



## HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Monday, 7th September, 2015 at 5.00 pm

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### MEMBERSHIP

Councillor D Coupar (Chair)

Councillor J Bentley

Councillor B Anderson

Councillor A Gabriel

Councillor S Hamilton

Councillor K Ritchie

#### Tenant/ Leaseholder

Ted Wilson  
Andy Liptrot  
David Atkinson

#### Independent Representative

Timothy Woods  
Matthew Walker  
Andrew Feldhaus

#### Co-opted Member

David Glew  
Jo Hourigan

# A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			<p><b>APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS</b></p> <p>To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2 of the Access to Information Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded)</p> <p>(*In accordance with Procedure Rule 15.2, written notice of an appeal must be received by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting)</p>	
2			<p><b>EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></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><b>RESOLVED</b> – 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>	

3

**LATE ITEMS**

To identify any items which have been admitted to the agenda by the Chair for consideration.

(The special circumstances shall be specified in the minutes)

4

**DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

To disclose or draw attention to any disclosable pecuniary interests for the purposes of Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and paragraphs 13 -16 of the Members' Code of Conduct

5

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence

6

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

1 - 10

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Housing Advisory Board held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015

(Copy attached)

7

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

11 -  
12

To consider any matters arising/ outstanding issues and actions from the previous minutes.

(Report attached)

8

**HOUSING LEEDS CAPITAL FINANCIAL POSITION PERIOD 4 2015/16**

13 -  
18

To consider a report by the Director of Environment and Housing which provides a financial position statement on the HRA Housing Leeds Capital programme at period 4 for the financial year 2015/16.

(Report attached)

9

**HOUSING LEEDS (HRA) REVENUE FINANCIAL POSITION JULY 2015/16**

19 -  
22

To consider a report of the Director of Environment and Housing which provides an update on the revenue financial position for the Housing Leeds (HRA) service as at the end of July 2015.

(Report attached)

10

**PERFORMANCE REPORT**

23 -  
36

To consider a report by the Director of Environment and Housing which provides a summary of the most recent performance data against the new six Housing Leeds priorities and informs the Board of progress with the development performance measures and dashboards for each priority. The purpose of the dashboards and extended range of performance measures is to give greater insight on matters that affect tenants and to help to put service performance into context.

(Report attached)

11

**KEY WELFARE CHANGES AND PREPARATIONS FOR UNIVERSAL CREDIT.**

37 -  
58

To consider a report by the Director of Environment and Housing which provides details of the Key Welfare Changes, implications from the recent Budget and sets out the preparations for Universal Credit.

(Report attached)

12

**TENANT ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

59 -  
84

To consider a report by the Director of Environment and Housing which provides an update on progress made in the development of tenant involvement and the newly formed citywide groups, their names and strategic priorities.

(Report attached)

13

**HOUSING LEEDS CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY**

85 -  
94

To consider a report by the Director of Environment and Housing which provides an update on the progress made to improve tenant satisfaction.

(Report attached)

14

**HOUSING ADAPTATIONS**

95 -  
100

To consider a report by the Director of Environment and Housing which provides an overview of recent changes in the way this service is provided, look at the current performance and ways to provide further service integration and improve the customer experience.

(Report attached)

15

**HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD FORWARD PLAN 2015**

101 -  
104

To note/ amend the contents of the Housing Advisory Board Forward Plan 2015/16

(Report attached)

16

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

To note that future meetings of the Board will be arranged as follows:

- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015
- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016
- Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016

All meetings to take place in the Civic Hall, Leeds commencing at 5.00pm

### **Third Party Recording**

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.

Use of Recordings by Third Parties– code of practice

- 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.
- 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

## HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

THURSDAY, 9TH JULY, 2015

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Coupar in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, J Bentley,  
S Hamilton and K Ritchie

### **65 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

### **66 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There were no items identified where it was considered necessary to exclude the press members of the public from the meeting.

### **67 Late Items**

There were no late items of business, the Committee did however accept the inclusion of an updated report (Minute No, 74 refers).

### **68 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest made, however, Matthew Walker did express an interest in Item No. 13 (Review of Housing related Support Programme) his organisation being a partner of the programme (Minute No. 77 refers).

### **69 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Gabriel, Andy Liptrot, Timothy Woods, Andrew Feldhaus and David Glew.

### **70 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015 were submitted for accuracy and approval.

Referring to Minute No. 60 Tenant Scrutiny Board Recommendations – Review of Annual Tenancy Visit Process, Jo Hourigan, referring to her comments said the use of the word bad was not accurate and suggested its removal.

**RESOLVED** – With the removal of the suggested wording, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015 were accepted as a true and correct record.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 7th September, 2015

## **71 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The following Matters arising/ Actions from the Minutes were highlighted:

Housing and the Jobs and Skills Agenda – Minute No.6 – 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013 (Shadow Advisory Board refers)

In providing an update Officers reported that future apprenticeship schemes would be linked to the Housing Growth Programme. Other opportunities within Housing Leeds would continue to be explored. The Housing Advisory Board would continue to receive updates – Status of action “Open in progress”

Towards a New Housing Strategy – (Minute No.29 – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2014 refers)

It was noted that the Leeds Housing Strategy was approved at the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015, proposed progress reporting arrangements would be included in the Board’s Work Programme – Status of action Closed

Housing Advisory Board Forward Plan – Minute No. 29 – 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014 refers)

A report on High Rise Blocks was considered at the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015 – Status of action Closed

A report in relation to Tenant Engaging Framework was considered on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015. Board to continue to receive progress report – Status of action “Open in progress”

A report in respect of Adaptations would be considered by the Board on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Status of action “Open in progress”

Tenant Scrutiny Board Recommendations – Review of Annual Tenancy Visit Process – Minute No.61 – 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015 refers

A report providing data from home visits was included within the “Performance Report” which appeared later on the agenda for this meeting - Status of action “Propose to Close”.

## **72 Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 2 2015/16**

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided the financial position statement on the HRA Housing Leeds Capital programme at period 2 for the financial year 2015/16.

Richard Ellis, Head of Finance, Environments and Housing presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2015



- Housing Leeds Services and BITMO
- Actual spend and commitments at period 2
- Planned works estimated to be £59.6m with spend and commitments at £5.67m (10% of revised estimated outturn)
- Responsive works at outturn 2014/15
- The overall Housing Leeds variance (£15.7m decrease) attributed to slippage in future years

In offering comment Matthew Walker said the “decent homes” standard was no longer referred to, so how were properties tracked that were a good standard?

In responding the Director of Environment and Housing suggested that the Leeds Standard required re-defining through to 2030. A return to the “decency standard was not desired”. He said the key element would be how to profile spend, following yesterday’s Chancellor’s Budget speech, which would in future mean significantly less funding in the Housing Revenue Account.

Ted Wilson referring to the Chancellor’s Budget Speech said there was an indication that the Capital Programme would be subject to a 1% reduction, what did this figure represent?

In responding the Director of Environment and Housing said 1% represented approximately £2m

Councillor Anderson reminded Officers that he had previously requested a breakdown of schemes by ward, was it near completion?

In responding the Director of Environment and Housing said details of works in each ward was progressing and would be circulated to Members as soon as it became available.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (i) To note the Housing Leeds and BITMO refurbishment programme and Housing Leeds Council House Growth programme position at period 2, 2015/16.
- (ii) That a breakdown of housing works in each ward be circulated to members as it became available

### **73 Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position Quarter 1 2015/16**

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided an update on the revenue financial position for the Housing Leeds (HRA) Service as at the end of Quarter 1.

Richard Ellis, Head of Finance, Environment and Housing, presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- Key variances to Budget – Income projected to be £106K – Expenditure, savings of £544K projected
- Right to buy sales (RTB) sales
- Arrears

Referring to the Chancellor's Budget Speech, Councillor Anderson asked if Board Members could receive details about possible Council Housing rent implications as a consequence of changes to the budget.

In responding the Director of Environment and Housing said officers were currently preparing a Briefing Paper which would be circulated to Board Members and would explain the position following reconfiguration of the Housing Revenue Account.

Councillor Anderson asked if there was sufficient funding to meet disrepair claims.

The Director of Environment and Housing said there would be an additional budget to meet disrepair claims, details about claims would be included in future Performance Reports.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted
- (ii) That a Briefing Paper on Council House Rent implications be circulated to Board Members as soon as it becomes available.

#### **74 Performance Report**

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided a summary of the latest available performance data against the six Housing Leeds priorities.

The report also highlighted the ongoing development of the relevant performance measures that would be used to report comprehensively against these priorities.

Debra Scott, Head of Resources and Strategy, Environment and Housing, presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included the following:

- Environmental Investment
- Rents and Benefits (Arrears Statistics) and (Under Occupation Statistics)
- Housing People – Homeless prevention/ Average re-let days/ number of void
- Repairs right first time
- Capital Programme effectiveness
- Knowing our tenants (Annual Home visits Outcomes)

Commenting on paragraph 3.4.1 of the submitted report Councillor Ritchie suggested that the figures on homeless preventions did not say a great deal, could more information be included in future reports.

Commenting on Annual Home Visits, David Atkinson referred to tenants suffering from deteriorating health problems and how such people may be assisted.

In offering comment the Chair suggested that such tenants required help in finding the right support (Signpost)

Jo Hourigan said some really good work had been carried out in East Leeds in terms of signposting and suggested such works could be replicated in other areas.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (i) To note the most recent performance information against the six Housing Leeds priorities
- (ii) To note the progress being made to develop dashboards for each of the six Housing Leeds priorities which will be reported to future meetings of the Board

#### **75 Environmental Improvement Programme Update**

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided an update on Environmental Improvement Programme.

Liz Cook, Chief Officer, Housing Management, Environment and Housing, presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- Programme established through the provision of £3m Housing Revenue Account Funding
- The aim of the programme is to the quality of the Council's Housing estates, improve tenant satisfaction and address long standing local concerns.

- Schemes categorised into the following themes: Dealing effectively with the City's Waste, Community Safety, Landscaping, Play and Parking
- To date a programme of 82 schemes had been approved
- Currently detailed plans being developed with a view to implementing over the next 18-24 months.

Referring to paragraph 3.3.6 of the submitted report, Ted Wilson asked if CCTV schemes were to be delivered as part of the full programme.

In responding Officers confirmed that CCTV schemes would be delivered as part of the full capital programme.

Councillor Hamilton requested to know the progress on Scheme CS4 (Sholebrooke Mount/ Street CCTV)

In responding officers said details on progress of individual schemes was not readily available but an undertaking was provided to Councillor Hamilton that the requested information would be supplied.

Councillor Ritchie questioned the spread of projects, suggesting more might be targeted to reduce inequality and deprivation across the city.

In responding the Director of Environment and Housing said that the programme had been based on local bids rather than an officer assessment of need, however, where funding was going into more affluent wards, it was still addressing pockets of deprivation.

Matthew Walker said the provision of such a programme was welcome.

In summing up the Chair said it was a really worthwhile programme but demand outstripped the funding.

**RESOLVED** – To note the progress on the Environmental Improvement Programme.

## **76 Contract Strategy and Future of Construction Services**

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided an update on the initial programme and outputs for the integration of Property Maintenance, currently part of Civic Enterprise Leeds and Construction Services.

Simon Costigan, Chief Officer Property and Contracts, Environment and Housing, presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- The Property Maintenance arm of Civic Enterprise Leeds would transfer to Housing Leeds Property and Contracts on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015. Harmonisation of terms and conditions was programmed for 1<sup>st</sup> August 2015. The integration process with Construction Services was underway and would run until March 2016.
- The integrated service would provide efficiencies in both management and service delivery and focus on enhanced customer service outcomes.
- The integrated service would further develop opportunities for external trading thereby generating revenue for the Council.
- The integration process would be managed by Property and Contracts and operational managers from both Property Maintenance and Construction Services. The process would be supported with resources from the Projects, Programmes and Procurement Unit.

In offering comment Jo Hourigan said the integration of the service may result in reduced sickness levels and could improve the rates for “getting it right first time”

Commenting on the Construction Services vehicle fleet, Ted Wilson asked if any consideration was given to the use of electric vehicles?

Responding the Chief Officer, Property and Contracts confirmed that electric vehicles and other vehicles that used eco-friendly fuels were all being tested and considered for use.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted
- (ii) To note the identified dates for implementation and completion of the process.

(Matthew Walker expressed an interest in the following item (Review of Housing related Support Programme) his organisation being a partner of the programme)

#### **77 Review of Housing Related Support Programme**

The Head of Commissioning, Strategy and Commissioning, Office of the Director of Public Health, submitted a report which provided an update on the review of housing related support services which was currently taking place. The report requested the views of the Board on what the model for housing related support should be in the future.

Julie Staton, Head of Commissioning, Office of the Director of Public Health, presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 7th September, 2015

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- Identifying opportunities for reconfiguration and remodelling
- Review to be undertaken in the context of the Council and City's priorities and strategies
- Methodology and timescales

In offering comment David Atkinson said it was important that the views of the people living on the estates were taken into account, using the Tenants and Residence Association network.

The Chair suggested the Community Committee structure would also be a useful way of receiving resident/ community feedback.

**RESOLVED –**

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted
- (ii) To note the methodology and timescales for the review

**78 Update on the Delivery of the Council Housing New Build Programme**

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided an update on the delivery of the Council Housing New Build Programme

Mandy Sawyer, Head of Neighbourhood Services, Environment and Housing, presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- Progress in delivering the Housing Regeneration Project in Little London and Beeston Hill and Holbeck, via the PFI
- Progress in developing delivering Council Housing Growth Programme
- Progress with letting the first round of properties, some lessons learnt and how the properties are contributing towards the development of strong communities

In offering comment Councillor Hamilton referred to favouring current Council tenants who had conducted their tenancy well. She said such an approach favoured “the perfect tenant” what about those tenants who were unemployed or who had other issues?

In responding the Director of Environment and Housing said that the department does take into account the needs and disabilities of all tenants and is mindful to equality issues. The Director, however, pointed to the level of

investment taking place and the importance of ensuring that tenants would look after the properties properly in the years to come.

Jo Hourigan welcomed the initiative, as something which would reward tenants who behaved well.

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted.

**79 Delivery of Enhanced Income Management Service Offer to Support Tenants who are Affected by Welfare Reform.**

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report which provided an update on progress in supporting tenants to respond to Welfare Reform and set out the proposed Enhanced Income Service Offer of a flexible resource to respond to demand over the next 3 years.

Liz Cook, Chief Officer, Housing Management, presented the report and responded to Members comments and queries.

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report which included:

- Preparation for Welfare Reforms & Universal Credit
- Ensure Tenants would be effectively supported and advised
- Specific programmes and initiatives had delivered good results and long term solutions

In offering comment the Chair welcome the investment of additional resources to support tenants affected by Welfare Reform

**RESOLVED** –

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted and welcomed
- (ii) To support the additional resources allocated to support tenants in responding to the challenge of welfare reform and universal credit.

**80 HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD FORWARD PLAN 2015**

The Board considered the contents of the Housing Advisory Board Forward Plan for 2015.

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the Housing Advisory Board Forward Plan for 2015 be noted.

**81 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – To note that future meetings of the Board will take place as follows:

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Monday, 7th September, 2015

- Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015
- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015

All meetings to take place in the Civic Hall, Leeds, commencing at 5.00pm



Meeting Date	Minute ref no.	Action	Responsible for Output	Others involved	(last updated 26 August 2015)	Status
04/12/13	6.	<u>Housing and the Jobs and Skills Agenda</u> Officers work with Cllr Maqsood who is employment lead and for a further paper to be brought back to a future meeting of the Board.	Housing Leeds COs	Employment and Skills colleagues	A summary of apprenticeship and other opportunities has been included in the performance report on the Sept HAB agenda	Close
11/11/14	29	<u>Housing Advisory Board – Forward Plan 2014/15</u>  That issues around High Rise Blocks, Tenant Working Groups and Adaptations be included on the Boards Forward Plan	Liz Cook	HAB Members and other partners/ stakeholders	High Rise and Tenant Working Groups have been to previous Boards.  Adaptations report on agenda for Sept. HAB	Close
20/5/15	59	<u>Tenant Engagement Framework Update</u>  To support in principle the development of the Strategic Tenant Body, subject to further development of the arrangements for representing this body on the Housing Advisory Board	Mandy Sawyer	HAB Members and other partners/ stakeholders	Update Report included on agenda for Sept HAB	Close
09/07/15	72	<u>Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 2 2015/16</u>  That a breakdown of housing works in each ward would be circulated to members as it became available	Simon Costigan		Work to improve and manipulate the capital programme data to present for each ward is ongoing and drafts to show jobs completed can be made available for the next HAB.	Open (in progress)

09/07/15	73	<p><u>Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position Quarter 1 2015/16</u></p> <p>(in relation to the Chancellor's Budget Speech):</p> <p>That a briefing paper on Council House Rent implications be circulated to Board Members as soon as it became available</p>	Richard Ellis		<p>Paper circulated to the Board 7 August 2015 and is included as an appendix to the Welfare Changes and Universal Credit report on the Sept HAB agenda</p>	Close
09/07/15	74	<p><u>Performance Report</u></p> <p>To include information on <b>disrepair</b> and more details of <b>homelessness</b> outcomes and provision in future reports</p>	Debra Scott		<p>Homelessness information has now been expanded within the performance report. Details of the review work being done on disrepair, which includes reviewing disrepair data and reporting arrangements, has also been included in the report.</p>	Close
09/07/15	75	<p><u>Environmental Improvement Programme Update</u></p> <p>More detail on individual schemes (requested by Cllr Hamilton)</p>	Liz Cook		<p>Information has now been provided to Cllr Hamilton</p>	Close

**Report of Head of Finance Environments and Housing**

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**Subject: Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 4 2015/16**

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

**Summary of main issues**

1. At the request of Housing Advisory Board, the purpose of this report is to provide a financial position statement on the HRA Housing Leeds Capital programme at period 4 for the financial year 2015/16.
2. The attached information has been provided by the relevant Head of Finance for the Board's consideration in relation to:-
  - Housing Leeds & BITMO refurbishment programme (section 3)
  - Housing Leeds Newbuild Programme & Other (section 4)

**3.0 HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

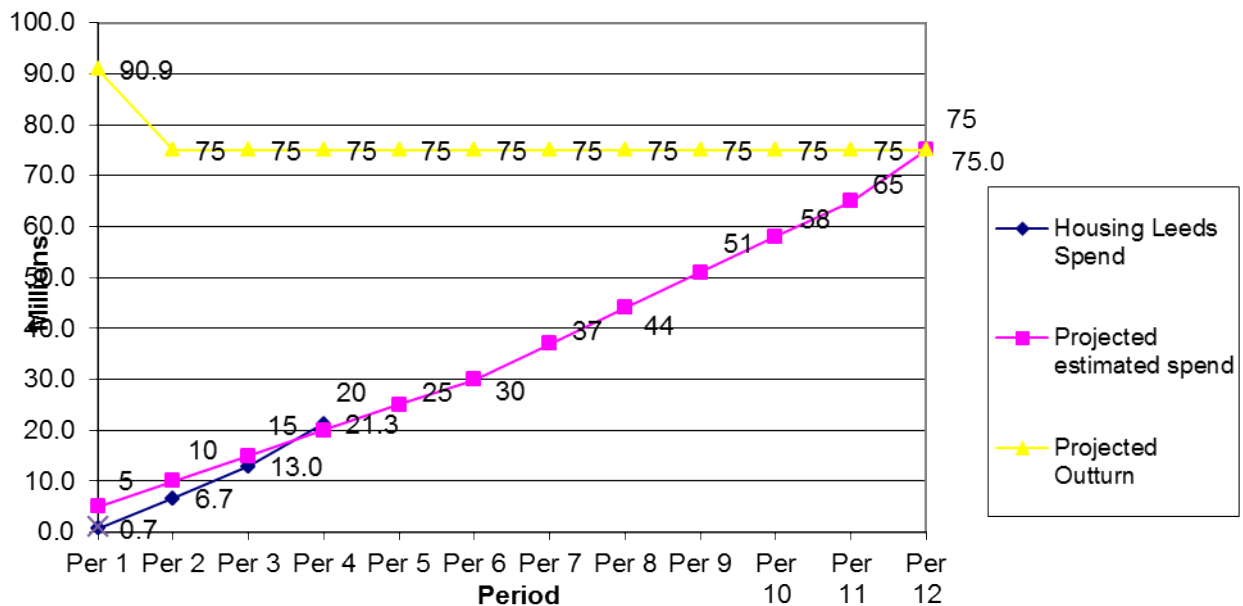
**3.1 Housing Leeds Services & BITMO**

3.2 Housing Leeds actual spend and commitments at period 4 is £21.3m equating to 28% of the revised available resources at period 4. The 2015/16 programme has been adjusted down from £90.9m to a more deliverable level on what can realistically be achieved within the year, circa £75m.

