

EXECUTIVE

5TH FEBRUARY 2019

HOUSING/HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN – PROGRESS REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Craig Warhurst Cllr Tom Baker-Price; and Cllr Gareth Prosser
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Deputy Chief Executive
Wards Affected	All Wards
Non-Key Decision - Yes	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides a progress report detailing actions taken to deliver on the Housing Strategic Improvement/ Action Plan endorsed by Executive Committee in September 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee are asked to RESOLVE:-

- 2.1 Executive consider the content of the report and endorse the progress reports for each of the items detailed.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1** There are no new financial implications as a result of this report, however, within Section 2 of the improvement plan updates on the Housing Revenue Account viability plan, and medium term financial budgets and plan are provided.

Legal Implications

- 3.2** The Council has a number of statutory duties to fulfil as a social landlord. Officers are also required to comply with corporate policies including financial regulations and contract procedure rules.

Background information

- 3.3.1** On 11th September 2018 Members of the Executive Committee agreed a number of key decisions including endorsement of a Strategic Improvement/ Action Plan.

- 3.3.2 This is the first of regular updates providing detail of progress in the delivery of change and improvement within Housing and other services over the next two years.
- 3.3.3 Attached at Appendix 1 is the Improvement Plan with Officers updates detailed.
- 3.3.4 Executive are asked to specifically note the following supplementary detail or revisions from that originally anticipated/proposed in the plan.

Section 1 – Corporate

- 1.6 Review of Housing & Community Services Management Team.
- 1.7 Review of Housing Capital, Property & Compliance Teams
- 3.3.5 For both areas, revised management/service structures have been developed and costed. Each review will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Service Review policy and procedures and subject to formal consultation with the Trade Unions and staff.
- 3.3.6 Implementation plans and timelines will form part of the proposals shared at the point of consultation and an update provided in the next progress report to Executive.

Section 3- Staffing/Service Reviews

- 3.3.7 Whilst work has commenced in the majority of areas in accordance with the original timescales advised, there is a delay in the Gas Services Business Case (3.3) which will consider options for the future delivery. A revised timescale of April 2019 is proposed for the completion of the Business Case with a report to be presented thereafter to Executive Committee.

Section 4 – Voids

- 3.3.8 Major improvements have been achieved with voids having reduced from a position of empty properties awaiting repair exceeding 120 to a figure of 60 in September 2018 with properties awaiting repair currently standing at 51.
- 3.3.9 The progress report details the reduced income loss as a result of the many actions implemented however extremely dependent on a new housing management system to be in place to achieve supported integration of all processes.

Section 5 – Compliance/Capital Works

- 3.3.10 Delivery of a comprehensive stock condition survey is critical in providing the basis for future resources and programme(s) of capital works to our stock.
- 3.3.11 There have been some delays from that originally envisaged and a reduced capital budget has been built into the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2019/2020.
- 3.3.12 The timescales within the improvement plan will be updated and advised to Executive in the next progress report in June 2019.

Section 8 – Governance/Performance Measures

- 3.3.13 As highlighted within the report a new set of strategic and operational measures have been reviewed and established in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Corporate Management Team.
- 3.3.14 These measures will be available and reported on within the Council's dashboard by February 2019 with the full schedule attached for Members information at Appendix 2.

Overview

- 3.3.15 There are no areas contained within the Improvement Plan which are not being developed, managed and reported on.
- 3.3.16 Executive will consider a report at this meeting, Corporate Performance Report "Help me find somewhere to live in my locality". This report contains additional locality narrative measures and data providing Members with a greater level of detail particularly in relation to:-
- Housing Strategic Intervention Overview
 - Housing Improvement Plan detail:-
 - Involving Tenants
 - Capital Programme including Fire Safety; Asbestos; Electricity and Stock Condition updates.
- 3.3.17 The Strategic Improvement Plan remains ambitious, and by necessity timescales and plans are being worked up in greater levels of detail during implementation phases. Such detail, including amendments, are being advised to the Portfolio Holder regularly and will form part of the progress reports to Executive.

3.4 Human Resource and Staffing Implications

The proposed management and staffing reviews will be undertaken in accordance with agreed Human Resource Service Review and Change Management policies in full consultation with the Trade Unions and staff impacted by any proposals.

3.5 Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

There are a wide range of people and groups of people affected by the report, specifically tenants and future tenants, leaseholders, residents of the borough and those seeking support and advice in all housing matters.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

The current risk logs, service based and corporate, are reviewed on a regular basis with a full formal review to be undertaken in advance of the new financial year 2019/20. The following specific risks remain as high:-

- Inability to deliver improvements/planned programme for tenants and properties.
- Reduced services to tenants (and those seeking housing advice) added.
- Financial risks – Housing Revenue Account and General Fund.
- Failure to deliver on compliance and health and safety is escalated from an overall medium risk to a high risk due to some of the presenting issues identified in high risk blocks. This is being fully managed in accordance with health and safety legislation and our statutory inspection policy with detail provided in the reports .

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Strategic Improvement/Action Plan – February 2019
Appendix 2: Strategic & Operational Measures – Housing Services

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Housing/Housing Revenue Account – Overview & Improvement Plan – 11th September 2018
- Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent Setting 2019/20 – 8th January 2019
- Corporate Performance Report – February 2019 – “Help me find somewhere to live in my locality”

7. AUTHOR OF REPORT

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