



## HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

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Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on  
Tuesday, 10th November, 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  
Vacancy

#### 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 7<sup>th</sup> September 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

**VOICE OF INVOLVED TENANTS ACROSS LEEDS**

13 - 26

To receive a report from Voice of Involved Tenants Across Leeds (VITAL) which is intended to provide an insight into the creation and direction of travel of the new strategic tenant body known as VITAL. Ted Wilson, Chair of the Cross City Chair's Group will present the report on behalf of VITAL.

(Report attached)

9

**HOUSING LEEDS CAPITAL FINANCIAL  
POSITION PERIOD 6 2015/16**

27 -  
36

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 6 for the financial year 2015/16.

(Report attached)

10

**HOUSING LEEDS (HRA) REVENUE FINANCIAL  
POSITION - PERIOD 6 - 2015/16**

37 -  
42

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 September 2015.

(Report attached)

11

**PERFORMANCE REPORT**

43 -  
58

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)

12

**EFFECTIVE HOUSING MANAGEMENT & LETTINGS POLICIES**

59 -  
78

To consider a report of the Director of Environment and Housing which seeks the Boards views on new approaches to housing management and the key principles for local lettings policies.

(Report attached)

13

**PROMOTING TENANT MOBILITY**

79 -  
88

To consider a report of the Director of Environment and Housing which provides an evaluation of tenant mobility incentive schemes operated in Leeds to date, consider other options available to encourage tenant mobility and to determine the options on spending the remainder of the budget.

(Report attached)

14

**HIGH RISE PROJECT UPDATE**

89 -  
114

To consider a report of the Director of Environment and Housing which provides an update on progress with the High Rise project, including the delivery of a number of work strands:

- Housing Management - including extensive pilot project in Clydes and Wortleys;
- Investment Strategy;
- Repairs and Maintenance;
- Enhanced Community Safety

(Report attached)

**HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD FORWARD PLAN 2015/16**

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

(Report attached)

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

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

- 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

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## HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

MONDAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER, 2015

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

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

### **Tenant/Leaseholder**

Ted Wilson  
Andy Liptrot  
David Atkinson

### **Independent Representative**

Timothy Woods

### **Co-opted Member**

Jo Hourigan

## **18 Chair's opening remarks**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of Housing Advisory Board in the Council's new committee room and asked Board Members and Officers to introduce themselves

## **19 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest

## **20 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from David Glew, Andrew Feldhaus and Matthew Walker

## **21 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the Housing Advisory Board meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 be approved subject to the following amendments:

The inclusion of the names of all of the attendees present at the meeting

Minute 11 relating to Environmental Improvement Programme Update to include after ' Councillor Ritchie questioned the spread of projects, suggesting more might be targeted to reduce inequality and deprivation across the city' the words ' and that the spend ought to be proportionate to the Council house stock levels'

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Tuesday, 10th November, 2015

Minute 11 relating to Environmental Improvement Programme Update to amend the typing error in the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph

## **22 Matters Arising From the Minutes**

The following matters arising/actions from the minutes were highlighted:

### Minute 12 – Contract Strategy and future of Construction Services

The Board was informed that approval had now been received to the new pay proposals for staff

### Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 2 2015/16 – Minute 8 – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 meeting

That work was continuing to provide information to the Board on a Ward basis, with this being circulated to Members within the next few weeks

### Environmental Improvement Programme Update – Minute 11 – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 meeting

Councillor Hamilton thanked Officers for the information which had been provided to her on this matter and queried whether all of the works had been completed by projected period of the end of Summer 2015. The Chief Officer Housing Management stated that she would provide further information on this directly to Councillor Hamilton

## **23 Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 4 2015/16**

The Director of Environment and Housing presented a report setting out the financial position statement on the HRA Housing Leeds Capital programme at period 4 for the financial year 2015/16

The Head of Finance, Environment and Housing presented the report and responded to queries and comments from the Board

Members discussed the report with the key issues being raised relating to:

- the reasons for the adjustment to the budget
- the level of uncommitted funding and the timescales for this to be committed
- new build and the possibility of specifying which properties would include accommodation for older people
- the inclusion of Rosemont under 'Other Planned' as no decision had yet been taken on this
- the number of small, Council owned sites which were to be disposed of and whether the potential of such sites was being considered
- the possibility of achieving some new build in the Wetherby area

The Board was informed that the adjustment of the budget down to circa £75m had been based largely on the capacity in the service to ensure all the work was delivered. There was a need to plan for constancy and the aim was to plan for circa £80m for the next 3 years

In terms of new build, the programme covered the period up to 2018, and in terms of uncommitted funds, Officers were looking at areas of Leeds where there was high demand but currently little supply

It was accepted that in terms of Rosemont, no final decision on this had been reached but that provision had been made to support a new build option

In respect of utilising Council owned sites, the Board was informed that all sites were being considered. A particular difficulty was the need to balance where high demand existed with affordability and where land values were high, new build was difficult to deliver, as in Wetherby. However, working with other Council Departments, a prospectus was being drawn up for developers, to indicate where there was unmet need, particularly for extra care facilities to encourage developers to meet this need

**RESOLVED** - To note the Housing Leeds and BITMO refurbishment programme and Housing Leeds Council House Growth programme position at period 4, 2015/16

## **24 Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position July 2015/16**

The Director of Environment and Housing presented a report updating the Board on the revenue financial position for the Housing Leeds (HRA) service as at the end of July 2015

A summary of the Key Variances in respect of income and expenditure were outlined in the submitted report together with information on the level of Right to Buy sales

The Head of Finance, Environment and Housing presented the report and responded to queries and comments

Board Members discussed the report with the main areas of debate relating to:

- rent collection rates
- rent arrears and the level of support given to assist people in this
- the level of Right to Buy sales and the impact of these on housing stock levels going forward
- PFI and that further information particularly on the level of income from this was required

The Board was informed of the level of work which had been done to ensure rent collection was maximised, including working in partnership with Revenue and Benefits colleagues and setting targets for each housing manager. In terms of assistance to people who were experiencing difficulties in paying their rent a range of different mechanisms were being considered as were the development of new approaches, especially for those people with variable incomes. In terms of the collection rates for August, the Board was informed these showed an improvement with the collection rate being reported as 96.36%

On the issue of Right to Buy sales, the Director of Environment and Housing stated there was a legal obligation to respond to requests from tenants to purchase their property, however, despite the increase incentives introduced by Central Government, the number of sales had not risen dramatically. It was noted that for each property sold, the Council received a level of funding, however, this sum did not cover the cost of a new build

**RESOLVED** - To note the contents of the report

## **25 Performance Report**

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Tuesday, 10th November, 2015

Housing Advisory Board considered a report of the Director of Environment and Housing summarising the latest available performance against measures relating to the new six Housing Leeds priorities which had been agreed by the Board. The report also highlighted the ongoing development of the relevant performances measures and included statistical and graphical information in the form of dashboards to illustrate the work being undertaken and to provide useful context. Members were informed of an error in the report relating to the figures in the end column of the dashboard relating to priority 1

The Head of Resources, Housing and Strategy presented the report and outlined the current position in relation to each of the Housing Leeds Priorities, (referring the Board to other agenda items that provided further information on particular performance areas). The following information being provided:

- Priority 3 – Housing People – homeless preventions were exceptionally high and Leeds was a top performer in relation to comparator authorities. Councillor Ritchie welcomed the provision of additional information on Homelessness assessment outcomes and commended this performance. In relation to re-lets the number of days had reduced and the cumulative average was now 33 days
- Priority 4 – Repairs – that in general a steady performance was being achieved although not quite to target, and there were some issues in one geographical area which were being addressed
- Priority 6 – Knowing Our Tenants – that the Department was above its target for Annual Home Visits

In terms of apprenticeships the Chair welcomed the hard work which had been undertaken on this

The Board considered the report and commented on a range of issues, with the key areas of discussion relating to:

- re-let times, with Officers advising that work to speed up the process was being undertaken through a more collective approach, with the figures for July showing an average re-let time of 27 days
- the possibility of highlighting the financial benefits achieved through shorter re-let times
- disrepair claims – the work being undertaken to reduce these with better management and increased resources, including picking up issues through the annual visit
- the target for completion of repairs correctly first time and the associated costs of this. The Board was informed that Officers were looking at how targets were managed across different contractors
- the use of local firms by contractors, with the Board being advised that contractors were actively encouraged to use local firms and local labour wherever possible and practical

At this point Councillor Hamilton brought to the attention of the Board

that she had recently been involved in dealing with a long-standing repair issue for a family member

- whether tenants were referred to other agencies if additional support was considered necessary. The Chief Officer, Housing Management advised that Housing Leeds had a duty to provide advice and support and was currently undertaking work on this together with a review of the work carried out by the Tenancy Sustainment Officers, with further information being made available to Members if required
- Housing Advisory Panel funding, with a verbal update being provided on the number of projects which had been supported; those which were in progress and the level of funding which was committed. The Chair asked that this information be put in writing and sent to all Board Members

**RESOLVED** - i) To note the most recent performance information relating to 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 Board meetings

iii) To note the details of apprenticeships at section 4 of the submitted report

## **26 Key Welfare Changes and Preparations for Universal Credit.**

The Director of Environment and Housing submitted a report informing Housing Advisory Board of the key welfare changes; implications from the recent Budget and the preparations being made for the implementation of Universal Credit which would be introduced in Leeds on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016. Appended to the report was a copy of the Housing Leeds Action Plan 2015-2016 relating to welfare reforms and the introduction of Universal Credit and a summary report of the financial implications of the Chancellor's July budget statement

Officers presented the report and informed the Board that initially around 60-80 tenants per month would be affected by the changes, however this would increase with around 24,000 tenants likely to be affected by the welfare reform changes

In terms of the provision of support to those who would be affected, teams of dedicated Officers were being developed who would provide support through access to IT and help with finding employment. In addition an action plan had been developed around communication and training for staff

The Board discussed the report, with the following issues being raised:

- the extent to which tenants affected by Under Occupation were seeking to be rehoused or were accepting reductions in Housing Benefit
- the cessation of Housing Benefit for those aged 18-20 and whether exceptions would be made for those young people leaving care. Members were informed that details of any exceptions had not yet been provided by DWP

- whether any information was available from other Local Authorities where Universal Credit had already been introduced. The Board was informed that a visit to Oldham Council was to take place and that a report on the findings of that visit could be brought to a future meeting
- the need for a representative from the Council's Benefits Service to attend a further meeting to provide information to the Board including on direct payments. Particular concern was raised about the in-built delay of 5-6 weeks before the first payment of Universal Credit was made and the fact that claims would no longer be backdated to 6 months but to 4 weeks. Members were informed that although a mechanism existed whereby payments could be taken directly by the Council this would only be possible after people had already fallen into arrears and of the list of priority debts set out by DWP, rent was not a top priority
- the cost to the Council of the additional staffing required to provide support. The Director of Environment and Housing advised that whilst there would be an additional cost the decision to provide this support was an economically sensible one
- how people with particular needs would be supported. Officers advised that for those people an holistic approach would be taken which looked at the needs of individuals
- how tenants would be involved in the work being undertaken with the Board being advised this would be through VITAL
- the number of other sections within the Council which were working on these changes and that a Scrutiny Inquiry was also taking place
- the composition of the membership of the Welfare Reform Board and the Citizens@Leeds Programme Board
- the implications of the changes together with the 1% cut in rent announced recently by the Chancellor and how pressure could be brought to bear on Central Government, possibly by joining with other Local Authorities to share information and best practice. The Director of Environment and Housing stated that Housing Leeds did engage in consultation with other Local Authorities and that Senior Officers were part of national networks, however it was clear the Government intended to implement the planned changes so the key element was about how Housing Leeds responded to them

The Chair welcomed the work which had been carried out to date but stressed there were many more issues which would need to be considered and addressed and that the Board should retain a watching brief on this matter though the preparation for Universal Credit and its implementation

**RESOLVED** – i) To note the contents of the report and the support provided to tenants to respond to the challenges of Welfare Reform and the preparations for the introduction of Universal Credit

ii) That the Chief Officer Welfare and Benefits be asked to submit a report to a future meeting which provided further information on the Welfare Reform proposals, including details of exceptions

## **27 Tenant Engagement Update**

Housing Advisory Board considered a report of the Director of Environment and Housing which provided details of the progress being made in the development of tenant involvement and the newly formed city-wide groups together with details of their strategic priorities. Appended to the report was a diagram showing the relationships and reporting structure of the Tenant Involvement Service; the draft terms of reference of the Strategic Tenants Body and a copy of the 2014-2015 Annual Report by the Cross City Chairs Group of the Housing Advisory Panels

Officers presented the report and outlined the key developments which had occurred since this matter was last reported to the Board in May 2015

Members were informed that the overall framework was being embedded; that VITAL – the new strategic tenant body – had been formalised and had met on three occasions

Concerns were raised about work being undertaken by a theology student from Leeds University on a project around the religion or belief of LCC tenants; the cost of this to Housing Leeds; how such information would be of benefit especially as statistical data around this subject already existed. The Board was informed no direct costs would be incurred by Housing Leeds and that the Department had been approached by Leeds University; that such information could be of use in respect of engagement and more practical issues relating to, for example, the layout of kitchens where certain requirements existed.

