issues; in addition the telephone is an efficient way of responding to enquiries.

In the options it was proposed under options two, three and four to carry out a more detailed feasibility to establish whether YHN should set up a call centre.

Some of the benefits are seen as

- Improved access to services outside normal office hours
- An efficient way of responding to the increasing number of people who contact YHN by telephone
- Provides customers with a single telephone number for all YHN housing management related enquiries
- Potential for freeing up officers from dealing with routine enquiries that could be handled by a telephone operator

It is therefore proposed that during 2006/07 a detailed feasibility be carried out to assess the benefits and risks of YHN introducing a call centre.

5.5 Surgeries and use of community facilities

One of the key aims of the review is to increase the amount of time staff spend on estates. By reducing the number of outlets it may be more difficult for tenants who need to visit an office to get there. It is therefore proposed to develop plans to set up regular surgeries in areas where there is a demand. It is proposed that the operating arrangements for surgeries will be subject to consultation with individual groups of residents. It is also proposed that consultation take place with local people to

to improve access to services. Initial discussions have taken place with the Tenants Federation and agreement reached to set up a joint group to progress these issues.

6. Consultation

6.1 Prior to the review starting consultation had taken place with staff and tenants which has been referred to as part of this review. This included the consultation done as part of the Best Value review of Housing Management in 2001/02 and the Tenants Federation report "Our vision for the future". Consultation has been split into two phases, phase 1 was carried out in the lead up to developing the four options, phase 2 that was consultation and communication about the options was carried out from November 2005 to March 2006. Further communication and consultation on the detail of the changes will be required on an area by area basis.

6.2 Phase 1 consultation – March 2005 to September 2005

Tenants and leaseholders

- We carried out a telephone survey and focus groups with tenants
- An officer from the Tenants Federation was on the Housing Management Review Project Board
- The Tenants Federation facilitated an open night for tenants to discuss the findings of phase 1 in August
- Specific focus groups were held with a range of hard to hear groups including older people, young people, disabled and BME communities
- The views of leaseholders have been sought through the Leaseholders Steering Group and Leaseholders Forum
- Homes and People

Internal Your Homes Newcastle

- Staff consultation took place through questionnaires, focus groups, and one to one interviews. The outcomes of phase 1 have been discussed at team meetings and with the staff side. All Your Homes Newcastle staff had the opportunity to give their views.
- The review was discussed at Area Boards in March 2005. In August Area Board members discussed the findings of phase 1.

Newcastle City Council

- Two officers from Newcastle City Council were on the Housing Management Review Project Board, including the Head of Strategic Housing.
- One to one interviews with officers from city council services including Community Support, Homeless Service and Neighbourhood Services.
- The progress of the review has been discussed at the YHN / Newcastle City

Council Strategic Liaison meeting.

Other stakeholders

- One to one interviews have taken place with officers of other stakeholders, e.g. Northumbria Police.

6.3 Phase 2 consultation – November 2005 to March 2006

Tenants and leaseholders

- Homes and People article
- Citylife article
- Letter to every tenant and leaseholder in January 2006
- Telephone helpline that was available for four weeks in January and February
- Forty six Roadshows held across the city, during January and February
- The Tenants Federation facilitated two open meetings for tenants to discuss the options in January 2006
- Local managers briefed individual Tenant and Resident groups
- Specific event held with a range of hard to hear groups including older people, young people, disabled and BME communities
- The views of leaseholders have been sought through the Leaseholders Steering Group

Internal Your Homes Newcastle

- Staff consultation has taken place through area based staff sessions in November and December. Meetings with individual staff groups from January to March, team discussions facilitated by the Area Directors and Principal Housing Managers. All Your Homes Newcastle staff have had the opportunity to give their views.
- Regular updates for all YHN staff in Housing Service News
- The options were discussed at a workshop for Area Boards in January 2006.
- Personnel committee have received updates on the review at its meetings in February and March

Newcastle City Council

- Briefing sessions were held with ward co-ordinators and community development workers
- Two open sessions were held for city councillors. Specific meetings took place with members from Fawdon and Fenham wards, there were other individual

enquiries from members by telephone and letter

- Commissioning Manager in the Strategic Housing Service has been briefed
- The review has been discussed at the YHN / Newcastle City Council liaison meetings

7. Implications

- Finance – there are a number of financial implications linked to the review. These include the revenue savings resulting from the merger of officers and the reduction in staff numbers. In addition savings in capital expenditure will be achieved by not having to refurbish as many offices.