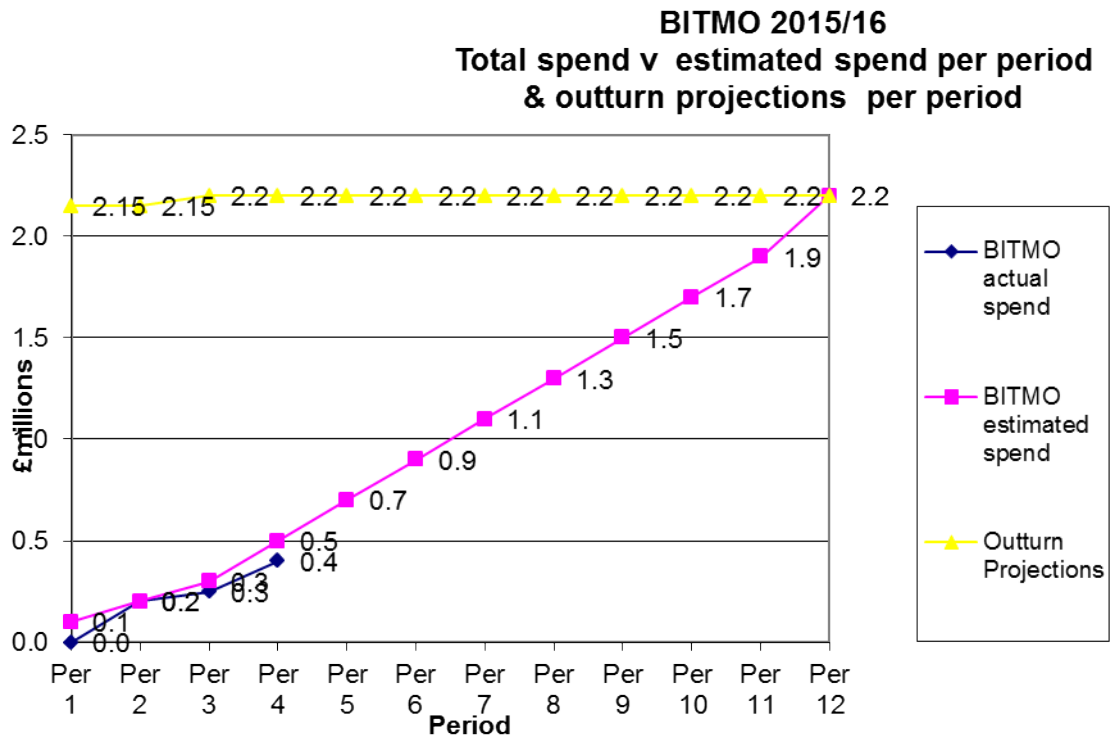
3.3 Housing Leeds 3 year estimated responsive and planned works programme at period 4 are detailed in the table below with a graphical rep of the actual and estimated outturn position for 2015/16 :-

Housing Leeds Capital Programme 2015/16	Original 15/16 Budget	Revised Budget at Per 4	Total Actual and Committed 2015/16 Per 4	% spent to revised budget	Estimtaed 16/17 Budget	Estimated 17/18 Budget
<b>Responsive Programme</b>						
Voids	6,500.0	6,500.0	2973.5	45.7%	6,500.0	6,000.0
Capital Repairs & Maintenance	3,772.0	2,400.0	1673.0	69.7%	4,650.0	4,650.0
Equipments & Modifications for Disabled	5,380.7	5,225.8	1200.0	23.0%	3,465.0	3,465.0
Support Services	1,147.0	1,147.0	657.3	57.3%	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Responsive</b>	<b>16,799.7</b>	<b>15,272.8</b>	<b>6,503.8</b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>14,615.0</b>	<b>14,115.0</b>
<b>Planned Programme</b>						
Window & Door Replacement	1,842.8	1,775.6	433.5	24.4%	2,000.0	3,400.0
Heating & Energy Efficiency	14,681.6	13,088.9	3698.5	28.3%	12,340.0	15,809.0
Community Safety	726.0	175.0	40.6	23.2%	561.0	160.0
Electrical	3,671.3	1,498.2	51.8	3.5%	3,473.7	1,770.0
Re-Roofing	4,459.3	5,891.1	820.8	13.9%	8,000.0	9,145.4
Kitchens & Bathrooms	12,379.6	9,591.6	2125.4	22.2%	14,933.3	19,491.6
Environmentals	920.9	772.9	558.8	72.3%	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous	50.0	286.4	11.4	4.0%	498.0	50.0
Structural Remedials & Insulation	8,511.3	3,543.0	897.3	25.3%	6,955.1	3,200.0
Communal Replacements	4,054.5	3,055.5	304.4	10.0%	3,232.3	250.0
Conversion/Regeneration Works	4,645.9	3,387.0	1663.6	49.1%	3,250.0	2,000.0
Fire Safety Works	3,976.7	3,745.2	1154.1	30.8%	2,700.0	2,817.5
Capital Planned Repairs & Maintenance	0.0	476.0	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Estate Shops & Leased Residential	230.0	230.0	0.7	0.3%	230.0	230.0
Service Delivery Associated Costs	13,918.1	12,210.8	3078.0	25.2%	9,211.6	9,561.5
<b>Total Planned</b>	<b>74,068.0</b>	<b>59,727.2</b>	<b>14,838.7</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	<b>67,385.0</b>	<b>67,885.0</b>
<b>Total Housing Leeds programme</b>	<b>90,867.7</b>	<b>75,000.0</b>	<b>21,342.6</b>	<b>28.5%</b>	<b>82,000.0</b>	<b>82,000.0</b>

**Housing Leeds 2015/16  
Total Spend v Estimated spend per period  
& Outturn projections per period**



- 3.4 There are no material issues of concern at period 4 other than the HL recruiting to full capacity to deliver the revised 2015/16 programme. We will monitor this situation and adjust outturn figures if planned recruitment is delayed.
- 3.5 BITMOs actual spend and commitments at period 4 are £0.4m equating to 18% of available resources of £2.22m. The 2015/16 programme will deliver 25+ schemes across Belle Isle in 2015/16.



**4.0 Council House Growth Programme**

4.1 Latest position attached as appendix A “Briefing to Council House Growth Programme Board”

**5.0 Recommendation**

5.1 Housing Advisory Board are asked to note the Housing Leeds and BITMO refurbishment programme and Housing Leeds Council House Growth programme position at period 4, 2015/16.

6.0 **Background documents**<sup>1</sup> No documents referred to.

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Title: Capital Finance Update  
Date: 31<sup>st</sup> July Period 4

### 1. Executive Board and Full Council Approvals

The total funding injected and available for the Council House Growth Programme at period 4 is £99.37m. Overall authority to spend to date is £81.8m. Overall spend to date in 2015/16 is £2m (£5.3m in previous years) a total of £7.3m for the programme to date.

We currently have £17.4m which remains available for funding schemes which have yet to be identified. However £9.1m of this is RTB receipts. Currently we have £7.2m of approved borrowing left in the programme and £1m of HCA grant which is uncommitted.

### 2. Summary Progress on each work stream to period 4

Council House Growth Programme	Total	Committed	Uncommitted	Total Spend to date	Budget remaining	Total No of Properties to deliver	No of Properties delivered to date
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s		
Newbuild & Off shelf LCC funding	51,517.6	10,973	40,545	5,326	46,192	481	23
HCA Grant	7,339.0	1,575	5,764		7,339		
RTBs 1 for 1 newbuild	7,974.6	2,281	5,693		7,975		
	66,831.2	14,829	52,002	5,326	61,506	481	23
Empty Homes Ph1	2,253	1,963	290	1,962.5	291	22	22
Empty Homes Ph2	9,000	9,000	0	55	8,945	100	1
	11,253	10,963	290	2,018	9,236	122	23
Grants to RPs from RTBs 1for1	947	947			947	35	
Potential to RPs from RTBs 1for1	2,980		2,980		2,980	169	
	3,927	947	2,980	0	3,927	204	0
Funding available awaiting schemes							
HCA grant for negotiation	1,012		1,012		1,012		
RTB 1 for 1 receipts residual 17/18	9,102	0	9,102	0	9,102		
HRA Borrowing balance	7,244	0	7,244	0	7,244		
	17,358	0	17,358	0	17,358	0	0
<b>TOTAL CHGP</b>	<b>99,370</b>	<b>26,739</b>	<b>72,630</b>	<b>7,343</b>	<b>92,027</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>46</b>

The above table assumes a successful bid to HCA for Westerton Walk Tingley 45 Unit extra home care scheme

### 3. HCA Empty Homes – RTB Buyback Authority to spend £11.25m.

Phase 1 is complete with savings of circa £250k which will be added to phase 2. One property acquired from phase 2. Phase 2 given ATS 28/7/15.

### 4. Right to Buy – One for One replacements

The total funding available is now £21m. Of this £21m available to us we are utilising £7.97m on Newbuild at 5 below, have committed to £3.92m in grants to registered providers £947k of which is agreed, with £9.3m residual funding not yet committed.

On the grants to registered providers we have agreed £947k to date. This includes Canopy 5 Units, Gipsil 10 units. Of the grants not yet agreed we are awaiting applications from Habinteg (former Wyther Park CC) 14 units, and Unity HA (parkwood road garage site) 6 units. We also have potential grants which would utilise £2.98m of RTB receipts and these include St Georges 21 units, Abbeyfield 56 units and Guinness Northern Counties 17 units.

**NB. Providing all schemes identified are delivered on time this takes us to Q4 17/18 before any repayments of RTB 1for1 funding if no other schemes come forward.**

### 5. New build – Contractually committed to date £13.8m against revised estimated scheme costs of £68.4m

Scheme	Number of units	FUNDING SOURCE			Construction Costs	
		Actual	LCC	RTBs 1for1	HCA Grant	Total Estimated Scheme Cost
<b>LCC Developments</b>						
1. East Park Road	32	£2,340,930	£1,003,256		£3,344,185	Start on site Sep 2014; completion Q4 2015-16
2. Howarth Court	45	£6,412,063	£612,300	£1,575,000	£8,599,363	Contract award May 2015; completion expected June 16
6. Thorn Walk	23	£1,553,432	£665,757		£2,219,189	23 properties acquired. Now complete
15. Yeadon Town Street	0	£0	£0		£0	No longer viable under CHGP per NPS feasibility.
Other completed schemes		£666,700			£666,700	Other completed schemes.
<b>HCA Bids £41m bid</b>						
5. The Garnets	25	£2,858,713	£1,225,163	transfer	£4,083,875	To start on site Q4 2015-16; to complete 2016-17.
3. Squinting Cat	18	£1,804,000.00		£396,000	£2,200,000.00	Contract Award June 15; completion summer 2016
4. Broadleas	24	£3,354,000.00		£528,000	£3,882,000	To start on site Q4 2015-16; to complete 2016-17.
7. Beech Walk,	Up to 21	£2,032,194.00		£462,000	£2,494,194	To start on site Q3 2016/17; to complete Q3 2017-18.
8. Beech Mount	Up to 6	£659,434.00		£132,000	£791,434	To start on site Q3 2016/17; to complete Q3 2017-18.
9. Whinmoor Pub	Up to 22	£2,145,851.00		£484,000	£2,629,851	To start on site Q2 2016/17; to complete Q3 2017-18.
10. Mistress Lane	Up to 77	£8,742,174.00		£1,694,000	£10,436,174	To start on site Q1 2016/17; to complete Q4 2017-18.
11. Brooklands	Up to 20	£1,933,845.00		£440,000	£2,373,845	TBC
12. Middleton Park Ave	Up to 34	£3,709,870.00		£748,000	£4,457,870	To start on site 2016-17; to complete 2017-18.
13. Bancroft	Up to 16	£980,000.00		£352,000	£1,332,000	To replace Miles Hill
13. Other TBI	Up to 14					To replace Miles Hill yet to be identified 14 units
14. Acre Mount	Up to 24	£2,494,228.00		£528,000	£3,022,228	To start on site 2016-17; to complete 2017-18.
<b>Other Planned</b>						
Nevilles 3 sites	20	£2,100,000	£900,000		£3,000,000	Based on 20 props at £150k !!
Former Lord Cardigan Pub	8	£826,000	£354,000		£1,180,000	Based on 8 props at £140k !!
* Westerton Walk Tingley	45	£5,924,136	£3,213,915	£1,575,000	£10,713,051	45 units extra home care scheme
Rosemount	7	£980,000			£980,000	7 units at £140k
Other off shelf TBC						To be identified
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>£51,517,569</b>	<b>£7,974,390</b>	<b>£8,914,000</b>	<b>£68,405,959</b>	

\* The above table assumes a successful bid to HCA for Westerton Walk Tingley 45 Unit extra home care scheme £1.575m if unsuccessful will come from balan

- This workstream of the programme is now utilising a revised £68.4m of available funding delivering 481units, The 2nd Homecare scheme 45 units is planned in Westerton Walk Tingley estimated at £10.7m. Six sites have been programmed to date as part of this workstream. Five are direct delivery and are at various design stages. It is estimated that these sites will deliver 167 new units. However some sites may now be delivered through the Brownfield Land programme. Bancroft has been brought forward in place of Miles Hill, 16 units £1.33m .

### 6. Capital Funding and Cashflow as at period 4

Total CHG programme as at 9th July 2015	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2015 £000's	FORECAST				
			2015/16 £000's	2016/17 £000's	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	99370.0	5319.8	17984.6	41238.2	34827.4		
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0						
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>99370.0</b>	<b>5319.8</b>	<b>17984.6</b>	<b>41238.2</b>	<b>34827.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Total overall Funding (As per latest Capital Programme)	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2015 £000's	FORECAST				
			2015/16 £000's	2016/17 £000's	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019 on £000's
HRA resources	32359.0	3028.3	12200.7	16987.1	142.9		
Section 106	1380.0	1242.6	137.4	0.0			
Government Grant HCA	10627.0	440.0	2127.8	5022.0	3037.2		
RTB receipts	21004.0	608.9	3518.7	4701.0	12175.4		
Departmental Borrowing	34000.0			14528.1	19471.9		
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>99370.0</b>	<b>5319.8</b>	<b>17984.6</b>	<b>41238.2</b>	<b>34827.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Balance / Shortfall =</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>



**Report of Head of Finance, Environment & Neighbourhoods**

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**Subject: Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position July 2015/16**

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

**Summary of main issues**

The purpose of this report is to update Housing Advisory Board on the revenue financial position for the Housing Leeds (HRA) service as at the end of July 2015.

**Recommendations**

Housing Advisory Board is requested to note the contents of this report.

**1. Summary Position**

1.1 At the end of Period 4 the HRA is projecting a surplus of £(506)k against the 2015/16 Budget.

**2. Key Variances – Income**

2.1 Income is projected to be £(439)k more than budget and this is largely due to income from rents, which is projected to be £(335)k more than budget. This is primarily due to actual level of voids being less than budgeted levels of 1.25%. In addition to this, income of £(35)k is being projected from equity share properties.

2.2 Additional income is anticipated from PFI pass through costs due to a higher number of adaptations than expected £(50)k, staff capitalisation £(38)k and a reduction in the charge for Corporate Management costs £(71k)). These offset telecoms income which is projected to be under budget by £90k.

### **3. Key Variances - Expenditure**

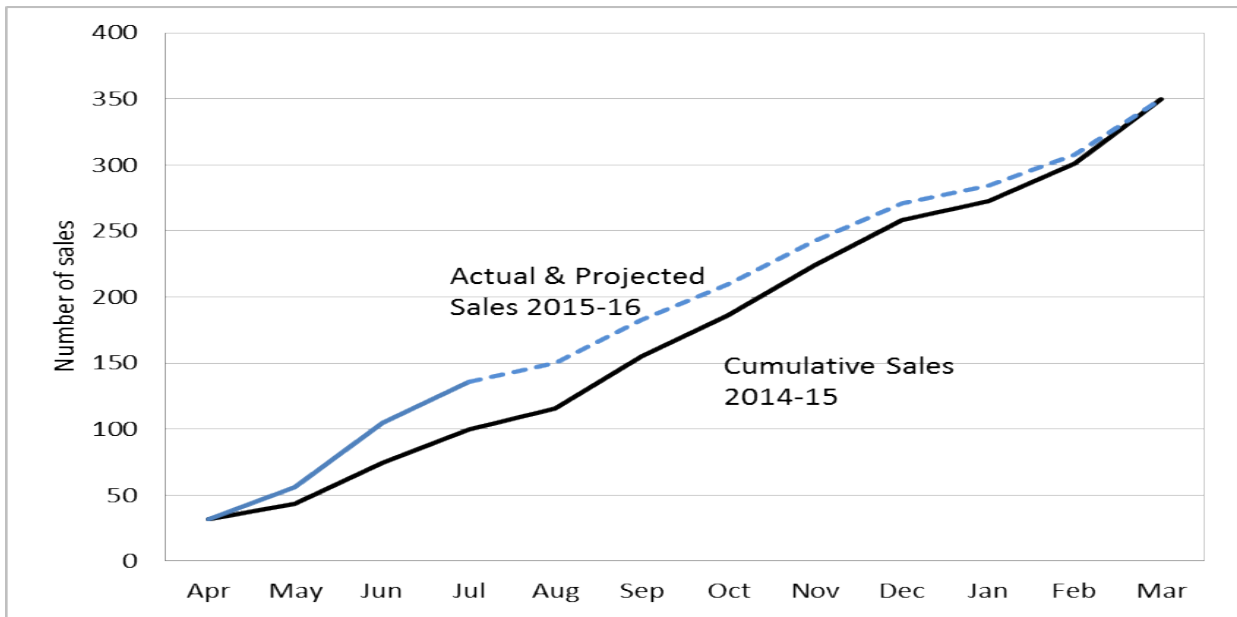
- 3.1 Savings of £(371)k are projected in relation to employees which is primarily due to posts which are currently vacant. Interviews have recently taken place for a number of these vacant posts and it is anticipated that most posts will be filled within the next 2-3 months.
- 3.2 Other variations to budget include a projected saving on the flats' utilities budget of £(100)k. This part offsets additional costs of £144k for three Anti-Social Behaviour Link Officers (charged from West Yorkshire Police), a more appropriate charge for the support provided by HR £116k and an increased charge of £108k for support provided by Regeneration staff in the delivery of the New Council House programme.

### **4. Right to Buy (RTB) Sales**

- 4.1 To the end of July there were 136 completed sales. It is anticipated that total year sales of 350 units will generate sales receipts of £15.8m. The Government formula in respect of 2015/16, indicates that the Council would be able to retain total receipts of £9.56m. £2.46m could be used by the Council for acquisition/build of properties representing 30% of the costs, or to passport to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) as a grant to fund 30% of the cost of building new housing stock. The balance of £7.1m could be used to repay debt, or to fund other capital expenditure.

Total receipts to be retained are down by £1.6m from £11.17m in 2014/15. This is due to the increase in the share of receipts to be taken up by Government (up £0.7m) and a smaller increase in the share to the Council (up £0.1m). In addition to this, the net sale price per property is also down (£3k per property) at present, this would indicate that total receipts would be down by £1m, assuming 350 sales.

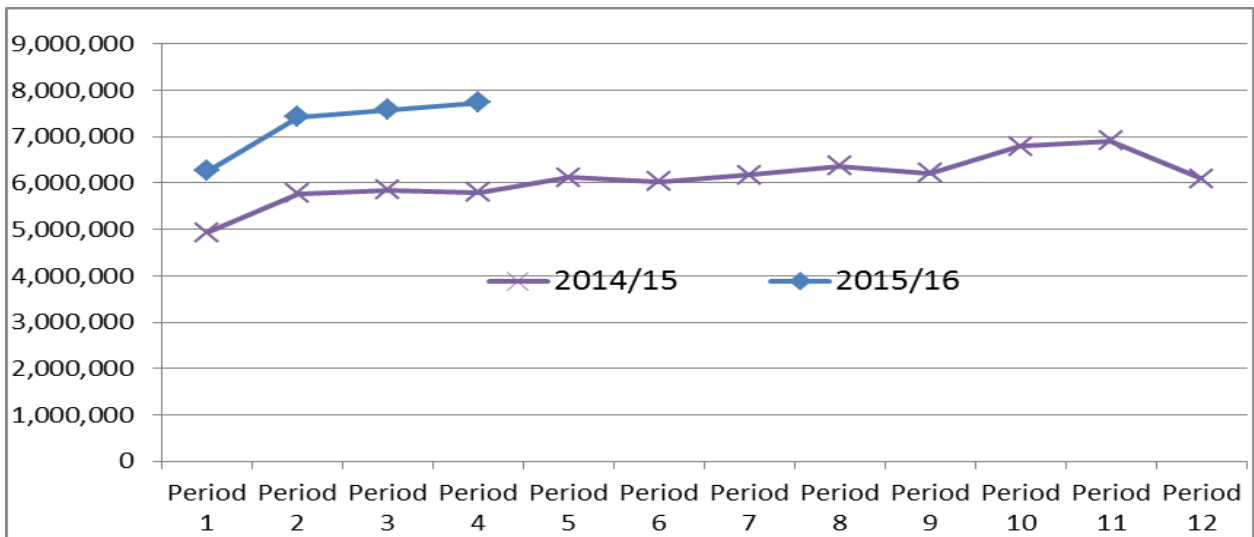
## Council House Sales to end of July 2015 & Projected Sales to Year End



### 5. Arrears

5.1 Excluding technical arrears, arrears for current tenants are £6.7m compared to £5.8m at the end of 2014/15, an increase of £0.9m. There are currently 5,100 tenants classified as under-occupied. At the end of 2014/15 approximately 53% of under-occupiers were in arrears, this rose to 55% as at the end of July 2015. The value of dwelling rent arrears for under-occupiers has decreased by £19k since the end of 2014/15 and now stands at £836k.

#### Comparison of Current Tenant Arrears 2014/15 and 2015/16



### 6. Collection Rates

6.1 Collection rates to the end of July were 96.31% for dwelling rents, compared to the target of 98.06%.

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**Report of the Director of Environment and Housing**

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 07 September 2015**

**Subject: Performance 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

**Summary of main issues**

1. This report provides a summary of latest available performance against measures relating to the new six Housing Leeds priorities agreed by the Housing Advisory Board. It also highlights the ongoing development of the relevant performance measures and dashboards that will be used to report comprehensively against these priorities.

**Recommendations**

2. The Board is recommended to
  - Note the most recent performance information relating to the six Housing Leeds priorities.
  - Note the progress being made to develop dashboards for each of the six Housing Leeds priorities which will be reported to future Board meetings.
  - Note the details of apprenticeships at section 4 of the report.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report presents a summary of the most recent performance data against the new six Housing Leeds priorities and informs the Board of progress with the development performance measures and dashboards for each priority. The purpose of the dashboards and extended range of performance measures is to give greater insight on matters that affect tenants and to help to put service performance into context.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 The six Housing Leeds priorities were agreed by the Board at their meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015. They cover a number of key performance areas and, when viewed together, they provide a broad view of the performance of the service. The intention is to provide quarterly performance information in the form of dashboards, giving a range of performance and other contextual information, together with supporting commentary. These dashboards are at various stages of development.
- 2.2 Draft dashboards in respect of priorities 1, 2 and 4 are appended to this report with the most recent available data (June). Commentary is given under each priority heading in section 3 below, to advise on the work being done to further develop these dashboards.
- 2.3 The most recent data available data (June) for the other three priorities is provided within the body of this report in section 3 below. The dashboards for these priorities are still at a rudimentary stage and so it has not been possible to provide drafts to the Board. Commentary is given as to the work being done to develop dashboards in relation to these priorities.

## **3 The Six Priorities**

### **3.1 Priority 1 – Environmental Improvement**

- 3.1.1 Please see attached draft dashboard.

- 3.1.2 110 applications, totalling over £400k in funding, have been approved by the Housing Advisory Panels. Please refer to the dashboard for a breakdown by type and area. A range of outcomes have been delivered to date, examples include increased safety of community spaces (Atlanta Street Community Safety Scheme and Richmond Hill Community Centre Fencing) and improvements to green spaces (Rosebank Rangers Project).