Concerns continued to be raised about the need for Officers to be involved at some level in the report which would be produced and that there were many more pressing issues for Officers to focus on

The successful work with TARAs in the Bramley area was reported, and that the local Tenant Engagement Officer had played a key role in this success. The Board was informed that the first TARA Panel would meet on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September

A typing error in paragraph 4.2 of the submitted report was highlighted

In responding to points which had been raised, the Director of Environment and Housing stated that a significant amount of work had been done with staff on engagement with the wide range of groups which formed Housing Leeds' tenants but that further work was required on this, especially how best to engage with younger people

**RESOLVED** - That Housing Advisory Board recognises the new city-wide strategic groups and supports the overall approach and direction of travel to create an engaged and representative tenant base within Leeds

## **28 Housing Leeds Customer Access Strategy**

The Director of Environment and Housing presented a report updating the Board on progress which had been made to improve tenant satisfaction in line with Housing Leeds' primary priority of fundamentally increasing tenant

satisfaction. Appended to the report was a copy of the Council's Customer Access Strategy upon which Housing Leeds' action plan would be based

The Board was informed that Housing Leeds' offer to its customers was being examined, with some elements of self-service being introduced which would also free up staff to offer a more personalised approach where this was needed. Staff training was also being undertaken to ensure that all customer-facing staff had received similar training to that in Customer Services and that they also had the skills and tools to provide what was required. In terms of monitoring the strategy, the quality of the experience would be considered

Members commented on the report in relation to routine concerns relating to the length of time tenants had to wait until telephone calls were answered and whether in terms of service delivery, this was carried out to fit around the tenants. The method of how quality would be monitored was also raised

The Board was informed that work had been taking place with the Contact Centre on telephone response rates and that improvements to this could be made. On the issue of hours of operation, it was accepted that Housing Leeds needed to extend their hours more to suit their tenants

On the issue of monitoring of quality, a range of measures would be used, including involving tenants groups and through the biannual tenant satisfaction survey

The Chair welcomed the report and the work which was being done to improve access for tenants and hoped this would in turn translate to higher satisfaction rates in the next tenants survey

**RESOLVED** - i) To approve the approach as set out in the submitted report

ii) That an update on this issue be provided to the Board together with details on how the differing age ranges of tenants could be addressed in terms of the best way in which to engage with the different groups

## **29 Housing Adaptations**

The Director of Environment and Housing presented a report which provided Housing Advisory Board with an overview of recent changes in the way the housing adaptation service was provided, including detail on current performance and ways in which further service integration and improved customer experience could be achieved

**RESOLVED** - To note the report

## **30 Housing Advisory Board Forward Plan 2015**

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

Items for the next meeting for consideration included The Community Lettings Policy and the High Rise Project. The Chair also suggested that the tenant/leaseholder representatives on the Board be asked to provide updates on the work they were doing



A request for information to be provided to Councillor Hamilton on the individual projects for the high rise blocks was noted

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

**31 Agenda distribution**

Concerns were raised that in some cases the papers for this meeting had been received at short notice with a request being made that the papers were delivered to Board Members rather than being sent through the post

The Clerk apologised for this and said that whilst the papers had been sent out in good time for the meeting, the Bank Holiday could have contributed to the papers being received late. The Chair asked that this be monitored and if delays continued to occur that an alternative method of delivery be considered

**32 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 5.00pm in the Civic Hall, Leeds

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Meeting Date	Minute ref no.	Action	Responsible for Output	Others involved	(last updated 27 October 2015)	Status
09/07/15	72	<p><u>Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 2 2015/16</u></p> <p>That a breakdown of housing works in each ward would be circulated to members as it became available</p>	Simon Costigan	Intelligence team	<p>A project has been initiated to allow data to be captured and manipulated to deliver details of planned works by ward. This requires work to be done to re-engineer some processes in order to report an accurate picture across all investment plans and activity at a ward level. An assessment is being made of the time and resources needed to deliver this and proposed delivery timescales will be estimated. The progress made will be reported to the next HAB</p>	Open (in progress)
07/09/15	25	<p><u>Performance Report</u></p> <p>Provision of information in writing for Board members on Housing Advisory Panel funding allocations and spending/commitments (as reported verbally)</p>	Liz Cook		<p>This information is reported via the Priority 1 dashboard</p>	Close

07/09/15	26	<u>Key Welfare Changes and Preparations for Universal Credit</u>	Liz Cook		Information will be shared with the Board at their next meeting in February	Open
		Provision of information following visit to Oldham to be brought to a future meeting				
		Chief Officer Welfare and Benefits to submit a report to a future meeting, including details of exceptions	Steve Carey		Information will be shared with the Board at their next meeting in February	Open
07/09/15	28	<u>Housing Leeds Customer Access Strategy</u>	Liz Cook		A report will be brought to HAB in the New Year	Open
		An update on this issue would be provided to the Board, together with details on how the differing age ranges of tenants could be addressed in terms of the best way in which to engage with the different groups				
07/09/15	30	<u>HAB Forward Plan</u>	Liz Cook /Martyn Long		This information has now been provided	Close
		A request for information to be provided to Councillor Hamilton on the individual projects for High Rise blocks was noted				
07/09/15	31	<u>Agenda Distribution</u>	Corporate Governance	Facilities Management	To await outcome of this round of Board paper distribution	Open
		The Chair asked that this be monitored and if delays continued to occur that an alternative method of delivery be considered				

### **Purpose of this report**

Housing Advisory Board requested an update from the key citywide strategic tenant groups. As a new strategic tenant body has now been created, we felt that the report should be written and presented by us. This report is intended to provide an insight into the creation and direction of travel of the new strategic tenant body known as VITAL. It also provides an update from each of the citywide tenant groups.

### **Progress to date**

Between December 2014 and April 2015, tenants from our existing strategic tenant groups; CCCG, HAP's and LTF volunteered to be part of a task and finish group, to work alongside officers from the tenant involvement team, to create a new model to strengthen the tenant involvement framework and give tenants a clearer strategic voice.

This helped us create the hub model which shows the relationships and lines of communication between the different involvement groups. See appendix 1.

It was agreed that chairs and vice chairs would form the makeup of the new body and that we would be able to co-opt members in, to ensure we had a fair representation of skills, diversity and area representation.

To date, we have had four meetings. These have involved:

- Selecting a name from options put forward by the group; VITAL, Voice of involved tenants across Leeds, was chosen
- Considering in more detail the role of the group, and how it can provide leadership to the tenant involvement framework
- Creating and signing off a Terms of reference, see appendix 2
- Creating a forward work plan, see appendix 3
- Creating a draft recruitment and selection process for all involved groups.
- Creating a sub group to directly support and direct communications in relation to Universal credit and Welfare reform

We also participated in a VITAL Away Day in September. This was facilitated by an Independent Tenant Advisor, recognising the need to better understand the different groups that are represented by VITAL. At the Away Day we explored what our leadership role means in practice, communicating with and providing direction to the tenants that we represent. We also considered our relationship with the Housing Advisory Board, and in

particular how we can strengthen our role on the Housing Advisory Board as being the strategic voice of tenants.

### **VITAL - Taking the lead in Tenant Involvement**

As VITAL members, we feel that the group is evolving. We are open to change and understand that our involvement in various projects and issues will change from time to time. We see ourselves as setting the foundations for the future, both of VITAL and the overall tenant involvement framework. We want to meet the obligations of those we represent and work closely together with Housing Leeds to improve the way that services are provided to tenants. We feel that it is VITAL's role to question why things are being done. We are confident in the approach of working together with Housing Leeds to carry out improvements and can see the mutual benefits.

We are keen to formalise VITAL's role as the strategic voice of tenants by beginning to do the following:

- We are keen to be made aware of all significant policy changes and strategy developments at an early stage and be given the opportunity to have input into their development.
- We would like to be consulted on the content of HAB papers where possible prior to meetings, so that we have the opportunity to formally comment on them.
- We have developed the VITAL forward plan to link in with the HAB forward plan, so that we are considering items before they are planned for discussion at a HAB meeting. This will mean that tenant members of HAB can provide more formal feedback on behalf of tenants. We would also like to request items to be added to the HAB forward plan.
- As chairs/vice chairs of city wide tenant groups we will ensure that we carry out wider tenant consultation with relevant tenant groups.
- As VITAL members we are committed to regular HAB attendance and to providing updates on our work and outcomes achieved.

### **Our priorities for the future**

- **Create a Communications Plan to launch VITAL, scheduled for Nov/Dec 15.**

At our October meeting we will develop a communications plan on how to launch VITAL. We will utilise as many media options as we can to promote it. This will include an entry in the tenant's winter newsletter, use of Facebook and twitter, and updates on the Housing Website. We intend to explore the use of free advertising sites, Made in Leeds TV channel, radio and press where possible. We would welcome HAB's support to the launch, and in particular Cllr Coupar's support when she writes her next introduction to the winter tenant newsletter.

We are also keen to explore holding a further tenant conference, similar to that which took place in 2013.

- **Welfare reform**

Having received a presentation on Universal credit at our September meeting, we are keen to take a key role in supporting Housing Leeds as welfare reforms continue, particularly in relation to the introduction of Universal Credit. Through our work with tenant groups and individual tenants, we are aware that most tenants do not know what Universal Credit is, let alone understand how it will impact on them and their income. Careful consideration is needed to communication with tenants to give them enough notice so they can plan for the changes. We would like to take an active role in developing the communications plan to tenants over the next year or so.

We have set up a VITAL sub- group which will work with officers to consider how best to manage the communication on Welfare reform. We welcomed the HAB paper on Welfare Reform at the September HAB meeting, and would like to request that a further update on Welfare reform is added to the HAB forward plan for February 2016, as Universal Credit is implemented.

- **Budgets**

Following the central government budget announcements earlier this year we are aware of the reductions in income that will be faced by Housing Leeds, from 2016/17. Through our work with tenant groups and individual tenants, tenants are very aware that this may have an impact on the levels of service that they receive. As VITAL members we are keen to represent tenants in identifying savings and efficiency opportunities for the 2016/17 budget and beyond. We would therefore welcome some consultation on the 2016/17 budget proposals.

### **Updates provided by the citywide groups**

#### **LTF**

The review of our relationship with Housing Leeds and the establishment of VITAL has refocused our role to be primarily the champion of tenants and residents at the local level. This includes working, supporting and helping communities to become more involved and have a greater say about decisions made about their area through Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs) and Area Representatives.

In partnership with Housing Leeds we held the first TARA conference in June 2015, to enable us to engage with Leeds tenant groups about issues and policies that impact them. The overwhelming feedback from groups was that they would like more support and communication with Housing Leeds, and could see the benefits of TARAs working more closely together to provide mutual support. We have formed a TARAs panel, made up of members of city-wide TARAs, to share communications, ideas and best practice across TARAs and ensure there is a direct link from local communities through LTF to VITAL.

#### **CCCG – Cross City Chairs group**

The CCCG, with representation from chairs of the 11 Housing Advisory Panels, has been up and running now for 18 months. We continue to meet on a monthly basis to ensure that we are running groups consistently and to share good practice of some of the community projects that we have supported. We have supported 2 citywide projects now – one to deliver

winter wellbeing packs to vulnerable older tenants, and the other to fund a city wide community payback scheme.

Two big priorities for us at the moment are to strengthen our links with Community Committees and TARAs. We have been to a number of Community Committee meetings and workshops over recent months, to ensure that we are more joined up when deciding local priorities and in funding projects. We are also keen to make more contact with TARAs in our HAP areas so that we can support TARAs in dealing with very local community issues.

### **VOLT – Voice of Older Leeds Tenants**

As the strategic older persons group we perform an advisory role on the quality of services delivered to sheltered housing tenants and other older people. We live in various types of properties and sheltered schemes across the city. We are working closely with officers to help them understand the needs of communities, influence changes to services and investment for older people's services, including attending staff team meetings each month.

To ensure that the council is aware of the views and priorities for older people we have encouraged and supported officers to set up six local forums that will be held twice a year across the city, and making a difference meetings at sheltered schemes where tenants have wanted to be involved. A VOLT member attends these meetings so feedback is provided back to the strategic meeting. We have been on a tour of various schemes so that we understand the differing needs and have commented on the facilities at each.

Our future topics will include the development of the housing support model for extra care, marketing sheltered housing and the investment across all sheltered schemes.

### **Leeds High Rise Advisory Group**

The Leeds High Rise Advisory Group has met several times through the course of the year to discuss issues of importance to residents, including cleaning, fire safety and waste management. We are also working closely with the project manager to have input into the development of the High Rise Strategy.

We held a city wide forum earlier this year to discuss pre- tenancy training and sustainable tenancies. Group discussions were held about the common problems faced by high rise tenants and we encouraged suggestions as to how we could address them.

### **Equal Access group**

Formed in July 2015 the Equal Access group represents tenants and leaseholders with disabilities and long term health conditions and their Carers, currently focussing on the priorities highlighted by attendees at the Housing Leeds Equal Access forum in April 2015.

We have met with a senior officer responsible for adaptations, received a presentation around processes and had the opportunity to feedback our experiences of applying for and receiving adaptations to our properties. It has been agreed that we will be consulted on any changes to processes and information regarding adaptations in the future.

We will be meeting with a senior officer for parking enforcement so that raise awareness of the issues concerning people with disabilities, such as parking on kerbs, the provision and siting of disabled bays and their misuse. We plan to carry out some mystery shopping so that we can assess and comment on access to public buildings and disability awareness.



## **Rainbow Roofs group**

Rainbow roofs group represents Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans-gender tenants. We work closely with officers to influence how housing services work with the LGB&T community and meet their needs.

A successful project that we have worked on was to provide training to the sheltered housing service raising their understanding of the issues faced by LGB&T people as they get older, require support and possibly become sheltered tenants. We attended Leeds Pride with officers, distributing information about the group and hate crime reporting.

Our future priorities include Transgender awareness and raising awareness of services supporting victims of same sex domestic violence.

## **Yagi - Young Adults getting involved group**

Formed in May 2015 to represent tenants aged 16 to 35, our main aims are to encourage young people to be involved with Housing Leeds, to hear about what matters to them about their home, identify barriers to communication and identify reasons for low satisfaction.

We are starting to engage with more and more younger tenants in different ways. We ran some citywide road-shows where lots of tenants told us they weren't really aware of Universal Credit and other Welfare Reforms that will affect them, and a priority for them is becoming familiar with how to calculate the benefits they will be entitled to. The first thing we have planned to try to tackle this issue is a live Twitter feed where young people who can post their questions and concerns and know that they will receive a quick response from a support officer.

