

SEVERN VALE HOUSING SOCIETY LTD.

**PRACTICAL USE OF STRATEGY/POLICY
CYCLE**

TO DELIVER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

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- **Introduction to Severn Vale**
- **Background to use of Excellence Model**
- **Objectives of our Strategy Process**
- **Strategy Map**
- **Approach**
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Mission, Aims & Style

MISSION

Our mission is to be the “Best Landlord” anyone could wish for.

AIMS

Passionate about being customer focussed through continuous Improvement aimed at making a real difference to peoples lives but not at any cost.

STYLE

- Consensus approach
- No blame culture
- Create a climate of hard work whilst having fun
- Team approach – involve staff at every level
- Continuously seek areas for improvement

90% of our staff are satisfied with the organisations leadership.

Some Thoughts

Poor housing providers in the past:-

- Did not take account of the customer, never recognised there was one!
- Failed to be proactive in self assessment and performance monitoring
- Just responded to Central Government led regulation rather than seeking to influence the agenda
- Generally no real passion for change and improvement in short being content with an easy life

How times are a changing:- Most organisations are now recognising the need to change and seek continuous improvement the question is how?

81% of our customers are satisfied with estate security.

Why the Excellence Model

Severn Vale realised early on that we needed a model which we could tailor to our specific needs.

The Excellence Model was eventually selected as being the one that would suit our needs yet one capable of fitting our ethos by:

- Demonstrating our achievements
- Monitoring our performance
- Providing a mechanism for self evaluation around a structured approach
- Providing early warning of areas that needed attention
- Helping us understand the relationship between actions and their effect
- An opportunity to identify areas for improvement after self assessment
- Give us a route for external validation and views from an informed but impartial team of external assessors.

92% of our staff are satisfied with Severn Vale as an employer.

Our use of the Excellence Model

We have now been working with the excellence model for over 5 years it has become part of “business as usual” more importantly everyone is aware of it’s value and is involved.

Our people recognise that it has delivered what we hoped

I commend the Excellence Model to you all but only if you are seriously committed to excellence and continuous improvement.

This requires a total commitment from all within the organisation, your board, the Chief Executive and the Management Team together with all staff.

Without this the task becomes onerous and you can lose focus.

88% of our customers are satisfied with the quality of their property.

Our Regulator

HOUSING CORPORATION – Extract How we Regulate re-Issue April 2006

“Self assessment is recognised across many regulated sectors as an effective and valuable tool that demonstrates improvement and underpins good governance. It ensures the management of important outcomes and informs the relationship between the regulator and the regulated”.

Our Inspector

AUDIT COMMISSION - Corporate discussion paper March 2006 recognised

“Centrally imposed targets and the associated performance monitoring and intervention are perceived to stifle innovation, addressing the failures of the worst performers while holding back the majority. Likewise, regulation is perceived to be a burden which is subject to a law of diminishing returns and which must be rolled back, in both the public and private sectors. In the public sector there is a growing demand from providers and commissioners alike for greater reliance on self-regulation and on market mechanisms to ensure high-quality services”

The Way Forward?

There is always a role for appropriate regulation and inspection but it needs to be proportionate to the manner in which organisations take responsibility for their own performance and management

The good news!!

I believe the tide is changing in that The Housing Corporation and the Audit Commission are now more ready to acknowledge organisations that genuinely seek continuous improvement, self assessment and business excellence as goals and enshrine these as key strategies within their business.

In adopting the principles under discussion I believe that with the move to a more risk based approach to regulation, organisations prepared to adopt an excellence model will be seen as mature, committed and concerned about the customer to deliver the goods.

In short doing what we should have been doing all along

95% of our staff are satisfied with their working environment.

- People on the front line can sometimes see strategy and policy as somebody else's job and can be resistant to change.
- Sometimes the people who write policies and strategies can be viewed with suspicion.
- First objective was to involve as many people as possible in the improvement process and make it relevant.
- Second objective was to ensure that the day job still got done by making the process easy.

STRATEGY MAP

We have developed a strategy map, which tracks the customer journey through their interactions with us.

The map consists of 11 “strands”:

- Voids
- Development
- Lettings
- Housing Management
- Planned Maintenance
- Response Maintenance
- Rent & Service Charges
- Customer Relationship Management
- Finance & IT
- People
- Strategy & Governance

90% of our housing stock meets the Decent Homes Standards.

STRATEGY MAP (Cont.)

Each strand is linked to the relevant EFQM criterion and looks critically to:

- The enablers approach (i.e. what we are trying to achieve)
- Who owns the process (i.e. who gets fired if it all goes wrong)
- Process costs (people & other assets)
- Who are the key stakeholders
- Which business process we have to excel at to deliver the required results
- Performance indicators – leading & lagging
- A consultation question to find how well we deliver the results to key stakeholders
- Each strand is referenced to our risk matrix

100% of our staff are satisfied with SVHS living the organisations values.