- 3.1.3 The reporting of HAP funded schemes is now developed to a point where we can show numbers of schemes by theme and by area, and their funding values. Commentary in terms of progress with delivery and outcomes is now coming through and officers are also exploring ways in which we can do more to show when schemes will be delivered, the range of outcomes and the impact of the work, including the use of Social Value measures.

- 3.1.4 Under the Environmental Improvement Programme, three schemes have been completed, including the completion of Middleton Skate Park, Minster Flats waste scheme (supporting AWC and addressing fire safety) and Community Safety fencing scheme.

### 3.2 Priority 2 – Rent and Benefits

3.2.1 Please see attached draft dashboard.

3.2.2 Rent and Arrears collection stands at 96.31% as at June 2015. This compares to 97.71% in June 2014. It represents a shortfall of £2.3m against potential rental income. Whilst collection rates are tracking below last year, performance is holding steady with small incremental improvements. Interestingly some external benchmarking (RIEN) shows other local authorities and housing associations also tracking below last year. Following a challenge event held with Senior Leadership and Housing Managers on 21<sup>st</sup> July, recovery actions have been identified and will be implemented to improve the position. Performance will be closely monitored over the coming weeks.

3.2.3 A count of all under occupation cases stands at 5,100 with 54% of cases in arrears. These cases owe a total of £835,591. (1,432 are “New Debt cases” i.e. those that have incurred arrears since under occupation was introduced – and these cases owe £266,686.) The trend continues as one of decreasing numbers of cases but with increasing arrears.

3.2.4 A Welfare Reform Action Plan is also tabled on the agenda for this meeting. Further work on the dashboard will bring in the monitoring of the full range of Welfare Reforms, including Universal Credit. It is intended to also include an analysis of transactions / payment methods in future dashboards.

### 3.3 Priority 3 – Housing People

This dashboard is still in development – please see below for latest performance data and commentary.

#### 3.3.1 Homeless Preventions:

A homeless prevention is defined as being when the Council helps a person, who is likely to lose their accommodation, to stay in their existing home or to make a planned move to alternative suitable housing. Examples of preventative work include mediation to help a young person reconcile with their parents, negotiating for a person to stay with family or friends, installing security measures (Sanctuary scheme) to help a person suffering violence/harassment to stay ‘safely’ in their own homes and facilitating a private rented letting by paying a returnable bond.

The 556 homeless preventions in May 2015 represent a 75% prevention rate out of the 738 cases closed by Leeds Housing Options.

At their last meeting, the Board requested further information on homeless outcomes to be provided in future reports. Of the 182 non-prevention cases in May (all of whom had a homeless assessment), outcomes were as follows:

- 50 statutory homeless cases (full housing duty accepted and Band A award);
- 120 homeless but not priority need (no statutory housing duty and Band B award);
- 9 intentionally homeless cases (no full statutory duty and Band B award unless non qualifying for council housing on grounds of behaviour); and
- 3 not eligible cases (no housing duty and non-qualifying for council housing as no recourse to public funds).

#### Temporary Accommodation:

The numbers of people in temporary accommodation are at the lowest level since the late 1980's due largely to our effective homeless prevention strategies. At May 2015, 87 households were placed in temporary accommodation (excluding placements in St. George's Crypt).

#### 3.3.2 Gross average re-let days:

	April	May	June
2014	31.63	28.96	28.73
2015	34.51	35.85	34.70

Citywide re-let days currently stand at 34.70 (June 2015), which is a small though welcome improvement on the previous month. The corresponding figure for June 2014 stood at 28.73 days. We have seen a reduction on the over 30 and over 70 day voids which in turn impact the average re-let time. The time in works for June 15 is at 19.58 days. We are projecting to see an improvement in July's time in work figures and overall average re-let time.

#### 3.3.3 Number of void lettable properties:

			Apr-14	May-14	June-14
			422	365	351
Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	June-15
614	619	544	548	532	520

The number of lettable void properties at the end of June 2015 stands at 520, a reduction from April and May. This is 0.92% of stock. The difference in void numbers between this year and last is predominantly seen in the South area, a result of additional new build and refurbished properties coming on stream, but much work is being done here and properties are being let at a faster rate as can be seen from the overall decreasing trend. As of week 12 there were 128 voids that were PFI/ New Build / buy backs across the East/ South and West area.

#### 3.3.4 Adaptations:

The performance measure for major adaptations is % completed within target timescale i.e. date of application to date of practical completion involving assessment of a disabled person's needs, drawing up an adaptations scheme and delivering the works – either in-house or through an approved contractor. A report on Adaptations Service developments, spending and performance are covered elsewhere on the HAB agenda.

3.3.5 In the fully developed dashboard, we will look to show the pathway into council housing, including details of housing applications, bids and reasons for refusal of offers with a view to highlighting particular areas where supply and demand are not matching up. We also want to reflect the work being done to improve sustainability of tenancies and demonstrate how we are responding to the differing and changing needs of tenants, including provision of adaptations, impact of community lettings policies etc. Some of this is existing information we can include, and some will require development. This particular dashboard is one that will develop over time.

#### 3.4 Priority 4 – Repairs



- 3.4.1 Please see attached draft dashboard
- 3.4.2 At the end of June 2015, Repairs completed right first time stands at 88.78% against a target of 90% (Construction Services – 91.37% and Mears – 87.81%). This is a slight improvement on May performance. Ongoing work is taking place to identify failures and make improvements.
- 3.4.3 Citywide performance for Repairs completed within target stands at 88.04% at June 2015 which is below target for this indicator. South and West performance in both contract areas is relatively strong against a challenging target of 99%, but is below target. Performance in the ENE area is well below target and has been for several months. Mobilisation of the new managed stores has impacted upon performance recently and the data input issues due to the mobilisation of the mobile software has served to further complicate the picture. Resources will continue to be targeted to analyse performance in order to identify and address issues and improve reporting.
- 3.4.4 Repairs Satisfaction information is now being captured through the Contact Centre datasets, but the first month's data is still in test mode and is not suitable for full reporting. Officers are confident that the data will be useable soon and therefore will be included in the next round of reporting.

### 3.5 Priority 5 – Capital Programme Effectiveness

This dashboard is still in development – please see below for available data and commentary.

- 3.5.1 Please refer to the separate report of the Head of Finance Environments and Housing from which the following excerpt is taken:

“Housing Leeds actual spend and commitments at period 4 is £21.3m equating to 28% of the revised available resources at period 4. The 2015/16 programme has been adjusted down from £90.9m to a more deliverable level on what can realistically be achieved within the year, circa £75m.”

- 3.5.2 In terms of reporting more detailed information on work delivered and the benefits of this investment for tenants, the dashboard will aim to show capital work that has been delivered to Council homes across the city in relation to the need identified in the Capital Programme Business Plan. This plan divides up the work into several themes, including for example Statutory and Essential investment, and the dashboard will match work delivered to identified need and give updates as to how effective the Programme is in meeting that need.

### 3.6 Priority 6 – Knowing Our Tenants

This dashboard is still in development – please see below for latest performance data and commentary.

- 3.6.1 % of Annual Home Visits completed:  
As of June 2015, 33.51% visits have been completed. The Q1 position for 2014-15 (compared to June 2014) was 21.80%.

The target of 100% of visits completed is an annual one, and we do look to reach milestones at quarterly points, so the service is currently exceeding the milestone target for June 2015.

### 3.6.2 AHV Outcomes:

For the period April to June 2015, AHV outcomes included 1,130 tenants with outstanding repairs; 65 tenants requiring help with budgeting and 7 referrals for tenancy fraud investigations.

### 3.6.3 Disrepair:

The number of disrepair cases that has been received over the last 10 years has increased year on year with a disproportionate increase over the last two years. Of the current case load 63% are currently with contractors for repair work, 14% are with Legal and 23% undergoing joint assessment.

In order to significantly reduce the volume of both current and future cases, a full review of our internal resources, legal and technical teams as well as contractor resources, is currently ongoing. All Internal resources will be transferred into a single multi-disciplinary team and co-located with our contractor resource to provide a single organisational team that is directly managed within Property and Contracts.

3.6.4 Further measures are being considered for inclusion in this dashboard to create a clearer picture of levels of tenant satisfaction, support needs and tenancy conditions.

## 4 Apprenticeships

Outlined below is a reflection of the work being done to provide apprenticeship and other training opportunities through our Construction Service and new house building and housing regeneration projects:

### 4.1 Construction Services

A recruitment process was held in July/ August 2014 where 18 QCFs (Qualification and Credit Framework) were appointed and 5 of the previous year's QCF were then interviewed and offered a permanent 3 year trade specific apprenticeship.

The program consisted of the selected QCFs gaining experiencing both on site and at college in a variety of trades every week for duration of 14 months (37 hours per week).

Out of the above 17 QCF (one resigned), the remaining were offered interviews in July 2015 and 6 were selected to progress onto a permanent 3 year trade specific apprenticeship (2 in Plumbing, 2 in Joinery, 1 in Plastering and 1 in Electrical).

In August / September, Construction Services are intending to recruit another 18 QCF's.

### 4.2 Mears

In 2014, Mears set on 18 permanent apprentices.

### 4.3 Little London, Beeston Hill and Holbeck PFI Scheme

As at July 2015 a total of 57 apprentices have been on site, as well as 7 trainees who are following a formal training programme. A total of 55 people have also been on full or part-time work experience placements and a range of other educational opportunities have been offered.

### 4.4 Council Housing Programme

East Park Road – the contractor (Houlton's) has committed to provide a minimum of 37 apprenticeship weeks during the construction. This will be spread across a number of disciplines and can be via a number of existing apprenticeships. In addition to this, the contractor has been working with LCC Employment and Skills and will be taking on 4 trainee work placements from the Council's Head Start work experience programme.

Extra Care at Yeadon - the contractor (Henry Boot Construction) has committed to provide a minimum of 48 apprenticeship weeks during the construction. In addition to this, to date the contractor has had 3 work experience students working with them and have carried out 3 workshop events at schools or colleges.

Squinting Cat - the contractor (Houlton's) has committed to provide a minimum of 48 apprenticeship weeks during the construction.

Partnership Procurement (Broadlea Street, Garnets and Whinmoor) – Employment and Skills outputs are being calculated. It is expected that 3 apprentices will be delivered as a result.

## **5 Corporate Considerations**

### **5.1 Consultation and Engagement**

5.1.1 This is an information report and as such does not need to be consulted on with the public. However all performance information is published on the council's website and is available to the public.

### **5.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

5.2.1 This is an information report and not a decision so it is not necessary to conduct an equality impact assessment. However, some of the data provided will link to wider issues of equality and diversity and cohesion and integration, and there may be occasions when the Board will want to look more closely at these issues, and may request further information.

### **5.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

5.3.1 This report provides an update on progress in delivering the council's Housing priorities in line with the council's performance management framework.

### **5.4 Resources and value for money**

5.4.1 There are no specific resource implications from this report, although some performance indicators relate to financial and other value for money aspects.

## **5.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

5.5.1 All performance information is publicly available and is published on the council website. This report is an information update providing the Board with a summary of performance for the strategic priorities within its remit and as such is not subject to call in.

## **5.6 Risk Management**

5.6.1 There is a comprehensive risk management process in the Council to monitor and manage key risks. This links closely with performance management, and any performance issues that are considered to be a significant risk can be escalated through the risk management process to ensure that mitigating actions are taken.

## **6 Conclusions**

This report provides a summary of the latest available performance against the six Housing Leeds priorities, and the continued work being done to develop dashboards for each priority to provide a more comprehensive picture of performance and useful contextual data to consider alongside service performance information.

## **7 Recommendations**

7.1 The Board is recommended to:

- Note the most recent performance information relating to the six Housing Leeds priorities.
- Note the progress being made to develop dashboards for each of the six Housing Leeds priorities which will be reported to future Board meetings.
- Note the details of apprenticeships at section 4 of the report.

## **8 Appendices**

8.1 Priority 1 Dashboard – Environmental Improvement

Priority 2 Dashboard – Rents and Benefits

Priority 4 Dashboard – Repairs

# Priority 1: Environmental Improvement

Funding from  
Housing Advisory Panels

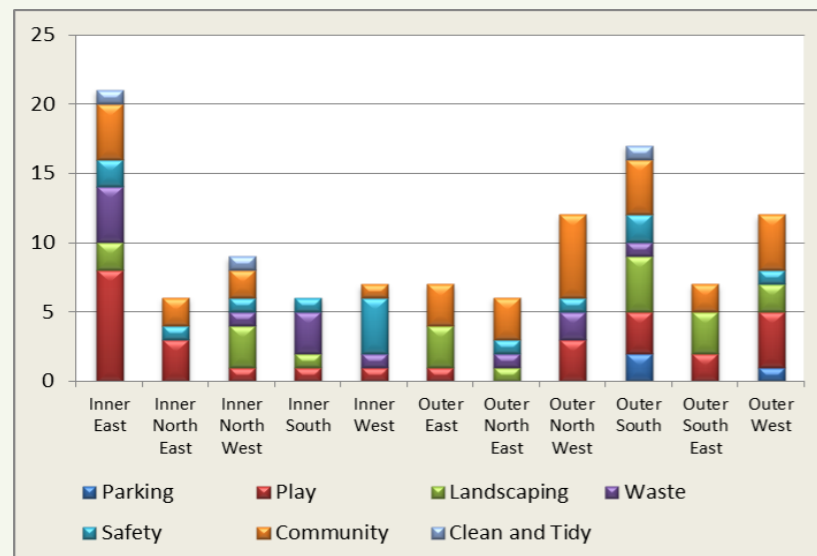
Approved  
applications: 110

Approved funding:  
£400,081

City	Number of schemes approved.	Amount of funding agreed by HAPs
Parking	3	£8,888.52
Play	27	£81,709.44
Landscaping	19	£56,286.16
Waste	13	£82,813.07
Safety	14	£51,033.60
Community	31	£107,285.26
Clean and Tidy	3	£12,065.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>£400,081.13</b>

City

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Area

Funding from Environmental  
Improvement Programme

Delivered schemes  
3

Total funding  
£3,000,000

## All Schemes proposed and with EIP funding.

HAP	Landscapes		Parking		Play		Waste		Community Safety		All Project Types	
	No. Projects	£	No. Projects	£	No. Projects	£	No. Projects	£	No. Projects	£	No. Projects	£
IE	3	£130,000					1	£50,000	3	£91,000	4	£180,000
INE	2	£20,000	2	£81,000			1	£90,000	2	£256,000	5	£110,000
INW			1	£60,000			3	£200,014	1	£18,000	4	£200,014
IS	3	£160,000			2	£125,000	3	£316,000	3	£191,175	8	£601,000
IW			3	£118,000			1	£3,500	1	£45,000	4	£3,500
OE			1	£80,000					1	£20,000	1	£0
ONE			4	£115,000							4	£0
ONW	2	£35,000	2	£87,440	1	£110,000	1	£10,000	2	£140,000	6	£155,000
OS			4	£157,000	1	£20,000			5	£208,050	5	£20,000
OSE	2	£65,000	1	£65,000	1	£140,000			5	£173,445	4	£205,000
OW			4	£101,000			10	£149,921			14	£149,921
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>£410,000</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>£864,440</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>£395,000</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>£819,435</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>£1,142,670</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>£2,488,875</b>

Design/Planning and Management

£234,000

Contingency

£277,125

## Schemes progress.

Landscapes	Two schemes to be delivered before November. Other work to commence Spring/Summer 16
Parking	Five sites assessed of which three now have draft plans. Delivery of one scheme late Sept.
Play	One scheme completed and a second to be delivered Sep/Oct.
Waste	One scheme completed. Plans to be drafted for seven further schemes following site visits.
CS	One fence scheme completed. All other fence projects had site visits and specifications have been worked up. Arrangements for CCTV and door replacement schemes are being progressed.

Officer time has gone into ensuring that schemes have relevant and strong project briefs and working in conjunction with colleagues across departments to ensure effective scheduling of projects for the duration of the programme.

## Outcomes delivered from the funding

**Atlanta Street Community Safety Scheme (IW):** scheme installed safety measures in and around a Community Room. Outcome is that residents now feel safer and reassured to use the room and thus reduce isolation.

**Wharfedale Court - Benches and Gardening Equipment (ONW):** scheme installed 3 new benches and provided gardening equipment. Outcomes are that residents have pleasant space to sit and socialise, they are able to grow their own fruit and vegetables, thus expanding the gardening club, and it gives opportunity to engage with local school children.

**DoorStep Green (OS):** Improvements to steps that were dangerous and unsafe. Outcomes are that visually the steps are greatly improved and tenants and residents are happy to use them as they are safe.

**Rosebank Rangers Project (INW):** this aims to engage children and local community in the Rosebank green space, providing 12 2hr sessions and monthly community days. Outcomes - weekly sessions will involve local primary school children, and improve their access to outdoor activities in local green space, encourage social cohesion, improve health.

**Richmond Hill Community Centre Fencing (IE):** scheme was to put up fencing to make a safer and better multi-purpose space for use by all centre users, and give children a safe area to play in. Outcome is that community centre has a safe outdoor space, this is of particular benefit to playgroup children who use the centre regularly.

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# Draft Version: Priority 2, Rents and Benefits, Q1 - June

## How well are people paying rent?

Rent arrears= 2.83% of rent due.

Rent and arrears collection = 96.31%

### Arrears: City

Rent & Arrears Carried Forward £s (Cumulative)

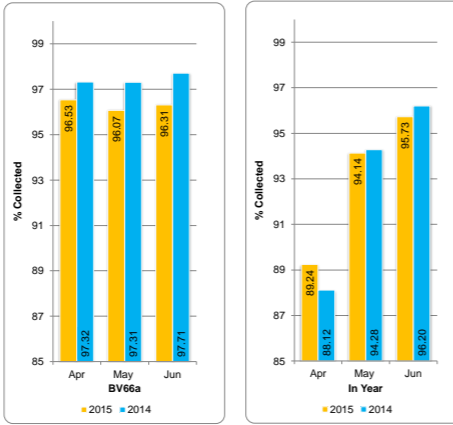
	Apr	May	Jun
Rent Due	£17.01M	£38.29M	£55.3M
Collected	£16.42M	£36.77M	£53.26M
<b>Shortfall</b>	<b>£.59M</b>	<b>£1.52M</b>	<b>£2.04M</b>

### This Years Rent £s

	Apr	May	Jun
Rent Due	£16.6M	£37.36M	£53.97M
Collected	£14.81M	£35.17M	£51.66M
<b>Shortfall</b>	<b>£1.79M</b>	<b>£2.19M</b>	<b>£2.3M</b>

### Rent Collection: City

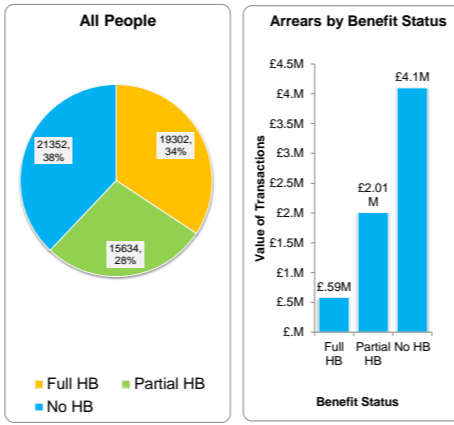
Rent & Arrears %      This Years Rent %



## What welfare do people receive?

62% of Tenants receive full or part housing benefit

### Housing Benefit: City



## How do people pay?

### Arrears: Region

Rent & Arrears Carried Forward £s (Cumulative)

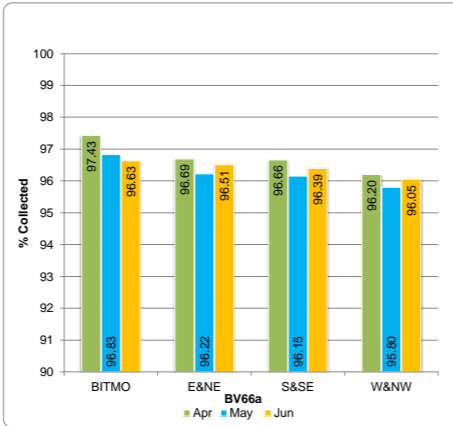
	BITMO	E&NE	S&SE	W&NW
Rent Due	£1.9M	£16.77M	£16.25M	£20.38M
Collected	£1.84M	£16.19M	£15.66M	£19.57M
<b>Shortfall</b>	<b>£64.2K</b>	<b>£585.1K</b>	<b>£585.3K</b>	<b>£.8M</b>

Collection of This Years Rent Only (in year rent)

	BITMO	E&NE	S&SE	W&NW
Rent Due	£1.85M	£16.42M	£15.8M	£19.89M
Collected	£1.79M	£15.7M	£15.22M	£18.95M
<b>Shortfall</b>	<b>£66.9K</b>	<b>£721.3K</b>	<b>£575.7K</b>	<b>£.94M</b>

### Rent Collection: Region

Rent & Arrears %



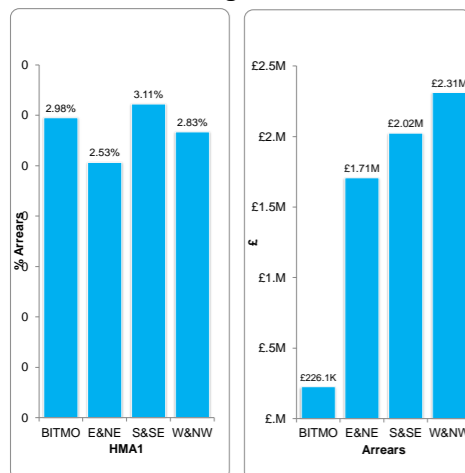
### Welfare Reform

**Universal Credit** - Due to be phased in from Feb 2016. New claims on jobseekers will be first group to receive the new Benefit.