The other priority for younger tenants is being more involved in decisions that affect them in their local areas. They don't feel that services tell them what is going on and don't ask for their opinions. We will keep talking to each other and meeting to discuss ideas about how the council and other agencies can get better at this. Some initial thoughts are around holding coffee mornings or workshops at the heart of communities.

This helps YAGi to focus on in its work supporting younger tenants, and will contribute to us achieving our main aim of improving tenant satisfaction of younger tenants across Leeds in the next STAR survey.

## **Repairs Focus Groups**

There are three area groups for repairs. The chairs of the groups meet to discuss cross cutting issues and findings.

In the South group we have provided feedback on a new version of the repairs handbook and the new system for collecting and managing repairs customer satisfaction data. We have also been consulted on and have helped change the rechargeable repairs procedures and we are planning some 'ride out's' with the gas engineers.

In the West group we have focussed on customer satisfaction, how feedback is collected and used to shape services, and the complaints process. We have interrogated performance data, particularly around void turnaround times, and will be looking at procedures for gas and electrical checks and testing and how these can be improved.

Some members of South and West have been involved in the procurement of new gas contractors.

The East group formed in September 2015. We have agreed that our priority areas of work will include the repairs budget and resources, communal repairs and empty homes.

### **BITMO**

BITMO's mission since 2014 has been to "Build a Better Future for Belle Isle". We have developed three core aims which are; maintaining a well-run organisation that is led by tenants and is open, transparent and financially viable, providing high quality services that focus on the organisation's key functions as well as other areas and building a stronger and safer community

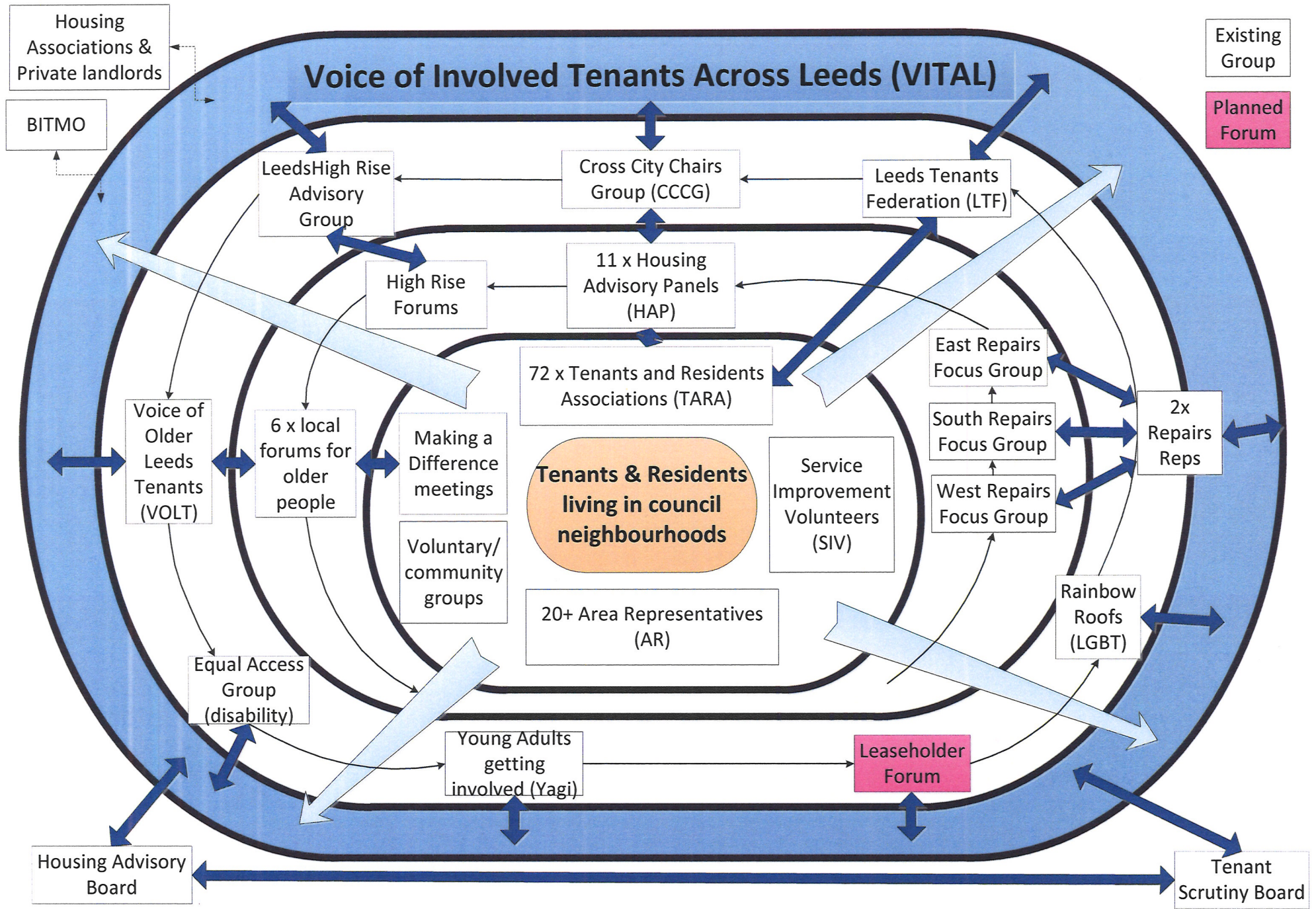
We have ensured high levels of satisfaction amongst our tenants and have improved or Improved or maintained good levels of performance in key areas of our service.

Our service offer has been extended to help tenants into employment and provide training support through the Gate centre. We have also prepared for the challenges presented from welfare reform.

BITMO's key priorities include maintaining high levels of tenant and customer satisfaction, investing reserves into capital improvements on the estate, and continuing to develop and improve services in the face of the welfare reforms.

By being part of VITAL BITMO can give a perspective of how common tenant issues such as welfare changes and anti- social behaviour affect the people of Belle Isle and contribute suggestions for tackling these. It will also help to make sure that the key messages from VITAL are fed back to BITMO tenants.

VITAL welcomes feedback for the future from HAB on presenting its reports.



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# Terms of Reference for VITAL- Voice of Involved Tenants Across Leeds

Oct 2015

## What is VITAL?

VITAL is the strategic tenant body which 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 VITAL?

The main aims of VITAL 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 VITAL?

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. When making decisions, there will only be one vote per group. VITAL 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 VITAL 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 VITAL.

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 VITAL 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?**

VITAL 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 VITAL 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 VITAL meetings or projects; and
- To attend all meetings; a member will not be expected to miss more than three consecutive meetings.

### **How often will VITAL meet?**

VITAL 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).

### **Governance and Key relationships**

VITAL will be accountable to the tenant groups it represents and to the Housing Advisory Board. Three VITAL members will sit on the HAB in line with the HAB Terms of Reference.

### **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 VITAL 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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## VITAL Forward Plan 15/16

HAB Meeting Date	VITAL Meeting Date	Discussion Topic	Other Agenda items
7 September	September	1. Universal Credit	1. Review of Away Day report 2. Recruitment & Chair Selection for tenant involvement activity 3. Agreeing mechanism for selecting representatives for HAB
	October	1. Property & Contracts Commissioning Team 2. Service Standards	1. Communication Plan for VITAL
10 November	November	1. Community Lettings Policy	1. Training and Development offer
	December	1. Extra Care Housing	1. Equality review of Tenant Involvement framework 2. Independent Representation?
	January		1. Tenant Engagement Strategy
2 February	February		1. Universal Code of Conduct
	March		
26 April	April		

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Report author: Stephen J Boyle  
Tel: 39 51523

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

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

**Subject: Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 6 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 6 for the financial year 2015/16.
2. The attached information has been provided by 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**

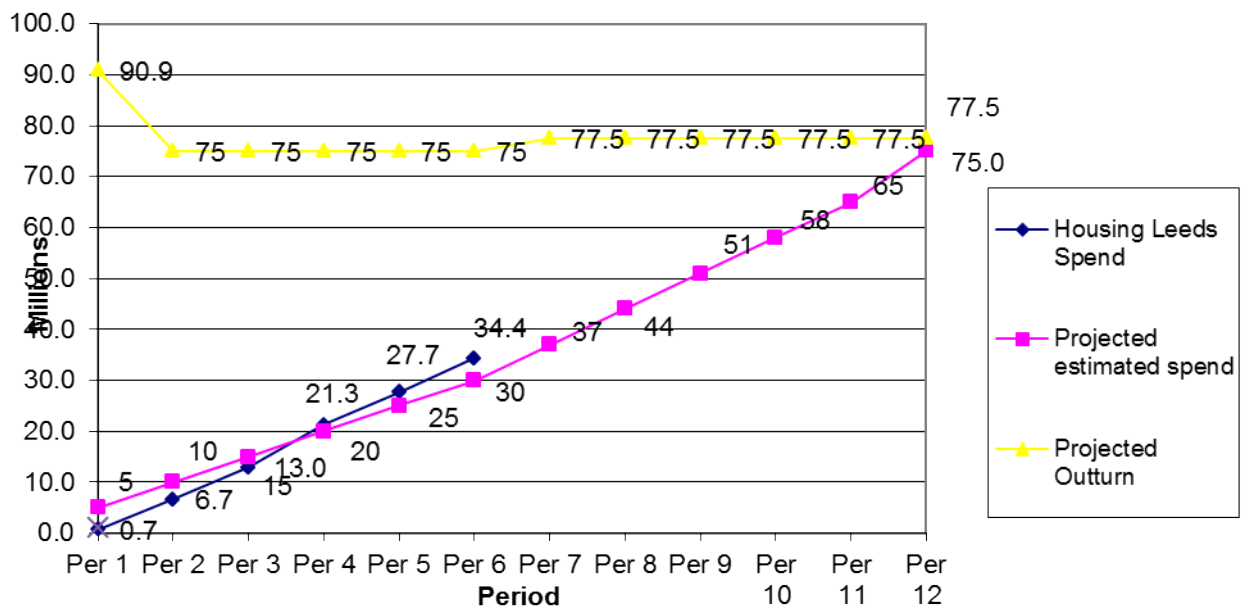
**3.1 Housing Leeds Services & BITMO**

3.2 Housing Leeds actual spend and commitments at period 6 is £38.4m equating to 49.5% of the revised available resources at period 6. 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 £77.5m.

3.3 Housing Leeds 3 year latest estimated responsive and planned works programme at period 6 are detailed in the table below with a graphical rep of the actual and estimated outturn position for 2015/16 :-

Housing Leeds Capital Programme	Original 15/16 Budget	Revised Budget at Per 6	Total Actual and Committed 2015/16 Per 6	% spent to revised budget	Estimaed 16/17 Budget	Estimated 17/18 Budget
<b>Responsive Programme</b>						
Voids	6,500.0	6,350.0	4,211.3	66.3%	6,500.0	6,000.0
Capital Repairs & Maintenance	2,400.0	2,400.0	2,242.3	93.4%	4,650.0	4,650.0
Equipments & Modifications for Disabled	5,225.8	5,053.0	1,856.0	36.7%	3,465.0	3,465.0
<b>Total Responsive</b>	<b>14,125.8</b>	<b>13,803.0</b>	<b>8,309.6</b>	<b>60.2%</b>	<b>14,615.0</b>	<b>14,115.0</b>
<b>Planned</b>						
Window & Door Replacement	1,842.8	1,837.8	638.5	34.7%	2,000.0	3,400.0
Heating & Energy Efficiency	14,681.6	14,570.0	6,969.6	47.8%	10,750.0	15,809.0
Community Safety	726.0	350.0	136.1	38.9%	481.0	160.0
Electrical	3,671.3	1,914.9	97.3	5.1%	3,130.6	1,770.0
Re-Roofing	4,459.3	5,513.1	1,722.4	31.2%	8,913.4	9,145.4
Kitchens & Bathrooms	12,379.6	11,055.6	4,180.4	37.8%	14,933.4	19,491.6
Environmentals	920.9	837.9	762.6	91.0%	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous	50.0	286.4	21.1	7.4%	50.0	50.0
Structural Remedials & Insulation	8,511.3	2,928.4	2,277.4	77.8%	7,473.2	3,200.0
Communal Replacements	4,054.5	3,754.9	437.9	11.7%	2,455.5	250.0
Conversion/Regeneration Works	4,645.9	4,044.3	2,027.8	50.1%	3,000.0	2,000.0
Planned Capital Repairs	1,372.0	310.0	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Disabled Access Works	154.9	172.8	154.8	89.6%	0.0	0.0
Fire Safety Works	3,976.7	4,330.1	1,600.4	37.0%	1,620.1	2,817.5
Estate Shops & Leased Residential Prop	230.0	310.0	79.1	25.5%	150.0	230.0
Service Delivery Associated Costs	13,918.1	11,480.8	5,031.3	43.8%	12,427.8	9,561.5
<b>Total Planned</b>	<b>75,594.9</b>	<b>63,697.0</b>	<b>26,137.0</b>	<b>41.0%</b>	<b>67,385.0</b>	<b>67,885.0</b>
<b>Total Housing Leeds 2015/16 Programme</b>	<b>89,720.7</b>	<b>77,500.0</b>	<b>34,446.6</b>	<b>44.4%</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 The planned works are now estimated at £63.7m with spend and commitments to period 6 of £26.1m representing 41% of the revised available resources. As at period 6 the Housing Leeds planned programme is reporting additional delivery of the new revised projection in 2015/16.

