

EXECUTIVE

9th July 2019

HOUSING STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT/ACTION PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Craig Warhurst
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Sue Hanley, Deputy Chief Executive
Wards Affected	All Wards
Non-Key Decision - Yes	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The report provides a further progress report detailing the actions taken to delivery on the Housing Strategic Improvement / Action Plan which was originally endorsed in September 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee will be asked to RESOLVE that

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 reference is made to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) outturns for 2018/19 and relevant updates contained within Section 2 of the Improvement Plan.

Legal Implications

3.2 The Council has a range of statutory duties to fulfil as a social landlord. Officers are required to comply with corporate policies, financial regulations, contract procedure rules and statutory returns.

3.3 Background Information

3.3.1 Members will recall that Executive Committee in September 2018 agreed a number of key decisions regarding Housing Services including the endorsement of a Strategic Improvement/ Action Plan.

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- 3.3.2 This report is a further update report to Members providing the detail of progress made in the wholesale delivery of change, improvement and developments within Housing Services over the forthcoming 18 months to 2 years.
- 3.3.3 Executive are asked to specifically note the additional detail provided for the relevant sections, and specifically those revisions to actions and timescales originally proposed in the plan.

Section 1: Corporate

- 3.3.4 The majority of corporate actions have been progressed as envisaged. It is however reiterated to Members that the programme of cultural change within housing and indeed across all of our organisation(s) will be delivered and supported over a much longer timeframe as detailed in the plan.
- 3.3.5 Action Plan 1.2 – Leadership/Management Development Programme – A package of arrangements to support leadership development, whilst currently in preparation, has not yet been considered corporately. A revised timescale is proposed of October 2019.
- 3.3.6 Action Plan 1.6 – Review of Housing & Community Services Management Team
Action Plan 1.7 – Review of Housing Capital, Property & Compliance Teams
Members were advised in February 2019 that implementation plans and timelines for the two major management reviews would be shared at the point of consultation. This has now been undertaken for the Housing & Community Services Management Team, however, due to delays in the Housing Capital/Property team review, it is envisaged that detailed timelines alongside the launch of formal consultation for these services will be undertaken by the end of July 2019.

Section 2: Finance

- 3.3.7 Members are provided with updates for each of the actions however reference is made to the HRA revenue outturn report, which will be considered as a separate report to this Executive Committee.

Section 3: Staffing/Service Reviews

- 3.3.8 Work has progressed in all the identified priority service areas however the following reviews will have revised timescales for delivery proposed when the Senior Managers are in post:-
- Review of Housing Management Services
 - Review of Performance Management Team

- Review of Repairs & Maintenance Team(s)

3.3.9 The Gas Business Case for which external consultants have been commissioned, will be presented to Executive Committee for consideration in October 2019.

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 the housing stock.

3.3.11 A full update on the stock condition survey is detailed within the improvement plan, with completion date for the survey work expected by 30th November 2019. Thereafter a five year capital programme will be developed and proposed (subject to full consultation) by the 31st March 2020.

Section 8: Governance/Performance/Measures

3.3.12 Members endorsed a new/revised full set of strategic and operational measures in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Corporate Management Team in January/February 2019. The majority of these measures have now been placed on the Council's dashboard, and whilst the vast majority are now being reported and updated on the 10th of each calendar month, the following measures are still to be populated:-

Strategic Measures

- % of rent collected;
- Local authority rent accounts in technical arrears;
- Balance of local authority rents in technical arrears;
- Homeless – duty relieved.

Operational Measures

- Average length of time in temporary accommodation.
- Gas servicing – new gas installations.
- Right to Buys in progress (by stage of application).

3.3.13 Measures are being regularly monitored and reviewed by the Heads of Service and Managers, and are a mix of qualitative, leading and lagging measures. Data and measures help our understanding of what is working, what isn't working and where our focus of attention is needed in real time.

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- 3.3.14 As we continue to improve our data and make the systems corrections we will ultimately make better decisions for our tenants and residents.

Section 9: Housing Management IT System

- 3.3.15 A full update is provided regarding the procurement of a new Housing IT system to support all aspects of the business, which Members have previously agreed to fund.
- 3.3.16 The timescale to open up to procurement is June 2019, with award of tender by September 2019. Whilst a huge amount of development work has been undertaken to date, this project/work/ implementation will continue for a number of years.

Overview

- 3.3.17 All of the identified areas within the Improvement Plan are being developed, managed and regularly reported.
- 3.3.18 The Plan(s) still remain ambitious and focused on priority areas, however given the number of issues which have presented during the last ten months, are by necessity regularly revised and updated. This is essential to ensure they remain achievable but also integrated and progressive with buy in and support from Members, Managers, staff and the Trade Unions.

Human Resource & Staffing Implications

- 3.4 All of the management and service reviews which are both currently ongoing and those programmed to be undertaken will be undertaken in accordance with endorsed Human Resource Service Review and Change Management policies. Full consultation will be undertaken with the Trade Unions and all staff impacted by any review proposal(s).

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.5 A wide range of people, groups of people and our communities are affected by the plan/proposed actions. Specifically tenants, future tenants, leaseholders, residents of the Borough and those seeking support and advice in all housing matters.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk logs are maintained and regularly reviewed at both corporate and service levels and reported to Members as part of these progress reports.

The following risks are categorised as high risk areas for the service(s):-

- Failure to effectively manage housing repairs and maintenance.
- Failure to deliver on compliance and health and safety
 - Non-compliance with Asbestos Regulations.
 - Non-compliance with Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.
- Financial risks – Housing Revenue Account and General Fund – longer term financial sustainability.
- Failure of Housing IT system (whilst new system is in process of being procured).
 - GDPR compliance with Allocations Policy.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Strategic Improvement/Action Plan – June/July 2019

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Housing/Housing Revenue Account – Overview and Improvement Plan – 11th September 2018
- HRA Revenue Monitoring Report 2018/19 & Outturn

7. AUTHOR OF REPORT

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