The detail of the financial implications is set out in appendix 3

- Equalities – failure to act on the outcomes of the review will have a negative impact on YHN as an equal opportunities employer and service provider. The proposals will provide consistency in terms of access to services and office accommodation.
- Impact on performance/services to tenants/leaseholders – failure to complete the review and implement change will have a negative impact on YHN's ability to deliver the service that tenants and leaseholders want. It will also be difficult for us to improve performance in some areas, particularly where staff have limited time on estates.
- Risk – not implementing change means that there is a risk to achieving three stars at our next inspection. The Audit Commission has been clear about its view that we should reap the benefits of having larger groups of staff in a smaller number of outlets and extend opening times. There is also a risk to our reputation as a progressive organisation if we fail to respond to the drivers of the review.

8. Next Steps

8.1 Communication and consultation plan

A communication and consultation plan is being developed to inform tenants, staff and stakeholders of Boards decision and how the proposals will be delivered. The draft plan is attached as appendix 4.

8.2 Implementation of the proposals

Due to the extent of the proposals, it is proposed to implement the changes over a two-year period. In terms of outlets, priority will be given to merging those offices that are currently closed at lunchtime, and those that can be completed without the need for major capital investment. The second wave of mergers will rely on securing appropriate accommodation and then finally the opening of the Benwell Customer Service Centre. The draft implementation plan is attached as appendix 5. Board is asked to approve the plan with the understanding that there needs to be flexibility to move some mergers dependant upon having appropriate accommodation.

8.3 Liaison with the Tenants Federation

During the course of the review the Tenants Federation have been kept advised of progress through representation on the project board and regular officer meetings. The Tenants Federation hosted an open night for tenants groups to discuss the options. Twenty groups were represented at the meeting. The Federation subsequently provided a formal response to the four options. The response concentrated on how service improvements would be delivered rather than specifically commenting on the number and location of offices. Whilst the relationship with the Tenants Federation has been very positive, it is fair to say that there are some issues around the delivery of the preferred option that require more detailed discussion. To ensure that tenants can continue to influence the development of the service it has been agreed in principle with the Tenants Federation that a joint group be established to agree overarching principles of delivery and that group supports local tenants and YHN staff in implementing area by area changes.

8.4 Staff Issues

Discussions with staff on changes to job roles and responsibilities started in January 2006. Agreement has been reached with local managers about their revised job description. Negotiations are ongoing with the remainder of the staff groups and unions to seek agreement on revised roles.

8.5 Call Centre

It is proposed to carry out a detailed feasibility study into the benefits and risks associated with setting up a call centre to provide a single telephone number for all housing management service enquiries.

8.6 Board updates

It is proposed to report progress on the implementation plan to board as appropriate.

Contact Officer: Neil Scott, telephone 287 8711

Background Papers

Housing Management Review Board Report February 2005

Housing Management Review Board Report July 2005

Housing Management Review Board Report October 2005

Housing Management Review Board Report November 2005

Housing Management Review Project Board papers March to September 2005

| Housing Office | From roadshows | | All responses | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| | Count | Percentage | Count | Percentage |
| Avison Street | 25 | 4.13% | 33 | 5.45% |
| Blakelaw | 20 | 3.31% | 25 | 4.13% |
| Byker | 7 | 1.16% | 22 | 3.64% |
| Cruddas Park | 36 | 5.95% | 43 | 7.11% |
| Daisy Hill | 12 | 1.98% | 14 | 2.31% |
| Elswick | 18 | 2.98% | 24 | 3.97% |
| Fawdon | 22 | 3.64% | 21 | 3.47% |
| Fenham | 24 | 3.97% | 33 | 5.45% |
| Gosforth | 26 | 4.30% | 32 | 5.29% |
| Heaton | 14 | 2.31% | 32 | 5.29% |
| Newbiggin Hall | 4 | 0.66% | 9 | 1.49% |
| Newburn | 23 | 3.80% | 46 | 7.60% |
| North Benwell | 29 | 4.79% | 48 | 7.93% |
| North Kenton | 16 | 2.64% | 21 | 3.47% |
| Scotswood | 20 | 3.31% | 36 | 5.95% |
| Shieldfield | 18 | 2.98% | 25 | 4.13% |
| St Anthony's North | 18 | 2.98% | 19 | 3.14% |
| St Anthony's South | 29 | 4.79% | 34 | 5.62% |
| Walker | 30 | 4.96% | 26 | 4.30% |
| West Denton | 51 | 8.43% | 48 | 7.93% |
| Area not known | | | 13 | 2.15% |
| Outside Newcastle | | | 1 | 0.17% |
| Post / other | 163 | 26.94% | | |
| Total | 605 | 100.00% | 605 | 100.00% |