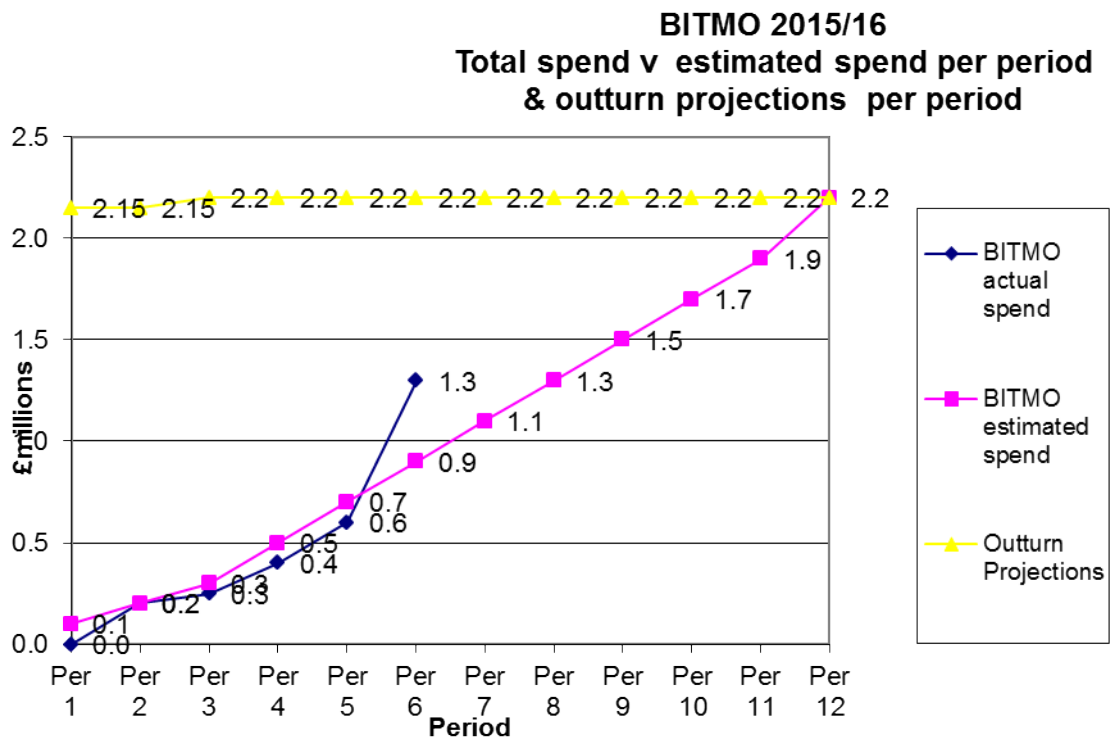
3.5 The responsive works are now estimated at £13.8m with spend and commitments to date of £8.3m representing 60% of revised resources at period 6. Civic Enterprise Leeds/Property Maintenance and Housing Leeds construction services transferred to E&H on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

3.6 Main Issues – As a result of additional capitalisations in year to accommodate increased capacity for the delivery of the 15/16 programme and future years, provision will be made from existing resources and budgets increased where necessary.

Pressures of £1m+ within the Capital repairs and Voids budgets continue to be monitored and a strategy to bring these within available resources is now in place.

To compensate for some of the (£12.9m) slippage from the 2015/16 programme to 2016/17, a £4m budget has been set aside to accelerate renewal of heating systems to housing stock in 2015/16.

3.7 **BITMOs** actual spend and commitments at period 6 £1.3m are exceeding expectations £1.3m equating to 59% of available resources of £2.22m. The 2015/16 programme will deliver 25+ schemes across Belle Isle in 2015/16. There are no current concerns on the delivery of the BITMO 2015/16 programme.



**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 6, 2015/16.

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

**Report of Head of Housing Partnerships**

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

**Subject: Appendix A - Progress Update on the Council House Growth Programme**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. The Council Housing Growth Programme seeks to maximise the amount of new housing delivered within the city and increase council house stock available for letting to council tenants on the Leeds Homes Register.
2. The council has an ambitious programme to deliver c1,000 new council homes through acquisitions, new build and purchasing long term empty homes.
3. Funding amounting to £99.37m has been allocated to deliver this programme along with £42m to fund the Little London Beeston Hill and Holbeck regeneration scheme.

**Recommendations**

4. The Housing Advisory Board is requested to note the progress to date on the council house growth programme.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Housing Advisory Board with an update on progress in respect of the council house growth programme. This includes:

- Acquisitions
- New Build
- Long term empty homes

## **2 Background information**

2.1 The council has an ambitious programme to deliver in the region of 1,000 new council homes in Leeds. This is the largest programme of new build council housing since the early eighties.

2.2 The council house growth programme comprises of three main strands:

- Acquisitions – off the shelf acquisitions provide an opportunity to purchase properties, either built properties or purchasing from plan.
- New build – through this programme, the Council aims to build modern homes taking account of design quality, space standards, energy efficiency and modern technology.
- Long term empty homes – the council has set aside funding to purchase 100 long empty properties by March 2018 to be refurbished and let as council housing. To qualify as a long term empty home, the property has to have been empty for 6 months. Earlier this year, Capita were awarded the contract to carry out valuations and conveyancing on behalf of the council for this programme.

2.3 Resources totalling £99.37m have been set aside for the council house growth programme to deliver the acquisitions, new build and long term empty home programme. In addition to this, £42m to support the council housing new build within the Little London and Beeston Hill and Holbeck (LLBHH) regeneration area have been made available through the Housing Revenue Account. These will deliver a total programme of c1000 new council houses.

## **3 Main issues**

3.1 A progress update on each of the council house growth work streams is outlined below.

3.2 Acquisitions:

3.3 Off the shelf acquisitions are proving to be a quick and cost effective solution to deliver good quality new homes for rent.

3.4 Over the last year, the council has purchased 23 new homes from Bellway in the Gipton area. These have all been let to customers on the Leeds Homes Register.



3.5 The council has recently exchanged contracts with a developer to purchase 8 homes on the former Lord Cardigan Pub site in Bramley. The developer is preparing to start construction works within the next month and the development is scheduled to complete in summer 2016.

3.6 New Build:

3.7 The table below provides a progress update on each of the council house new build sites:

Site	Ward	Units	Programme
LLBHH Regeneration	Beeston + Holbeck, City and Hunslet, Hyde Park and Woodhouse	388 new build units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contractor – sc4L comprising of Keepmoat</li> <li>- Mix of apartments and family housing</li> <li>- All units to be completed and handed over to the council by the end of March 2017.</li> <li>- 145 units have been delivered to Sep 2015</li> </ul>
East Park Road	Burmantofts and Richmond Hill	32no 1 + 2 bed apartments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contractor - Geo Houlton and Sons Ltd</li> <li>- General needs apartments</li> <li>- Scheduled to complete Q4 2015-16</li> </ul>
Extra Care Yeadon	Otley and Yeadon	45no 1 + 2 bed apartments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contractor - Henry Boot Construction</li> <li>- 45 extra care apartments with communal lounge, restaurant, multi-use room</li> <li>- 10 apartments to be marketed for shared ownership</li> <li>- Scheduled to complete Q2 2016-17</li> </ul>
Swarcliffe Drive	Crossgates and Whinmoor	18no 1 + 2 bed apartments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contractor – Britcon</li> <li>- General needs apartments for older people (55+)</li> <li>- Scheduled to complete Q2 2016-17</li> </ul>
Broadleas	Bramley	24no 2 + 3 bed houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Currently evaluating tenders to procure a partner to deliver Broadleas, Garnets and Whinmoor Public House</li> <li>- Programmed for a 2015-16 contract award</li> <li>- Scheduled to complete Q1 2017-18</li> </ul>
Garnets	City and Hunslet	25no 2 + 3 bed houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Currently evaluating tenders to procure a partner to deliver Broadleas, Garnets and Whinmoor Public House</li> <li>- Programmed for a 2015-16 contract award</li> <li>- Scheduled to complete Q1/2 2017-18</li> </ul>

Whinmoor Public House,	Crossgates and Whinmoor	22no bedroom houses	2	- Currently evaluating tenders to procure a partner to deliver Broadleas, Garnets and Whinmoor Public House - Programmed for a 2016-17 contract award - Scheduled to complete Q3 2017/18
Beeches	Gipton and Harehills	27 units		- Programmed for a 2016-17 contract award - Scheduled to complete Q3/Q4 2017/18
Mistress Lane	Armley	TBC		- Programmed for a 2016-17 contract award - Feasibility study underway to determine number of units - Expected to complete Q4 - 2017/18
Westerton Walk	Ardsley and Robin Hood	45 units		- Applied for funding under Care and Specialist Supported Housing Fund for 45 extra care apartments - announcement is expected in late October 2015 - Scheduled to completed Q4 2017/18
Barncroft	Killingbeck and Seacroft	16 units		- Site investigations underway - Scheduled to complete before Q4 2017/18

### 3.9 Long term empty homes:

- 3.10 In April 2014 the Council was successful in securing almost £2m HCA (Homes and Communities Agency) grant supported by £7m HRA funding to purchase 100 long empty properties to be refurbished and let as council housing between 2015-18.
- 3.11 To date, one property has been bought, refurbished and let and a community centre (Palace Youth Project) is currently in the final stages of conversion / refurbishment to deliver 2 family houses.
- 3.12 In addition, so far this year, the council has sent 356 letters since July to the owners of empty properties. This resulted in 75 responses from interested property owners. Of these, 64 properties have been passed to Capita for valuation; to date 25 valuations have been carried out and the council has agreed a price with 9 owners and awaits responses from a further 9 owners. The estimated average total cost for all the properties that have been valued (including the refurbishment, valuation and legal costs) is around £83,000 which is well within budget.

3.14 Budget position:

3.15 Of the £99.37m resources to deliver the acquisitions, new build and long term empty homes programmes, £21m comes from Right to Buy receipts; almost £8m of this has been allocated to new build and almost £4m committed to grant registered providers. Providing the schemes are delivered in line with the programme, the Right to Buy receipts are allocated until Q4 2017/18.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 Executive Members are briefed regularly on progress and via the Members Steering Group. Ward Members are briefed on schemes / acquisitions within their ward and are consulted and engaged at specific intervals on the development of proposals for new build sites. Public consultation events take place prior to submission of a planning application.

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

4.2.1 Equality and Diversity Impact screening has been undertaken for the Council House Growth Programme and has been determined that the proposals have a positive impact in terms of Equality and Diversity and that a full assessment is not required.

### **4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 The development of new council housing will address priorities within the City Priority Plan to provide additional affordable housing and to support housing growth.

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

4.4.1 The programme and budget is managed through the Housing Growth Team in conjunction with Corporate Resources and Environment and Housing Finance Teams.

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

4.5.1 There are no legal implications resulting from this report.

### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 There are no specific risks associated with this report.

4.6.2 A risk log for the programme is managed by the Council Housing Growth Programme Board is presented to each programme board meeting.

## **5 Conclusions**

5.1 The Council Housing Growth Programme seeks to maximise the amount of new housing delivered within the city and increase council house stock available for

letting to council tenants on the Leeds Homes Register. It aims to do this via the following routes:

- Acquisitions
- New Build
- Long term empty homes

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Housing Advisory Board is requested to note the progress to date on the council house growth programme.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 None

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



Report author: Richard Ellis  
Tel: 74291

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## Report of Head of Finance, Environment & Neighbourhoods

### Report to Housing Advisory Board

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Subject: Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position - Period 6 - 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 September 2015.

## Recommendations

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

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## 1. Summary Position

- 1.1 At the end of September (Period 6) the HRA is projecting to come in on line against the 2015/16 Budget.

## 2. Key Variances – Income

- 2.1 Income is projected to be £(515)k more than budget. Key variations include additional rental income of £(247)k primarily as a result of voids being less than budgeted levels of 1.25% and additional income of £(152)k from service charges.
- 2.2 Other variations include increased staff capitalisation £(38)k linked to the number of Right To Buy Sales, a reduction in the charge for Corporate Management costs £(71)k, PFI pass through costs due to a higher number of adaptations than expected £(50)k and a reduction of £55k in telecoms income due to renegotiated leases.

## 3. Key Variances - Expenditure

- 3.1 **Disrepair** - The charge to the disrepair provision is projected to be £1,932k, which is £432k above the original estimate.

There has been a continuing reduction in Disrepair caseload from a peak of 910 cases at the start of the financial year, with the service currently on target to reduce this to 392 cases by the end of March 2016 – a reduction of 57%.

This reduction is due to clearing the backlog of cases and changes in strategy and processes which have streamlined the case management process and reduced the number of new claims being submitted.

The projected overspend against budget in 2015/16 is primarily due to clearing the backlog of outstanding cases. This, together with changes in processes and preventative work being undertaken should lead to both a reduction in cases and resources required in future years.

- 3.2 The repairs budget is currently projected to overspend by £400k which is due to a combination of the requirement to address outstanding repairs resulting from the backlog of disrepair cases and through taking a more pro-active approach to avoid expensive disrepair claims in the future. A recovery plan has been put in place to ensure a balanced position at year end.
- 3.3 Savings of £(353)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.
- 3.3 There are projected savings of £(100)k on utilities which offset unbudgeted rent and premises costs.

- 3.4 Further key variations include costs of £144k for three Anti-Social Behaviour Link Officers (charged from West Yorkshire Police), charges from PPPU for category management (£171k) and energy portfolio work (£110k), a more appropriate charge for the support provided by HR (£116k), increased charges of £108k for support provided by Regeneration staff in the delivery of the New Council House Growth programme, £50k for property clean ups and an additional charge from Adult Social Care for the provision of floating support.

