



TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Wednesday, 26th April, 2017 at 1.30 pm

(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 1.00 p.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

Sallie Bannatyne

Olga Gailite

John Gittos (Chair)

Christine Gregory

Michael Healey

Maddy Hunter

Rita Ighade

Peter Middleton

Roderic Morgan

Jackie Worthington

Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded

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A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>1 To highlight reports or appendices which officers have identified as containing exempt information, and where officers consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons outlined in the report.</p> <p>2 To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information.</p> <p>3 If so, to formally pass the following resolution:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as containing exempt information on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">No exempt items have been identified.</p>	
2			<p>LATE ITEMS</p> <p>To identify items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.</p> <p>(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.)</p>	
3			<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>To receive any apologies for absence.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
4			<p>MINUTES - 1ST MARCH 2017</p> <p>To confirm as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2017.</p>	1 - 10
5			<p>CHAIR'S UPDATE</p> <p>To receive an update from the Chair on scrutiny activity, not specifically included on this agenda, since the previous Board meeting.</p>	11 - 12
6			<p>SCRUTINY INQUIRY - EAST LEEDS REPAIRS</p> <p>This year, the Scrutiny Board have undertaken an in-depth inquiry into the East Leeds Responsive Repairs Service.</p> <p>This inquiry has now concluded and the Board is in a position to report on its draft findings and recommendations resulting from the evidence gathered.</p>	13 - 14
7			<p>TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE</p> <p>The Board are made aware of matters arising in between meetings through Chairs Update.</p> <p>However, due to the number of topics which the Chair needs to raise with the Board it was felt a separate item would be best placed in the agenda to make the Board aware of other issues which have arisen since the last meeting.</p>	15 - 16
8			<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>Future meeting dates and times of the Board to be confirmed during May 2017.</p>	

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
			<p>THIRD PARTY RECORDING</p> <p>Recording of this meeting is allowed to enable those not present to see or hear the proceedings either as they take place (or later) and to enable the reporting of those proceedings. A copy of the recording protocol is available from the contacts named on the front of this agenda.</p> <p>Use of Recordings by Third Parties– code of practice</p> <p>a) Any published recording should be accompanied by a statement of when and where the recording was made, the context of the discussion that took place, and a clear identification of the main speakers and their role or title.</p> <p>b) Those making recordings must not edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or comments made by attendees. In particular there should be no internal editing of published extracts; recordings may start at any point and end at any point but the material between those points must be complete.</p>	

TENANT SCRUTINY BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 1ST MARCH, 2017

PRESENT: John Gittos in the Chair

Sallie Bannatyne, Olga Gailite, Michael Healey, Maddie Hunter, Rita Ighade and Jackie Worthington

47 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

48 Late Items

There were no late items.

49 Apologies for Absence

Peter Middleton, Roderic Morgan

50 Minutes - 21st December 2016

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2016 be approved as a correct record.

51 Chair's Update

The Chair gave his apologies for cancelling the previous meeting in February due to unforeseen circumstances.

The Chair has attended two Environment and Housing Scrutiny Board meetings. The Chair gave a brief overview – the January meeting had a discussion on the implications of the 2016 Housing and Planning Act, quality of the private rented sector housing, issues with right to buy and void turnaround times of Council properties. The Chair also noted a report by Mandy Sawyer around governance of Tenant Scrutiny Board and its relationship with the Environment & Housing Scrutiny Board. The Chair spoke to the board about work carried out since 2014 and the two reports published and outlined the improvements their work has had on tenants. The Chair noted that Environment & Housing Scrutiny Board are now setting up a working group, with a view to establishing a closer working relationship with Tenant Scrutiny.

February's Environment & Housing Scrutiny Board was around Anti-Social Behaviour, begging and the future of CCTV in the City and progress on

funding this in the future. There was also discussion around Pub Watch in the City.

The Chair reported he had met with Councillor Khan on 24th February which touched on the East Leeds repairs inquiry and also recruitment to the Board.

The Chair explained the process for recruitment to the Board. It was noted there was a number of formalities:-

- Interested parties sent an application form and information pack
- Checks are carried out to ensure no serious tenancy breaches are ongoing
- The applicant is invited to have an informal discussion about the Board through the Scrutiny Officer
- The applicant is invited to observe one of the Board's meetings and after that meeting a small group will meet to discuss the person and what they can offer to the Board.
- The Chair, Scrutiny Officer and one Board member would form part of the interview panel.

The Chair noted the key points the Board must consider during recruitment,

1. That it is fair, robust and hold up to challenge.
2. That recruitment addresses any imbalance in the make-up of the board in regard to equality characteristics and also the area of Leeds the tenant comes from. These must take preference in any recruitment so that the Board reflects the wider profile of the city.