| 1 Do you agree that the housing service needs to change in order to improve? | Count | Percentage | % of those who answered this question |
|--|-------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| Yes | 384 | 63.47% | 68.09% |
| No | 180 | 29.75% | 31.91% |
| No answer | 41 | 6.78% | |
| | 605 | 100.00% | |

| 2 If 'Yes' which of the following improvements do you think are needed? Please tick all that apply | Count | Percentage | % of those who answered Yes to 1 |
|--|-------|------------|----------------------------------|
| Housing Officers should spend more time on estates | 324 | 53.55% | 84.38% |
| Staff should have better local knowledge | 238 | 39.34% | 61.98% |
| YHN should provide more support for vulnerable tenants | 303 | 50.08% | 78.91% |
| YHN should have larger staff teams (i.e. more staff in offices) | 193 | 31.90% | 50.26% |
| YHN need better trained staff | 128 | 21.16% | 33.33% |
| Housing Officers should work closely with other local services | 270 | 44.63% | 70.31% |
| YHN should have a contact centre with a single contact number for all enquiries | 247 | 40.83% | 64.32% |
| YHN should provide improved internet access to services | 91 | 15.04% | 23.70% |
| Other, please write in the box below | 12 | 1.98% | 3.13% |

| 3 You have seen the “Why things need to change” information. Do you agree with the reasons given? | Count | Percentage | % of those who answered this question |
|--|--------------|-------------------|--|
| Yes | 398 | 65.79% | 90.05% |
| No | 42 | 6.94% | 9.50% |
| Both | 2 | 0.33% | 0.45% |
| No answer | 38 | 6.28% | |
| Not applicable | 125 | 20.66% | |

| 3a If no please tell us your reason in the box below | | % |
|---|-----|----------|
| Reason given | 43 | 7.11% |
| No reason given | 562 | 92.89% |

| 4 Do you think the information given about the 4 options explains what they mean for you? | Count | Percentage | % of those who answered this question |
|--|--------------|-------------------|--|
| Yes | 477 | 78.84% | 92.80% |
| No | 36 | 5.95% | 7.00% |
| Some | 1 | 0.17% | 0.19% |
| No answer | 91 | 15.04% | |

| 4a If ‘No’ please tell us why you say this in the box below | | % | % of those who said No |
|--|-----|----------|-------------------------------|
| Reason given | 39 | 6.45% | 108.33% |
| No reason given | 566 | 93.55% | -8.33% |

| 5 Please indicate which option you prefer by ticking, 1 option only, below | Count | Percentage | % of those who indicated a choice |
|---|--------------|-------------------|--|
| Option 1 - Little change | 160 | 26.45% | 28.42% |
| Option 2 - Small change | 111 | 18.35% | 19.72% |
| Option 3 - Significant change | 214 | 35.37% | 38.01% |
| Option 4 - Very significant change | 78 | 12.89% | 13.85% |
| No choice made | 42 | 6.94% | |
| | 605 | | |

| 6 If you have any comments about the options for the future of the housing service please write them in the box below | | % |
|--|-----|----------|
| Comments given | 245 | 40.50% |
| No comments given | 360 | 59.50% |

| Gender | Count | Percentage | % of those that responded |
|---------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Male | 220 | 36.36% | 38.06% |
| Female | 358 | 59.17% | 61.94% |
| No response | 27 | 4.46% | |
| | 605 | | |