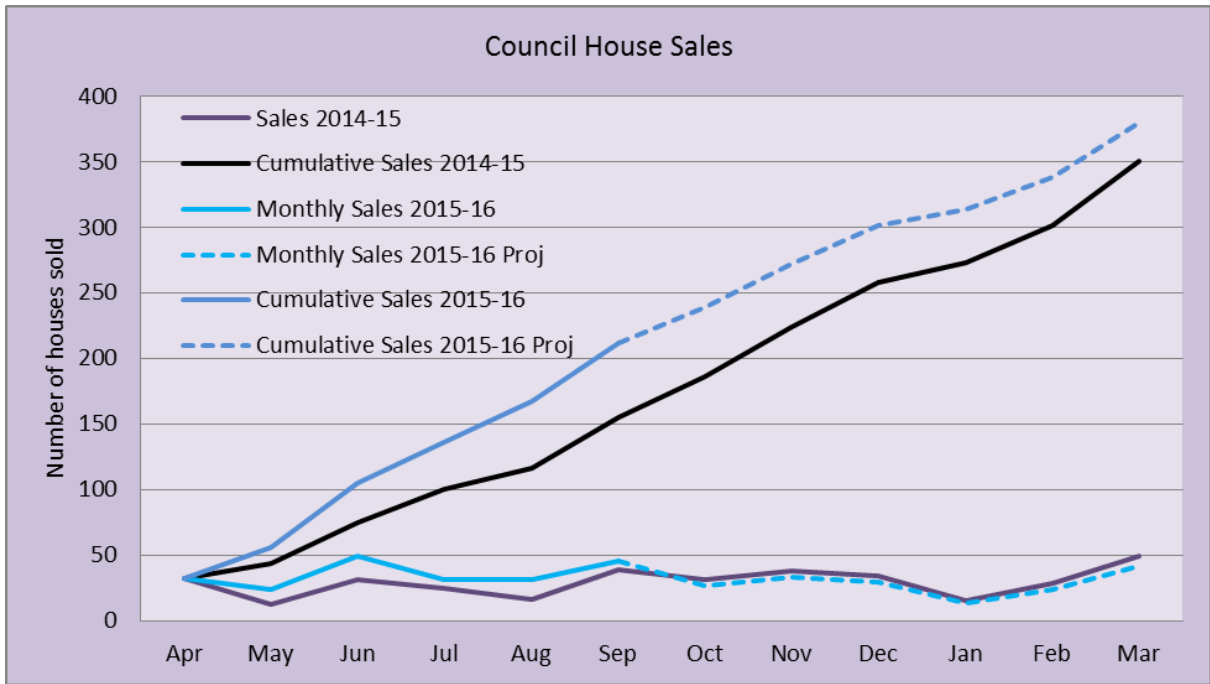
These additional costs are offset by reductions in charges from LASBT £(147)k and Housing Options £(110)k together with other minor variations.

- 3.5 In order to address the budget pressures in respect of both disrepair and repairs the intention is to reduce the amount that is used for repaying debt at year end by £(567)k.

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

- 4.1 To the end of September were 212 completed sales with total sales of 380 being projected to year end. It is anticipated that total year sales will generate sales receipts of £17m. The Government formula in respect of 2015/16, indicates that the Council would be able to retain total receipts of £10.7m. Of this £3m 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 £7.7m could be used to repay debt, or to fund other capital expenditure.

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





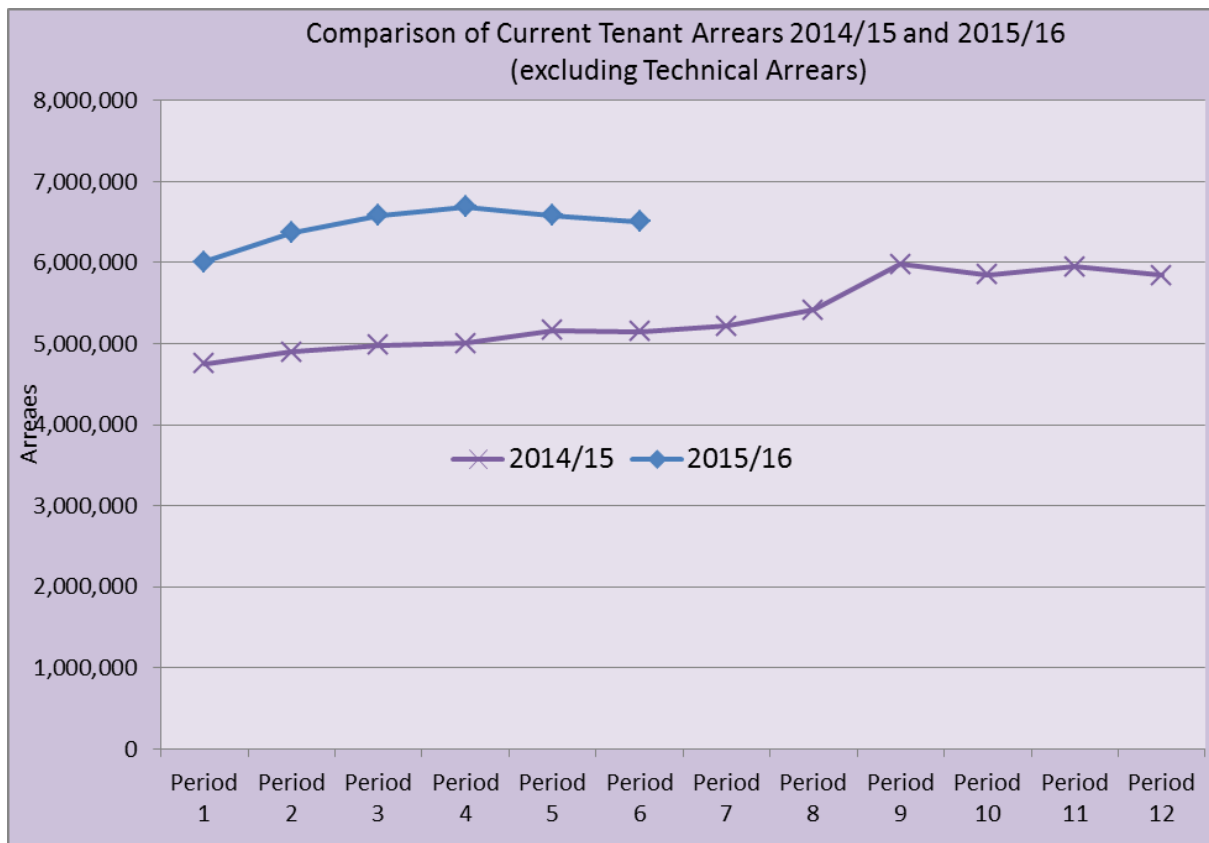
## 5. Collection Rates

- 5.1 Collection rates to the end of September were 96.70% for dwelling rents, compared to the target of 98.06%.

## 6. Arrears

- 6.1 Excluding technical arrears, arrears for current tenants are currently £6.4m compared to £5.8m at the end of 2014/15, an increase of £0.6m. There are currently 5,047 tenants classified as under-occupied. At the end of 2014/15 approximately 53% of under-occupiers were in arrears, this rose to 54% as at the end of September 2015. The value of dwelling rent arrears for under-occupiers has increased by £14k since the end of 2014/15 and now stands at £861k.

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



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

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 10 November 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 provide a range of both performance and contextual data to give a rounded view of performance.

## **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 (September). 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 (September) 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 developmental 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.

The dashboard reflects that, as of September 2015, 158 applications totalling over £630k in funding have been approved by the Housing Advisory Panels. Please refer to the dashboard for a breakdown by type and area. However, this position is constantly changing, and the service has since indicated that 175 projects have now been supported by HAPS, totalling over £740k in spend.

HAPs have funded two city-wide projects:

- £89,000 for a partnership with West Yorkshire Community Rehabilitation (known as 'Community Payback'). Since 1 August there have been 91 requests for a range of environmental and clearance / tidy up work across the city. 17 of these have been completed with, most notably in terms of impact to tenants, a clean-up and cut back of overgrown vegetation on the Bawn estate in Farnley that the local TARA instigated with the Housing Officer.
- £24,000 to boost the provision of Winter Well-being Packs for vulnerable tenants. This represents the Housing Service's contribution to the Public Health led Winter Warmth Programme. HAP funding will enable the purchase of 1608 Winter Well-being packs for distribution by Housing Officers during their day to day activities.

HAPs continue to fund projects that also meet their local priorities and evidence partnership working:

- £6,600 INW HAP funding for Groundwork Leeds to consult with tenants in three high rise blocks in Little London (the Lovell's, outside the PFI area) to create an environmental master plan. From this master planning with tenants, three main priorities will be designed and costed and presented to the HAP and Community Committee for further support. A current example from tenant consultation is the need to build ramps to two of the tower blocks where access is difficult for wheelchairs/pushchairs.
- £2,136 ONW HAP funding for benches and gardening equipment for Wharfedale Court Sheltered Scheme – helping 20 residents, their carers, families and nearby younger residents get involved with gardening and enjoying the communal garden space.
- £5,924 OS HAP funding for a 'ball wall' – an estimated 300 tenants, families and young people using a new recreation facility identified as a priority from young people and the local tenants and residents association.
- £18,000 from both the Inner East and Outer East HAPs for GIPSIL to run 'Opportunity Shops', enhanced job clubs for local younger tenants and residents.

3.1.2 Under the Environmental Improvement Programme, five schemes have been completed, including Cottingley / Dulverton Roof Garden, Middleton Skate Park, Minster Flats waste scheme (supporting AWC and addressing fire safety) and two Community Safety fencing schemes.

### 3.2 Priority 2 – Rent and Benefits

3.2.1 Please see attached draft dashboard.

3.2.2 Rent and Arrears collection stands at 96.70% as at September 2015. This compares to a stronger position of 97.70% in September 2014. However, there has been an overall increase over this quarter. It represents a shortfall of £2.63m against potential rental income.

The majority of tenants (62%) do not have arrears and of those who do, there are more within the £100 to £500 banding than any other banding.

Rent Collection and Arrears performance has improved during Q2, but the pace needs to improve at a faster rate for the city to achieve the 98% Collection year-end target. Income Recovery Action Plans have been instigated; these focus on training, support and robust management.

Detailed performance information drilled down to local officer patch levels are shared weekly. Monthly Collection Milestones have been reviewed following Q2 performance and these are going through approval consultation with the Area Teams.

Please refer to the Service Commentary on the dashboard for further details of actions taken / planned to improve performance in this area (including workshops, telephone training and development of an arrears refresher training pack).

3.2.3 A count of all under occupation cases stands at 5,047 at September 2015 with 54% of cases in arrears. These cases owe a total of £860,975. The trend continues as one of decreasing numbers of cases. The value of arrears has also decreased since last month.

3.2.4 The first new claimants of Universal Credit are expected in February 2016. When the Benefit Cap changes are introduced in April 2016, an estimated 650 tenancies will be affected (this is based on research carried out by Welfare and Benefits team).

### 3.3 Priority 3 – Housing People

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

#### 3.3.2 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 591 homeless preventions in September 2015 represent a 78.7% prevention rate, out of the 751 cases closed by Leeds Housing Options.

Of the 160 non-prevention cases in September, outcomes were as follows:

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

#### 3.3.3 Temporary Accommodation:

As of 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015, 102 households were placed in temporary accommodation. The services used are those that the local authority would describe as emergency accommodation used to fulfil a housing duty to a homeless household. The exception to this is the Stonham Women's Refuge (25 out of the total) which takes referrals from a variety of sources including those outside of the city.

The number of people in temporary accommodation continues to decrease: there were 147 placements at the end of Jul 2015 as opposed to the current number of 102 – this represents a 30% reduction. The most significant change is the phasing out of 50 LEAP (Leeds Emergency Accommodation Provision) units without an accompanying increase in placements in other services. The key to reducing temporary accommodation placements is a focus on homeless prevention and timely move-on from temporary into more settled accommodation.

The comparative figure for Birmingham Council is 872 households in temporary accommodation.

### 3.3.4 Gross average re-let days:

	Jul	Aug	Sept
2014	28.93	28.64	29.30
2015	33.03	31.84	31.38

Citywide re-let days stand at 31.38 (September 2015), which is almost a half day improvement on the previous month. The corresponding figure for September 2014 stood at 29.30 but it is clear that we are starting to close the gap.

### 3.3.5 Number of void lettable properties:

	Jul	Aug	Sept
2014	478	437	478
2015	536	571	576

The number of lettable void properties at the end of September 2015 stands at 576, an increase from July and August. Voids account for 1.01% of stock and the % rent loss from voids is 0.94%. The increase is due to the number of PFI / New build properties that will be discounted once relet. If these were removed for comparison purposes (195) it would leave 381 voids in total and the % of stock would be under 0.7%.

### 3.3.6 Adaptations (September 2015):

Public Overall, including Social Care:  
(% of adaptations meeting overall targets)

Overall			
Priority Category	Total number of Cases	Number of Cases Target Met	Percent Achieved
Urgent	13	6	46.15%
Non-Urgent	41	28	68.29%
All	54	34	62.96%

Public – Housing Services:  
(% of adaptations meeting Property & Contracts targets)

Property & Contracts			
Priority Category	Total number of Cases	Number of Cases Target Met	Percent Achieved
Urgent	13	7	53.85%
Non-Urgent	41	36	87.80%
All	54	43	79.63%

Private Overall, including Social Care:  
(% of adaptations meeting overall targets)

Overall			
Priority Category	Total number of Cases	Number of Cases Target Met	Percent Achieved
Urgent	15	7	47.66%
Non-Urgent	64	57	89.06%
All	79	64	81.01%

Private – Housing Services:  
 (% of adaptations meeting Property & Contracts targets)

<b>Property &amp; Contracts</b>			
<b>Priority Category</b>	<b>Total number of Cases</b>	<b>Number of Cases Target Met</b>	<b>Percent Achieved</b>
Urgent	15	10	66.66%
Non-Urgent	64	64	100.00%
All	79	74	93.67%

Performance for Housing Leeds (Health & Housing assessment and P&C delivery) is running at 79% for public and 93% for private. Social Care's performance for public is currently running at 62% and private is 65%.

There has been a slight drop off in performance in the last few months as the new delivery arrangements within Housing Leeds (H&H assessment/design and P&C delivery) establish themselves, and indications are that other changes being considered could further improve performance. Work has already been done to address sub-contractor performance and to improve monitoring arrangements, and new processes and other changes have been implemented to improve service delivery.