52 Scrutiny Inquiry - East Leeds Repairs

The Chair introduced Simon Costigan (SC), Chief Officer Property and Contracts. The Chair explained the background to how the Board decided on this inquiry and also the progress which has been made on it.

SC gave an overview of his role. He explained that he is responsible for the management and delivery of the repairs service across the whole city, delivery of the capital programme, PFI project management and also disrepair.

SC gave an account of Leeds Building Services. Construction Services originally sat within the East North East ALMO as an in house repairs service. When the ALMOs returned back to the Council this created a situation where there were two internal service providers, one being Construction Services providing an in house repairs service to their housing stock and Property Maintenance which had remained in the Council and did repairs to Councils assets across the city as well as delivery of some of the capital programme to housing stock. Because 70% of Property Maintenance's work was carried out to council housing a decision was made to bring both providers together and create one service, hence Leeds Building Services.

Currently the service is going through a reorganisation. Leeds Building Services employ 400 operatives and 120 management and support staff. As an internal provider they provide a repair and maintenance service through directly employing Council staff which generates a rate of return which helps the council deliver its own economic and financial structures, which means Leeds Building Services make a profit which then is reinvested into Council services.

The Chair thanked Simon for this information and noted that a series of questions would be asked.

The Board has received performance information in last year which showed the responsive repair service in East Leeds was not meeting targets. Can you shed any light on this?

SC explained when the two organisations were combined the repairs activity was below target. This was down to the different mechanisms for reporting performance. So Construction Services had one set of measures and Property Maintenance had another and when combined the average was low. SC explained that better measures have now been introduced which now means that the service is now meeting its targets on a number of indicators.

The Chair asked if there is a divide between the two former services as during the Board's visit to the Seacroft depot the two services work within the same office. SC explained part of the reorganisation is to bring the two services together with one management team being in place. This working is also because of the different work they have carried out previously and an example was given where an electrician within the former Property Maintenance team could come out to Civic and carry out repairs on certain pieces of specialist equipment which they have installed, where as an electrician going out to carry out repairs at a Council property would not be able to do this and so there is some work to do on training in order that the electrician can do the same as each other.

The Chair asked if the budgets were combined or if they were separate. SC explained there is one trading account and we measure the totality of income and work within one budget. Because of funding streams, council housing repairs are paid out of the HRA whereas the other repairs to non-council housing, like Civic Hall would be paid out of the general fund. Further to this the chair asked if this would cloud the cost of East Leeds repairs? SC explained not so. There is a schedule of rates attached to any job that is irrespective of where the repair is carried out across the city. This means you can then assess the cost of the job across different areas of the city.

SB asked about lifts in high rise properties and also communal doors, would it be Property Maintenance staff who would come out to these? SC explained that on lifts they are all done by Property Maintenance as they have the expertise regardless if it's in a housing estate or a Council building like Civic Hall. SB asked where the funding would come from, and SC explained that the charge would come from the appropriate budget as noted previously.

RESOLVED That revised performance data is provided to the Board by SC.

You have given us figures in regard to the percentage breakdown of the repairs budget for East, South and West areas. Can you explain how the budget is determined and how it has been allocated and why?

SC explained that some of this is historical and that when the ALMOs moved back into the Council the budgets were kept the same, however work has been done to try and understand why the budget is calculated in this way and is it correct to do it in this way.

SC explained there is a formula in order to come to these budget figures. For example for multi storey flats it relates to the number of these in an area and as East Leeds has the most they get a larger proportion of this budget. Work is being done to try and equalise this over a period of time, the reason for not doing it in one go is it would be disproportionate to other areas.

Can you explain how jobs are priced both at East Leeds and across the rest of the city and do you do comparisons, for example a job done by Mears and the same job done in house at East Leeds?

A piece of work is being done to understand this. Currently this isn't the case and we need to make changes in order to make it more reflective. For example we pay more in West than South, and Mears compared to East we pay more in the East contract.

SC explained some of the differences in that within each contract would have a list of all the schedule of rates and each provider would be asked to price against each job. However for East Leeds because there is an internal market there is a need to build in a rate of return to the price and this is keeping people employed within the Council, whereas money spent on an external provider it leaves the Council and is money 'lost'.

As part of the Boards current investigation, we consulted with Ward Members and Tenants. Feedback around jobs where follow on work is required and lack of communication from LBS was quoted. An example of this is reporting damp which required more than one visit, however the tenant was not kept informed about the repair and had to make numerous contacts. Can you explain the process which should happen for a job which requires more than one visit?