**Benefit Cap** - Waiting for new changes to policy to be implemented

**Young Tenants on Benefit** - Waiting for new changes to policy to be implemented

### Arrears Levels: Region



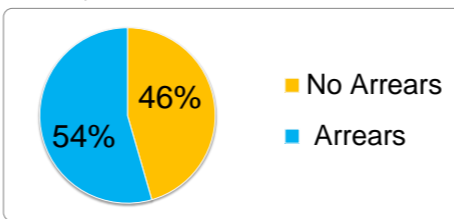
### Satisfaction Results

Status: on hold, with income management team

### Under Occupation

Region	All Cases	All £s owed	New Debt Cases*	New Debt £ owed**
CITY	5100	£ 835,591	1432	£ 266,686
BITMO	138	£ 21,474	45	£ 7,744
E&NE	1721	£ 235,233	522	£ 93,421
S&SE	1411	£ 280,478	380	£ 80,860
W&NW	1830	£ 298,406	485	£ 84,660

\* Count of cases which have incurred arrears since under occupation was introduced in April 2013  
 \*\* Debt of tenancies that had clear accounts when under occupation was introduced in April 2013



### Key issues

Performance on rent collection for the quarter was disappointing. Analysis made by the Rent Income Excellence Network (REIN) shows a drop in performance from all local authorities surveyed.

However Senior Leadership held a challenge event with Housing Managers to implement actions to recover the position.

Performance will be closely monitored over the quarter and improvements are expected end of September

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# Priority 4 - Repairs *DRAFT*

## Repair First Time

## Repair First Time Satisfaction

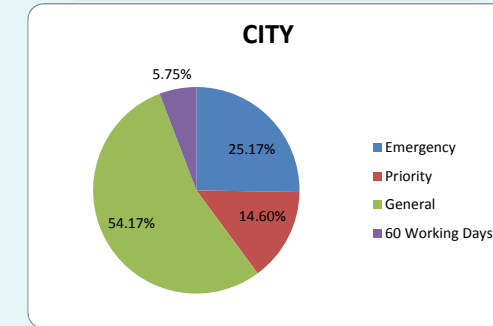
## Completed within Target

## Priority Breakdown - Responsive Repairs

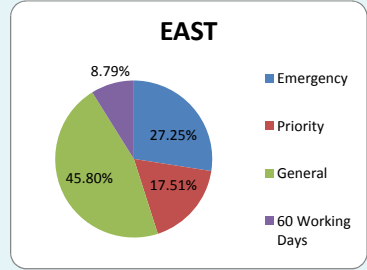
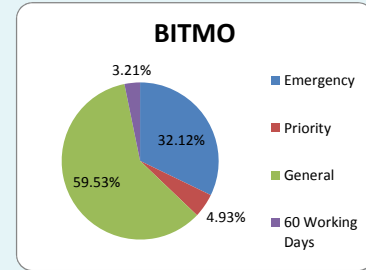
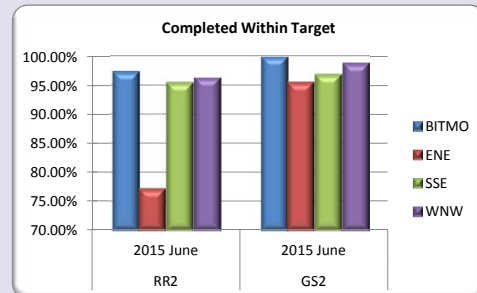
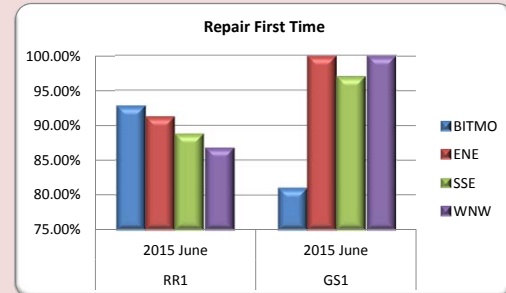
### City



Satisfaction data will be included in future dashboards. Data is still in test phase.

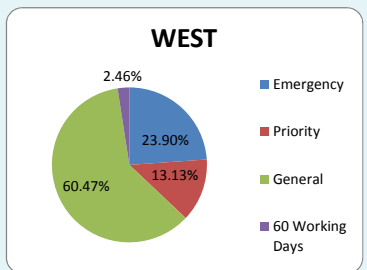
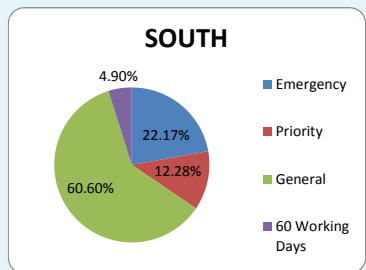


### Area

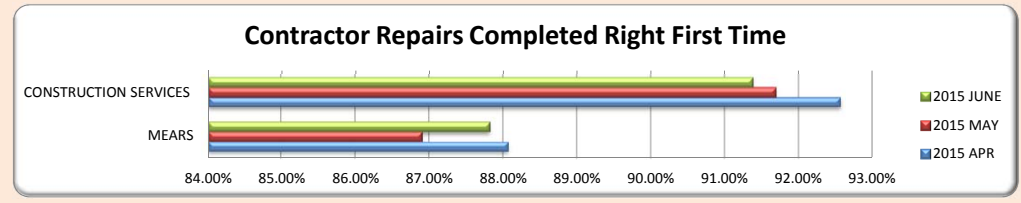


RR1 - Repairs Right First Time				
Area	Target	May-15	Jun-15	
BITMO	90.00%	93.02%	92.84%	
CITY (inc BITM)	90.00%	88.42%	88.78%	
ENE	90.00%	91.50%	91.28%	
SSE	90.00%	87.61%	88.85%	
WNW	90.00%	86.69%	86.86%	
GS1 - Gas Repairs Right First Time				
Area	Target	May-15	Jun-15	
BITMO	87.00%	92.50%	81.08%	
CITY (inc BITM)	87.00%	99.20%	98.37%	
ENE	87.00%	99.78%	100.00%	
SSE	87.00%	98.93%	97.03%	
WNW	87.00%	99.68%	100.00%	

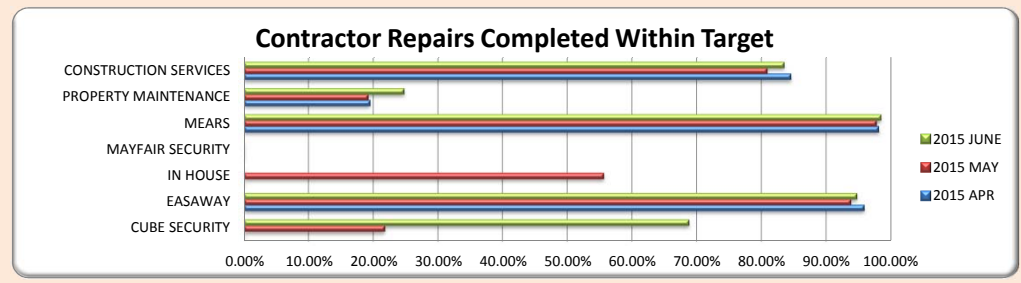
RR2 - Repairs Completed Within Target				
Area	Target	May-15	Jun-15	
BITMO	99.00%	97.38%	97.43%	
CITY (inc BITMO)	99.00%	86.29%	88.04%	
ENE	99.00%	74.80%	77.33%	
SSE	99.00%	95.11%	95.56%	
WNW	99.00%	99.22%	96.39%	
GS2 - Gas Repairs Completed Within Target				
Area	Target	May-15	Jun-15	
BITMO	98.00%	100.00%	100.00%	
CITY (inc BITMO)	98.00%	97.07%	97.39%	
ENE	98.00%	92.23%	95.59%	
SSE	98.00%	99.22%	96.97%	
WNW	98.00%	98.71%	98.88%	



### Contractor



Contractor	June 15	Target	No of Jobs	No Met
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES	90.00%	90.00%	3290	3006
MEARS	90.00%	90.00%	8746	7680



Contractor	June 15	Target	No of Jobs	No Met
CUBE SECURITY	99.00%	99.00%	32	22
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES	99.00%	99.00%	6458	5390
EASAWAY	99.00%	99.00%	566	536
IN HOUSE	99.00%	99.00%	0	0
MAYFAIR SECURITY	99.00%	99.00%	7	0
MEARS	99.00%	99.00%	9201	9055
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	99.00%	99.00%	1081	267

**Comments:**

**RR1 - Repair First Time**  
Citywide performance against this indicator is strong at 88.78% against a target of 90%. A slight improvement on May's performance. Ongoing work is taking place to identify failures and make improvements.

**Repair First Time Satisfaction**  
Satisfaction will be measured from August once the new system of collection has been tested.

**RR2 -Completed within Target**  
Citywide performance is below target for this indicator. South and West performance in both contract areas is relatively strong against a challenging target of 99%, but is below target. Performance in the ENE area is well below target. Data has declined recently as a result of issues stemming from manual inputting of data whilst the new mobile software has been rolled out. Mobilisation of the new managed stores has also impacted on performance. Resources will continue to be targeted to analyse performance in order to identify and address issues and improve reporting.

**Priority Breakdown**  
Work is being undertaken to reduce the number of emergencies throughout the City.

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Report author – Simon Swift  
Tel: 0113 3782284

**Report of Liz Cook Chief Officer Housing Management**

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**Subject: Key Welfare Changes and Preparations for Universal Credit.**

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

**Summary of main issues**

This briefing has been produced to provide the Housing Advisory Board with an overview of the main Welfare Changes which impact on the tenants of Housing Leeds. It provides information on actions taken by Housing Leeds to minimise the impact of Welfare Change and details preparations for the implementation of Universal Credit which will be introduced on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 in Leeds.

**Recommendations**

That the Housing Advisory Board:

Note the contents of the report and the support provided tenants to respond to the challenges of Welfare Reform and the preparations for the introduction of Universal Credit.

**1 Purpose of this report**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise the Board on the Key Welfare Changes, implications from the recent Budget and sets out the preparations for Universal Credit.

**2 Background information**

2.1 In April 2013 the Government commenced a series of Welfare Reforms. These include Under Occupation, the Benefit Cap and Universal Credit. These reforms have a significant impact on some of our tenants and the ability to pay their rent. Welfare Reform is a high risk to the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The risk is regularly monitored and reviewed in the Corporate Risk Register.

2.2 Housing Leeds has provided a high level of support to tenants to help them both prepare for and support them through the Welfare Reform process. Universal Credit is the most significant of all the reforms and it is essential that robust preparations are in place to minimise the potential impact on rent collection.

### **3 Main issues**

#### **3.1 Under Occupation**

3.2 Under Occupation was introduced in Leeds in April 2013. Initially in excess of 7000 council tenants were affected who had to pay an Under Occupation Charge if they were residing in a property deemed larger than their household needs. Tenants who were under occupying saw a reduction in their Housing Benefit of 14% if they were under occupying by one bedroom and 25% if they have 2 or more bedrooms than they require.

3.3 There are currently around 5000 tenants still affected by Under Occupation (UO) and the weekly loss in Housing Benefit for this group is approx. £62,000. The total rent arrears due to under Occupancy are £840,000.

3.4 There continue to be around 300 new cases of Under Occupancy each month. A similar number are no longer affected due to changes in their household make up. Therefore the total number of cases remains fairly static.

#### **3.5 Support Activity**

3.6 The arrears process was revised to ensure that tenants affected by UO were provided with a high level of support to enable them to resolve their situation and reduce the need for Court Action to be taken against this group.

3.7 Housing Officers carry out a home visit and offer a range of support measures including budgeting, assistance with downsizing, undertaking a Mutual Exchange etc. This high level of support has meant minimal numbers of UO cases have been taken through the Court Process.

3.8 The new Enhanced Income Management Service Offer will be provided to tenants affected by UO who are struggling to pay their rent and are approaching the level of arrears where Court Action would be taken.

The new service will focus on delivering a number of outcomes including:

- Improve tenants budgeting skills
- Reduce levels of personal debt and increase disposable income.
- Assist customers in accessing affordable credit, thereby avoiding high cost and illegal money lenders.
- Increase activity by tenants to improve their employment prospects.
- Reduce the number of tenancy terminations by tenants affected by Welfare Change.

#### **3.9 Benefit Cap**

3.10 The Benefit Cap was introduced in Leeds in September 2013 and restricted the amount of benefit a family could receive to £26K per year. There are currently 86 council tenants affected by the Benefit Cap in Leeds.

- 3.11 The majority of these cases have seen a reduction in their Housing Benefit. The average weekly reduction in Housing Benefit awards for this group amounts to £42.00 per household.
- 3.12 **Support Activity**
- 3.13 All tenants affected by the Benefit Cap have been visited by a Housing Officer (Benefits) to support them with budgeting and applying for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) where applicable.
- 3.14 To date minimal cases have been taken to Court for rent arrears and prior to any Benefit Cap cases being taken to Court they are referred to Housing Options for further intervention and support.
- 3.15 The new Enhanced Income Management Service will be provided to tenants affected by the Benefit Cap. The team will be arranging to visit this group of tenants to review their circumstances and see what additional support may be offered to them.
- 3.16 **Universal Credit**
- 3.17 Universal Credit (UC) is the new Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) benefit which replaces a range of existing benefits for those of working age:
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance
  - Income based Employment and Support Allowance
  - Income Support
  - Working Tax Credit
  - Child Tax Credit
  - Housing Benefit
- 3.18 The key features of Universal Credit are:
- All claims are made on-line. The current Universal Credit system requires customers to complete an online claim in one sitting as there is no option to save a claim and come back to it. This will change when the fully functional Digital Service is rolled out – this is expected later in 2016;
  - There is an in-built delay of 5-6 weeks for the first payment of Universal Credit. All first-time claimants for Universal Credit, including customers migrating from another benefit to Universal Credit, will have to wait 5-6 weeks before receiving their first payment. DWP will provide, on request and where appropriate, short-term benefit advances to help customers during this time but these have to be repaid from future UC payments.
  - Payments are normally made monthly in arrears and to only one person in the household. This is a change from the current benefit system which will often see child-related benefits paid to the mother even if other payments go to partner. Under Universal Credit, the whole payment will normally go to just one person in the household.
  - The housing costs element of Universal Credit is normally paid directly to the tenant. Landlords can apply for 'alternative payment arrangements' (APAs) where there are rent

arrears and APAs will be considered where there are issues relating to drug and alcohol issues and other instances.

3.19 It is estimated that approximately 24000 tenants will be affected and Housing Leeds will have to collect an additional £73.5M in rent which is currently paid direct through Housing Benefit. A detailed potential impact on arrears is being worked up in conjunction with colleagues at the DWP and the Welfare and Benefits Service.

### 3.20 **Universal Credit Action Plan**

3.21 Welfare Reform and in particular UC is a high risk to the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The risk is regularly monitored and reviewed in the Corporate Risk Register and actions are taken to minimise the impact of Welfare Change.

3.22 Housing Leeds must ensure that it makes adequate provision to prepare itself and our tenants for the introduction of UC. The significant change for the Council is that tenants will receive their Housing Allowance (currently Housing Benefit) themselves and have to pay this to the council. Currently Housing Benefit is paid direct to the tenants rent account.

3.23 It has just been confirmed that UC will be introduced in Leeds on the 1st of February 2016. This will only be for new single jobseekers initially and it is expected to affect around 50 to 80 tenants per month. There are no more details yet available about how and when the transition and migration process will start.

3.24 Housing Leeds in partnership with other Council departments and external partners are making preparations for the introduction of UC. The Welfare Reform Strategy Board is the strategic corporate group that coordinates the plans for Universal Credit. Housing Leeds is a key partner in this group.

3.25 Within Housing Leeds the Welfare Reform Operational Group is planning and coordinating the preparations for the organisation and our tenants.

3.26 A detailed UC action plan has been produced and is attached for information.

### 3.27 **Key Actions**

#### 3.28 Completed Actions

- A UC action plan has been developed to organise the preparations for Housing Leeds and its tenants.
- The Annual Home Visit Form has been updated to include key questions relating to preparations for Universal Credit.
- Financial Inclusion Awareness briefings have been delivered to all Housing Officers during May and June 2015.
- In conjunction with the Welfare and Benefits Service one Communication Strategy is being produced for staff and customers across Leeds City Council to ensure consistent and timely messages are sent out.
- The Housing Leeds Autumn Tenants newsletter will include an article on Universal Credit.

- Universal Credit training has been delivered in June to key officers leading on the preparations.
- Improvements to the Direct Debit system have been requested so staff will be able to set them up on line for any day of the month.
- The Leeds City Credit Union Money Advice and Budgeting Service has been agreed up to 2018 to provide support to tenants requiring banking and budgeting advice.

### 3.29 **Future Actions**

- A team of Housing Officers will be recruited to provide additional support via an Enhanced Income Management Service Offer to tenants affected by Welfare Change. The recruitment will be undertaken during August/September 2015.
- The Universal Credit action plan will be reviewed and updated on a monthly basis as further learning outcomes from the pilots emerge and regulations are revised.
- Visits are to be undertaken to authorities who have gone live on UC to seek out best practice.
- SMT briefing on UC arranged for 24th August and front line staff briefings to commence September 2015.
- Undertake further promotions on the take up of Direct Debit with a focus on payments in advance.

### 3.30 **Budget 2015**

3.31 A number of changes were announced in the July Budget which will impact on our tenant's incomes and their ability to be able to pay their rent. The key changes are detailed below and at the Appendix 2 to this report.

### 3.32 **Benefit Cap**

3.33 It was announced that the Benefit Cap will be further reduced to £20K per year for families living outside London. No details of when this is to be implemented have yet been announced but it is expected to be phased in during 2016. The new cap will mean that households with 3 children or more will see a reduction in their Housing Benefit.

### 3.34 **Young People aged 18 – 21**

3.35 Young People aged 18 - 21 years old will no longer automatically be able to qualify for Housing Benefit. No implementation date for this has been announced, further details will be provided when available. It is envisaged some young people will be able to claim i.e. if they have children, are vulnerable or live in supported accommodation.

3.36 If Housing Benefit for all under 22s in Leeds was stopped, 807 tenants would have to start paying full rent. Based on an average rent of £75 this equates to a reduction in Housing Benefits of approx. £60,000 per week. Annually this means an extra £3.1M would need to be collected.

3.37 When the implementation date of this is known and the revised benefit guidelines have been produced contact will be made with tenants who will be affected and visited/interviewed to establish whether they are still able to claim within the new rules.

3.38 The Enhanced Income Management Service Offer with the additional levels of support will be offered to this group.

### 3.39 **Freeze working age benefits.**

3.40 From April 2016 the government is proposing to freeze the majority of working age benefits, Tax Credits and Local Housing Allowance rates for 4 years. In other words many claimants of these benefits will not see an increase in the amount of benefits they receive due to the cost of living until April 2020. This will further increase financial hardship for tenants and impact on their ability to pay their rent.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.2 Housing is actively participating and engaged in the Welfare Reform Board for the City and the preparations for dealing with the Welfare Reforms are fully supported by the Welfare Reform Board and the Citizens@ Leeds Programme Board.

4.3 Partner agencies have been engaged throughout the delivery of Welfare Reform project work and regular engagement has taken place to review the activity including Welfare Reform Board, Citizens@ Leeds Programme Board, Employment and Skills Board and Local Debt Forums.

## **5 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

5.1 Delivery of responses to Welfare Reform has provided personal support to tenants to meet individual needs.

5.2 An EIA impact assessment has not been included as this report is for information purposes only.

## **6 Council Policies and City Priorities**

6.1 The Welfare Reform project work contributes to the Council's strategic objectives of supporting communities and tackling poverty.

6.2 It supports delivery of the Housing Priority Strategic Indicator Rent and Benefits by maximising tenants' income and increasing rent collection.

6.3 The work supports the Council and its tenants in preparing for the introduction of Universal Credit which is the most significant change in Welfare Reform to date.

6.4 Housing will continue to foster excellent relationships that have been developed with Leeds City Councils Welfare and Benefits, Employment and Skills, Public Health and external partners such as Ebor Gardens Advice Centre, GIPSIL, Voluntary Advice Leeds, Pinnacle People, Money Buddies, Leeds City Credit Union and StepChange.

## **7 Resources and Value for Money**

7.5 The Enhanced Income Management Service to tenants will be a flexible resource where recruitment will take place in line with demand, and will include the new monthly Under Occupation caseload of approx. 300 cases, 100 affected by the Benefit cap and initially 513 tenants under occupying owing over £500. This is a critical group whose arrears are increasing and will be approaching possession proceedings over the next 12 months.



7.6 The number of cases taken to court for rent arrears should reduce, avoiding the court costs associated with each claim which is currently £250 and a reinvestment of staff time and associated resources. Any evictions the team can prevent will result in approx. savings to the council of £6.5K per eviction.

7.1 Due to the significant amount of additional rent to be collected it is vital that adequate resources are put in place to support tenants with the transition to Universal Credit. This will help to support tenants to increase their ability to meet rental obligations and maximise rent collection.

## **8 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

8.1 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.

8.2 This report is not eligible for call in.

## **9 Risk Management**

9.1 Welfare Reform may have an adverse impact on the Council's financial position, undermining services and investment as well as creating financial hardship. As such it has been deemed a High Risk to the council and this risk is regularly monitored and reviewed in the Corporate Risk Register.

9.2 The recommendations within this report seeks to minimise the risk by supporting tenants to move to a better financial position and therefore more able to pay their rental charge.

## **10 Conclusions**

10.1 This document provides an overview of the key Welfare Changes affecting the tenants of Housing Leeds. It is evident that Welfare Reform is having a direct impact on tenants and their ability to pay their rent. The changes announced in the recent Budget will further affect tenants, in particular those affected by the Benefit Cap.

10.2 Universal Credit represents the biggest change of all the reforms and goes live in Leeds in February 2016. It is critical that Housing Leeds prepares itself and tenants for this major change. Preparations are underway to ensure this happens and further updates on progress can be provided as required.

10.3 Housing Management has been working successfully in partnership with other directorates, third sector organisations and will continue to do so.

10.4 Housing Management is developing a 5 year strategy to work through the implementation of UC to evaluate and track the impacts.

10.5 The new Enhanced Income Service Offer would continue to utilise those effective partnerships to support tenants and maximise rent collection.

## **11 Recommendations**

11.1 That the Housing Advisory Board note the contents of the report and support the additional resources allocated to support tenants respond to the challenges of welfare reform and Universal Credit.