| Age | Count | Percentage | % of those that responded |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 16 – 24 | 35 | 5.79% | 6.70% |
| 25 – 34 | 72 | 11.90% | 13.79% |
| 35 – 44 | 69 | 11.40% | 13.22% |
| 45 – 54 | 76 | 12.56% | 14.56% |
| 55 – 59 | 49 | 8.10% | 9.39% |
| 60 – 64 | 45 | 7.44% | 8.62% |
| 65 – 74 | 119 | 19.67% | 22.80% |
| 75+ | 57 | 9.42% | 10.92% |
| No response | 83 | 13.72% | |

| Ethnicity | Count | Percentage | % of those that responded |
|--|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| a) White - British | 532 | 87.93% | 93.99% |
| b) White - Irish | 5 | 0.83% | 0.88% |
| c) Any other white background | 3 | 0.50% | 0.53% |
| d) Mixed - White & Black Caribbean | 1 | 0.17% | 0.18% |
| e) Mixed - White & Black African | 1 | 0.17% | 0.18% |
| f) Mixed - White & Asian | 1 | 0.17% | 0.18% |
| g) Any other mixed background | 0 | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| h) Asian & Asian British - India | 1 | 0.17% | 0.18% |
| i) Asian & Asian British - Pakistani | 0 | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| j) Asian & Asian British - Bangladeshi | 13 | 2.15% | 2.30% |
| k) Any other Asian background | 1 | 0.17% | 0.18% |
| l) Black or Black British - Caribbean | 1 | 0.17% | 0.18% |
| m) Black or Black British - African | 2 | 0.33% | 0.35% |
| n) Any other Black background | 0 | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| o) Chinese | 0 | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| p) Other ethnic group | 5 | 0.83% | 0.88% |
| No response | 39 | 6.45% | |

| Disability | Count | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Long term illness or infirmity | | |
| Yes | 194 | 32.07% |
| No | 411 | 67.93% |
| | 605 | |
| Registered disabled | | |
| Yes | 99 | 16.36% |
| No | 506 | 83.64% |
| | 605 | |

Housing Management Review

Appendix 2

Preferred Option

| Office | Stock | | Estate Officer average patch Size | | Staff | | Net Effect |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|--|--|---|
| | Current (incl sheltered) | Proposed (excl. sheltered) | Current | Proposed | Current | Proposed | |
| Inner West | | | | | | | |
| Benwell Benwell CSC | 1,367 | 2,108 Add in Scotswood | 456 | 422 | CHM 1 EO 3 HA 4 | CHM 1 EO 5 HA 5 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM - No change EO - plus 2 HA - plus 1 Snr Hsng Services Officer - plus 1 |
| Scotswood (office closes) | 741 | 0 Benwell CSC | 371 | 0 | CHM 1 EO 2 HA 3 | CHM 0 EO 0 HA 0 | CHM - Minus 1 EO Minus 2 HA Minus 3 |
| Cruddas Park | 1,866 | 1,866 | 374 | 374 | CHM 1 EO 5 HA 5 | CHM 1 EO 5 HA 5 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM no change EO no change HA no change Snr Hsng Services Officer - plus 1 |
| Avison Street merge with Elswick | 1,345 | 1,799 Avison Street and Elswick | 449 | 450 | CHM 1 EO 3 HA 4 | CHM 1 EO 4 HA 5 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM no change EO plus 1 HA Plus 1 Snr Hsng Services Officer - plus 1 |
| Elswick Merge with Avison Street | 518 | 0 | 259 | 0 | SEO 1 EO 2 HA 3 | SEO 0 EO 0 HA 0 | SEO Minus 1 EO Minus 2 HA Minus 3 |
| Fenham | 1,612 | 1,577 | 538 | 526 | CHM 1 Vacant March 06 EO 3 HA 4 | CHM 1 EO 3 HA 4 | CHM - no change EO - no change HA - no change |

Inner West Total **7449** **7350** **Current Average 414** **Proposed Average 432**