SC explained:-

- the repair is received and we assess it and what is needed
- make an appointment with the customer so they know who is coming, when and what work is going to be carried out.
- The operative should ring ahead then to check the customer is in the property.
- If the operative cannot carry out the work on that visit they should then contact their supervisor who can then make a further appointment to complete the work at the customer's convenience.

SC acknowledged this isn't as robust as it should be but we are introducing performance management against the process to improve on this in the future.

The Chair asked about Total Works and that this would alleviate some of the problems. SC explained this is part of a wider rollout which is made of total works mobile and a scheduling tool. The scheduling tool will automate a lot of the processes and will help for that job which operative needs to complete it and where the nearest one is which will make the service more efficient and reduce travel time. SC explained this would be implemented around July/August 2017.

The Chair asked about the new system and how the workforce is receiving this and if he envisioned any problems. Currently there is negotiation with Trade Unions around this and there is some resistance to the new working practices. SC explained the system can make the workforce more efficient to do more jobs, and that a conservative estimate of 30 minutes per day more work could be gained from these new working practices.

SB asked about out of hours and would this change with the new system. SC explained the out of hours service is provided by both Mears and Leeds Building Services. We are looking at the service and if there is a better and more economically way of providing it, however the response times must remain as they are, even if the cost is higher. The Chair asked do Mears and Leeds Building Services stick to their contract areas on out of hours or do they move across to cover work where necessary? SC noted that practicalities mean that cross boundary work is done where it is required in order to meet out of hours response times.

The Chair asked how many subcontracts we use. SC couldn't give an exact number, it is not a large amount, but did note work is being done to reduce use of these as again this is money lost to the Council when an external contractor is used but due to peaks and troughs we have to call on them.

We have learnt during our investigation that at times because of lack of certain trades, Leeds Building Services have to use outside contractors that obviously increases costs. Can you advise are salaries offered by East Leeds competitive enough to attract more specialised tradesmen and hence in the long term save money?

The Chair explained during the visit to the depot that there understood that there is a shortfall of certain trades and this could be due to not being able to pay the 'market rate' and longer term would it not be better to pay them this rate to save money.

SC explained when the first phase was implemented we amalgamated salaries so everyone was on the same pay band which meant some people took a significant pay cut due to how some operatives were carrying out jobs. A benchmark was carried out to ensure we were paying the going rate for the various trades however there is an issue on bricklaying which is volatile due to the national picture, and if there is a lot of building going on then they will

move to where the money is and no council could compete with this. SC explained initially some operatives said they would leave because of the new pay structure however only two left and this showed that the total package for working for the Council were positive, such as leave, sickness pay and pension.

During the Boards current investigation the Board have been presented with examples where communication between the Contact Centre taking the initial repair call from tenants which was felt to be lacking by a member of LBS. What's your view on this?

SC explained the Contact Centre have pictures in order to help them order a repair accurately. Where an operatives arrives they can do work over and above what the job card says, for example rehang kitchen door but when they get there a drawer front needs repairing they can do this as it saves resources and they would just report back the work they carried out on return to the office.

SB explained the issue where a tenant cannot explain exactly what repair they require and they give incorrect information which means the Contact Centre can never get the repair accurate and is felt where this is the case that someone with more knowledge contact them and sort it out with them what is really wanted. SC explained this should happen now and where this cannot be worked out from the call they should then carry out a visit to identify the repair required.

The Chair explained in some cases information from the Contact Centre was not accurate and tenants are getting through to Seacroft depot by pressing the wrong buttons and instead of them taking a second call for a repair it's the first time and could this be improved by having staff taking these calls directly at the depot? SC explained this would have unintended consequences and staff resources would need to be increased and then this would have an impact on staff left at the contact centre. What needs to happen is improve the first point of contact, and recently we have created a single team taking repair calls in a team so they gain experience to ask the right questions. We are now encouraging staff go to the Contact Centre and vice versa so they build up a relationship.

The Chair inquired further that surely if this is how they work currently it is just a case of moving staff from one office to another. SC qualified his remarks by saying there is a Council desire for a 'golden number' and this is why it would need to remain as is.

Can you explain how Housing Leeds ensures consistent delivery of service standards are applied between different contractors.

SC explained that service standards need to be understood by both the contractor and they are applied the same and the customer knows what should be delivered to them as otherwise you cannot measure it correctly. SC noted that all standards have been revised and sent to contractors and tenants and we are currently measuring these under a performance management framework.

The Chair asked if because Leeds Building Services is in house provider, that due diligence is not carried out as much as it would be to an external contractor. SC noted he would agree with that and it needs to change. There is a robust framework being introduced to manage this like with external contractors and it is disappointing we are not there yet.

During our visit to the Depot we were shown the Leeds Building Services part but also the Commercial Team who are also based in the same office. Are the Commercial Team totally separate from Leeds Building Services or do the sections share staff and resources in times of shortages?