## **12 Appendix**

12.1 Chancellor of the Exchequer's 2015 Budget Statement – implications for Housing Leeds

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Required Action	Specific Actions	Action Owner	Links to specific groups	Comment / Progress
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**WELFARE REFORMS : UNIVERSAL CREDIT - HOUSING LEEDS ACTION PLAN 2015-2016**  
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**UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

**Outcome 1**

**Stakeholders understand Universal Credit and what it means for them.**

*Universal Credit aims to simplify the benefit system and ensure that work always pays. The rules, regulations, requirements and roll out of Universal Credit will create complexity and potential for confusion and will impact on landlords, employers, the unemployed and disabled. Service providers in public, advice and third sectors need to understand and prepare for the possible implications of Universal Credit.*

1. Raise awareness with claimants about Universal Credit, what it means for them and how to claim Universal Credit.	Link with Jobcentre Plus to create general awareness campaign. Joint publicity in Housing Offices, OSC & Job Centres	Housing Managers Group; Comms & Info	WR Strategy Board	On agenda for Welfare Reform Project Teams – June 2015. Corporate Comms Strategy being developed.
	Provide link to LCC online tool to provide indicative UC entitlement figures for callers	Housing Managers Group; Comms & Info	WR Strategy Board	Utilise DWP quick guides, ensure these are shared with staff & customers
	Provide regular communications to customers in Newsletters and on our websites.	Housing Managers Group; Comms & Info	Communications Team	1 page reserved in Autumn Housing Leeds tenants newsletter & to put on website. Article Deadline 4/8/15, & posted 21/9/15
	City wide presentations to Housing Advisory Panels, tenant groups to be undertaken.	Housing Managers, Tenant and Community Involvement	WR Strategy Board & Operational Group	Presentations to be planned Autumn 2015 to key groups.
	Review Annual Home Visit proforma to incorporate info	Housing Managers Group		Complete and orchard action codes also being used after to

Required Action	Specific Actions	Action Owner	Links to specific groups	Comment / Progress
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	<p>regarding UC.</p> <p>Hold further Welfare Reform briefings to staff and partners working with our customers.</p>	Income Champions Group	WR Strategy Board & Operational Group	<p>sign post.Covered within front line staff financial inclusion training delivered May/June 2015</p> <p>To create FAQ and use DWP toolkits/lots of tools already available to use. Briefings to commence September 2015.</p>
2. Undertake an analysis of how Universal Credit will affect our tenants and our business.	<p>Contribute to creation of a "Universal Credit" toolkit" for tenants.</p> <p>Provide link to LCC online tool to provide indicative UC entitlement figures for customers</p> <p>Work with Partners to develop effective liaison arrangements around tenant migration to UC;</p> <p>Potential for UC sessions with customers to discuss the changes, how it will affect them and what is needed to assist them with the changes. Use learning from DHP MSF project for good practice.</p>	<p>Welfare Reform Operational Group</p> <p>Comms &amp; Information</p> <p>Income Champions Group</p> <p>Income Champions Group</p>	<p>WR Strategy Board</p> <p>Welfare Reform Operational Group</p> <p>Welfare Reform Operational Group</p> <p>WR Strategy Board</p>	<p>DWP guides to be provided via websites &amp; leaflet in development</p> <p>Also think how we will publicise – DWP have lots of UC tools/guides/documents/videos we can use</p> <p>City Wide Housing Leeds/BITMO visits to be undertaken. Enhanced Income Management Service to be introduced. To be further incorporated into AHV visits.</p>

Required Action	Specific Actions	Action Owner	Links to specific groups	Comment / Progress
<b>WELFARE REFORMS : UNIVERSAL CREDIT - HOUSING LEEDS ACTION PLAN 2015-2016</b> Version 6: 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2015				
<b>3.</b> Ensure relevant partners and stakeholders understand the potential impacts of Universal Credit and are able to build any necessary actions into their planning	Develop data sets, case studies and interest areas.	Income Improvement / DWP / LRBS	Performance Team;	June 2015 – We now know around 50-80/month LCC tenants make new claims for JSA, so expecting same numbers from 1/2/16.
	Hold further Welfare Reform briefings to partners working with our customers.	Welfare Reform Project Teams	WR Strategy Board Advice Leeds Network	Maximise support to tenants impacted by Welfare changes.
	Review resources/structures within the Housing Leeds/BITMO in light of potential impact of UC.	Income Improvement	Income Champions, Welfare Reform Operational Group	July 2015- additional 16 staff approved and recruitment commenced.
	Ensure sufficient frontline resources dedicated to minimising the impact of UC on our collection figures.	Income Improvement & SLT	Income Champions, Welfare Reform Operational Group	See above. New Team to be introduced to deliver Enhanced Income Service to tenants affected by Welfare Change.
	Review arrears process in order to prepare for introduction of UC.	Income Improvement	Income Champions, Welfare Reform Operational Group	Procedures being reviewed October 2015 in conjunction with UC timetable.
<b>4.</b> Develop Communication Strategy and UC toolkit for tenants following learning outcomes in item 2	Tenants newsletter, social media, staff communications, website, face to face, community groups	Welfare Reform Operational Group	Income Champions Group	Presentations to Housing Advisory Panels, tenants groups, community events during 2015-16 Tenants Newsletter Article Due 21/9/15 Monthly UC Bulletin for Housing Leeds to be produced from August 2015.
		Income Improvement	WR Strategy Board	

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**Outcome 2**

**Customers are prepared and supported to manage their Universal Credit accounts.**

*Customers will move to Universal Credit in Leeds from February 2016 for new claims, and then onwards as part of a natural and managed migration programmes. A transitional protection scheme aims to ensure that no one is worse off in cash terms at the point of transfer. Customers migrating to UC will be required to make an online claim, sign a claimant commitment, have a bank account and take responsibility for paying household costs, including rent and mortgage interest – continued entitlement to UC will depend on customers effectively managing their UC claim.*

<p>1. Link with Local Support Services Framework to include Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Families First Project, to support the most vulnerable.</p>	<p>Link to agreement, put in place Local Delivery Partnership to provide face to face services to most vulnerable.</p> <p>Link with Customer Services UC plan.</p> <p>Ensure all front line staff aware of the scheme and refer customers as appropriate.</p>	<p>Income Improvement WR Strategy Board</p> <p>Income Improvement</p> <p>WR Strategy Board Income Improvement</p>	<p>Customer Strategy Board; Child Poverty Board; Families First; Adult Social Care; Children's Services</p> <p>Local Welfare Reform Project Teams; Housing Leeds Income Champions Group</p>	<p>Use existing Partnerships with Families First Team</p> <p>Developing a Triage process jointly with Customer Services. Meetings taking place city wide and with Customer Services.</p> <p>Financial Inclusion front line staff briefings during May/June 2015. Further ones planned for September/October 2015.</p>
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Required Action	Specific Actions	Action Owner	Links to specific groups	Comment / Progress
<b>WELFARE REFORMS : UNIVERSAL CREDIT - HOUSING LEEDS ACTION PLAN 2015-2016</b> Version 6: 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2015				
<b>2.</b> Increase digital inclusion and improve capacity for tenants to manage accounts independently	Arrange for UC sessions with customers to discuss the changes, how it will affect them and what is needed to assist them with the changes. Use learning to develop good practice.	Income Improvement	Welfare Reform Project Groups Get IT Together WR Strategy Board	Housing Leeds/BITMO – Annual home visits/planned UC visits for those affected. To be part of new Enhanced Income Service Offer whereby referral's for developing IT skills will be made.
	Utilise data mapping to highlight IT black spots in estates. Work with partners to provide IT in these communities.	Income Improvement & Tenant Involvement WR Strategy Board	LCC Policy and Information Unit	Data mapping undertaken 2013 and provided to Local Welfare Reform project teams and Housing Leeds reps. Refreshed data to be provided, request via WR operational Group June 2015
	Link with Get IT Together and GO On projects. HUGO Bus	Income Improvement & Tenant Involvement	Local Welfare Reform Project Teams; Housing Managers Group	Meetings taking place with rep from Get IT Together. Some initial joint projects undertaken. Further courses to be run city wide. IT access points mapped out city wide.
	Review IT provision in offices OSC/HUBS	WR Strategy Board	Customer Services	
	With partners provide basic IT skills courses for customers	Income Improvement & Tenant Involvement	Voluntary Action Leeds	Housing Leeds developed and running basic IT courses for customers. Enhanced Income Service Offer will refer on.
<b>3.</b> Increase bank account use and access to financial services that work with Universal Credit.	Need to work with finance sector and Credit Union to address barriers to accessing bank accounts; into accounts	Income Improvement WR Strategy Board	Finance Inclusion Group, Debt Forums, Advice Leeds Network	Continue to promote services of LCCU and other ethical banking services via poster, website and on arrears card campaign. Also

Required Action	Specific Actions	Action Owner	Links to specific groups	Comment / Progress
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## WELFARE REFORMS : UNIVERSAL CREDIT - HOUSING LEEDS ACTION PLAN 2015-2016

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	<p>that provide budgeting facilities.</p> <p>Major task in promoting benefits of bank accounts and tie in with discounts for online payments. Successes in private rented sector and direct payment pilots need to inform actions in Leeds. LCCU MABS service city wide &amp; annually reviewed but agreement in place until March 2018.</p>	Income Improvement	WR Strategy Board LCCU	<p>included in AHVs.</p> <p>Loan Shark campaigns, action days, awareness sessions and communications commended and ongoing. Direct debit campaigns being undertaken.</p> <p>3 LCCU MABS workers covering whole city.</p>
4. Contribute to development of effective migration strategy for customers moving from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit, including identifying payment exceptions where appropriate.	<p>With LCC develop good practice toolkit for starting tenants onto Universal Credit with clear roles for HB admin, Housing Leeds and Jobcentre Plus</p> <p>Include the process for identifying vulnerable customers for direct payment</p>	<p>Income Improvement WR Strategy Board</p> <p>Income Improvement WR Strategy Board</p>	<p>Housing Managers Group; WR Strategy Board</p> <p>DWP/ JCP and Housing Managers</p>	<p>HBnotes delivered UC training to Housing Officers (Benefits) and Income Team – 25/6/15 - this training then to be cascaded to Housing Officers at appropriate time depending on migration.</p> <p>Set up direct payment process within IT systems.</p>
5. Review tenant satisfaction surveys with arrears process and support on managing customer finances.	Review current tenant satisfaction surveys between Housing Leeds areas.	Income Improvement & Performance Team	Income Champions Group	<p>Revised Income Survey drafted, go live estimated Summer 2015.</p> <p>July 15- Survey on hold pending review of other surveys.</p>



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### Outcome 3

#### Use of door step/ pay day lenders is significantly reduced.

*Paying UC monthly in arrears and paying household costs directly to customers is likely to lead to increased rent arrears and increases in debt. The focus on providing budgeting advice is understandable and may help in some cases but many people on low incomes have good budgeting skills that will be challenged by Universal Credit. We need to develop an obsession around reducing debt that targets payday/doorstep lenders, consistently promotes alternative arrangements, works with communities, social enterprises, utilities and financial services to develop practical solutions for reducing costs and providing affordable credit.*

1. Increase understanding and awareness of the impact of debt in the city	Build on work of Debt Forum, State of the City to publicise the extent of debt in the city and the damage it causes.	Income Improvement WR Strategy Board	Finance Inclusion Group; Debt Forums Advice Leeds Network	Presentations to Housing Advisory Panels, tenants groups, community events to link with LCC high cost lending group. July 2015 – New Leeds loan shark victim’s video presented at annual debt forum & also publicised on Money Information Centre Website and Housing Hot Topics internally and Facebook & twitter.
2. Put in place a multi-agency campaign against payday/doorstep lenders in the city.	Multi-agency campaign to deter use of payday/doorstep lenders. Need to involve all frontline workers, offer debt advice, tackle lenders directly and direct borrowers away from doorstep lenders. Need a clear set of measures to show whether the campaign is working.	Housing Leeds Loan Shark Group	Financial Inclusion Group; East Leeds Debt Forum; West Leeds Debt Forum; Advice Leeds Network	Completed – take a stand campaign Loan shark campaigns/action days carried out and ongoing.

Required Action	Specific Actions	Action Owner	Links to specific groups	Comment / Progress
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	<p>Carry out targeted anti loan shark campaigns across the city linking in with Operation Champion.</p> <p>Link with SAFER project to carry out awareness sessions for vulnerable customers.</p> <p>Implement Cold Calling Control Zones where appropriate</p>	<p>Income Improvement</p> <p>Income Improvement</p> <p>Income Improvement</p>	<p>Illegal Money Lending Team; Community Safety Forums; Local Tasking Groups; LCCU</p> <p>SAFER Project</p> <p>West Yorkshire Trading Standards</p>	<p>Action Days across city began May 2015, initially targeting most deprived areas.</p> <p>July 2015- leaflets sent in all rent letters.</p> <p>Older persons week/teams &amp; SAFER has been rolled out to front line staff. Completed.</p>
<p><b>3.</b> Develop alternative sources of help, advice and practical support to deal with debt and money issues at Housing Leeds and Community level.</p>	<p>Review existing advice/ support available to customers. Develop good practice initiatives to assist customers with developing money management and budgeting skills.</p> <p>DHP / Under Occ project for customers in multi storey flats.</p> <p>To develop project to provide support to care leavers moving into accommodation.</p>	<p>Income Improvement</p> <p>Income Improvement</p> <p>Income Improvement &amp; Tenancy Management</p>	<p>Finance Inclusion Group; Debt Forums Third Sector Partnership.</p> <p>As above</p> <p>Childrens Services</p>	<p>Debt advice/support being discussed through local debt forums.</p> <p>Completed March 2015</p> <p>Initial discussions taken place between LRBS, Social Services and Housing Leeds October 2014. Now incorporated in</p>

Required Action	Specific Actions	Action Owner	Links to specific groups	Comment / Progress
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	Undertake a Fuel Poverty campaign, Winter Warmth campaign, Community Energy Online, Fuel Saver/ Fuel switch	Income Improvement & Tenant Involvement	Public Health, Winter Warmth England	Children and Young People Plan 2015. Autumn 2015 – plan in fuel poverty campaign/publicity and also work with P & C on home improvements as we could tie in switching suppliers with work they are doing.
4. Develop advice and support available to reduce/minimise repossessions, evictions and homelessness	Increase debt advice and early intervention activity; Produce list of Partner agencies able to offer support to customers and refer as part of arrears process.	Income Improvement	Local Welfare Reform Project Teams	List of Partner agencies produced for each area of the City. New Better Leeds Communities now offering Skype debt advice appointments
	Further review of arrears process due to UC to include Enhanced Income Management Service Offer with additional support.	Income Recovery	Income Champions Group	Scheduled October 2015

**Outcome 4**

**An effective model for delivering welfare services and tackling unemployment that centres around a greater role for Local Authorities**

*Cities and their councils are best placed to understand and deliver the initiatives, support and strategic direction to address problems with key issues such as worklessness and debt. The provision of additional powers, responsibilities and funding streams to local authority areas would enable more effective programmes to be developed to deliver improved job outcomes, improve work readiness and support sustainable communities.*

Required Action	Specific Actions	Action Owner	Links to specific groups	Comment / Progress
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<p><b>1.</b> Link with a joined-up local employment and skills delivery model that is more responsive to and better meet the needs of the local labour market and the ambitions of the city.</p>	<p>Link with local job centres and jobs and skills services to assist customers in seeking employment and training Promote Apprentices and local job clubs. Develop referral process for customers to Jobs and Skills Service. Promote employment services in local offices, on website and consider inclusion in revised Debt Pack.</p>	<p>Income Improvement and Employment &amp; Skills. Housing Managers Group Income Improvement</p>	<p>Housing Managers Group; WR Strategy Board</p>	<p>Local Welfare Reform Project Teams.  Housing Leeds supporting jobs &amp; skills work, and sign posting customers within the local areas. This is included within the enhanced Income Service Offer.</p>
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**MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

**Outcome 5**

**Stakeholders are able to reflect the impacts of welfare reform in City Priority Plans and in local area plans**

*The impacts of welfare reform need to feed into City Priority Plans and be understood at a locality level. It is important that regular reports on impacts and progress with actions and preparations are available for Area Committees and other forums.*

<p><b>1.</b> Provide data and statistical information available at Housing Leeds, Ward and locality level on a monthly basis.</p>	<p>Housing Leeds currently developing new reporting systems to monitor impact of UC.</p>	<p>Performance and Information;</p>	<p>Housing Managers Group; WR Strategy Board</p>	<p>Performance team include impact of welfare reforms in priority dashboards.</p>
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**Report of Head of Finance Environments and Housing Item 11:Appendix 2**

**Report to Housing Advisory Board Members**

**Date: 28<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Subject: Financial implications of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's July budget statement**

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. Summary Position**

This report details some of the key issues arising from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's budget speech to Parliament on July 8<sup>th</sup> 2015 which have direct implications for Housing Leeds.

Specifically the report details the implications of the announced reductions in housing rent whilst at the same time highlighting some of the other announced changes in respect of housing tenancies and benefits reductions.

**2. Key issues for Housing Leeds arising from the Chancellor's speech**

**a) Housing rent reductions**

The Chancellor announced that for each of the next 4 years (2016/17 to 2019/20) Housing rents will reduce by 1% each year and then revert back to the previous policy of CPI+1% from 2020/21. On a cash basis this equates to a reduction of £20.5m in rental income over this four year period which will then start to be offset by reverting back to annual rent increases of CPI+ 1% in 2020/21. These reductions in rental income will be required to be managed along with having to absorb pay, price and service pressures.

The HRA Financial Plan was based on the assumption that rents would increase in line with CPI +1% each year for 10 years as per the Government Policy introduced last year – in essence a 3% increase pa (based on the Government CPI target of 2%). The Chancellor's announcement last week is therefore a 4% pa reduction from the Plan for each of the next 4 years (2016/17 to 2019/20). When

compared to the level of resources assumed in the Financial Plan this equates to a loss of £283m of rental income over a 10 year period (2016/17 to 2024/25).

The projected loss of rental income will have implications for Executive Board approved investment strategy for the HRA and this will be required to be managed through a combination of identifying efficiencies and cost reductions in the HRA, the use of the borrowing headroom and the review and re-phasing of capital investment plans (including new build).

#### **b) Pay to Stay**

Local Authority and Housing Association tenants in England who earn more than £30k (£40k in London) will be required to pay up to market rent with the increase i.e. the difference between what these tenants pay now and what they will have to pay, being collected by the Local Authority/ Housing Association and then being paid direct to Government. At the moment Local Authorities do not require tenants to provide details of their income so this information will be required to be captured in order that it can be determined whether or not the tenant should pay social rent or market rent.

#### **c) Benefits adjustments**

A lower benefits cap is to be introduced (£23k in London in London and £20k elsewhere from April 2016). Information has been requested from the Welfare and Benefits section as to how many Council tenants will be impacted upon by these changes.

From April 2017 tax credits and universal credit will only support the first two children. People who have an additional child will not get extra help and people who make a new claim will only get money for two children. There will be exceptions for multiple births.

The Chancellor announced that job seekers aged 18 to 21 years old will no longer be able to claim housing benefit. Information has been requested from Benefits as to how many Council tenants will be affected by this but it is understood that such proposals will affect around 6k young people who claim job seekers allowance and housing benefit in the north.

#### **d) Life time tenancies**

The Budget document contains plans for a review of the use of lifetime tenancies in social housing to limit their use and ensure that households are offered tenancies that match their needs, and ensure the best use is made of the social housing stock.

### **3. Conclusion**

As detailed above the proposed 1% reduction in rents for each of the next four years can be readily quantified and the implications of this need to be managed so that the Housing Revenue Account remains sustainable.

In respect of the other announcements detailed above further information is required to inform what the implications are for Leeds tenants.

### **4. Recommendations**

Housing Advisory Board members are asked to note this report

### **5. Background documents**

Chancellor of the Exchequer 's speech to Parliament on July 8<sup>th</sup> 2015.

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Report author: Amanda Britton

Tel: 07891 277354

## Report of Chief Officer Housing Management

### Report to Housing Advisory Board

**Date:** 7th September 2015

### **Subject: Tenant Engagement Update**

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

### **Summary of main issues**

The tenant involvement framework is now taking shape and is now at a stage where the vision has become reality and tenants can see how they fit in and contribute to influencing decisions at both a local and strategic level. This report provides insight into recent developments.

The report will outline:

- Our progress with the strategic tenant body (STB)
- How Leeds Tenants Federation (LTF) contribute to the vision
- Our support for Tenants & Residents Associations (TARA's)
- How the newly formed city wide tenant groups work
- Recent Housing Advisory Panel (HAP) work

### **Recommendations**

That the Housing Advisory Board:

- Recognises the new city wide and strategic groups
- Supports the overall approach and direction of travel to create an engaged and representative tenant base within Leeds.

## 1 **Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To update the Housing Advisory Board on progress made in the development of tenant involvement and the newly formed citywide groups, their names and strategic priorities.

## 2 **Background information**

- 2.1 The first 12 months saw the integration of staffing resources and foundations being laid for the vision for the new service. This included the development of single processes, either newly created or by taking best practice from existing ones.
- 2.2 During the second year, development and recruitment to the new city wide groups has taken place. Some of these were already established to some degree, but have been refreshed to ensure fair representation across the city and to re align terms of reference and codes of conduct.
- 2.3 A number of citywide tenant forums have taken place, to reach out to specific tenant groups to help us to understand what their needs and expectations are. This has been a route for initial expressions of interest for recruitment of citywide groups.
- 2.4 The findings of the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) survey has been shared with the local and strategic groups to obtain their opinions in how we can best improve our tenant satisfaction.

## 3 **Update on Progress to date**

- 3.1 A model has been developed to show the relationships and reporting structure of the Tenant Involvement Service. (See appendix 1).
- 3.2 The progress and current status of the different groups and forums can be seen below. They are reported from the outer ring inwards according to strategic positioning.
- 3.3 **Strategic Tenant Body** – now called **VITAL** (Voice of Involved Tenants At Leeds). 3 formal meetings have now been held, and draft terms of reference and a workplan developed. Draft terms of reference are attached in appendix 2. VITAL is made up of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all the citywide groups, two representatives from the Repairs Focus Groups and the Chair of BITMO. This means that all tenants and residents of Leeds are represented at the highest level and there is a clear channel of communication for them to have a voice. VITAL will be launched officially in September 2015. The service recognises the need to invest in the training and development of this group, supporting them to work well together and provide leadership to the tenant involvement agenda. We are investing in the support of an Independent Tenant Advisor to facilitate an away-day during September, which will focus on leadership skills, teamwork and identify group and individual training and development needs.
- 3.4 **Leeds Tenants Federation (LTF)** - Housing Leeds and LTF jointly held a citywide TARA event in June 2015 to promote LTF's new role in the tenant involvement framework, which is made up of the following:

- Providing strategic leadership to Housing Leeds Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs) by sharing good practice, promoting a consistent approach and identifying common/emerging themes across groups via a citywide TARA forum.
- Coordinating awareness campaigns on behalf of tenants e.g. welfare change/fuel poverty.
- Representing views of non-Housing Leeds tenants.