The current performance measures are not particularly useful and need to be reviewed. For example:

- extensions can take up to 6 months or sometimes longer to complete and in most cases the Occupational Therapist prioritises this type of work as urgent, so Housing Leeds have failed target before the work starts as the target completion time scale for urgent jobs is 70 calendar days.
- Although applications are received for adaptations, Health & Housing are often working with families to find more suitable accommodation. However, if this is not successful within a time period, decisions are being made to adapt their current property. While this has been deemed as the most appropriate way forward it leaves extremely reduced timescales to install adaptations that affects the performance rating.

### 3.4 Priority 4 – Repairs

3.4.1 Please see attached draft dashboard.

3.4.2 At the end of September 2015, Repairs completed right first time stands at 92.72% against a target of 90% (Construction Services – 96.08% and Mears – 91.32%). This is showing a slight improvement month on month over the last quarter with both August and September above target.

3.4.3 Citywide performance for Repairs completed within target stands at 89.16% for September 2015 which is below target for this indicator but is an increase on the previous month (86.77% in August). Performance in the ENE area is well below target and has been for several months. Analytical work has now identified the main issues causing failure and discussions have taken place with managers to remedy the issue. One of the challenges faced has been a significant backlog on bricklaying jobs; recruitment is taking place to tackle this issue. Administrative, planning and other support staff now have specific



actions to deliver (which are being monitored) to ensure the figure improves over the coming months.

3.4.4 Repairs Satisfaction information is now being captured through the Contact Centre datasets. Overall citywide satisfaction with repairs stands at 95.11% (Construction Services) and 91.67% (Mears) as at September 2015. With only two months data available so far via this source, we will be able to share more information on performance trends at the end of the next quarter.

### 3.5 Priority 5 – Capital Programme Effectiveness

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

3.5.2 Please refer to the separate report of the Head of Finance Environments and Housing.

3.5.3 Housing Leeds actual spend and commitments at period 6 is £38.4m, equating to 49.5% of the revised available resources at period 6. 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 £77.5m.

3.5.4 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

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

3.6.2 % of Annual Home Visits completed:

As of September 2015, 63.08% visits have been completed. This compares to a September 2014 position of 43.45%. Housing Leeds is on target to carry out most Annual Home Visits by the end of December 2015, allowing sufficient time in quarter 4 to make contact with tenants where we have not been able to make contact to arrange the visit.

3.6.3 AHV Outcomes:

Following the Tenant Scrutiny board Enquiry on AHVs, the service has improved the way that it records the outcomes within the Orchard Housing Management system, which allows greater intelligence of the visit outcomes. The main points that are coming out of the visits are as follows:

- 12% of our tenants don't have a bank account that allows direct debits. This may be an issue for those tenants as Universal Credit is implemented.
- 1977 tenants have told us that they need additional support with budgeting and 6093 have said that they are not confident that they could make a claim on line and

5588 would struggle receiving their benefits on a monthly basis. This information indicates the scale of additional support our tenants will need during the transition to Universal Credit, but will help us to deliver more targeted support to tenants during the transition period.

- 39% of tenants don't have access to the internet at home, which will also be an issue when Universal Credit goes live. The information will allow us to do more targeted work with tenants to ensure that they know where they are able to access the internet.
- 2556 tenants have outstanding repairs at the point of the AHV. For each of these cases Housing Management is liaising with Responsive Repairs teams and contractors to ensure that the repairs are completed as soon as possible, in order to minimise the risk of future disrepair claims.
- There have been 15 visits where there is suspected tenancy fraud.

The service will undertake greater analysis of these outcomes during quarter 4 in order to identify correlating issues and trends, which then can be used to inform individual customer contact and any areas of service improvement.

#### 3.6.4 Disrepair:

The financial performance aspects have been covered in an earlier report and reflect the considerable work being done to reduce caseloads, with a target of 392 set for achievement by end of March 2016 (a reduction of 57%).

This has been combined with a full review of our internal resources, legal and technical teams as well as contractor resources, and the introduction of a new bespoke data management system to improve record keeping, access to data and the ability of the team to accurately forecast and take action to prevent/minimise future cases.

- 3.6.5 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.

## 4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 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.

## 4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 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.

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

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

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

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

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

4.5.1 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.

### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 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.

## **5. 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.

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 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.

## **7. Appendices**

7.1 Priority 1 Dashboard – Environmental Improvement

Priority 2 Dashboard – Rents and Benefits

Priority 4 Dashboard – Repairs

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## Funding from Housing Advisory Panels

**Approved applications: 158**

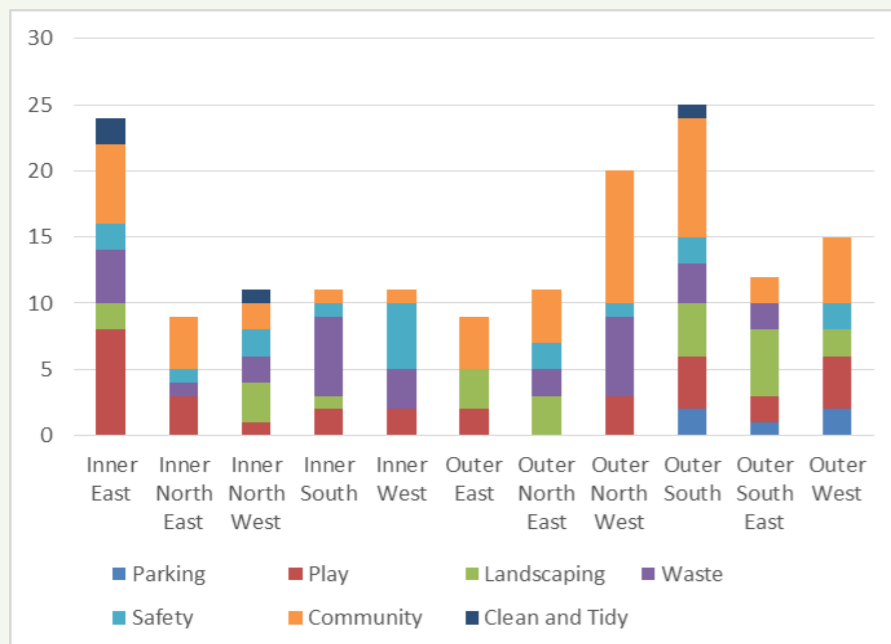
**Approved funding: £633,107**

City

	Number of schemes approved.	Amount of funding agreed by HAPs
Parking	5	£9,769
Play	31	£143,384
Landscaping	23	£75,873
Waste	29	£143,226
Safety	18	£115,516
Community	48	£129,578
Clean and Tidy	4	£15,761
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>£633,107</b>

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Area



Area	Amount of funding agreed by HAPs
Inner East	£103,949
Inner North East	£42,233
Inner North West	£48,688
Inner South	£27,738
Inner West	£106,835
Outer East	£87,744
Outer North East	£18,971
Outer North West	£68,583
Outer South	£45,044
Outer South East	£37,845
Outer West	£45,477
<b>Total</b>	<b>£633,107</b>

### Outcomes delivered from the funding

HAPs have funded two city-wide projects:

- o £89,000 for a partnership with West Yorkshire Community Rehabilitation (known as 'Community Payback'). Since 1 August there have been 91 requests for a range of environmental and clearance/ tidy up work across the city. 17 of these have been completed with, most notably in terms of impact to tenants, a clean-up and cut back of overgrown vegetation on the Bawn estate in Farnley that the local TARA instigated with the Housing Officer.
- o £24,000 to boost the provision of Winter Well-being Packs for vulnerable tenants. This represents the Housing Services contribution to the Public Health led Winter Warmth Programme. HAP funding will enable the purchase of 1608 Winter Well-being packs for distribution by Housing Officers during their day to day activities.

HAPs continue to fund projects that also meet their local priorities and evidence partnership working:

- o £6,600 INW HAP funding for Groundwork Leeds to consult with tenants in three high rise blocks in Little London (the Lovell's, outside the PFI area) to create an environmental master plan. From this master planning with tenants, three main priorities will be designed and costed and presented to the HAP and Community Committee for further support. A current example from tenant consultation is the need to build ramps to two of the tower blocks where access is difficult for wheelchairs/pushchairs.
- o £2,136 ONW HAP funding for benches and gardening equipment for Wharfedale Court Sheltered Scheme – helping 20 residents, their carers, families and nearby younger residents get involved with gardening and enjoying the communal garden space.
- o £5,924 OS HAP funding for a 'ball wall' – an estimated 300 tenants, families and young people using a new recreation facility identified as a priority from young people and the local tenants and residents association.
- o £18,000 from both the Inner East and Outer East HAPs for GIPSIL to run 'Opportunity Shops', enhanced job clubs for local younger tenants and residents.

## Funding from Environmental Improvement Programme

**Delivered schemes 5**

**Approved funding £3 Million**

All Schemes proposed and with EIP funding.

Area	Community Safety	Landscapes	Parking	Play	Waste	Total
Inner East		3			1	4
Inner North East		2	2	1	2	7
Inner North West			1		3	4
Inner South		3		1	2	6
Inner West			3		1	4
Outer East			1			1
Outer North East			4			4
Outer North West		2	2	1	1	6
Outer South	2		4	1		7
Outer South East	1	2	1			4
Outer West			4		10	14
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>61</b>

Top 3 EIP Funding	
Parking	£942 k
Waste	£737 k
Landscapes	£391 k

### Schemes progress.

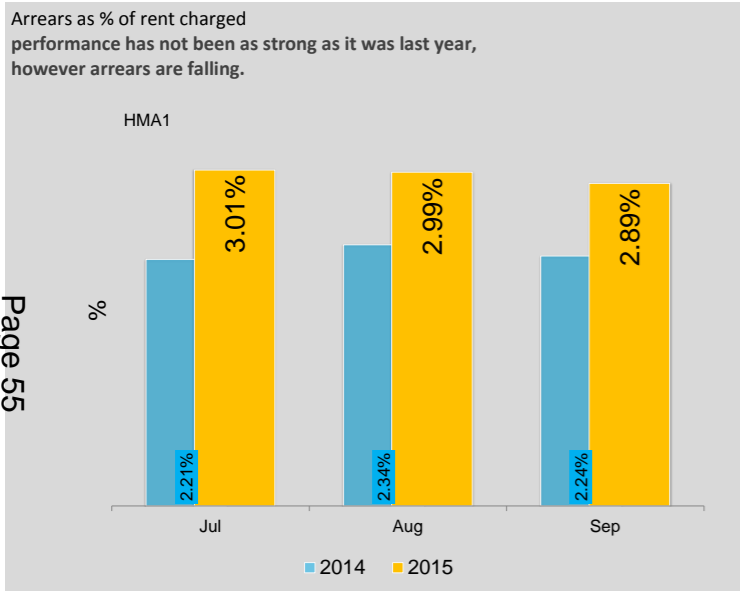
- Landscapes Cottingley/Dulverton Roof Garden completed, three scheduled for completion this Autumn.
- Parking Couple of schemes scheduled for autumn/winter.
- Play Middleton Skate Park completed, and consultation complete for Wood Lane scheme.
- Waste Minster Flats scheme completed (addresses fire safety and supports AWC)
- CS Two fence repair schemes completed and more scheduled for Autumn.

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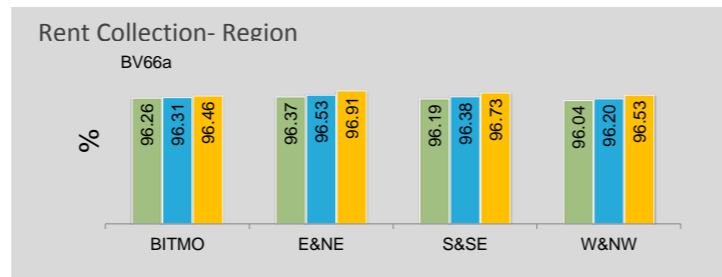
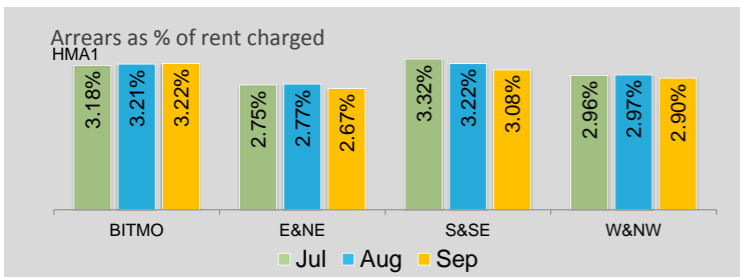
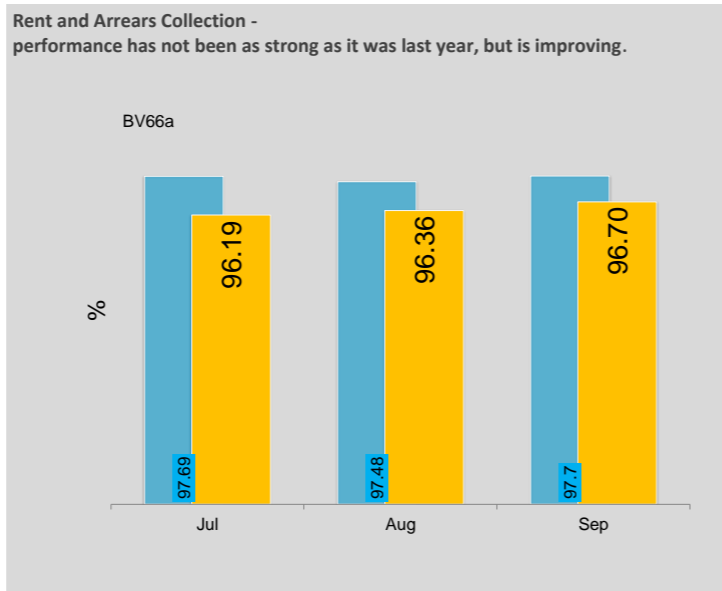
# Priority 2, Rents and Benefits, Qtr 2

## Performance: How well are we collecting rent

**Arrears as % if rent charged 2.89%**



**rent and arrears collection 96.70%**

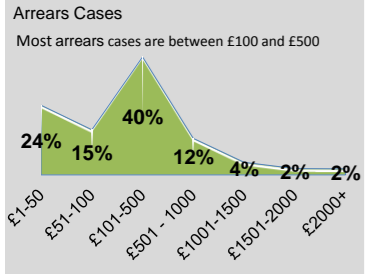
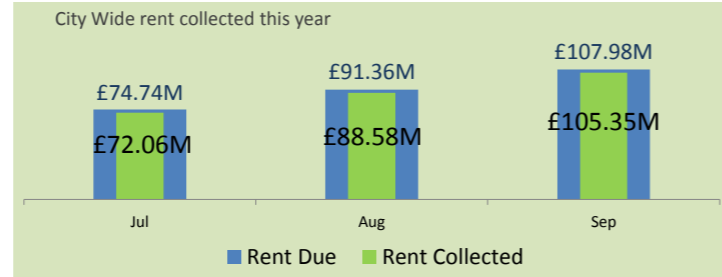
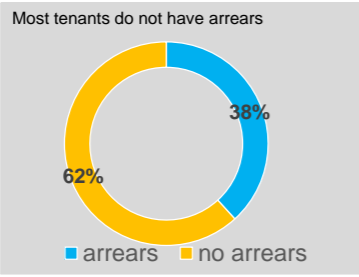


City Wide rent arrears arrears are falling.