SC explained we are going through a staff re-alignment where we are presenting a final draft proposal which will deal with those issues which should help eliminate silo working and create a consistent and shared provision.

You inherited when you became Chief Officer the structure that East Leeds repairs was in-house. If you were able to review this would you opt for the same system today if you had a choice?

SC explained he would not. And went on to explain this is because we have had to reorganise the operatives who work there and carry out rationalisation. We are now working through the second phase which is the management side which we hope to introduce by 1st April. One of the ways a more robust management of the Leeds Building Services is to have a new set up for managing their contract as they are currently self managing, so now it has a client/contractor split within Property and Contracts. One manager will manage the service and another will monitor their performance.

The Chair asked if SC was satisfied with the quality of work being done by Leeds Building Services. For the majority yes he is but there are some complaints which mean we always need to keep improving.

The Chair asked if it were possible would he consider going back to all having external contractors or has too much time passed that it would be too costly to do this now? SC explained it is always an option but it would be a retrograde step as you would have to make 520 people redundant or move them into a new organisational structure which wouldn't have the same terms and conditions and also there would be a loss to council funding. However it was stressed there needs to be value for money and continually challenging ourselves to improve.

The Chair asked if one large repair contract or smaller contracts are best way to deliver a repairs service. SC explained there can be positives and negatives for both options.

The Chair thanked Simon for his attendance and time to answer the Boards questions.

53 Surveys Update

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 26th April, 2017

LW explained at November's meeting it was agreed the Board would consult with Councillors and involved tenants living in East Leeds by means of an online survey. Further to this an update was provided on the responses received.

COUNCILLOR RESPONSES

Key themes arising from the responses include:

- Mixture of both positive and negative feedback
- Too long to carry out some types of repairs was a common theme.
- The number of repeat contacts required with some type of repairs was a concern, and perceived lack of communication between Leeds Building Services and the tenant was poor which lengthened the time taken to complete the repair.

Other comments from Councillors included:

- Poor communications
- Worse since coming back from the ALMOs
- Lack of respect for tenants
- Example of a tenant with damp who had numerous visits by officers and maintenance staff and the damp is still there
- A comment that if a private company was given this job by a private customer and they carried out to the standard of some of LBS repairs you would not pay them

TENANT REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSES

- Majority of tenants who responded had received a repair in the last 12 months
- Majority of tenants who responded stated they were satisfied with the overall quality of their home
- Majority of tenants were satisfied with the way Housing Leeds deals with their repairs, however of the remainder was split equally between neither or dissatisfied responses.
- Ease of reporting a repair was split between majority being satisfied but a third were dissatisfied
- Majority of tenants were satisfied in the accuracy of the repair ordered.
- Speed of completion of work was split between satisfied and dissatisfied
- Half of those who responded were happy with the quality of work, but a quarter were not satisfied and a quarter gave no opinion on this
- Around half were satisfied their repair was done right first time but just under half felt dissatisfied
- On the question of insulation and how good it is at keeping the property warm, 52% stated it was good, 29% thought it was poor and the remainder felt it was neither.

Comments from the tenant representatives survey were:-

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 26th April, 2017

- The main issue is reporting a repair but this has improved
- Outside paintwork has been hanging off the fascia boards for the past 14 years at least.
- Reporting online repairs is easier than waiting to get through on the phone
- I have reported mould in my house a long time ago and up to now nothing has been done regarding this.
- How silly it's getting now with the repair side when they have make three time trip for repair and three month it takes
- I was concerned when my wet floor shower would not drain. An electrician followed by a plumber followed by another electrician followed by a plumber who told me it needed drain experts. Three weeks later the flat drains became blocked again a plumber attended who asked for a drain expert to be called. The problem turned out to be a problem with the stack in the block which have not been cleared and cleaned for a while
- Not had any big repairs done in the last year, I am happy with items corrected and work better
- Online repair service needs to allow a photo option to upload along with the order.
- Repairs seem to be done to a minimum standard to save money. It would be nice to repair to a good or high standard. I appreciate costs would be higher, but you expect standards from your tenants, we should be able to expect the same from you.
- It's long time waiting for repair to carry out
- More communication. Need to be kept informed when the work would be done.
- Satisfied with home repairs, but extremely disappointed with repairs to communal areas and other communal problems.

54 Election Process for Chair

At this point in the meeting the Chair stood down from this position within Tenant Scrutiny Board and the Scrutiny Officer took lead for this item.

SG explained as part of governance of the Board there was a requirement each year to hold an election for Chair. Each member had been provided with a letter in their agenda packs prior to the meeting explaining the situation and offering them an opportunity to stand for Chair if they wished. SG asked members to confirm that they had received this which was confirmed by all in attendance.