LTF is currently recruiting residents to a new TARA Forum, which will support LTF in working with TARAs and to develop good practice and clear support networks.

3.5 **TARAs – Tenants and Resident’s Groups and Area Representatives** - There are now 86 TARAs operating locally across Housing Leeds, with the creation of 3 new TARAs, and further TARAs are in development. 23 TARAs and 4 groups attended the citywide TARA event in June 2015. Views were collected on how the proposed TARAs Panel could be geographically representative of TARAs, and areas of support that are a priority for groups. The service offer, launched at the June event has now been delivered to all TARAs and Area Reps. This will create a consistent approach to the services and support available to them, but also provide a more consistent approach by the TARA’s themselves, especially with the direction and leadership from LTF.

3.6 **Housing Advisory Panels (HAPs) and the Cross City Chairs Group (CCCG)** - At the end of July 2015, 4 months into the financial year, the HAP’s have committed £405,081, or 31% of their £1.32m overall budget on 110 environmental and community related projects. They remain focussed on ensuring the projects they support are value for money and try to manage their budgets to be able to support projects throughout the year.

Whilst year one focused on harmonising bid and HAP processes, year two is now about focussing on other local priorities such as local performance and concerns from STAR, and developing closer working relationships with Community Committees. The CCCG have been encouraging joint funding via the HAPs of citywide bids such as Community Payback or showcasing HAP funded projects for consideration in other areas of the city such as the Parenting program.

The CCCG commissioned the tenant involvement service to produce an Annual Report of HAPs for 14/15 reflecting on the busy year and achievements they had made. (See appendix 3).

3.7 **High Rise Advisory Group** - The High Rise Advisory Group meets regularly to discuss issues affecting tenants in high rise properties, and to develop improvements to services. The group recently met with the Fire Safety Manager to discuss the fire safety booklet for high rise tenants and raise their concerns regarding existing processes.

The group held a citywide forum in June 2015, to provide feedback to tenants on the High Rise Tenants Survey, to outline the High Rise Project, and to involve tenants in identifying the priorities.

3.8 **VOLT – Voice of Leeds Older Tenants** - This strategic older persons group has had 3 meetings, and continues recruitment to ensure wide representation from across the city. The group has elected a chair and is currently developing its work programme for the coming year.

Members represented the group at the 6 more local forums at sheltered schemes to get more local views of tenant priorities. Going forward, forums will be twice a year. Making A Difference meetings are being held at sheltered schemes where there is interest from tenants, and the frequency is determined by the tenants.

- 3.9 **The Equal Access Group** – This strategic group representing tenants with disabilities has now had 1 meeting and has wide representation from tenants of all areas of Leeds, a range of disabilities, carers and mix of tenants who have been involved previously and newly involved tenants.

The initial group held their first meeting in July 2015 and reviewed and discussed tenant priorities highlighted at the Equal Access forum in April 2015. Possible future work plans identified are aids and adaptations, contacting Housing Leeds and disabled parking arrangements.

- 3.10 A significant focus of the Tenant Involvement Service is to improve the engagement and involvement of younger tenants. The Service has started to make connections with Children's Services through the Youth Forums and we are looking to develop different methods and activities using social media to engage younger tenants and working age in ways which suite them.

**YAgI – Young Adults Getting Involved** - This group, currently has 7 members, and is working on a less formal basis with Housing Leeds to represent tenants aged 16 to 35 and support the service in identifying how best to involve and communicate with young people. The group is growing in confidence, and the experience has proved beneficial in helping tenants to access employment opportunities. Recent meetings that the group have led on include a meeting with the lead officer from the Voice, Influence and Change team to discuss opportunities for involving more young people in communities through the Area Youth Panels, a meeting to discuss improvements to the Housing Leeds website and newsletter, and meeting with Flagship (Foundation) and Archway to promote YAgI and to discuss closer working relationships.

The group is currently focusing on active marketing, to encourage others to get involved, including setting up a YAgI Twitter page, sharing posters with organisations that work with young people, contacting over 4000 council tenants under 35, and supporting International Youth Day in August by attending a Breeze youth event in Beeston.

- 3.11 **Rainbow Roofs** – This group represents the views of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) tenants. It continues to meet monthly and has been supporting Housing Leeds to influence how Leeds Housing works with LGB&T customers to meet their needs. The group have provided training to our sheltered support officers around awareness of LGB&T older people. The group is working to increase awareness and increase its membership. They have been working with Housing Leeds' officers to prepare an information stand at Leeds Pride. They will provide information on the group's projects, how to report hate crime, and other tenant involvement opportunities.

- 3.12 **Leaseholder forum** - A Leaseholder Officer has recently been appointed .We have been liaising with them and researching Leaseholder engagement at other local authorities to identify best practice to ensure future engagement activities are attractive to leaseholders.

- 3.13 **Repairs focus groups** - Both existing groups (South and West) have supported the service in developing the repairs handbook and Recharge Policy, and have received updates on the cyclical painting programme and customer satisfaction with repairs. Future work includes input into the Council's Empty Homes Strategy and voids process, how to increase access rates on gas servicing, and how to increase customer satisfaction with the repairs service.

Recruitment is on-going for the East group. Tenants that have been recruited are invited to the South group meeting to experience the process.

- 3.14 **Tenant Scrutiny Board** - Four new members have joined and attended their first meeting on 1 July 2015. Board Members were advised that from their recent scrutiny of the Annual Home Visit, 8 out of the 10 recommendations were agreed and implemented. Possible topics for future inquiries include:
- Development of an environmental standard and the quality of housing estates.
  - Empty homes and voids
  - Customer satisfaction

- 3.15 **Service Improvement Volunteers (SIVs)** - The Service Improvement Volunteer programme was launched to tenants in March 2015 to support the service in managing service improvements and the Tenant Scrutiny Board in undertaking enquiries. Volunteers are getting involved in Estate Walkabouts, the review of the tenant newsletter, housing website review and will become involved in spot checking the quality of void properties and mystery shopping at housing offices.

### 3.16 **Key Community Development Outcomes**

The Tenant and Community Involvement Framework has supported the delivery of a number of key community development projects, as outlined below.

- **Community Pay Back** - the 11 Housing Advisory Panels (HAPs) have jointly funded, in partnership with West Yorkshire Community Rehabilitation Company Ltd, Housing Services and Localities Teams, a new scheme known as 'Community Payback'. This will carry out Court instructed community service and deliver a range of communal and environmental related work in their local area.
- **Parenting Programme** - 2 projects have now been delivered, in Bramley and Burmantofts, (funded by HAPs) to deliver parenting courses which support tenants in managing behaviour and accessing services available to support them. A third project is planned in Morley North/Rothwell.
- **HUGO** (Help You Get Online) – this project, which is a partnership project with Leeds Federation Housing Association, of two buses equipped with computers and Wi-Fi that tour the city offering computer training to improve people's digital skills, has been honoured with a national TPAS award for work getting customers online. HUGO continues to support new projects, e.g. John O'Gaunts Job Club, Halton Moor Digital T Parties.
- **Young People** - various projects have been delivered to support activities for children and young people in order to build confidence, reduce ASB and support communities, e.g. Sk&safe project in Inner North West to support young people to learn to skate, football clubs, Dance4Tots.
- **Environmental** – various projects to support the community environment, e.g. supporting use of housing land for allotments at Leigh View, Urban Oasis event across the Outer South area.

- **Social Isolation** – projects to reduce isolation, e.g. tea parties in Outer South sheltered schemes, in partnership with ASDA celebrating their 50th Anniversary, supporting the development of a Men’s Group in Armley to improve health and wellbeing and reduce suicide rates.

## 4 **Communications**

- 4.1 We are currently developing a Housing Leeds Marketing and Communications Strategy, which will outline the service’s overall plans for communication with tenants. A fundamental part of this strategy will be to improve the way that we communicate with young and working age tenants, to put a greater emphasis on digital communications, including the internet, email, social media and texting.
- 4.2 **Housing Website** - Housing Leeds is currently reviewing the Housing pages on the Council’s website to develop a Housing Leeds site which is more accessible to tenants, and provides the types of information that tenants would like to access on line. We aim to go live with the new website during autumn 2015. There is a longer term vision to make the website more interactive, and to provide more local information to tenants about what is happening in their area.
- 4.3 **Tenants Newsletter** – Following reduced tenant satisfaction with the tenants newsletter in the STAR survey, we are currently reviewing the newsletter to consider how effective it is as method of communication. A tenant survey is currently underway and we have contacted other Local Authorities and social housing providers to find out how they manage this communication. We are also working with Service Improvement Volunteers and the YAgi as part of this review.
- 4.4 **In The Loop** - We have recognised that some of our most frequently involved tenants and leaseholders like to receive regular housing update and we now produce In The Loop, a monthly E-Bulletin that is emailed to 400 households.
- 4.5 **Social Media** – Housing Leeds continues to make improvements to its Twitter and Facebook communications, with regular updates to tenants about what is happening in their area. We are also exploring the development of online forums to invite comments from tenants on particular issues.

## 5 **Performance**

- 5.1 To track the performance the impact of all involvement activity the service is currently working with VITAL to design a performance dashboard, which will summarise who is getting involved in what kind of involvement activity and show which customer groups are over or under-represented. This will help the service, and VITAL, understand which parts of the framework are most effective and how the framework, in consultation with VITAL, can adapt to changing needs. Since April 2015 the involvement service has been recording its activity in specialist involvement software. This allows for better management and analysis of the work the service undertakes.

Between April and the end of July 2015, 233 individuals have in some way been actively involved within the formal tenant involvement framework. This includes 197 tenants (48 of whom are sheltered), 28 private residents and 6 leaseholders. Many more tenants will have participated in local or informal activity that is supported by the team or led on by local tenants and residents associations.

The gender and disability profile of 'involved' tenants is broadly in line with the overall tenant profile, with differences in BME engagement and in some age groups, most notably 25-34 year olds who are most under-represented.

## **6 Corporate Considerations**

### **6.1 Consultation and Engagement**

6.2 Over the past few months, further forums supporting high rise, sheltered and access have taken place. These have gained tenant views on key themes that need to be addressed. Housing Leeds also delivered in partnership with LTF, the first citywide TARA forum; gaining their views on citywide TARA representation.

6.3 Tenants who have already being recruited to specific groups are now working with Housing Leeds officers to undertake further recruitment to the different groups. Tenants have recently assisted in recruiting to VOLT.

## **7 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

7.1 A Theology Student from Leeds University is joining us in September 15 to carry out a research project around the religion or belief of LCC tenants. We have asked that they undertake analysis on satisfaction/dissatisfaction of young tenants in relation to faith or belief and also what faith support is available for our young tenants.

7.2 Housing Leeds has worked with the Corporate E&D team to identify and propose housing E&D priorities for 2015 to 2019. Discussions are on-going with other LCC departments to agree citywide equality priorities.

## **8 Council policies and City Priorities**

8.1 The service's tenant involvement activity contributes towards the delivery of the Best Council plan priorities of supporting communities and tackling poverty and becoming and more efficient and enterprising council.

8.2 The service helps to support the Best City for Communities priority to increase the sense of belonging that builds cohesive and harmonious communities.

## **9 Resources and value for money**

9.1 The total HAP commitment of £405,081 on 110 projects has been enhanced by a further £186,583 of funding contributions from other sources, e.g. community committee funding. This has helped the HAPs to support a greater number of projects.

9.2 Now that the Tenant Involvement Framework is fully developed, Housing Leeds will be working with VITAL during 2015/16 to consider the costs and benefits of each of the areas of tenant involvement with consideration to the social return on the investment, in order to identify the most effective forms of tenant involvement and community development.

## 10 **Legal Implications**

- 10.1 The involvement framework has been developed in line with The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing 2012. In particular: 'Providers are expected to engage meaningfully with their tenants and offer them opportunities to shape the tailoring of services to reflect local priorities. Tenants should have the ability to scrutinise their provider's performance, identify areas for improvement and influence future delivery'.

## 11 **Risk Management**

- 11.1 There are a number of risks identified linked to the Tenant and Community Involvement Framework. These are as follows:

- That the newly implemented Tenant Involvement Framework does not deliver fully integrated and effective tenant involvement or improvements for tenants and communities.
- That the new Strategic Tenant Body- VITAL, does not deliver the desired outcomes or perform as expected.
- That future STAR surveys do not show the desired outcome of increased tenant satisfaction.

- 11.2 These risks will be managed by Housing Leeds, working closely with VITAL. Issues with the effectiveness of the tenant involvement framework will be reported as part of regular updates to Housing Advisory Board.

## 12 **Conclusions**

- 12.1 The Tenant Involvement Framework is now becoming embedded within Housing Leeds, and tenants are now in a stronger position to influence and support service improvements for tenants and to make a real difference to local communities.

- 12.2 A priority for the coming year is to strengthen relationships within the framework, and to ensure that tenants are supported to work with services to make service improvements.

## 13 **Recommendations**

That the Housing Advisory Board:

- Recognises the new city wide and strategic groups
- Supports the overall approach and direction of travel to create an engaged and representative tenant base within Leeds.

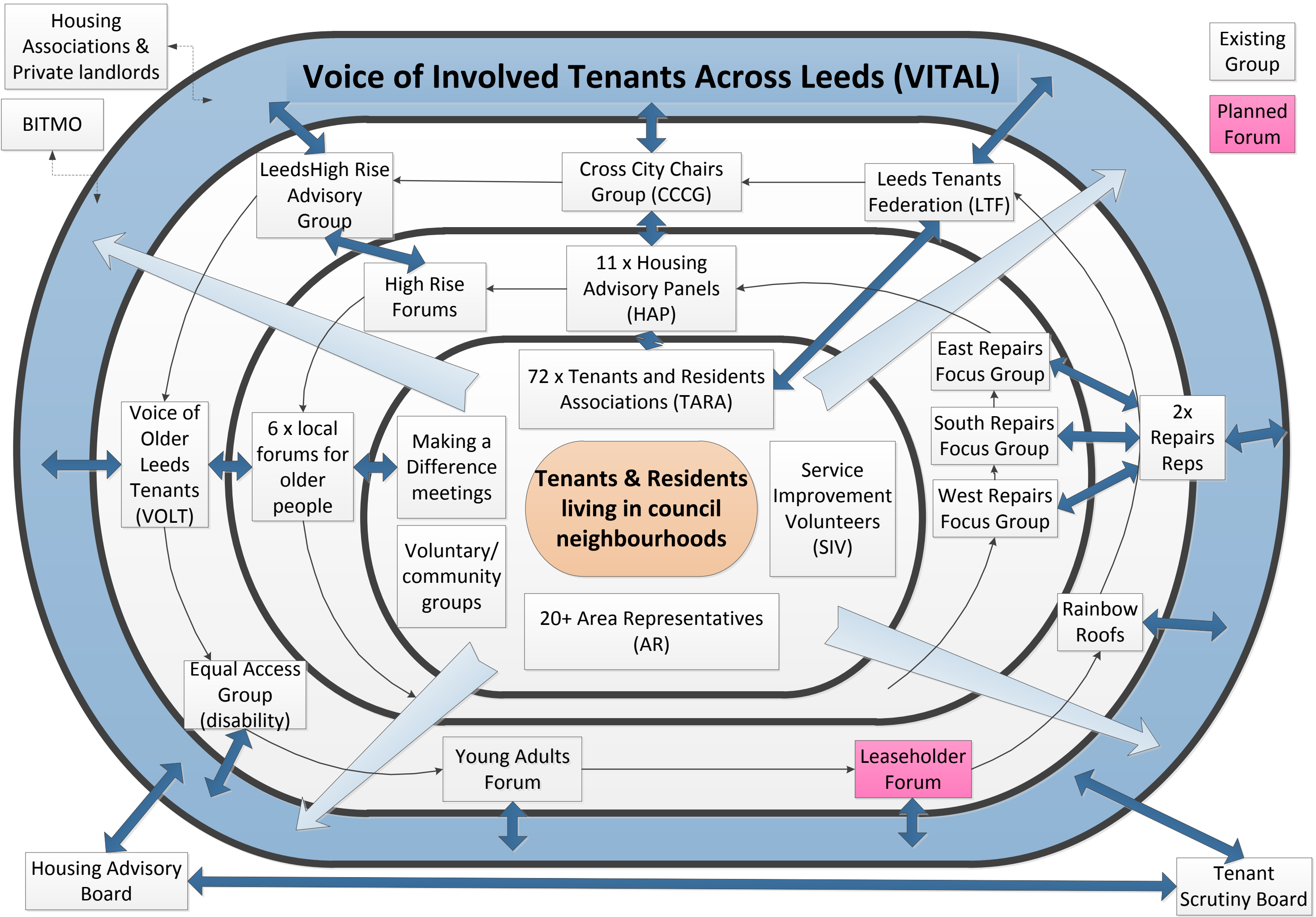
## 14 **Background documents**

- 14.1 Appendix 1: STB/VITAL Map
- 14.2 Appendix 2: Draft STB T.O.R
- 14.3 Appendix 3: CCCG Annual Report





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# **DRAFT Terms of Reference for member of Strategic Tenants Body**

**June 2015**

## **What is the Strategic Tenant Body?**

The Strategic Tenant Body (STB) is what drives tenant involvement in Leeds. It plays a vital role in overseeing all tenant and community involvement activity in the city, ensuring all tenant involvement groups and forums are empowered and equipped to achieve their goals.

## **What are the aims of the Strategic Tenant Body?**

The main aims of the STB are:

- To support the development and oversee the implementation of the Tenant Involvement Strategy;
- To oversee consultations to avoid duplication or consultation fatigue;
- To ensure wide-spread feedback to tenants;
- To co-ordinate communications via a single communications plan;
- To enable communication between tenant forums to avoid duplication;
- To bring issues of concern to Housing Leeds for action;
- To review Tenant Involvement budgets for Value For Money and assess impact;
- To co-ordinate tenant training programmes and providers;
- To review representation within tenant involvement and co-ordinate approach to address any under-representation; and
- To co-ordinate tenant consultation on policy development/strategic direction.

## **Who makes up the Strategic Tenant Body?**

The STB is made up of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all the citywide groups, two representatives from the Repairs Focus Groups and the Chair of BITMO. When making decisions, there will only be one vote per group. The STB can recruit up to 6 independent members in order to ensure a more representative balance from across the city, but only groups or individuals representing council tenants will have a vote on decisions about Housing Leeds policy or funding.

Chair and Vice Chair will be elected following expressions of interest and once voted in, will serve for two years.

## **Who can be a STB member?**

You must be a tenant or resident of Leeds and already act as a representative of tenants of Leeds in some capacity. For example it could be that you are a member of

a Housing Leeds involvement group such as Rainbow Roofs or the Equal Access Group. Members of the Scrutiny Panel will not be eligible for membership of the Strategic Tenant Body.

An ideal member will also:

- Be open minded;
- Be prepared to read papers and reports before a meeting;
- Be prepared to listen to different points of view;
- Ask questions if anything is unclear;
- Be prepared to contribute to meetings and any other panel activity;
- Draw conclusions based on evidence, not on individual opinion;
- Accept collective responsibility for decisions;
- Be committed to training and development;
- Maintain confidentiality and protect the reputation of the STB and its members;
- Tell us any private or personal interests, financial or otherwise; and
- Be prepared to have a public profile.

### **What is expected of me?**

STB members have the following responsibilities:

- To provide direction on the Housing Leeds tenant involvement strategy;
- To provide leadership to tenants that you represent in influencing the tenant involvement agenda;
- To play a proactive role in transforming the tenant and community involvement service into a 'centre of excellence';
- To influence decisions relating to housing at a strategic level;
- To adopt an inclusive and open customer focused approach to developing the tenant involvement and wider housing service;
- To ensure that the view of the tenants that they represent are being represented;
- To contribute to STB meetings, fully representing the views of the tenants and residents that you represent;
- To feedback to and regularly communicate with the tenants and residents that you represent the outcomes of the STB meetings or projects; and
- To attend all meetings; a member will not be expected to miss more than three consecutive meetings.

### **How often will the Strategic Tenant Body meet?**

The Strategic Tenant Body will meet monthly for the first six months at which point this will be reviewed. A meeting will be quorate with 50% of the current membership present (rounding up when this is an odd number e.g. 2.5 = 3).

### **What else do you need to know?**

The position is voluntary; however, we will pay all reasonable expenses – it's important that members are not out of pocket for the time they give.

We will make reasonable adjustments to help you to fulfil the role if you have any specific requirements.

We will support tenants, and offer training and development opportunities to help all members to work well in the role.

You must sign a code of conduct that sets out the behaviour expected of all panel members.

Declarations of interest must be disclosed prior to the meeting. The Chair reserves the right to ask any member who declares an interest in an item, to leave the meeting whilst this item is being discussed.

You can find more information about the Strategic Tenant Body on the website or you can contact the Housing Leeds Tenant and Community Involvement Service on 0113 3783330 or email [housinginvolvement@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:housinginvolvement@leeds.gov.uk)

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# Housing Advisory Panels (HAPs)

## 2014-2015 Annual Report by the Cross City Chairs Group

May 2015



*I am incredibly proud of the work that has been carried out by the Housing Advisory Panels over the past year.*

*Together, we have*

- *Increased panel membership.*
- *Supported hundreds of local projects and we have.*
- *Created some sound working practices to make sure all tenants across the city, whether wanting to join a panel, or looking for funding, are treated the same.*

*In particular, with the support of the Cross City Chairs and Vice Chairs, we have been able to create a very positive 'can-do - will do', working culture and I believe the work and the efforts we contribute are becoming more well received and much better known throughout the city by Housing Leeds tenants.*

*In the year ahead we will build on these solid foundations and we will continue to play a major role in not just investing in local projects but also in helping the Housing Service review and design better services to tenants.*

*I would like to thank all Panel members, local Councillors and Housing Leeds staff for the help in making HAPs such an enjoyable and productive part of tenant involvement in Leeds, and I look forward to seeing and hearing about more local success stories in the future.*



## Ted Wilson

Chair of the Cross City Chairs Group

[housingadvisorypanel@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvisorypanel@leeds.gov.uk)

[www.leeds.gov.uk/hap](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/hap)

0113 378 3330

## 1. Background

- 1.1. Housing Advisory Panel (HAP) Chairs have asked Housing Leeds to write this report to allow them to share their work and achievements to date with tenants and leaseholders of Leeds City Council, Leeds City Council officers (including the Housing Advisory Board), Ward Members and any other interested audience. This report shows the combined work of the 11 HAPs across the city since their creation in October 2013, and is in addition to the local annual reports produced by each panel in April 2015.
- 1.2. HAPs are tenant led groups set up to review the delivery of local housing services and monitor local housing performance. Each HAP also has a budget, allowing them to fund projects that benefit tenants and help tackle local and city-wide priorities.
- 1.3. Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the local HAPs regularly meet at their 'Cross City Chairs Group' (or CCCG) to help develop how HAPs work, guide the creation of policy and share ideas and case studies of projects that have worked well that could also work in other parts of the city. The Chair and Vice-Chair of this group are members of the Housing Advisory Board, and it's in this way that issues from the local panels can be highlighted into the main governing body of Housing Leeds.

