

PETER BEDFORD HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Value for Money Statement 2014-15

Peter Bedford Housing Association has been successfully including people in society since 1969. Originally set up to provide work for ex-offenders on a self-help, mutual support basis, PBHA now provides a combination of housing, support and vocational services. We work alongside people who have faced long term exclusion from society through homelessness, enduring mental health problems, learning difficulties or multiple needs. We are committed to mutual support, participation and personal development.

We are a registered social landlord, regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency. We are a not for profit charitable housing association, a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. As recently as 2012, we explored merger as we were struggling to cope with the economic downturn. However, our shareholders laid great store in the community developed and valued at PBHA and voted to remain a small niche local organization, opting not to merge with a larger housing association. They challenged the organisation to achieve a viability plan which retained the local focus and community ethos they valued. We subsequently succeeded in achieving this plan within 3 years.

We have developed a strategy to optimise value for money and systems to ensure this is delivered. Value for money is fundamental to PBHA and key to achieving viability in our five year strategy. We are committed to getting the best value for money in buying goods and services and also in how we actually do our work so that we can deliver the right service to our tenants in the most cost effective and efficient way. We consult with the users of our services to ensure that their interests are taken into consideration when achieving this objective.

Value for money is at the forefront of everything we do. The Senior Management Team and Board ensure that there is:

- Regular scrutiny of cost performance against budget and comparison of operating costs with similar organisations
- A robust procurement procedure
- Regular review of assets and asset performance
- Regular reviews of the organisations staffing establishment to ensure the structure is as efficient as possible
- Regular SMT meetings which focus on quality and best value in procurement of our goods and services
- A clear process for managing and monitoring contractors
- Periodic reviews of areas of service.

Our charitable purpose, to enable vulnerable adults to achieve independence, is at the heart of the organisation. Consequently we invest heavily in our Vocational and Community Services (VCS) developing our progression pathway for adults with vulnerabilities from recovery through to learning, training, job search and employment. This service enabled us to reach 489 people over 2014-15. Of this 489 people, we housed 226 people in supported housing over the year and a further 64 in general needs housing. Service users benefit from the rich relationships with employers we have developed through employment support programmes. Our social enterprises in retail, catering, administration and creative industries provide opportunities for gaining work experience and producing goods and services to sell. This service is provided in partnership with complementary funders mentioned elsewhere in these accounts.

For the year 2014-5, we joined a benchmarking group and are now in a position where we can identify where we need to adjust operations to provide better value for money.

Our priorities for 2015-16 are to:

- improve the efficiency of our property services,
- increase the investment in our fundraising capacity,
- realise efficiency gains by improving our housing management performance and IT system, and
- increase our measurement of customer satisfaction.

We have introduced the Online Outcomes Star which demonstrates the progression made by supported tenants. Our partner and tenant survey has assisted us in determining whether the services, in particular the VCS services we deliver are offering value for money.