SG explained one expression of interest for the Chair role has been received and asked if there was anyone else who wished to put their names forward for the Chair role to do so now. No other members came forward and it was announced that John Gittos has expressed interest and so a vote was required to elect him to Chair.

RESOLVED The Board voted by show of hands unanimously 6-0 to elect John Gittos to the role of Chair for a further 12 months.

55 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 26th April 2017 at 1:30pm (pre meeting for all Board Members at 1:00pm)

THE MEETING WAS CLOSED AT 3:15PM



Report author: Sharon Guy
Tel: 07891 273581

Report of Scrutiny Officer

Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

Date: 26th April 2017

Subject: Chair's Update Report

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline some of the areas of work and activity of the Chair of the Scrutiny Board.

2 Main issues

2.1 Invariably, scrutiny activity takes place outside of the formal monthly Tenant Scrutiny Board meetings. Such activity can take the form of specific activity and actions of the Chair of the Tenant Scrutiny Board.

2.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity to formally update the Tenant Scrutiny Board on activity since the last meeting, including any specific outcomes. It also provides an opportunity for members of the Tenant Scrutiny Board to identify and agree any further scrutiny activity that may be necessary.

2.3 The Chair and Scrutiny Officer will provide a verbal update at the meeting, as required.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to:

- a) Note the content of this report and the verbal update provided at the meeting.
- b) Identify any specific matters that may require further scrutiny input/activity.

4. Background papers¹

4.1 None used

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.



Report author: Sharon Guy

Tel: 07891 273581

Report of Scrutiny Officer

Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

Date: 26 April 2017

Subject: Scrutiny Inquiry – East Leeds Responsive Repair Service

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 This year, the Scrutiny Board have undertaken an in-depth inquiry into the East Leeds Responsive Repairs Service. Terms of reference for this inquiry were agreed by the Board in August 2016.
- 1.2 This inquiry has now concluded and the Board is in a position to report on its draft findings and recommendations resulting from the evidence gathered.
- 1.3 Once the Board publishes its final report, the appropriate Director(s) will be asked to formally respond to the Scrutiny Board’s recommendations within three months.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider and provide feedback and agree as appropriate the Board’s draft report following its inquiry into East Leeds Responsive Repair Service.

3.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS ¹

- 3.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council’s website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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**East Leeds Repairs
Tenant Scrutiny Board
April 2017**

DRAFT



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DRAFT



Desired Outcomes and Recommendations

Desired Outcome – To reassure tenants that Housing Leeds aim is to get it right first time

Recommendation 1 – That Housing Leeds provide dedicated repairs training for new staff as part of their first week induction and regularly review training needs of existing staff.

Desired Outcome – Increased service improvements, efficiencies and opportunities for savings

Recommendation 2 – Implement and roll out the Total Works system.

Desired Outcome – Optimum use of operative time and ability to create additional appointment slots and reduce waiting time for repair appointments

Recommendation 3 – Implement new working practices through Total Works, in relation to creating additional appointments, by reducing waiting times and increase tenant satisfaction. We also request that this Board be provided with an update on progress.

Desired Outcome – Improve customer satisfaction

Recommendation 4 – Improve customer satisfaction by using and act on learning from complaints and improve the process of follow on work which may be required.

Desired Outcome – Improve ease of finding information and getting it right first time

Recommendation 5 – That Leeds Building Services, work with the Contact Centre, HUBs and local housing offices to ensure staff know how to identify key issues for properties types, such as heating type, to enable more accurate repair reporting.

Desired Outcome – Administration of repairs ordered is carried out effectively

Recommendation 6 – Administration on repairs performance is improved – so that orders are closed down in a timely manner on systems, including sub-contractor orders.

Desired Outcome – Improve tenant access to repair service

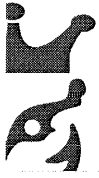
Recommendation 7 – Make repair raising more accessible online. Whilst this is currently available, it is not actively promoted or widely utilised.

Desired Outcome – Improve Officer knowledge, get it right first time

Recommendation 8 – That there is a named contact at Leeds Building Service for new and existing staff to reference enquiries on repairs.

Desired Outcome – Manage operative capacity

Recommendation 9 – Where a trade has a shortfall in operative numbers, Leeds Building Services consider apprenticeships in these trades and continues to upskill operatives in a multi skilled approach.



Introduction and Scope

Introduction

1. This is our third Inquiry report since the amalgamation of the scrutiny panels previously established under the three ALMOs.
2. Our first Inquiry report looked at Annual Home Visits. The second report focused on Environment of Estates. This report focuses on the repairs service in East Leeds, provided by Leeds Building Services.