## 2. Consistent ways of working

- 2.1. Throughout the last year, a priority of the HAPs and the Cross City Chairs Group (CCCG) has been to develop consistent ways of working so that tenants wishing to become panel members, or applicants seeking funding, have the same experience. The panels have also developed a consistent approach to managing their budgets to ensure money is spent wisely.
- 2.2. An early task of the CCCG was to create a **common funding application** form and supporting guidance notes. These are under regular review and have recently been updated for 2015/16 to make more user-friendly and clearer for panels and officers to make decisions. This work included agreeing how community orientated projects should be managed so that local decisions about funding can be made to reflect local priorities, but to also give the panel assurance that funding was being spent for the direct benefit of tenants. The funding form and guidance notes are available on the HAP webpage ([www.leeds.gov.uk/hap](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/hap))
- 2.3. To help guide the work and decision making of HAPs, each HAP has developed a '**Plan on a Page**'. Panels reviewed information about their local areas, including current tenant satisfaction levels with housing services, the types of homes and the profile of people, headline performance information and other key facts and figures that painted a picture of the type of community they represent. Using this, and taking into account Housing and the Council's wider 'Best City Priorities', each panel agreed their own 'service' and 'funding' priorities.

2.4. 11 HAPs identified the cleaner, greener and safer environmental agenda as well as the world of work in terms of employability, work and skills as funding priorities. 10 panels prioritised community safety and crime reduction and also the general health and well-being of communities. On a more local basis, the Outer South East panel specifically identified the health and well-being of elderly tenants; and the Inner East panel the importance of supporting projects to encourage community cohesion and the involvement of young people and BME groups.

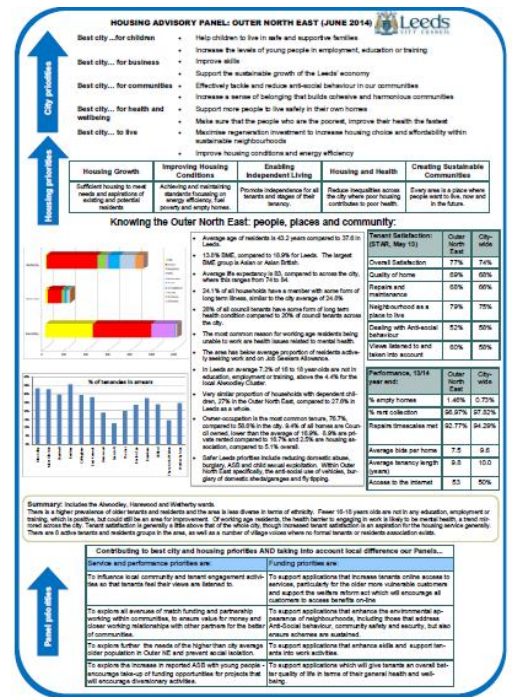
2.5. All HAPs wish to explore the services approach to rent collection to help mitigate the impact of welfare changes and all are interested in helping shape the future of the tenant engagement service. On a more local basis, the Inner North East and Outer East panels have highlighted the importance of engaging with under-represented groups especially younger and BME tenants and the Outer North East panel wish to explore how we tackle the issue of elderly residents being at risk of isolation.

2.6. A common **recruitment and selection process** is now in place across the city, so that all tenants wishing to become panel members are given the same information about the role and informal 'interviews' are all carried out in the same way. With the special input of some volunteers from the CCCG, an 'information pack' about HAPs has been written that explains what kind of person would make an ideal panel member, the expectations of the role and a little more about what HAPs are all about.

2.7. So that panels are able to start to better fulfill their role of monitoring and reviewing local housing service performance, the CCCG towards the end of the year agreed a **standard performance report**. This captured a range of measures that when reviewed together, gives insight into what the quality and difference in service exists across the city and how the panels might be able to shape the solutions for tackling this.

2.8. Based on some good practice from one of the former three areas, a **model evaluation form** for all HAP funded projects has been agreed that records what the project was, how much it cost, how many tenants benefitted, the longer term benefits to the community, any partners involved and any lessons learnt. This new evaluation record also doubles as a marketing tool, as is presented in a clear and accessible way for the HAPs to issue to local tenants and residents and to help further raising the profile of what local projects HAPs can support.

### 3. Supporting local projects



- 3.1. During 2014/15 HAPs supported 276 local projects, ranging in value from £32 to £30,200 and an average amount of £4,000. About two thirds were for 'environmental' projects, the other third for community related projects. The panels committed 94.5% of their total £1.32m and are grateful for the Council's support to allow the remainder to be carried forward to the new financial year.
- 3.2. The projects are many and varied, and have benefitted many thousands of tenants across Leeds. Some examples are:

**Housing Advisory Panel Bid Success**  
**New environmental improvement schemes ...**  
 Bin service provided for residents at Granville Road and Beckett Street




If you want to improve your environment or make a difference in your area, ask your housing office staff about Housing Advisory Panel Bids.

**Funded by Housing Advisory Panels - Shaping your local community**

**Total spend £22,461**

[www.leeds.gov.uk/hap](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/hap)  
 email: [housingadvisorypanel@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvisorypanel@leeds.gov.uk)

**Housing Advisory Panel Bid Success**  
**New community improvement scheme ...**  
 Provision of new garden tools to support the John O'Gaunts tool bank.




Ernest, Chair of John O'Gaunts Residents Association pictured at the tool bank with some of the tools HAP provided.

If you want to improve your environment or make a difference in your area, ask your housing office staff about Housing Advisory Panel Bids.

**Funded by Housing Advisory Panels - Shaping your local community**

**Total spend £927**

[www.leeds.gov.uk/hap](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/hap)  
 email: [housingadvisorypanel@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvisorypanel@leeds.gov.uk)

### **Housing Advisory Panel Bid Success**

#### **New environmental improvement schemes ...**

Newly flagged patio area and fencing for residents of York Road, Wetherby. The area was cleared of overgrowth and re-seeded.

**BEFORE** **AFTER**

If you want to improve your environment or make a difference in your area, ask your housing office staff about Housing Advisory Panel Bids.

**Funded by Housing Advisory Panels - Shaping your local community**

**Total spend £10,000**

www.leeds.gov.uk/hap  
email: housingadvisorypanel@leeds.gov.uk

- 3.3. HAP funded projects have made a significant contribution to helping the Housing Service achieve the aim of its Housing Strategy. The majority of projects contribute to 'Creating Sustainable Communities', 20 support 'Independent Living', 12 helped improve 'Housing and Health' and 5 were related to 'Improving Housing Conditions'.
- 3.4. In addition, each project helped Leeds City Council achieve its Best City Priorities. 147 projects contributed to the Council's Best City for Communities by helping reduce crime levels and their impact across Leeds, effectively tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour and by ensuring that local neighbourhoods are clean. A further 103 projects helped Leeds to achieve its ambition to be the Best City to Live, by improving the quality of the environment. Some 39 projects helped to place Leeds as the Best City for Health and Well-being by support more people to live safely in their own homes. Helping children to live in safe and supportive families and increasing the levels of young people in employment, education or training was the overall aim of 18 projects and 4 helped Leeds become the Best City for Business by either improving skills or increasing people's participation in cultural opportunities.
- 3.5. Panel funding supported projects in 32 out of the 33 Wards, the exception being Headingley Ward. Headingley however, has a much smaller number of homes (just 159) compared to other Wards.
- 3.6. During the year, the service included HAP funding on the Leeds City Council funding search tool: [www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/lcc](http://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/lcc). HAPs hope to encourage a broader range of interest from local groups active in areas of Council housing with this tool. The officers supporting HAPs are now also able to signpost this tool in cases where the HAPs have been unable to support projects as are for activities not in line with local or wider Council priorities.
- 3.7. Over 80 funding requests came from community or voluntary groups including Tenants and Residents Associations, 36 originated from enquiries from individual

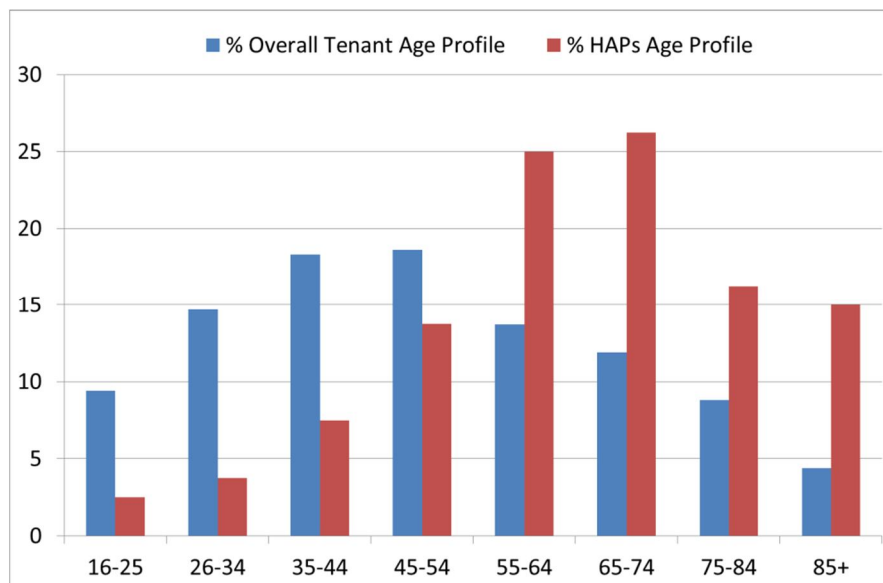
residents and 138 were submitted by staff of various housing and housing related teams in response to tenant, resident and/or Ward Member feedback.

3.8. HAPs contributed £160,00 to the 2014/15 Housing Revenue Account Estate Improvement Fund, helping the service fund more activity that it would otherwise have done enabling more environmental, waste/recycling and community safety projects to improve customer satisfaction.

#### 4. Membership

4.1. The number of HAP members has increased since their inception from 71 to 80. This includes 4 co-optees and 2 leaseholders. Panel membership varies across the city, ranging from 3 in ONE to 12 in INW (who also have 2 co-optees). The average number of tenants on each panel is 7.

4.2. The gender of members is equally split between make and female. Panel diversity in terms of ethnicity broadly matches that of the wider tenant base and panels represent well the interests and needs of disabled tenants and those with physical impairments. The overall age profile of HAP members is more elderly than the age profile of tenants more widely, however, this mirrors the trends of other involvement activities.



4.3. The service is working in the local areas to attract new members, especially for those panels with lower numbers of tenants. The recent STAR survey was used by the Involvement Team to contact tenants who were happy to get involved, a number of which have been to observe panel meetings or have an informal interview arranged for full membership.

#### 5.0 Joint working

5.1 The HAPs and especially HAP Chairs/Vice-Chairs have worked to create a culture of partnership working and continuous improvement. The working relationship

developed with all levels of officers has been positive, helped by joint events such as an end of year review session with many panel members and the Tenant and Community Involvement Officers. The panels continue to benefit from the input and support of local Housing Managers and their teams, helping the panels keep in touch with key staff delivering local services and to enable HAPs to explore their local priorities. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the CCCG have met regularly with the Deputy Leader of Leeds City Council and Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel, Councillor Peter Gruen and Neil Evans, Director Environment and Housing to share HAP feedback.

- 5.2 All HAP members came together in October 2014 at an event at the Civic Hall to share good practice, help set a common 'HAP vision' and to encourage networking and sharing between panels. HAP members, their Chairs and officers have recently met to also consider their forward plans for the year, which includes working and engaging with other teams and services to help panels tackle some of their service related priorities.
- 5.3 The CCCG are now regularly sharing good practice and considering ways of joint working. For example by sharing local projects such as 'maecare' (a community based organisation tackling social isolation of elderly residents through a range of innovative ways) and collectively supporting a HAP funding proposal for a 'Community Payback' project that will benefit tenants across the whole of Leeds.

## **5. Communications**

- 6.1 Throughout the year panel members and the CCCG have instigated a number of communication related actions to raise the profile of HAP work and to ensure more tenants (and other LCC services, stakeholders, voluntary groups etc) know what HAPs are and what their role is.
- 6.2 A new webpage [www.leeds.gov.uk/hap](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/hap) now introduces HAPs, including individual panel minutes, meeting dates, plans on a page, local annual reports and some other key documents such as the funding application form and some case studies on HAP successes.
- 6.3 HAPs have featured regularly in 'Housing Leeds', the newsletter for all Council Tenants. HAP activity has been regularly shared with online tenants on both Facebook and Twitter:



- 6.4 A number of individual HAPs have held their meetings in different locations, and visited other tenants groups or meetings to help raise their local profiles.
- 6.5 In April 2015 each HAPs produced a short 'annual report', sharing with tenants what its priorities were, what projects it had supported and feedback from tenants about what difference it made to them.

**What our communities say about the funding they've received ...**

*Put Sidlow, member of Huddersfield Community Group ... saying HAP funding, there was no opportunity to get out (on their own) the funds have helped us jing our way out ... on the large, and out it get us together as a group.*

*Angela Barker, Manager of St. Augustine's distributed some of the Winter Warmth Packs to ... Thank you for HAP for the generous ... The feedback were brilliant to ...*

*Kath Thompson, Community Champion on the Huddersfield page ... you are very happy with the work it's very good, thanks to HAP!*

Housing Advisory Panels (HAPs) are tenant led groups, representing ten or more local housing services and monitor local performance. Each panel is made up of up to 30 Council tenants some of which can be Council representatives, plus a local Councillor who work together to improve housing services and fund projects that benefit tenants.

We are always looking for new members to join our Housing Advisory Panels. If you are interested in becoming a member, call the number below to find out what's involved.

Find our more at [www.housing.gov.uk/hap](http://www.housing.gov.uk/hap), email: [housingadvisorypanels@huddersfield.gov.uk](mailto:housingadvisorypanels@huddersfield.gov.uk) or call 01484 378 5330

**Annual Report 2014/15**

**Inner East**  
Covering Cleaton and Tharfield, Burncliffe and Richmond Hill.

**Housing Advisory Panels - Shaping a local community**

Welcome to the first Annual Report from the Inner East Area Housing Advisory Panel.

We would like to report a year that:

- Our priorities
- Housing Advisory Panel bid successes
- A combination of reports and
- Hearing from our tenants so how the funding has helped them or improved where they live.

**Jayne Gottlieb**  
Chair of Inner East HAP

**Shaping a local community**

- our panel service and performance priorities are:
  - To monitor the repair services, working to improve the quality of response times for repairs.
  - To work closely with Leeds City Council's Locality Team ensuring communities in which we live become cleaner and safer for local people.
  - To monitor news collected and understand the affects of welfare changes.
  - The role of tenants to be heard and they have their concerns are acted on.
- our panel funding priorities are to support:
  - Young groups and promote youth engagement activity.
  - Schemes that improve the environment and address community safety, helping to reduce crime.
  - Projects that increase health, wellbeing and employability.
  - Projects that develop community spirit and bring communities together.

Inner East HAP Annual Report  
Covering: Cleaton and Tharfield, Burncliffe and Richmond Hill.

**Housing Advisory Panel Bid successes**

**Environmental Improvements** - Security camera at St Augustine's.

**Removal of overgrown bushes / shrubs at Pembroke Grange.**

**New gateway and gate at Riverside Court.**

**It's been a very busy year for the Housing Advisory Panels. To reflect the amount of Council investment in panels, we've focused on making sure we spend our budget wisely. In the year ahead all the panels will be looking at our wider role too, building our relationships with local tenants, responding to performance and tenant satisfaction trends and helping Housing Leeds review the quality of its services.**

Inner East HAP Annual Report  
Covering: Cleaton and Tharfield, Burncliffe and Richmond Hill.

**Breakdown of spend Inner East HAP**

Sutton Gardens Residents Association - chemical toilets	£195.00
East Hill Levensham Hall	£276.00
Copson Gate	£100.00
Cross Green Community Group - Wm event	£75.00
Mena Room (Spice 1) - funding for equipment	£820.00
Leeds African Cup of Harbours - Nigerian Community Leeds	£840.00
Theright Social Club - equipment	£350.00
Burncliffe Senior Action - Garden clean up	£1,750.00
St Wilfrids - fencing scheme	£1,084.32
Riverside Court environmental improvement - pathway and gate	£1,535.00
Leak in the Park	£1,000.00
Sutton Gardens Residents Association - community activity for families	£1,619.08
Indians and Active Group	£1,700.00
Pembroke Grange - environmental improvement	£1,448.48
Caly Park Scouts - camping trip	£1,880.88
Sutton Gardens received funding to support an event to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 1st world war	£1,050.00
Widder Harthorn	£1,000.00
Leeds Refugee Forum - One Community Centre	£1,000.00
Huddersfield Festival Partnership	£2,198.00
St Augustine security camera	£1,000.00
Community Pathway - East Panels Funding	£5,571.00
Dosson Road CCTV (match funding)	£5,821.00
Copson/Harfield/Burncliffe - Green Work Sector Project	£8,240.00

**Shaping a local community**

Inner East HAP Annual Report  
Covering: Cleaton and Tharfield, Burncliffe and Richmond Hill.

## 7 Training and Development

- 7.1 An induction training session was held in February 2015, to help newer panel members understand their role and the role of the panel. Feedback from the induction was positive, and will be used as a model for officers to follow for new panel members in the future.
- 7.2 A sub-group of HAP Chairs drafted a training and development plan, capturing the training needs of HAP members following feedback from all members and worked with officers to prioritise certain themes.

## 8 The Year Ahead

- 8.1 The focus for HAPs in this first year has been to develop common ways of working and to achieve consistent decision making for funding applications. The panels have made significant progress in this area and have a solid foundation to build upon.



8.2 There are a number of areas that the HAPs now wish to develop further during 2015/16, these include:

- Gaining a better understanding of the performance of key housing services, and to use this knowledge to work with officers to help shape improvements in services and innovative project proposals.
- Learning more about new tenant satisfaction information, to help understand what tenants think about housing services and the neighbourhoods they live in. This will help panels keep their local priorities up to date and support funding projects that benefit tenants the most.
- Building on existing skills and knowledge by participating in more varied and useful training and development opportunities. This could be bespoke training just for HAP members, or joint training with other involved tenants and also staff.
- Creating stronger and more visible links with local Tenants and Residents Groups, other tenant groups and forums working with Housing Leeds and to have a clear mutually beneficial relationship with the new 'Strategic Tenants Body'.
- Continue to promote HAP success stories using a variety of ways.
- Seeking more insight into the impact and beneficiaries of panel activity, for example by mapping funding decisions to see if any communities have yet to benefit, or by reviewing equality information to see if there are any customer groups that have benefitted less than others.

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Report author: Amanda Britton

Tel: 07891 277354

**Report of Chief Officer, Housing Management**

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 7th September 2015**

**Subject: Housing Leeds Customer Access Strategy**

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

**Summary of main issues**

The primary priority for Housing Leeds is to fundamentally increase tenant satisfaction.

A survey of tenants and residents (STAR) took place in November 2014. Tenant satisfaction was reported at 77%, however the survey highlighted areas for improvement and we want to ensure all tenants receive excellent services.

Keys areas for improvement include:

- Dealing with enquiries and providing an effective and efficient service
- Tenants being treated fairly, being able to trust the landlord and listening and acting on tenants views

**Recommendations**

That the Housing Advisory Board:

- Approves the approach, which is to improve tenant satisfaction, in line with Leeds City Council Customer Access Strategy

# 1 Purpose of this report

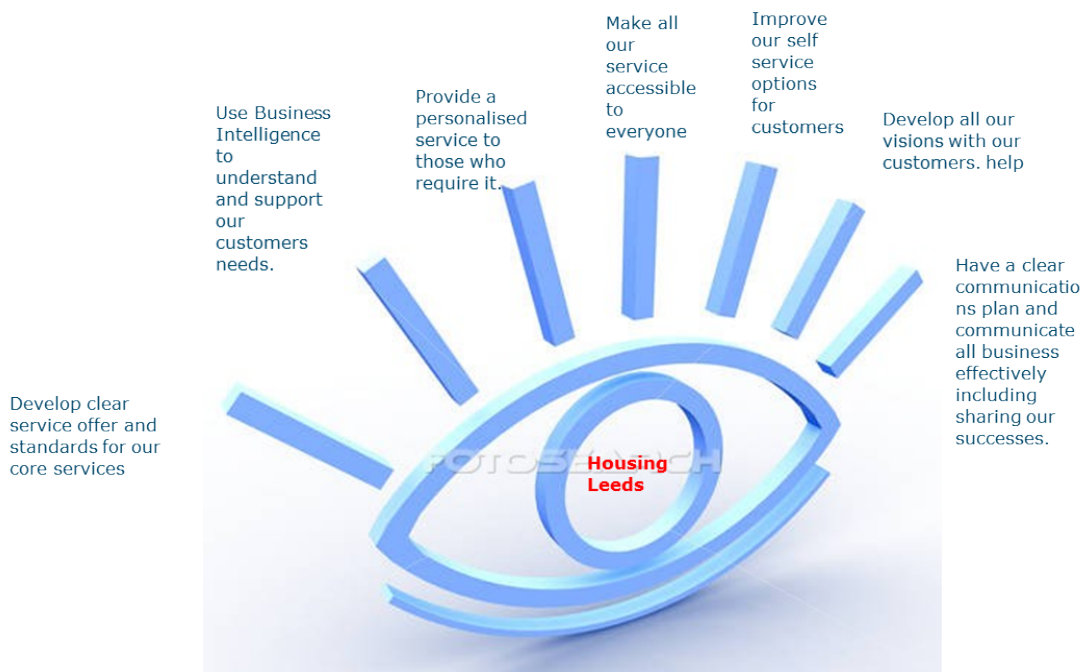
- 1.1 To update the Housing Advisory Board on progress made to improve tenant satisfaction

# 2 Background information

- 2.1 Whilst the 77% satisfaction figure remained the same as the previous survey, we want to improve service delivery
- 2.2 Housing Leeds aims to build an action plan based on the LCC Customer Access Strategy. (Appendix 1). To cultivate and embed this, there must be a commitment to it throughout the organisation, from the strategic leader to the front-line staff.

