Apex Housing Association

Business Plan

2012/13

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Introduction

The Business Plan sets out the key tasks to be undertaken by the Association in the year 2012/13 to achieve the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2011/2014. The Plan addresses the main issues facing Apex. The key tasks indicated are measurable and time bound to allow for the reporting of performance which will be included in the Annual Report, and in regular reports to the Board of Management.

The Financial Plan incorporates the development programme, the methods of financing, together with administrative and management budgets, and indicates that the Association expects to achieve its objectives and maintain its present financial position.

1.0 Managing & Maintaining The Stock

Objectives and Key Tasks

1.1. Continue to deliver effective housing management, ensuring quality, compliance, continuous improvement, value for money and effective community involvement.

1.1.1 Assess the requirements of the Respect Standard and develop and commence implementation of a Compliance Action Plan by 31 March 2013.

1.1.2 Implement Year 2 of the Community Involvement Plan by 31 March 2013.

1.2. Further develop responses to ensure stable communities.

1.2.1 Implement the 'Good Neighbour Agreement' on two 'existing' estates by 31 March 2013.

1.2.2 Promote and encourage implementation of the 'Shared Futures' concept on all new estates allocated during 2012-2013.

1.2.3 Assess the implications of the Welfare Reform proposals on Apex tenants and agree an Action Plan by 30 September 2012.

1.2.4 Investigate the potential of introducing long term savings incentives for tenants by 31 December 2012.

1.3. Maintain the stock condition database and roll out responding maintenance programmes.

1.3.1 Complete 300 stock condition surveys and produce robust stock investment data to inform decision making and future financial planning by 31 March 2013.

1.3.2 Ensure full compliance with the current property management section of the DSD Housing Guide.

1.4. Raise the energy efficiency of Apex's housing stock.

1.4.1 Increase the overall energy performance of 150 general needs properties to above the Northern Ireland benchmark average of 57 by 31 March 2013.

Objective ■ Key Task ■

1.5. Ensure the efficiency of the maintenance service.

1.5.1 Achieve a 60:40 split of (planned/cyclical: response maintenance) expenditure by 31 March 2013.

1.5.2 Monitor the performance of consultants in the Minor and Major Works Framework in meeting agreed programme delivery targets by 31 March 2013.

1.6. Improve performance through Key Performance Indicators.

1.6.1 Reduce rent arrears by 0.1% by 31 March 2013.

1.6.2 Reduce void loss by 0.1% by 31 March 2013.

1.6.3 Implement monitoring and reporting on anti-social behaviour performance indicators within the Customer Contact Module by 31 December 2012.

1.7. Ensure services reflect tenant and resident needs and expectations.

1.7.1 Implement the Customer Satisfaction Strategy Action Plan 2012-2013 by 31 March 2013.

1.7.2 Publish performance information for the year 2011-2012 by 31 December 2012.

1.7.3 Review the effectiveness of the Consultation Policy by 31 March 2013.

1.7.4 Carry out timely consultation with tenants and residents regarding conversions to gas at Clarendon Street and Dunvale Close, Derry and conversions to oil at Tamlough Park, Ballykelly.

1.7.5 Introduce new Complaints Policy & Procedure throughout the organisation by 31 March 2013.

2.0 Developing & Delivering Care and Support

Objectives and Key Tasks

2.1. Maintain and develop the Association's existing care and support portfolio in sustainable and affordable ways.

2.1.1 Implement the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) 2 assessment process and agree improvement plans by 30 June 2012.

2.1.2 Develop Action Plans to address any gaps in relation to the 2012/13 Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSS&PS) Inspection Standards by 30 June 2012.

2.1.3 Introduce pilot standardised approach to the management of annual leave within the Supported Living Schemes by 31 March 2013.

2.2. Examine peripatetic care and support delivery models from elsewhere.

2.2.1 Review the service delivery model in place at the Association's schemes for those with addictions and make recommendations in consultation with Supporting People by 31 December 2012.

2.3. Continue to enhance the quality of life of service users.

2.3.1 Develop and implement a programme of activities in Supported Living Schemes in conjunction with service users, ensuring compliance with Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSS&PS) and Supporting People standards by 31 March 2013.

2.3.2 Review the 'needs assessment' and 'move on' processes within each discipline to ensure the effective delivery of support and care, the appropriate management of changing need, and compliance with regulatory requirements by 31 March 2013.

2.3.3 Launch and host the 'Carer of the Year Award 2012' by 31 December 2012.

3.0 The Development Agenda

Objectives and Key Tasks

3.1. Deliver the Association's Development Programme, with an increased focus on energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty.

3.1.1 Achieve the total number of site starts allocated to Apex in the published Social Housing Development Programme by 31 March 2013, subject to the availability of public finance.

3.1.2 Achieve at least 200 completions before 31 March 2013.

3.1.3 Achieve a Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or any successor accreditation rating for new build capital projects, with particular emphasis on energy conservation, energy efficiency and thermal comfort.

3.2. Look at innovative and effective ways of delivering good quality, value for money social and affordable housing.

3.2.1 Submit proposals for a Departmental pilot scheme to deliver intermediate housing on Housing Executive surplus sites.

3.2.2 Continue to work in partnership with the Procurement Strategy Programme Board to implement good practice in the delivery of social housing.

3.2.3 Continue to implement the International Standards Organisation (ISO) Quality & Environmental Management Policies during the course of the year.

3.3. Develop Apex's subsidiary (known as Fairbuild Homes) into a going concern.

3.3.1 Achieve planning permission on the Victoria Road site, Belfast for affordable housing and begin construction and marketing during the course of the year.