Scope of the Inquiry

3. The Board chose this topic as there was compelling performance evidence and feedback from key stakeholders that indicated there was a need to improve performance and service for tenants.
4. The Terms of Reference for this Inquiry were agreed on 31st August 2016 when it was concluded that the purpose of the Inquiry would be to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:
 - Current policies and processes
 - Consultation with tenants (questionnaire)
 - Co-ordination of services and agencies
 - Developing and delivering standards
 - Performance measuring
 - Customer satisfaction
5. The Inquiry was conducted over five formal evidence gathering sessions which took place between September 2016 and February 2017.

5. Members of the Board also undertook a site visit to Leeds Building Services depot based in Seacroft.
6. Board Members also attended a demonstration of the repairs system currently being used, and its replacement.
7. The Board also conducted surveys with local Ward Members and involved residents and tenant groups.
8. The Board would like to thank all those involved in this Inquiry. A full list of those who participated is detailed at the end of this report.



Conclusions and Recommendations

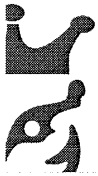
Accurate Repair Raising

1. The Board have noted from their evidence gathering that a large number of repairs are taken through the Contact Centre, and this is reflected in the number of Officers which take these calls, as well as providing an Out of Hours service.
2. The Board also note a number of repairs are raised by Housing Officers, and a smaller number online.
3. The Board recommend that all new staff, in particular Housing Leeds officers, as part of their induction, should have formal repairs training within their first week of induction. The Board acknowledge this is provided to Contact Centre staff and it is felt that Housing Leeds officers would benefit from this training at the beginning of their role.
4. Whilst the report focuses on East Leeds repairs service, it is acknowledged by the Board that this recommendation will benefit the entire city and will have additional benefits in improving customer satisfaction, providing value for money, and importantly getting repairs right first time as officers will be more skilled within their role.

Recommendation 1 – That Housing Leeds provide dedicated repairs training for new staff as part of their first week induction and regularly review training needs of existing staff.

IT Systems

5. It has been a theme during the Boards previous inquiries that IT systems have been raised as an issue in providing a quality and efficient service. In this inquiry, at each meeting, Officers from Leeds Building Services raised issues with the current IT system.
6. Following on from this, the Board were invited during November to Leeds Building Services Seacroft Depot to see both the current IT system (Orchard) and its replacement (Total Works).
7. Officers explained to the Board how the current IT system used is not easy to use and inefficient for ensuring operatives best use of time. The current system used also has a number of limitations.
8. It was explained there is a time consuming process where things need to be changed within the system, and often the Council have to rectify any IT problems on their own as there is no supplier support.
9. It was explained tasks such as having to reallocate work, for example, due to operatives being on sick can be very difficult on the current system.
10. It was also explained that when staff use one screen and a call comes through then you have to close the current window in order to move on which means that more time is spent going in and out of different screens.
11. It was noted that officers from Leeds Building Services spend a lot of time managing workloads. The Board noted that the Total Works system will allow a



Conclusions and Recommendations

more efficient service to be provided including reducing the number of no accesses and moving away from paper job tickets.

12. During the demonstration of the Total Works system it was shown how a planner can see the capacity of the service, so when booking appointments Officers can see at a glance if there is capacity to book the job at that time or if it would cause problems. The system also takes into account any priorities of jobs.
13. The new system also gives text message confirmation of the appointment the night before and when the operative is on the way to the property. The Board feel this would help with reduction of no accesses.
14. The system also accounts for travelling time to make the most effective use of the operative's time. It can reallocate jobs where one is overrunning and thus causes other appointments in the day to be delayed.
15. This means jobs are moved throughout the day and if they get to the point where they cannot be carried out on the appointed day, they are returned to a workqueue and a planner would need to make alternative arrangements.
16. The new system is much more visual and makes it easy for a planner to intervene as required. The system also allows management to see if an operative has been active recently as it flags where there has been no contact for a period of time.
17. Board Members asked officers what happens if a follow on trade is required,

as officers indicated this is an area where the current service is likely to fail. The Board were told that forms would be used on the operatives PDA which sends the request for another trade to attend and then the planners work this through and make contact with the tenant.

18. It was noted the system is easier for management to analyse targets and factors such as time spent travelling to jobs and time spent on jobs which within the current system isn't as easily available.
19. It was noted that the current system and Total Works can be run parallel; this allows the initial changeover to be gradual with both systems 'talking to each other'.
20. The Board are supportive of this approach given the issues faced when introducing new IT systems into an organisation. They felt from their demonstration of the new system there are benefits to replacing the existing system.

Recommendation 2 – Implement and roll out the Total Works system.

Efficient Working Practices

21. Officers raised concerns about the lack of flexibility within the existing system to allocate work to operatives where an unexpected change occurs, for example sickness or other event.