# 3 Vision & Strategy

- 3.1 As an established corporate customer services vision and strategy exists, it is proposed that Housing Leeds builds upon this work tailors it to ensure a step change in tenant satisfaction
- 3.2 Housing Leeds will include an outward customer vision to:



## **4 Service Standards/Offer**

- 4.1 One of the corporate customer access strategy actions is to develop in consultation with customers, a set of service standards. If Housing Leeds is to support the corporate strategy it will need to adhere to these.
- 4.2 Housing Leeds is currently working with Citizens and Communities on developing corporate standards. One proposal is for Housing Leeds to develop the standards with customers and for the Customer Access Board to recognise these and adopt them corporately.
- 4.3 In 2010 customers created a Housing Service offer. This is now due for an overhaul and the intention is to create a working group, made up of tenants, residents and officers to update the offer, creating a new set of overarching customer service, service standards with specific standards underpinning them. This would be signed off by VITAL, (Voice of Involved Tenants Across Leeds) the new Strategic Tenant Body.

## **5 Communications Plan**

- 5.1 Customers value accurate and comprehensive information that is delivered or available through the most appropriate channel for them.
- 5.2 An overarching communications plan has been developed, showing our options for communicating both inwards and outwards with both staff and customers.
- 5.3 A working group will be tasked with understanding deeper, these communication options and what works best for customers in different situations. Their task will be to:
- Review the customer pathways using Service improvement volunteers
  - Consider further options for improving the self-service option available to housing customers
  - Develop a detailed plan for communicating with customers on general information, day to day tenancy management, customer involvement, consultation and feedback.

## **6 Training/Delivery**

- 6.1 Housing Leeds has been working closely with the Contact centre to ensure that the telephony service is delivered effectively in partnership.

Actions taken are to:

- Undertake a review of processes with a view to streamlining them and making them more effective
- Regularly sharing information
- Provide regular updated contact lists
- Undertaking joint recruitment plans for new starters and apprentices
- Monthly liaison meetings to address problems before they escalate
- Shared projects and mail outs to ensure capacity can be met.
- Ensure they are linked in to our Hot Topics updates
- Advising of changes to policy and procedure in good time to ensure training can take place.

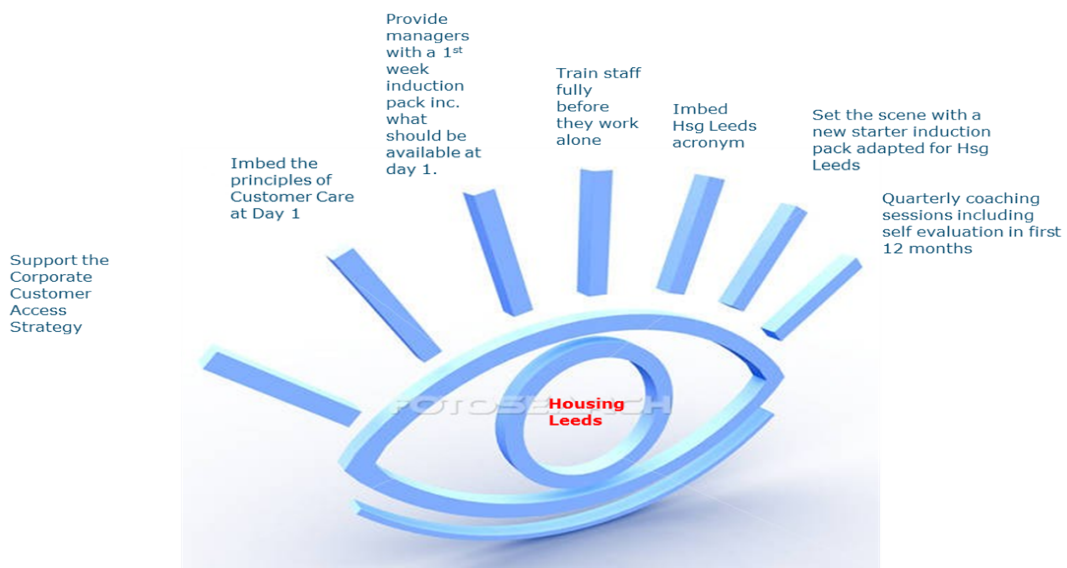
6.2 Housing Leeds is supporting the creation of the new community Hubs and the services they will support. We will ensure that we work in partnership with the centres to get better customer outcomes. Where we can, we will integrate our services into them to support the local communities.

6.3 Visits to the Centres of Excellence within Citizens and Communities, identified that robust customer service training was key to delivering the excellent customer experience.

6.4 Housing Leeds is currently working on an options appraisal as to the best training course available for front line staff. This needs to cover the full customer pathway from the greeting, to goodbye, to follow up. Consideration is currently being given to:

- An initial welcome pack being created to set the scene and expectations at appointment stage.
- Officers being taken out of the workplace to be trained making use of real life examples.
- Quarterly coaching sessions led by managers to ensure training has become common practice
- Train the trainer in order to have capacity to deliver customer service training whenever required for new cohorts of staff.

## 6.5 Housing Leeds will have an inward customer vision to:



## 7 Quality

### 7.1 The quality of the service Housing Leeds provides will be monitored by:

- Mystery shopping using our service improvement volunteers
- Feedback from Neighbourhood office customer experience surveys
- Staff feedback from our staff engagement surveys
- Type of complaints received
- Manager insight into staff performance
- Our citywide customer groups fed upwards to VITAL.
- Our service standards.

## 8 Corporate Considerations

### 8.1 Consultation and Engagement

8.2 Customers were consulted as part of the STAR survey as to their views on Customer Service.

8.3 The service offer created in 2010 was produced in line with customers' views. Any update will involve customers and be signed off by VITAL, the new Strategic Tenant Body.

- 8.4 Customer satisfaction surveys regarding the NHO service are being trialled in Moortown. It is envisaged that these will roll out to other offices once the initial analysis has taken place, due mid-August 2015.
- 8.5 Service Improvement volunteers will be utilised to undertake mystery shopping to evaluate the present and future position of our Customer Service.

## 9 **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 9.1 As part of our strategy we will be reviewing the access to our services. This will ensure that all our customers can access our services in the way that they want. Whether this is for their convenience or due to a specific need i.e. translator, hearing loops, disabled access.
- 9.2 We have reduced patch sizes so our officers can provide a more tailored service to meet the needs of the tenants in their area. This will improve the customer service offer to our tenants.
- 9.3 We have consulted with staff and they have told us that understanding religion is important to them. Being aware of different beliefs can assist with the services provided and give both the customer and the officer a better experience. Awareness sessions are to be delivered on Buddhism as this was the religion staff indicated they knew least about.

## 10 **Council policies and City Priorities**

- 10.1 The work we undertake will enhance the Corporate Customer Access strategy and contribute to establishing the foundation blocks for understanding our customers better and designing access to our services with them and around their needs.

## 11 **Resources and value for money**

- 11.1 A leading business said 'if you invest in staff and staff are happy, they do a good job and customers are happy'.
- 11.2 Ensuring staff happiness will potentially lead to a more motivated workforce and reduced levels of sickness.
- 11.3 Equipping officers to assist customers at first point of contact reduces costs often caused by avoidable contacts, where the customer has to come back after being wrongly signposted, expectations not set, or ownership not being taken.



- 11.3 Giving officers the confidence to assess and deal effectively with any situation makes them feel valued. It also leads to increased satisfaction e.g. the customer feels that they have been listened to and their enquiry acted upon.

## 12 **Legal Implications**

- 12.1 Our service offer has been and will continue to be developed in line with The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing 2012. In particular:
- provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards
  - the formulation of their landlord's housing related policies and Strategic priorities
  - the making of decisions about how housing related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards

## 13 **Risk Management**

- 13.1 That our proposals and actions do not influence customer perception about our service
- 13.2 That future STAR surveys do not show an improvement in customer service satisfaction
- 13.3 That staff feedback does not indicate that they felt the customer service training helped them to improve the service they provide to customers.

## 14 **Conclusions**

- 14.1 Housing Leeds is very committed in contributing to the Corporate Customer Access Strategy
- 14.2 Priorities over the next few months will be to
- Deliver a robust customer service training programme to key officer
  - Work with tenants and staff to produce a new service offer
  - Develop an innovative communications plan

15      **Recommendations**

That the Housing Advisory Board:






- Supports the direction of travel

16      **Background documents**

16.1    Appendix 1: Customer Access strategy

# Customer Access Strategy 2012 - 15

Leeds City Council is striving **'to be the best city council in the UK'** and to develop a future for local government built on the principles of civic enterprise. To ensure we meet these ambitions, a key success measure is delivering services which meet the needs of the people of Leeds. This **customer access strategy 2012-15** focuses on delivering this capability. The strategy establishes the foundation blocks for understanding our customers better and designing access to our services with them and around their needs.

We want our services to:	 Be open to all	 Provide Choice	 Meet Need	 Deliver First Time	 Provide Satisfaction
<b>Our outcomes...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All customers have fair and equal access to services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers have greater input to, and choice over, the services they receive and how they access them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers influence the design and delivery of the services available to them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wherever possible, customer needs will be resolved at the first point of contact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer satisfaction drives service improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>Our headline target(s)...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased service take-up among under-represented and vulnerable groups.</li> <li>Increased consultation with community groups in relation to preferred access channels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace enquiries made via face to face and telephony channels with opportunities to interact via self-service channels.</li> <li>Reduce the number of inappropriate /little used channels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More service redesign projects that include customers directly in their delivery.</li> <li>Increased service satisfaction levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced avoidable contact.</li> <li>Reduced service failure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance met on service standards.</li> <li>Increased customer satisfaction across all service delivery channels.</li> </ul>
<b>What we hope to achieve...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved understanding of customer diversity issues to remove barriers to access for under-represented and vulnerable groups.</li> <li>Increased targeting and take-up of services for under-represented and vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer choice on how they interact with the Council.</li> <li>Seamless service delivery across a broad range of channels.</li> <li>Maximise opportunities for citizens to interact with the Council via mobile and social network platforms.</li> <li>Withdraw channels that citizens do not use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer insight is consistently used to profile our communities, determine service delivery and market services to the people of Leeds.</li> <li>A clear and consistent approach to the identification of customer pathways/journeys.</li> <li>Community-led service provision where demand exists.</li> <li>An ability to respond quickly to demands for new ways of interacting with the Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A single view of customers and how they interact with services.</li> <li>Consistent information, advice and tools provided across all channels.</li> <li>Resolution at the first point of contact.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer satisfaction at the heart of our performance management framework.</li> <li>Customer satisfaction at the heart of our commissioning framework.</li> </ul>
<b>What we're going to do...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximise the use of existing customer service assets - the Contact Centre, One Stop Centres, Joint Service Centres and the website, taking into account local needs.</li> <li>Provide information in accessible formats across channels.</li> <li>Use customer insight to develop channels to increase service take-up.</li> <li>Ensure fair and equal access is key to our performance framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a more transactional website providing self-service options for service delivery.</li> <li>Where appropriate give control to the community to deliver services and support for themselves through the provision of social technology platforms and opendata.</li> <li>Increase online book and pay facilities and enable citizens to track application requests.</li> <li>Continually review channel usage to ensure the most cost-effective channel/s for service delivery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a clear and consistent approach to gathering customer insight.</li> <li>Redesign services around the customer and provide/commission them on this basis.</li> <li>Improve locally based service delivery through streamlining processes, having a more flexible workforce, and making more efficient use of our assets.</li> <li>Develop further self-service opportunities for citizens to access services giving priority to areas of greatest demand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximise the depth of enquiry handled at the first point of contact.</li> <li>Have a unique and consistent view of the customer.</li> <li>Ensure that appropriate Customer Relations training is readily available to support the delivery of this strategy</li> <li>Use customer feedback to drive content on the Council's website.</li> <li>Exploit the benefits of using multi-media content on the Council's website to help customers wishing to self-serve.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the Councils performance management framework incorporates the measurement of customer outcomes across all service channels</li> <li>Publish annual measurable corporate customer service standards, developed with customers themselves.</li> <li>Publish satisfaction levels against those standards.</li> </ul>

Treating people fairly

Working with communities

Working as a team for Leeds

Spending money wisely

Being open, honest and trusted

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Report author: Rob McCartney

Tel: 2243480

**Report of:** Environment and Housing

**Report to:** Housing Advisory Board

**Date:** 7th September 2015

**Subject:** Housing Adaptations

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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

### Summary of main issues

The process of undertaking housing adaptations aims to create an accessible living environment which helps disabled people to continue to live in their own homes or where appropriate we would help to facilitate a move to more suitable accommodation.

These new arrangements have been introduced to provide a consistent service for customers by adopting a bespoke service to an individual household that looks at offering a solution that is specific to their individual needs.

The report seeks to outline progress relating to the change, provide an overview of current performance trends and look at opportunities for service improvement.

### Recommendations

Housing Advisory Board are asked to note the contents of this report.

## 1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To give an overview of recent changes in the way this service is provided, look at the current performance and ways to provide further service integration and improve the customer experience.

## 2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The legal framework relating to housing adaptations is set out in the 1996 Housing Construction Grants and Regeneration Act: Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs).

A DFG covers the cost of major adaptations which costs more than £1k, to create an accessible living environment for disabled people. A DFG is approved if the Council assesses major adaptations are 'necessary and appropriate' meet a disabled person's accessibility need and that it is 'reasonable and practicable' to adapt a disabled person's home.

- 2.2 The legal framework relating to DFGs is tenure neutral. Nevertheless there are important distinctions between the adaptation of Council housing and that of other tenures.

The adaptation of Council housing is funded through the Housing Revenue Account with private sector (owner-occupied/ privately rented/ housing associations) adaptations being funded through government grant and supplemented by Council capital funding.

Agreements are in place with local housing associations to contribute to the cost of adapting housing association managed stock. The 2015/16 budget for council housing adaptations is £5.2m. A means-test (excluding adaptations for children) is applied to the DFG entitlement for home-owners/private tenants/housing association tenants; whilst there is no means-test applied to the adaptation of council housing.

- 2.3 The management of the housing adaptations service within the Council changed in June 2015. The 'necessary and appropriate' assessment continues to be carried out by an Occupational Therapist working in Adult Social Care, Children's Services or Housing Leeds. In order to improve the service and create a more consistent City wide service it was decided to move the service into Housing Leeds with the 'assessment' being done by the Health and Housing with the 'delivery' of work being undertaken by Property and Contracts.

- 2.4 The strategic thinking relating to housing adaptations is framed around the concept of a 'housing pathway' with a disabled person having the options of 'staying put' in their existing home through suitable adaptation or making a 'planned move' to alternative accessible housing. These options are, where appropriate, considered concurrently.

If a decision is made that it is not 'reasonable and practicable' to adapt a disabled person's current Council tenancy then a 'housing needs' assessment is carried out by the Health and Housing Service to determine priority for re-housing with an accompanying medical re-housing recommendation, which sets out the type of housing and adaptations that the person requires in order to be suitably re-housed.

The Health and Housing service works with disabled Council housing applicants to help them secure a suitable Council allocation, which will include assistance with bidding for available homes. These decisions are made in consultation with the local housing management service to ensure the best match between available stock and the individual needs of the applicants.

- 2.5 Property and Contracts has lead responsibility to determine how to deliver cross-tenure works based on the industry capacity. The capacity of the internal and external service provision is being considered in order to ensure the Council meets its internal targets relating to work completion times and quality, and the Council's intention to continue to support the work of local contractors.
- 2.6 Cross-tenure targets have been set to measure the time taken to complete major adaptations, which is from the date an application is received to the date work is completed. The measure includes three elements, the 'necessary and appropriate' assessment by an OT, the 'reasonable and practicable' assessment by a surveyor and the delivery of any work which including both the selection of a contractor and the works being undertaken.

The Council has recently adopted more demanding performance targets 56 days to complete the OT assessment and 70 days to complete the works on high priority cases.

### 3.0 Main Issues

#### 3.1 Council Housing Suitability Assessments:

A target has been set to make a suitability of let decision within three working days of receiving the referral. Performance for June and July 2015 is as follows:

Area	Number of Assessments	Number completed within 3 working days
ENE	83	82
South	168	119
WNW	99	94

- 3.2 A key issue highlighted through the performance monitoring is the high number of assessments that result in a decision that the prospective let is not suitable for the applicant; which can slow down the lettings process. Operating a choice based lettings system means that there will be always be some disparity between the bidding choices made by applicants and the specific characteristics of a property. Medical re-housing recommendations are notional assessments, based upon the type of housing and adaptations a disabled person requires, while an OT will assess the specific characteristics of a property. Nevertheless, there is an opportunity to look at medical re-housing recommendations, and the assistance given to disabled applicants to bid for suitable properties which will improve current performance.
- 3.3 A key part of this work is the development of an Accessible Housing Register that will better match disabled housing applicants, based upon their medical re-housing recommendations, and the pool of adapted council housing with improved detail on the adaptations within the interior and curtilage of the property. This work involves reviewing all current medical re-housing recommendations and recording of adaptations. The Accessible Housing Register will better enable officers, to assist disabled people with making suitable bids and determining suitable direct let offers.
- 3.4 **Major Adaptations Spend:** the budget for council housing adaptation work in 2015/16 is £5.2m, which includes the delivery of specialist works such as stair lifts and through floor lifts as well as standard work such as ramps and adapted bathing facilities.
- 3.5 **Service Review:** In order to ensure that we meet the individual needs of individual households we are currently undertaking a review of our processes to ensure that it is responsive and flexible to deliver a

service that offers value for money, is consistent in approach and delivers against the assessed needs of individual family members.

- 3.6 A workshop has been arranged between all partners in order to assess our current process, reduce duplication and align our collective services into a single delivery model that will offer a consistent approach to service delivery.
- 3.7 There are a number of areas that will be considered further as part of the overall process and will include the following;
- Pooling of resources to deliver the OT activity.
  - Availability of resources to deliver works
  - Definition of an adapted property when allocating an empty property
  - Development of an accessible housing register
  - Link expenditure and demand to the future investment strategy
- 3.8 **Major Adaptations Performance:** 83% of major adaptations to council housing completed between April and July 2015 were delivered within the target timescale. Comparable performance for 2014/15 was 85%. It is important to stress that the performance targets are now significantly more demanding: 70 days rather than 114 days for high priority cases.
- 3.9 The targets are applied irrespective of the works required, and some complex cases have gone over target. There are some issues relating to the performance of contractors, especially sub-contractors, and this is being addressed.
- 3.10 There are some issues relating to securing access to a tenancy and/or the need for wider improvement work, this will be tackled through a partnership approach which puts the tenant at the center of the process

## **4.0 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 As part of the service review consultation will be undertaken with user groups, support groups and Members through the HAB.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 The delivery of adaptation services makes an important contribution to enabling disabled people to continue to live independently and promoting health and well-being.

### **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 The delivery of adaptation services makes an important contribution to promoting the health and wellbeing of disabled people.

### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The report sets out opportunities for generating efficiencies within existing budgets to delivery an adaptations service throughout the city. These opportunities could result in the costs associated with hospitalisation or care, are reduced or avoided.



#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 The Council delivers adaptation services in accordance with the legal framework set out in the 1996 Housing Construction Grants and Regeneration Act.

4.5.2 The report does not contain any exempt information.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 The report sets out opportunities for delivering better value for money in the assessment and delivery of adaptation services.

#### **5.0 Conclusions**

5.1 The Council has re-organised its adaptation services around the two functions of assessment and delivery. The report sets out progress to date in respect of implementing this re-organisation and how further improvement opportunities can be achieved.

#### **6.0 Recommendations**

6.1 Housing Advisory Board are asked to note the contents of the report.

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# Housing Advisory Board

## Forward Plan

7<sup>th</sup> September 2015



Deadline for first drafts	Deadline for final drafts after Chair's brief	Item	CO/Author
Monday 7 September 2015			
Deadline for reports to Neil – Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> August 2015 12 noon <b>Chair's Brief Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015 at 9.00 am</b>	Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> August 2015 10.00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position July 2015/16</li> <li>• Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 4 2015/16</li> <li>• Performance Update</li> <li>• Key Welfare Changes and Preparations for Universal Credit</li> <li>• Update on Tenant Involvement Framework</li> <li>• Housing Leeds Customer Access Strategy</li> <li>• Adaptations</li> </ul>	Richard Ellis  Stephen Boyle  Debra Scott  Mandy Sawyer  Mandy Sawyer  Mandy Sawyer  Rob McCartney/Simon Costigan

Tuesday 10 November 2015			
<p>Deadline for reports to Neil Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015</p> <p><b>Chair's Brief Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at 9.00 am</b></p>	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2015 12 noon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position July 2015/16</li> <li>• Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 4 2015/16</li> <li>• Performance Update</li> <li>• Community Lettings Policy</li> <li>• Encouraging Tenant Mobility</li> <li>• Customer Service Standards / Local Service Offer to Tenants</li> <li>• Housing Strategy Updates</li> <li>• High Rise Project</li> <li>• Updates from Tenant Representatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HAPs</li> <li>○ High Rise</li> <li>○ LTF</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Richard Ellis</p> <p>Stephen Boyle</p> <p>Debra Scott</p> <p>Mandy Sawyer</p> <p>Mandy Sawyer</p> <p>Mandy Sawyer</p> <p>Rob McCartney</p> <p>Martin Long</p> <p>Tenant Reps</p>

Deadline for first drafts	Deadline for final drafts after Chair's brief	Item	CO/Author
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2016			
Deadline for report to Neil Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2016 12 noon  Chairs Brief (Thurs 14, Fri 15, Mon 18 <sup>th</sup> , Jan 2016)	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2016 12 noon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance update (capital and revenue)</li> <li>• Performance Update</li> <li>• Extra Care Housing</li> <li>• Housing Strategy Updates</li> </ul>	R Ellis/Stephen Boyle/Helen Semianczuk Debra Scott Mandy Sawyer Rob McCartney
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> April 2016			
Deadline for report to Neil Thursday 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2016 12 noon  Chairs Brief (Thurs 7 <sup>th</sup> , Fri 8 <sup>th</sup> , Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> April)	Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	

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