Outer West and North

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|---|-----|-----|-------------------------|---|---|
| Kenton CSC | 1,999 | 1,999 | 500 | 500 | CHM 1 EO 4 HA 4 | CHM 1 EO 4 HA 4 | CHM - No change EO - no change HA - no change |
| Gosforth | 1,312 | 3,021 add in Fawdon add in 815 Heaton | 656 | 504 | CHM 1 EO 2 HA 3 | CHM 1 EO 6 HA 6 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM - No change EO plus 4 HA - plus 3 Snr Hsng Services Officer plus 1 |
| Fawdon (office closes) | 961 | 0 | 481 | 0 | SEO 1 EO 2 HA 2 | SEO 0 EO 0 HA 0 | SEO Minus 1 EO Minus 2 HA Minus 2 |
| West Denton CSC plus Throckley Satellite | 1,822 | 3,793 Add in Newburn | 456 | 474 | CHM 1 EO 4 HA 4 | CHM 1 EO 8 HA 7 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM no change EO plus 4 HA plus 3 Snr Hsng Services Officer plus 1 |
| Newburn (office closes) | 2,073 | 0 | 519 | 0 | CHM 1 EO 4 HA 5 | CHM 0 EO 0 HA 0 | CHM minus 1 EO minus 4 HA minus 5 |
| Newbiggin Hall (satellite office) | 1,640 | 1,595 | 547 | 532 | CHM 1 EO 3 HA 4 | CHM 1 EO 3 HA 3 | CHM no change EO no change HA minus 1 |
| Blakelaw/Cowgate | 2,088 | 2,088 | 464 | 418 | CHM 1 EO 4.5 HA 5 | CHM 1 EO 5 HA 5 | CHM - no change EO - plus 0.5 HA - no change |

Outer West & North 11895 12496* Current Average 506 Proposed Average 480
 *Part Heaton stock added

East

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-----|-----|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Daisy Hill (office closes) | 894 | 0 | 447 | 0 | SEO 1 EO 2 HA 3 | SEO 0 EO 0 HA 0 | SEO Minus 1 EO Minus 2 HA Minus 3 |
| Heaton (office closes) | 1,396 | 0 | 698 | 0 | CHM 1 EO 2 HA 3 | CHM 0 EO 0 HA 0 | CHM Minus 1 EO Minus 2 HA Minus 3 |
| Walker Centre Churchwalk and Pottery Bank Merged May '05 | 2,258 | 3,013 | 452 | 431 | CHM 1 SEO 1 EO 5 HA 5 | CHM 1 SEO 0 EO 7 HA 7 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM - No change SEO Minus 1 EO - plus 2 HA - plus 2 Snr Hsng Services Officer - plus 1 |
| Byker | 1,959 | 1,849 | 490 | 463 | CHM 1 EO 4 HA 5 | CHM 1 EO 4 HA 5 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM - No change EO - no change HA - no change Snr Hsng Services Officer - plus 1 |
| Shieldfield | 1,740 | 2,055 | 580 | 411 | CHM 1 EO 3 HA 5 | CHM 1 EO 5 HA 5 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM - No change EO - plus 2 HA - no change Snr Hsng Services Officer - plus 1 |
| St Anthony's North (Merge with SAS) | 1,565 | 0 | 522 | 0 | CHM 1 EO 3 HA 3 | CHM 0 EO 0 HA 0 | CHM - minus 1 EO - minus 3 HA - minus 3 |
| St Anthony's South (Merge with SAN) | 1,756 | 0 | 586 | 0 | CHM 1 (vacant) EO 3 HA 3 | CHM 0 EO 0 HA 0 | CHM - minus 1 EO - minus 3 HA - minus 3 |
| St Anthony's | 0 | 3,122 | 0 | 446 | CHM 0 EO 0 HA 0 | CHM 1 EO 6 HA 6 Snr Hsng Services Officer 1 | CHM - plus 1 EO - plus 6 HA - plus 6 Snr Hsng Services Officer - plus 1 |

East Total **11568** **10039*** **Current Average 526** **Proposed Average 456**

*Part Heaton removed

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Staff Totals | | | | | CHM 17 SEO 4 EO 63.5 HA 77 | CHM 13 SEO 0 EO 65 HA 67 9 Snr Hsng Services Officer | Net Effect CHM Minus 4 SEO Minus 4 EO plus 1.5 HA minus 10 Snr Hsng Services Officer - plus 9 |
|---------------------|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|

Staff levels reduced by 7.5 posts

Current City Wide Totals

Total managed stock

Average patch size

30,912

487

Proposed Citywide Totals

Total managed stock (less Sheltered stock)