Conclusions and Recommendations

22. Whilst the new IT system will resolve this issue, there is an acknowledgement by management this will cause changes to the way operative's time is allocated.
23. The Board were made aware the Total Works system will contribute to more effective working, with conservative estimates of 30 minutes additional productive time per day per operative.
24. The Board considers this to be a more efficient way of working and would be of benefit for both the Council, who can complete more jobs with the same resource and most importantly, tenants who will receive a quicker repairs service due to having more operatives available to carry out jobs.
25. The Board also noted that from speaking with Officers the monitoring procedures for Leeds Building Services are not applied as strictly as those applied to external contractors.
26. Management acknowledged this to the Board and explained there were measures being implemented which would eliminate this, and create a client/contractor split which would remove any potential conflict of interest. The Board are supportive of this and encourage its implementation.

Recommendation 3 – Implement new working practices through Total Works, in relation to creating additional appointments, by reducing waiting times and increase tenant satisfaction. We also request that this Board be provided with an update on progress.

Customer Satisfaction

27. The Board received performance information which showed that customer satisfaction with repairs was lower in East Leeds, in comparison to West and South Leeds areas.
28. The Board were also informed by the Director of Environment and Housing there had been significant changes to the internal repairs service in the East area, and there were concerns at that time that the timeliness of repair completion was not as good as expected.
29. The Board received evidence from both Officers and tenants, via a questionnaire which was carried out but also directly of members on the Board who had their own personal experiences of the repairs service.
30. These viewpoints were supported by the survey which the Board commissioned which raised concerns about the quality of work being carried out and also timeliness of repairs being completed. A number of respondents raised concerns about the time taken to complete a repair, and also the quality of the repair which was being carried out.
31. The Board during their visit to the Seacroft depot asked if the new system had a survey function. Whilst this does, the Board were informed that there is a project looking at how best Housing Leeds gather customer feedback.
32. It is the Board's view that work should be carried out to look at these service failures.



Conclusions and Recommendations

Learning from Complaints

33. The Board understands the improvement of customer satisfaction is a large piece of work and the Board respect not every tenant would be satisfied with the service regardless of process being correctly followed.
34. The Board acknowledges some tenants responded to the satisfaction survey as satisfied; but there was a significant number who were not. Feedback provided to the Board indicated that work continues to improve tenant satisfaction. The Board noted that some issues raised during the survey continue to occur even though they have been ongoing for some time.
35. In this vein, the Board want to ensure that Leeds Building Services have guidance from this report in the way that they can improve this.
36. One of the key ways organisations learn from their mistakes is to ensure that complaints are learned from. This is a 'free' way to gather information about why tenants are not satisfied with the service and whilst implementing some improvements may take time, there will be quick wins which could have an immediate impact on the performance of customer satisfaction.
37. A common theme the Board were informed about was where problems in relation to follow up work, either due to parts not being available, or where a follow on trade is required to be used.
38. Tenant feedback indicated that it is at this point there is often a breakdown in

communication, with tenants often left in the dark as to what is happening and when their repair will be completed, with the tenant then having to chase up any follow on work.

39. Officers explaining the process to the Board noted this shouldn't be the case yet the Board note this is a common occurrence and it is important Leeds Building Services ensure processes for follow on work are improved and this is followed by all operatives.

Recommendation 4 – Improve customer satisfaction by using and act on learning from complaints and improve the process of follow on work which may be required.

Repairs Ordering Process and Performance

40. How repairs are raised is the first element of the repair, and the first point in which the service can get it wrong, causing issues further in the process.
41. The Board found from speaking with Officers at Leeds Building Services that orders which are raised by the Contact Centre being raised against the wrong trade, in particular where there are communal heating systems in multi storey blocks.
42. Because of this, the Board asked the Contact Centre officers during their evidence session their views on this. It was explained to the Board that feedback is welcomed and is given by Leeds Building Services.



Conclusions and Recommendations

43. However, the Board felt there was an underlying issue which didn't seem to be addressed at present and a way to help resolve this could be more information which is quicker to hand to enable Contact Centre staff to make more accurate decisions, given the pressure they are under taking many calls a day.

Recommendation 5 – That Leeds Building Services work with the Contact Centre, HUBs and local Housing Offices to ensure staff know how to identify key issues for property types, such as heating type to enable more accurate repair reporting.

44. The Board were provided performance information which indicated that the performance of Leeds Building Services was not being met. When receiving evidence during their inquiry, the Board noted from officers that there have been issues with the closing down of some repairs on the system, leading there to be repairs showing as outstanding when this wasn't the case.

Recommendation 6 – Administration on repairs performance is improved - so that orders are closed down in a timely manner on systems, including sub-contractor orders.