**£6,413,315**

Arrears level by region

BITMO	£244,003
E&NE	£1,798,233
S&SE	£2,004,191
W&NW	£2,366,888



Quick Arrears Profile

No noticeable differences between age and gender were observed.

uncollected rent this year

**£2,634,432**

Improvement from previous two months

Aug	£2,782,580
Jul	£2,681,931

\*Included in the £6.4 million shown on the left

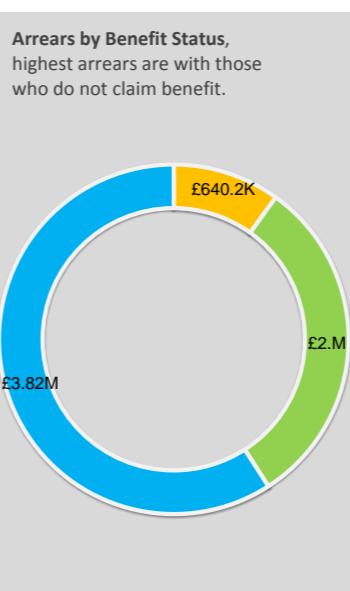
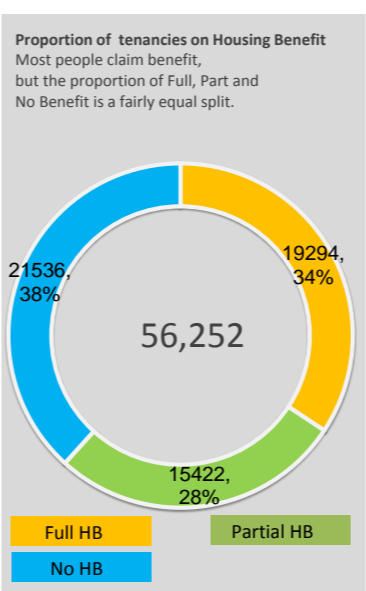
uncollected rent this year

Improvement in East, South and West but BITMO continues to climb.

Region	Rent Due	Shortfall	Trend
BITMO	£3.71M	£88.4K	↑
E&NE	£32.83M	£836.3K	↓
S&SE	£31.67M	£623.K	↓
W&NW	£39.77M	£1.09M	↓

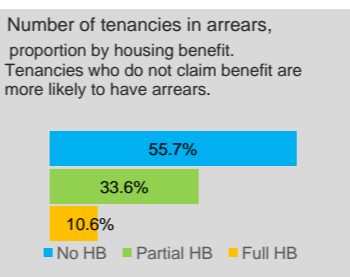
## Insight: What welfare do people receive?

**62% of tenants receive full or part housing benefit**



**66%**

People in part time or full time work, as inferred from benefit status.



Universal Credit

First new claimants expected

**Feb '16**

At first, only new claimants who receive Jobseeker Allowance will receive the new Benefit, estimated to be **between 50 and 80 each month.**

Benefit Cap

estimated tenancies affected

**650\***

Changes to be introduced April '16

\*research carried out by Welfare and Benefits

Current Under Occupation cases

Region	arrears	cases	in arrears
CITY	£860975	5047	54%
BITMO	£25345	143	60%
E&NE	£265245	1692	54%
S&SE	£275411	1396	53%
W&NW	£294975	1816	55%

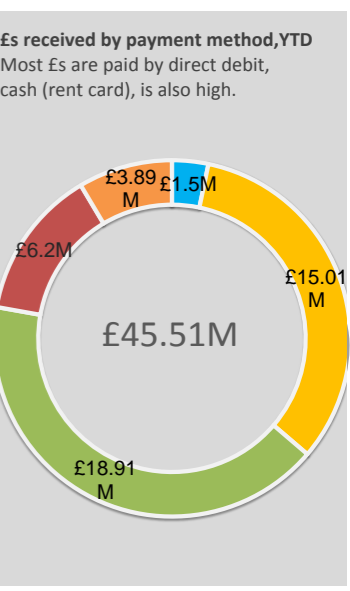
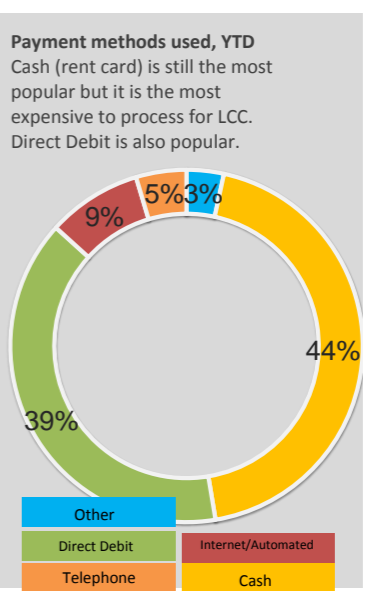
cases with no arrears at policy introduction, who now owe arrears.

**3130**

Arrears - **£285,167**

## Insight: How do people pay?

**Cash is the most used payment method**



Service Commentary

Rent Collection and Arrears performance has improved during Q2, note that the direction of travel is positive, but the pace needs to improve at a faster rate, for the city to achieve 98% Collection year end target. Income Recovery Action Plans have been instigated, these focus on training, support and robust management.

Detailed performance information drilled down to local officer patch levels are shared weekly. Monthly Collection Milestones have been reviewed following Q2 performance and these are going through approval consultation with the Area Teams.

Actions Update:

Housing Manager and Team Leader Arrears Performance Workshops were held in June/July 2015, where an overview of best practice and guidance and the toolkit was launched to staff.

Housing Manager Arrears procedure workshops were held in June/July 2015, where an overview of the procedure, protocols and arrears actions were demonstrated and discussed. Feedback on both sessions has been very positive.

A programme of telephone training for Housing Officers and Team Leaders has been scheduled through September and December 2015. The first tranche of sessions are already underway. The training develops staff abilities around negotiation and recording quality data in a debt collection / performance environment.

Better case management has resulted from these programmes.

The second staff Induction took place during week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015, which involved a 2 hour overview around rental income management.

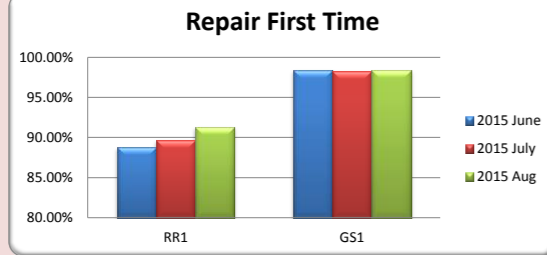
An arrears refresher training pack is being developed to allow Housing Managers and Team Leaders to be able to deliver this locally to staff who may require this.

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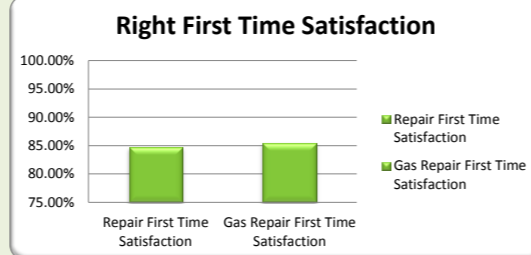


# Priority 4 - Repairs *DRAFT*

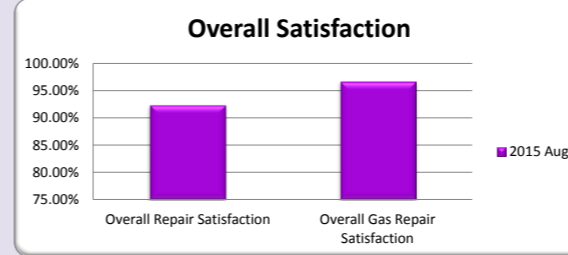
## Repair First Time



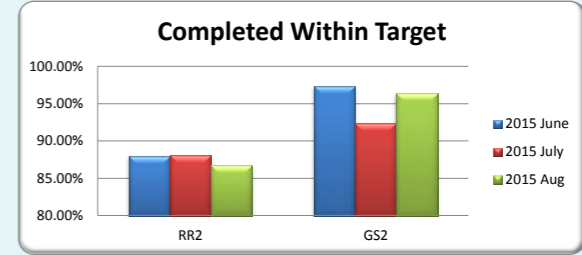
## Repair First Time Satisfaction



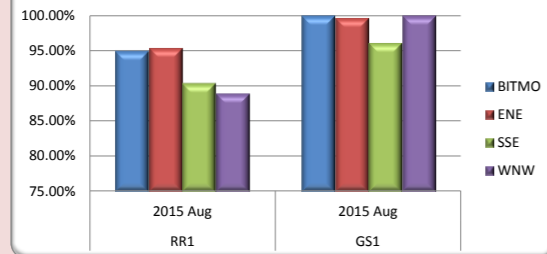
## Overall Satisfaction with Repairs



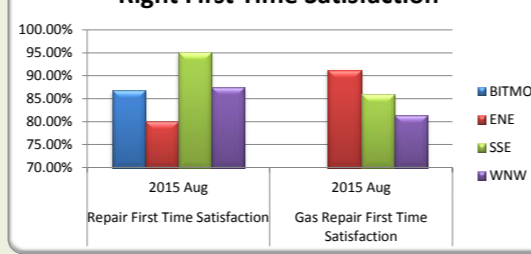
## Completed within Target



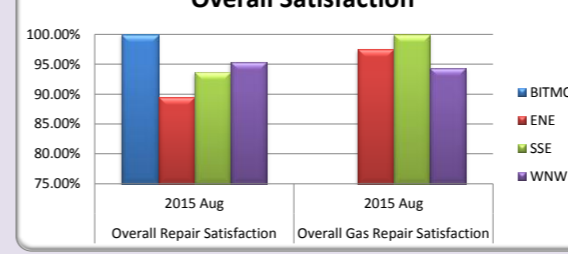
## Repair First Time



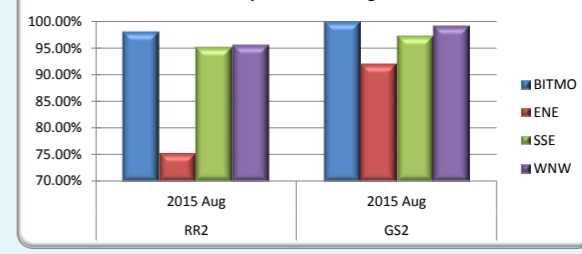
## Right First Time Satisfaction



## Overall Satisfaction



## Completed Within Target



RR1 - Repairs Right First Time				
Area	Target	Jul-15	Aug-15	
BITMO	90.00%	97.14%	95.01%	
CITY (inc BITMO)	90.00%	89.65%	91.31%	
ENE	90.00%	94.17%	95.46%	
SSE	90.00%	89.11%	90.43%	
WNW	90.00%	86.55%	88.95%	

GS1 - Gas Repairs Right First Time				
Area	Target	Jul-15	Aug-15	
BITMO	87.00%	100.00%	100.00%	
CITY (inc BITMO)	87.00%	98.25%	98.39%	
ENE	87.00%	99.74%	99.71%	
SSE	87.00%	96.84%	96.14%	
WNW	87.00%	97.94%	100.00%	

Repairs Right First Time Satisfaction			
Area	Target	Aug-15	
BITMO	TBC	86.96%	
CITY (inc BITMO)	TBC	84.70%	
ENE	TBC	80.25%	
SSE	TBC	95.08%	
WNW	TBC	87.60%	

Gas Repairs Right First Time Satisfaction			
Area	Target	Aug-15	
CITY (excl BITMO)	TBC	85.50%	
ENE	TBC	91.36%	
SSE	TBC	85.94%	
WNW	TBC	81.45%	

Overall Repairs Satisfaction			
Area	Target	Aug-15	
BITMO		100.00%	
CITY (inc BITMO)		92.34%	
ENE		89.52%	
SSE		93.75%	
WNW		95.42%	

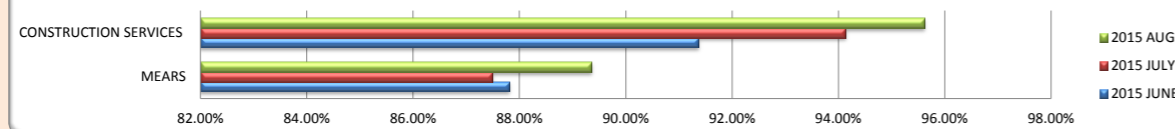
Overall Gas Repairs Satisfaction			
Area	Target	Aug-15	
BITMO			
CITY (exc BITMO)		96.68%	
ENE		97.47%	
SSE		100.00%	
WNW		94.35%	