APPROACH

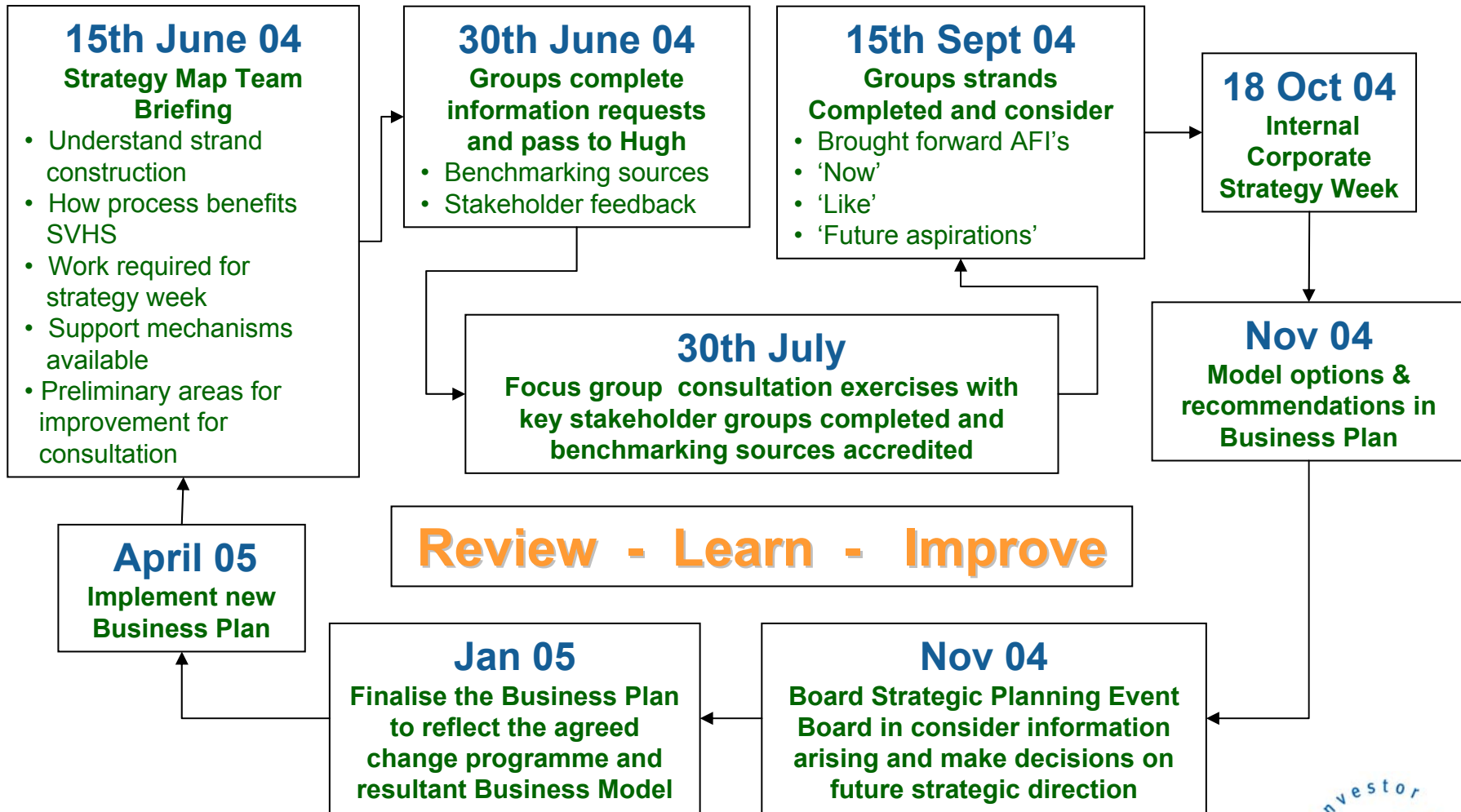
In 2004 we put 10 teams together, each headed by the process owner, to look at these strands with the brief:

1. To understand, critically examine and complete the data set for each strand
2. To answer 3 questions:
 - if we carry on doing what we do now what are the likely results?
 - how might we enhance results or processes and what are the operational/financial consequences?
 - how could we significantly improve results/processes and what are the operational/financial consequences?

Each team reported its findings to the Corporate Strategy week in October 2004.

In the last year we have developed 218 new units for our customers.

STRATEGY WEEK PROCESS



RESULTS

- Most teams wanted some changes to their strands – which were debated before strategy week. Some were agreed & some not.
- The week was a great success people were enthusiastic about suggesting improvements and were pleased to have been asked to be involved – as well as being hard work it was enjoyable.
- Priorities were agreed with and by everyone during the week. 23 Areas for Improvement were agreed (from loads!). The majority of these did not require significant additional resources.
- Those that did were modelled as Business Plan options for 2005/06.
- The Board considered and supported all options at a meeting in November 2004.
- The Bank approved the 2005/06 business plan.

96% of our customers are satisfied with our planned maintenance.

RESULTS (cont)

- Small teams were tasked with implementing or further researching the agreed improvements, monitored through a project plan.
- These teams met through the end of 2004 and up to November 2005. Some improvements were easily done, others needed more work.
- Alongside this we evaluated how the concept of Strategy week had worked and started to plan the next one.
- The work of the improvement teams was disrupted by some significant diversions during the year. e.g. implementation of new integrated IT & the Annual Efficiency Statement & a major restructuring of staff resources.
- Nevertheless substantial progress had been made by the time the 2005 Strategy Week took place in November.
- Of the 23 improvements set in train, the majority had been completed with leading results improving
- Revised project plans have been agreed for the remainder and some new ones. We have 13 teams working through 2005/06.

100% of our staff are proud to work for our organisation.

CONCLUSIONS

- Our Strategy Map and Strategy Week process works.....

FOR US !!!!!!!!!

- Everyone wants to do a good job and can see ways to make their job easier and to deliver improvements. Our job was to tap into this knowledge
- Get the people involved who really know what's what
- Our work with Midlands Excellence and the quality of the feedback we receive from them has helped us along this journey and I believe has and is improving our business.
- We do have a blame culture.....
.....our Chief Executive blames me if it all goes t- -s up!!

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