3.4. Continue to manage the Apex Procurement Group to the best advantage of the Group's member associations.

3.4.1 Continue to implement the Group's five year Business Plan in partnership with the members of Apex Procurement (NI) Ltd.

3.4.2 Continue to implement the recommendations from the departmental mid-term review report on the implementation of the Group's Business Plan.

4.0 Governance

Objectives and Key Tasks

4.1. Continue to seek sustainable, long-term funding support.

4.1.1 Ensure adequate sources of funding are available to meet the financial commitments and cash flow requirements of the Business Plan throughout the year.

4.2. Manage the Association's financial and other resources to best effect, using performance measures which help Apex manage its business.

4.2.1 Ensure key ratios continue to meet lender financial covenants throughout the year.

4.2.2 Report 'Management & Maintenance' costs per unit type quarterly to the Finance Committee by 30 September 2012.

4.2.3 Continue to closely monitor revenue deficits in Supported Living Schemes and achieve a 1% reduction in food and cleaning costs by 31 March 2013.

4.2.4 Complete the implementation of Purchase to Pay/Electronic Approvals system by 31 December 2012.

4.2.5 Ensure compliance with Treasury Management Annual Plan and report half-yearly to the Finance Committee by 30 November 2012.

4.3. Ensure the on-going effectiveness of the Board of Management.

4.3.1 Ensure no Board member exceeds nine years continuous service by 31 March 2013.

4.4. Continue to develop the workforce to meet the Association's business objectives.

4.4.1 Ensure that a further 10 candidates successfully complete either Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) Level 2 or 3 in Health & Social Care by 31 March 2013.

4.4.2 Deliver a leadership development programme for director and middle management levels of staff by 31 March 2013.

4.5. Look at the issue of 'people succession' at all levels and in all areas within Apex.

4.5.1 Launch competency framework for all care and support posts within the Supported Living Schemes by 31 March 2013.

4.5.2 Review the Recruitment & Selection Strategy within the organisation by 31 March 2013.

4.6. Ensure diversity is valued.

4.6.1 Produce an Audit of Inequalities in preparation for the development of a new Equality Scheme as stipulated by the Equality Commission.

4.7. Further improve the Association's IT/ICT capacity.

4.7.1 Replace software Firewall with hardware Firewall by 30 September 2012.

4.7.2 Upgrade Exchange 2003 to 2010 version by 31 March 2013.

4.8. Continue to improve communication within and beyond Apex, in particular using IT/ICT-based methods.

4.8.1 Implement Storage Area Network (SAN) permitting the amalgamation of data storage into one central unit by September 2012.

4.8.2 Source appropriate training providers to facilitate e-learning in the organisation by 31 March 2013.

4.8.3 Review the content and format of Staff Handbook by 31 December 2012.

4.8.4 Development and launch of a 'Social Media Policy & Procedure' by 31 December 2012.

4.8.5 Implement the organisation Texting Module by 31 March 2013.

4.9. Ensure Apex has a sustainable management presence which reflects the geographical spread of its operations.

4.9.1 Implement the revised staffing structure to ensure a satisfactory management presence throughout the Association's area of operation by 30 September 2012.

4.10. Continue to develop Apex's corporate social responsibility in meaningful and sustainable ways.

4.10.1 Evaluate the 'Affordable Credit Project' and investigate options to continue with the 'affordable loans' initiative by 31 March 2013.

4.10.2 Continue with the 'Time To Read' initiative for staff volunteers within Apex.

4.10.3 Continue to deliver an Apex led workshop within the 'Strive 2 Work' programme by 31 December 2012.

Revenue Budget For Year 2012/13

	£m
Income	
Rents	24.7
Other Income	2.6
	27.3
Expenditure	
Direct Property Management	17.3
Administration	3.8
	21.1
Operating Surplus	6.2
Net Interest Payable	4.9
Transfers to/from Reserves	0.6
	5.5
Retained Surplus	0.7

Financial Statement 2012/13

The Association's Revenue Budget for the next financial year indicates strong growth in income from rents and other activities to £27.3m, an increase of 8.3% on 2011/12. Revenue expenditure is budgeted at £21.1m (an increase of 4.8% on 2011/12) resulting in an overall operating surplus of £6.2m. This represents an increase of 13.2% on the current year and would be a good result for the Association in a challenging operating environment. After deducting net interest payable and transfers to reserves totalling £5.5m, the budgeted retained surplus for the year is set at £0.7m.

The Association continues to develop much needed social housing, despite public sector cuts affecting both its capital and revenue streams. Inflationary pressures have started to ease slightly, however higher borrowing costs continue to impact on the overall results. The Association currently has a sizeable development programme under construction which will start to contribute positively towards revenue income towards the latter half of the year. Over the coming year, the Association will spend £78.7m on developing new schemes and capital alterations and improvements to existing properties. To fund the capital programme, Apex Housing Association expects to receive £27.8m of Housing Association Grant, release £2m from the Disposal Proceeds Fund and draw down a further £48.9m of private finance. These additional borrowings will bring total loans to £125m by the end of March 2013. Based on historic costs, the projected total assets of the Association after deduction of capital grants at 31 March 2013 is forecast to be £145m.

2012/13 will see the completion of a number of significant projects throughout Northern Ireland. These include over 150 dwellings at various sites in Londonderry, approximately 100 in Belfast and 130 in Newcastle. All these homes are energy efficient incorporating Lifetime Homes, Code for Sustainability and Secured by Design standards. The Association's in-house architect and Clerk of Works ensure a high specification and quality workmanship on all Apex sites.

2012/13 will start with over 900 dwellings under construction. During the year, the development team will continue to seek other opportunities to ensure that a further substantial programme of site starts will be in place by the end of the financial year.

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