45. The Board also noted the facility for tenants to report repairs online through the Leeds City Council website.

46. The Board felt promotion of ordering online repairs could be improved and this would be of benefit to tenants who could report repairs at a time convenient to them.

47. Given the above, the Board are of the view better publicity around benefits of reporting repairs online would help to improve the tenant experience, as well as reducing the number of calls coming into the Contact Centre.

Recommendation 7 – Make repair raising more accessible online. Whilst this is currently available, it is not actively promoted or widely utilised.

48. The Board was informed by the Contact Centre there are issues around staff turnover and that in some ways the Council is a victim of its own success in being able to train up officers who then feel confident enough to move onto more senior roles in the authority.

49. However this causes issues with more knowledgeable staff leaving the Contact Centre and less experienced staff being left who may struggling with some repair raising, particular unusual or complex repairs.

50. The Board were informed there has been a higher grader post created in an attempt to retain staff but there still needs to be further work in this area.

51. The recommendation below should enable better partnership working between the two teams.

Recommendation 8 – That there is a contact provided for new and existing staff to refer to where they have enquiries on repairs



Conclusions and Recommendations

Apprenticeships

52. The Board were provided with evidence that each year Leeds Building Services take on 18 apprentices. The apprenticeship is a 14 month scheme where participants do 2 days a week at college and 3 days training on site, giving them a taster of the whole service and they receive a recognised qualification.
53. Whilst the Board acknowledges Leeds Building Services are looking to increase the opportunities for apprentices, the Board feel it is vital that recruitment to the trades with a shortfall of operatives is of paramount importance.
54. It was noted during evidence sessions that Leeds Building Services are a growing organisation which they hope will enable them to take over some of the works currently done by outside contractors, providing further value for money opportunities.
55. The recommendation below will help to achieve this.

Recommendation 9 – Where a trade has a shortfall in operatives numbers, Leeds Building Services consider apprenticeships in these trades and continue to upskill operatives in a multi skilled approach.



Evidence and Witnesses

Monitoring arrangements

Standard arrangements for monitoring the outcome of the Board's recommendations will apply.

The decision-makers to whom the recommendations are addressed will be asked to submit a formal response to the recommendations, including an action plan and timetable, normally within two months.

Following this the Scrutiny Board will determine any further detailed monitoring, over and above the standard quarterly monitoring of all scrutiny recommendations.

Reports and Publications Submitted

- Terms of Reference for the Board's inquiry into East Leeds Repairs
- Questionnaire on Leeds Building Services and responses to tenants and tenant groups
- Questionnaire on Leeds Building Services and responses to Elected Members

Witnesses Heard

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| • Neil Evans | Director of Environments and Housing |
| • Simon Costigan | Chief Officer Property and Contracts |
| • Tony Butler | Head of Leeds Building Services |
| • Simon Jarman | Repairs & Adaptations Delivery Manager |
| • Shannon O'Brien | Planner |
| • Amy Rogers | Planner |
| • Sharon Guy | Housing Manager |
| • Lee Ward | Neighbourhood Services Officer |
| • Nik Carter | Performance Officer |
| • Debra Harding | Operations Manager, Contact Centre |
| • Rachel Murray | Customer Services Officer |

Dates of Scrutiny

Tenant Scrutiny Board meetings on:

- 1 June 2016
- 29 June 2016
- 3 August 2016
- 31 August 2016
- 28 September 2016
- 26 October 2016
- 30 November 2016



Evidence and Witnesses

- 21 December 2016
- 1 February 2017
- 1 March 2017

Site Visits

- 16 November 2016 Tour of Leeds Building Services Depot, Seacroft
- 16 November 2016 Demonstration of Total Works System, Seacroft

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Evidence and Witnesses

DRAFT

DRAFT

**Tenant Scrutiny Board
East Leeds Repairs April 2017
Report author: Sharon Guy**

www.scrutiny.unit@leeds.gov.uk





Report author: Sharon Guy
Tel: 07891 273581

Report of Scrutiny Officer

Report to Tenant Scrutiny Board

Date: 26th April 2017

Subject: Tenant Scrutiny Board Updates

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Board are made aware of matters arising in between meetings through Chairs Update.
- 1.2 However, due to the number of topics which the Chair needs to raise with the Board it was felt a separate item would be best placed in the agenda to make the Board aware of other issues which have arisen since the last meeting.

The topics the Chair will discuss in this item are:-

- Complaint received from a member of the public
- The forthcoming meeting of the E&H working group on TSB and Tenant Involvement
- Housing Leeds' VITAL meeting in June

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the updates from the Chair about these topics and raise any questions.

3.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS¹

- 3.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

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