REPORT NO 189/08

ANGUS COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE – 21 FEBRUARY 2008
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE – 28 FEBRUARY 2008

TRANSFER OF HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES FROM HOUSING TO SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH

JOINT REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH
THE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

ABSTRACT

This report seeks approval on the phase two restructuring process in relation to the transfer of housing support services from Housing to Social Work and Health.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee and Neighbourhood Services Committee:

i. approve the contents of this report;

II note the intention to transfer housing support services to Social Work and Health on 1 April 2008

2 BACKGROUND

Members are asked to note that the focus of this element of Phase 2 restructuring is to ensure all housing support services provided by Angus Council are managed through a single department.

Two distinct service areas are being transferred from Housing to Social Work and Health. These are the Sheltered Housing Service and the Homelessness Support Service.

The housing support comprises core service (provided to all sheltered housing tenants), personal support (to meet the assessed needs of the individual) and social activities (both general and person specific). Tenants’ Housing Support Plans detail all three aspects of the service relevant to the recipient.

The Homelessness Support Service provides two distinct services – “Accommodation” for those requiring temporary accommodation and “Community” for those requiring support to prevent homelessness. Currently, this service is provided from a number of separate self contained accommodation sites throughout Angus. The service also assesses tenants in dispersed premises throughout the Angus area to enable individuals to become part of the general community.

We propose that the sheltered housing service and management should be based in the Social Work and Health Homecare Service and that the Homelessness Support Service be based within the Social Work and Health Intake Service.

It is proposed that 67 members of staff ie 55 full time equivalent (FTE) posts be transferred. These comprise of 37 FTE dedicated sheltered housing staff; 16 FTE dedicated homeless staff plus a housing support manager and an admin assistant.
The transfer of the Housing Support Service is part of the Council's Phase Two restructuring and is designed to ensure services are in the right place. Housing Support is a “People and Support Centred Service” and therefore the Corporate Management Team believes it is best placed within Social Work and Health.

Following detailed discussions between Neighbourhood Services and Social Work and Health, a Project Board has been established to oversee the smooth transfer of all appropriate staff. The Board is responsible for the strategic decisions involved in the transfer and ensuring the project runs to time and with a focus on customer standards.

A Project Team, which comprises representatives from Social Work and Health, Human Resources and Housing, is working through the detail of the transfer.

Communication
Members are advised that considerable preparation is being put into the consultation process with tenants and staff. The communication strategy is currently being finalised and will involve road shows within each of the sheltered housing units and with staff.

The appropriate trade unions have being fully consulted and involved in the proposed transfer.

Service Standards
There will be a continuity of care and service provision for existing service users in receipt of general and specialist support as identified by their assessment of need.

It is important to note that the tenants will not notice any reduction in service as a result of this transfer.

Service Provision
Formal external assessment of the service and staff will be maintained following transfer through Care Commission inspections and National Care Standards

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost of housing support services within the Housing Revenue Account is met through a Service Level Agreement with Social Work and Health who pay for this service with Supporting People Grant.

The costs of the staff transferring from Housing to Social Work and Health are equivalent to the value of the grant payment at around £1.27million and, therefore, there are no financial implications for either department arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

4 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.
5 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

R Peat  R Ashton
Director of Social Work and Health  Director of Neighbourhood Services

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.