

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

20 July 2009

Report of the Director of Health and Housing

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES AND MANAGEMENT REPORT

Summary

This report presents the minutes from the last Tonbridge & Malling Home Improvement Agency (T&M HIA) Advisory Group meeting and the Mid & West Kent Home Improvement Agency Management Report 2008-09.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The T&M HIA Advisory Group meets on a quarterly basis and is organised by *in touch*. It has two T&M Members appointed to the Group, currently Councillors David Cure and John Balcombe. Representatives from the Council's Housing Team, Kent County Council Supporting People Team, Pensions Service, Age Concern, Tonbridge Volunteer Bureau and other local organisations/charities attend as well as service users. The Group is not a decision making body but advises the HIA on policies and procedures as well as providing a useful forum for information exchange and networking.

1.2 HIA Advisory Group minutes

1.2.1 The minutes of the last T&M HIA Advisory Group meeting managed by *in touch* on 13 May 2009 are attached at **[Annex 1]**.

1.2.2 The new *in touch* Mid & West Kent Home Improvement Agency covering Tonbridge & Malling, Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks and Maidstone is now up and running from the new offices on Kings Hill. As Members were made aware during the reporting of the Scrutiny Review of the HIA and subsequent decision to outsource the HIA, it is the intention of *in touch* to establish one Advisory Group covering the mid and west Kent area.

1.2.3 Recent discussions with *in touch* indicate that the T&M HIA Advisory Group in its current format will continue until April 2010. *In touch* intends reporting with recommendations to the Advisory Group on the proposed arrangements later this year with the new format group meeting starting from April 2010.

1.3 Mid & West Kent Home Improvement Agency Management Report 2008-09

1.3.1 The Mid & West Kent Home Improvement Agency Management Report 2008-09 prepared by *in touch* is attached at **[Annex 2]**. Members should note that *in touch* have only managed the Council's HIA since August 2008 and therefore the costs, fees, performance figures are for a lesser period than the other local authorities. It should also be noted that *in touch* took over a considerable backlog of cases from the Council and were without a Technical Officer dedicated to Tonbridge & Malling until November 2008. These issues clearly affect the performance and I believe a true comparison with others can only take place from 2009/10.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 None arising from this report.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 None arising from this report.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 None arising from this report.

Background papers:

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Nil

John Batty
Director of Health and Housing