

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

08 November 2010

Report of the Director of Health and Housing

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 THE AUDIT COMMISSION'S KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY (KLOEs) FOR HOUSING

Summary

This report outlines the progress that has been made in assessing the housing service against the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry. The process has been closely aligned to the review of the Housing Strategy Action Plan, which is the subject of a separate report to this Board.

1.1 Key Lines of Enquiry

- 1.1.1 KLOEs are designed to provide the Audit Commission's inspection staff with a framework to view and assess services. They are also used by individual organisations to carry out in-depth service reviews outside of an inspection regime, and develop improvement plans to drive forward service improvements.
- 1.1.2 The KLOEs represent sets of questions around different service areas, and provide consistent criteria for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and the efficiency of the service. There are 20 KLOEs¹ in total and each one includes descriptors of both excellent and fair services that set out what the Audit Commission expects from services delivered to such standards.
- 1.1.3 The Housing Strategy Action Plan, which was approved by Members in November 2009, identified a need to undertake an initial evaluation of the service against the following four KLOEs:
- Allocations and Lettings;
 - Homelessness and Housing Advice;
 - Private Sector Housing; and

¹ Details of each KLOE are available at:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing/inspection/Keylinesofenquiry/Pages/default.aspx>

- Strategic Approach to Housing.

1.1.4 This work has been undertaken as part of the review of the Housing Strategy Action Plan, with selected areas for improvement carried over as objectives for the forthcoming twelve month period where appropriate.

1.1.5 The evaluation has focussed on comparing the service against the descriptors for an excellent service, and generally it compares well. Members will recall that in August the Government announced that the Audit Commission's responsibility for overseeing and delivering local audit and inspections will cease from 2012/13. It would be reasonable to expect that eventually the KLOEs will be replaced with an alternative framework for measuring the effectiveness of a service, but until then we will continue to use them as a means of identifying service improvements and this will be very much work that is ongoing.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 None arising from this report.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 None arising from this report.

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 Failure to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the service, and to identify areas for improvement and development will compromise the Council's ability to meet identified housing need and to attract the necessary funding required for that purpose.

Background papers:

contact: Janet Walton

Nil

John Batty
Director of Health and Housing