Average patch size

29,885

460

| | Appendix 3 | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| <u>Housing Management Review - Financial Implications</u> | | |
| | | |
| <u>Revenue costs per annum</u> | <u>£000's</u> | <u>£000's</u> |
| YHN Office Revenue Costs | | |
| Avison Street CHO | -12 | |
| Benwell CHO | -36 | |
| Daisy Hill CHO | -12 | |
| Elswick CHO | -20 | |
| Fawdon CHO | -16.5 | |
| Heaton CHO | -20 | |
| Newburn CHO | -30 | |
| St Anthony's (1 from 2 offices) | -16 | |
| Scotswood CHO | -15 | |
| Total savings | | -177.5 |
| New Outlets | | |
| Throckley Satellite (est) | 15 | |
| West Road (est) | 20 | |
| Additional CSC Costs (estimate for Benwell CSC & Gosforth and East End CSC surgeries) | 77 | |
| Total New Costs | | 112 |
| Net Effect - Savings | | -65.5 |
| Staffing Costs (Savings) per annum | | |
| Community Housing Manager, minus 4 posts @ £39,851 | -159.5 | |
| Senior Estate Officer, minus 4 posts @ £32,984 | -132 | |
| Estate Officer, plus 1.5 posts @ £27,192 | 41 | |
| Housing Assistant, minus 10 posts @ £21,842 | -218.5 | |
| Senior Hsg Services Officer, plus 9 posts @ £30,191 | 272 | |
| Net Effect - Savings | | -197 |
| <u>Total Revenue costs / (Savings) Per Annum</u> | | -262.5 |
| <u>Capital Costs</u> | | |
| | | <u>£000's</u> |
| Capital Costs (refurbishment, DDA and maintenance) | | 337* |
| - £100k Newbiggin Hall (est) - but may not be required if NCC development achieved | | |
| - £200k West Road office (est) | | |
| - £37k minor works to range of offices | | |
| Notes | | |
| 1. *Assumes SAS office could be used for new St Anthonys base. | | |
| 2. Call Centre feasibility - financial implications to be reported to Board as part of overall report. | | |
| 3. Progressing this option would mean £1.19m would not be required for other refurbishments | | |

Your Homes Newcastle - Improving the Housing Management Service

Communication plan

1. Aims

Communication and consultation undertaken to date has been integral to the review process and feedback received has been vital in shaping both the consistent proposals for service improvement and the preferred option.

This communication plan will be expanded to ensure YHN has a robust framework to:

- communicate the final decision reached by Board
- ensure that there is effective coverage of all stakeholders, with focused targeting of harder to reach groups

2. Stakeholders

There has been a wide range of consultation with Board, YHN staff, tenants and leaseholders, and other stakeholders as part of the review process. The following highlights the stakeholder groups who need to be made aware of Boards decision.

Main Stakeholders

- Tenants and leaseholders
- YHN Staff
- Area Boards
- Newcastle City Councillors
- Newcastle Tenants Federation
- Individual Tenants and Residents Associations or Groups
- Trade unions
- Newcastle City Council

Other stakeholders

- Residents (people who are not Council tenants)
- MP's
- Northumbria Police
- Media – local, Housing specialist press

3. Linkages

It is important that this communication framework links with several existing YHN strategies. The key areas to consider are:

- YHN's overall Communications Strategy, which includes agreed communication standards

- All printed information to clearly state that it is available on request in community languages, audio tape, Braille and large print. Also material should be made available on the Your Homes Newcastle website
- YHN's existing framework on involvement and participation, particularly in respect of ensuring the engagement and involvement of hard to reach groups, including young people and tenants from BME and disabled communities

4. Headline communication actions

The following provides an overview of key communication actions to take place with each stakeholder group. This is not exhaustive at this stage and will be added to as required in order to ensure timely and relevant contact is made, appropriate to the group concerned.

