

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
TUESDAY 25TH JANUARY 2011

**Recommendation from Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee,
Thursday 6th January 2011**

Housing Services Assessment and Improvement Plan

The Community and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered a report from the Strategic Housing Services Manager that outlined the assessment that had been undertaken by the Audit Commission and the associated Improvement Plan.

The Council opted not to have a full inspection due to the uncertain future of the Audit commission and the cost so the assessment undertaken has not been scored and will not be published on the Audit Commission website. The Audit Commission acted in the role of critical friend to the Council.

The assessment identified progress made in housing strategy through the development and consultation on the Worcestershire Housing Strategy, the core strategy and the recent Private Sector Housing Action Plan. It also recognised the importance of the County Homelessness Strategy and Housing Market Assessment updated but recognised the need to more research into particular client groups e.g. the Housing Needs of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) households.

Areas for development included work around empty homes, disabled facilities grants and better monitoring of RSL performance. The improvement plan also identified further work being required around homelessness and housing options and the value for money achieved through the homeless contract with Community Housing Group.

Capacity for improvement was seen as strong with the team being effectively led and with the skills and ability to further develop the service. The active engagement from the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Services was also recognised.

Recommended to Cabinet:

The Strategic Housing Services Assessment be signed off and the Improvement Plan be agreed.