4.1 Tenants and leaseholders

- Press release within week of Board decision
- Individual letter to all tenants and leaseholders
- Feedback and discussion with Hard to Hear groups, who contributed to the consultation process at Assembly Room event
- Targeted information to all known Hard to Hear groups, via Tenant Involvement Team
- Agenda item for discussion at the next Leasehold Steering Group
- Article in Homes and People (scheduled for July)
- Posters and leaflets to be prepared for display in offices mid June
- Information display at Annual Tenants Event, St James' Park (27-28 June)

4.2 YHN Staff

- Notice to all YHN staff informing them of Boards decision
- Housing Management News Feature Article week commencing. 15 May
- Area Management Team Meetings scheduled for 17 May
- Individual team meetings commencing 17 May
- Team Brief for all staff, scheduled for 24 May
- Regular Housing Service News items during implementation process

4.3 Area Boards

- Item on May Area Board meetings
- Opportunity to discuss detail of Area based implications
- Update on progress with implementation as appropriate

4.4 Councillors

- Individual letter to all NCC elected Members week commencing 15 May
- Opportunity for discussion in local implications with members of the Housing Management Senior team at a local level

4.5 Newcastle Tenants Federation

- Letter to Tenants Federation officers and executive week commencing 15 May
- Meeting agreed (24 May) to start a joint working group of Tenant representatives and YHN officers, to consider review outcomes and implementation
- Regular meeting with Tenants Federation officers to focus on implementation plan, scheduled for 26 May
- Monthly meetings to follow on to discuss detail of Area based implications and related service improvements

4.6 Individual Tenants and Residents Associations or Groups

- Letter to all TARA's by the end of May
- Targeted liaison with TARA's in areas of agreed change with Senior team support where required
- Regular communication with TARA chair's as implementation plan and timescales are consolidated

4.7 Trade unions

- Letter to be sent to all recognised Trade Unions week commencing 15 May
- Regular meeting with Union convenor to focus on staffing issues and implementation plan. This will build on consultation which has occurred to date

4.8 Newcastle City Council

- Meeting with NCC senior officers to occur week commencing 15 May
- Regular meeting with City Service operational managers to focus on agreed option, implementation plan and linkage with NCC services

4.9 Residents (people who are not Council tenants)

- Article to be requested in next available City Life magazine (July / August)
- Press releases will be produced to inform wide audience

4.10 MP's

- Letter from CX to be sent to all local Members of Parliament, week commencing 15 May

4.11 Northumbria Police

- Discussion with Northumbria Police senior liaison officer to occur with Senior team members
- Letter to follow up above to be sent June 2006

4.12 Media – local and specialist press

- NCC Press officer to agree post Board press release followed by specific articles as required
- Questions and Answers to manage specific follow up press enquiries to be available mid May

- Further targeted press releases on service improvements etc to occur as implementation plan is moved forward

5. Monitoring and further actions

While every effort will be made to communicate with all stakeholders in an appropriate and timely manner, this will be monitored closely in order to ensure action to cover any identified gaps takes place. All staff involved in the process will be encouraged to provide feedback on the success, or otherwise of the process.

Similarly it is likely that feedback, through questions and comment from various stakeholder groups will generate the need for further bespoke communication as required.

The need to provide suitable responses, particularly in respect of groups who perceive agreed changes to be detrimental to the service will be vital. Face to face dialogue and discussion at a local level will be an important communication tool in presenting YHN's strategic aims which include the continued improvement to localised service provision which this review will deliver.

Staff and managers will be fully supported through this period, with members of the Housing Management Senior Team leading specific communication sessions with key stakeholder groups.

Your Homes Newcastle Housing Management Review

Outline implementation plan

Year 1 2006/07

Tenants and leaseholders

- Communicate board decision
- Establish working group with Tenants representatives to develop operational improvements

Staff

- Agree changes to job roles
- Appoint new Senior Housing Services Officers where appropriate

Outlets

- Daisy Hill and Walker to merge
- Fawdon and Gosforth to merge
- Scotswood, Elswick and Newbiggin Hall to change to satellite outlets
- Heaton to close, properties divided between Gosforth and Shieldfield
- St Anthony's South and St Anthonys North to merge

Contact centre

- Carry out contact centre feasibility and report findings to board

Evaluation

- Evaluate impact of first round of mergers on tenants and staff

Year 2 2007/08

Outlets

- Establish satellite for Throckley and Newburn residents, close Newburn office
- Establish West Road outlet, close Elswick and Avison Street offices
- Benwell CSC opens