RR2 - Repairs Completed Within Target				
Area	Target	Jul-15	Aug-15	
BITMO	99.00%	98.33%	98.11%	
CITY (inc BITMO)	99.00%	88.14%	86.77%	
ENE	99.00%	79.66%	75.39%	
SSE	99.00%	95.19%	95.21%	
WNW	99.00%	93.77%	95.62%	

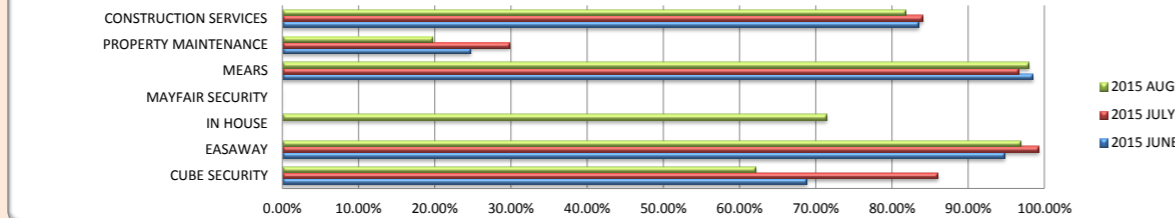
GS2 - Repairs Completed Within Target				
Area	Target	Jul-15	Aug-15	
BITMO	98.00%	100.00%	100.00%	
CITY (inc BITMO)	98.00%	92.42%	96.45%	
ENE	98.00%	93.58%	92.09%	
SSE	98.00%	92.75%	97.30%	
WNW	98.00%	90.28%	99.16%	

## Contractor Repairs Completed Right First Time



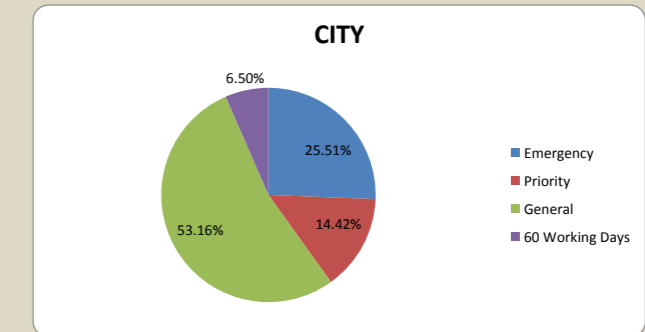
Contractor August 15	Target	No of Jobs	No Met
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES	90.00%	3012	2880
MEARS	90.00%	7485	6688

## Contractor Repairs Completed Within Target



Contractor August 15	Target	No of Jobs	No Met
CUBE SECURITY	99.00%	66	41
CONSTRUCTION SERVICES	99.00%	6025	4922
EASAWAY	99.00%	511	495
IN HOUSE	99.00%	7	5
MAYFAIR SECURITY	99.00%	7	0
MEARS	99.00%	7874	7709
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE	99.00%	983	193

## Priority Breakdown - Responsive Repairs



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Report author: Liz Cook

Tel: 0113 247 5808

## Report of Chief Officer, Housing Management

### Report to Housing Advisory Board

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015

### **Subject: Effective Housing Management & Lettings Policies**

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 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**

Housing Leeds' ambition is to create great places people want to live in and where tenants take pride in their homes and communities. Council homes are let under the council's lettings policy, supported by local lettings policies which operate in specific areas and property types.

The council has a moral and legal duty to meet the requirements of those in housing need. It also has an obligation to ensure that existing tenants lives are not disrupted by anti-social behaviour and a broader ambition to build sustainable communities. Balancing individual housing and support needs with community impacts is not straight forward as some of those in greatest need may also impact on the lives of neighbours and the functioning of the community. The development of Local Lettings Policies was an attempt to minimise the impacts of lifestyle clashes, and as they developed in a demand led manner it has led to inconsistent approaches across the City. An example, exacerbated by changes in housing demand, there are now nine age bands being used, as reductions in age criteria have been implemented to enable lettings.

The proposals set out in this report aim to build on the positive outcomes achieved through local lettings policies and build a coherent and easily understood approach for the City as a whole.

This paper aims to establish the key principles for consultation on which we will base the Local Lettings Policy's to create balanced communities and meet housing needs and a clear, transparent and understood approach on which to move forward. In putting forward the policies, however, it is recognised that there are no perfect answers from changes to the lettings policy. The Council will have to continue to meet the needs of those who present challenges to others through their lifestyle. Progress is therefore also required through the development of strong housing management and appropriate housing support.

In March 2014 Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Board tasked Housing Leeds with improving consistency in the operation of local lettings policies across the city and developing alternatives to age related restrictions.

Executive Board agreed in June 2014 to prioritise council tenants with an excellent tenancy record to access new build homes delivered through the Council's Housing Growth Programme; establishing a principle for the new approach to developing 'community lettings policies'.

Reviewing the systems for letting council homes has identified the need for new approaches for housing management, tenancy policy proposals and development of new community based approaches to lettings.

### **Recommendations**

Housing Advisory Board provide advice on the proposed approach to housing management and tenancy policy. The Housing Advisory Board is also asked to comment on the key principles for developing community lettings policies which builds on the success of the new lettings criteria used for new build homes delivered through the Council's Housing Growth Programme.

The feedback from Housing Advisory Board will inform the report to Environment & Housing Scrutiny Board and Executive Board in November & December respectively.

## 1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consult Housing Advisory Board on new approaches to housing management and the key principles for local lettings policies.

## 2 Background information

- 2.1 Allocation of council homes is governed by the Lettings Policy to ensure that available homes are let in accordance with the law and in an equitable, transparent and accountable way. The Lettings Policy contributes to the Council being able to fulfil its legal duties relating to meeting housing need, but needs to ensure the outcomes contribute to the delivery of sustainable communities and making Leeds the best city to live. Effective management of council housing in the City needs to balance meeting individual needs with the needs of the communities to ensure sustainable communities.
- 2.2 The **Housing Management** structure has been developed to ensure clear accountability and responsibility for Area Housing Management through local leadership and dedicated Housing Managers. A holistic customer approach to service delivery has been developed with Housing Officers accountable for the relationship with the tenant, and delivering services including assessment of prospective tenants, appropriate lettings and the delivery of comprehensive housing management services. Amendments to operational lettings and tenancy management practice, the proposed new initiatives including pre-tenancy training, development and delivery of new housing pathways and case conferencing for people who require support and a review of the local lettings policies all contribute to the aim of creating sustainable communities.
- 2.3 The **overall framework for letting council homes** is set out in the main lettings policy, supported by local lettings policies which reflect local issues and needs. The lettings policy is integral to the council's overall approach to delivering a customer-focussed, people-centred proactive housing management service.
- 2.4 The lettings framework is based on the council's legal duties set out under the Housing Act 1996 of meeting housing needs as well as meeting the aspirations of tenants and residents. In order to balance the needs of households in housing need with those local communities, the council lets 75% of properties based on housing need and 25% to households who have been on the waiting list the longest with a connection to the area.
- 2.5 Currently there are 24,118 (30/09/15) households on the housing register, approximately 24% (5,700) of customers have identified housing needs (Band A & B) and 76% are registered on waiting time, these households have no identified housing need, but have expressed a preference to be rehoused by the council. Of the 24,118 households on the housing register 5,972 (25%) are council tenants who have expressed a preference to move. Over 11,000 households (45%) on the housing register have not bid for a home in the last 12 months. In 2014/15 75% were let to people in housing need and 25% to people with no identified needs on the basis of waiting time.
- 2.6 Demand for council housing outstrips supply. The average waiting time for households who were rehoused in 2014/15 was 48 weeks across all areas of the city, property types and sizes. Approximately 4,500 -5,000 homes are allocated per year.
- 2.7 The proportion of lettings made to existing council tenants has decreased from 25% in 2013/14 to 19% in 2014/15. The number of mutual exchanges where social housing tenants can swap homes decreased to 390, a decrease of 195 from 2013/14. In order to achieve a holistic and

comprehensive offer to tenants, the principles of rewarding tenants and residents who abide by their tenancy agreement will be applied to future reviews of the council's tenancy agreement and overarching lettings policy.

- 2.8 Consideration needs to be given to the development of a separate transfer list as permitted under the Localism Act 2012 which rewards excellent tenancy records and a recognition in the lettings policy of the contribution made by tenants and residents for example through employment or volunteering.
- 2.9 Local lettings policies apply to approximately 1 in 5 properties across the city. The majority are based on age, but others relate to employment status, behaviour and local connection.
- 2.10 In March 2014 Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Board made the following recommendations for the council in reviewing the current local lettings policies:
- Rationalisation of age restrictions to improve consistency across the city
  - Introducing pre-tenancy training for prospective tenants
  - Developing the use of evidence based LLPs to address behaviour issues such as antisocial behaviour
  - Reviewing the use of Introductory Tenancy extensions and Secure Tenancy demotions.
- 2.11 In reviewing housing management practices and the lettings policies we have the opportunity to develop a new approach to support the best council objectives and priorities and contribute to the breakthrough projects.

### **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 Housing Management Practice A holistic approach to housing management and lettings is necessary to ensure effective housing solutions for people in sustainable communities. The Housing Management Service has developed a range of operational practices to improve the quality of housing management including, quality assessment of applicants including consideration of conduct in previous tenancies, accompanied viewings, a fundamental review of the sign up process, introduction of new tenancy visits, a review of the use and consistent approach of Introductory tenancies and annual home visits to ensure proactive and preventative approaches are employed with the aim of early intervention and improved sustainability of tenancies and communities.
- 3.2 Lettings and Tenancy Management Practice. It is critical that we strengthen the way in which we carry out lettings and tenancy management to ensure that tenants are housed successfully into communities, and ensure this practice is robust across all housing stock.

The council's lettings framework takes behaviour into account in a number of ways including:

- making checks on previous conduct when an applicant joins the housing waiting list
- removing people from the waiting list in serious cases of antisocial behaviour, or reducing their preference on the waiting list
- bypassing the top ranked customer for offers of accommodation on the basis of their previous behaviour, for example, a tenant would not be rehoused in the area where they had perpetrated antisocial behaviour
- making 'sensitive lets' of properties where the previous tenant was evicted for antisocial behaviour, to ensure the letting is made to a customer without a history of causing antisocial behaviour.

The appropriate response will depend on the individual circumstances taking into account whether the behaviour is still on-going and the impact rehousing will have on the locality. Applicants are offered introductory (probationary) tenancy unless they were already a secure tenant, in which case they would be offered another secure tenancy.

The council has powers to demote secure tenancies and extend the introductory tenancy period if the tenant breaches the tenancy agreement. In some cases where a household is facing eviction other interventions may be considered, for example, a Family Intervention Tenancy which requires them to agree to an intensive support package aimed at improving their behaviour. The application and consistent approach of these processes and procedures are being reviewed to ensure high challenge and support is delivered consistently

- 3.3 Good tenancy record Application of a process for assessing good tenancy records has been trialled within the Local Lettings Policy (LLP) for new build homes. The LLPs give preference for lettings to tenants who have demonstrated they have conducted their tenancy well in terms of having a clear rent account, no record of antisocial behaviour and maintaining their property inside and out to a high standard. Under the new build LLP, the council made a commitment to visit all potential tenants at home before an offer is made.

There are resource implications involved in undertaking the home visits and potential for increased relet times, however, this is balanced against ensuring new tenants have conducted their previous tenancy well. This approach gives a clear message that the council will reward applicants and existing tenants who conduct their tenancy well and promotes a preventative approach and saves resources by reducing void costs on released properties.

The aim is to expand this practice to all lettings and incorporate an assessment of current tenants' tenancy record and recommendation for transfer within the Annual Home Visit process.

- 3.4 Transfer Policy. In order to recognise and reward our existing tenants it is proposed that a specific transfer system be introduced into the lettings framework. Offering additional priority to existing tenants will not reduce the number of homes available to people in housing need; however it will increase costs as essentially for every transfer of an existing tenant you will have two empty homes (voids) . In developing an effective priority for existing customer you can incentivise and reward tenants with good tenancy records and you can create a housing ladder within the council housing stock. This approach needs to recognise that some council homes are more sought after and in higher demand. In addition it can ensure that new / existing tenants are not trapped in homes that don't meet their needs or expectations and enable a better use of stock to tackle issues of under-occupation / overcrowding.

- 3.5 It is recognised that not all applicants will have previous tenancies and that some households will have had failed tenancies, however the Council retains a duty to secure housing, in these cases it is proposed to deliver Pre-tenancy training.

Pre-tenancy training is widely provided by social housing services to help support and prepare applicants for living in rented accommodation before they are offered a property. This was initially intended in preparing young people to live independently for the first time covering such things as budgeting skills and what is meant by being a good neighbour. The outcomes have been successful in terms of sustaining tenancies and the model has been expanded to include other applicants who require support and guidance for running a home and conducting a good tenancy.

The programme would include sessions on how to maintain a tenancy successfully, why tenancies fail, rent payment and budgeting, community responsibilities, how to find a home and employment.

Giving preference to people who have completed Pre-tenancy training gives prospective tenants the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to taking on the responsibility of becoming a council tenant.

The options for implementation of are:

- Implement good tenancy record or Pre tenancy training for all lettings
- Implement for lettings to people in high rise/other specified property types
- Implement on a phased approach running a pilot for specific blocks with a view to rolling out city-wide in the longer term.

3.6 Case Conferencing Over the last 12 months a partnership approach between Housing and Children's Services has had successes in accommodating young people leaving care, either with a stay put or a planned move approach. Historically, applicants have been placed in independent living in LCC and other properties which often resulted in tenancy failure and disruption within communities. The case conferencing approach introduced an approach of looking at the young person and their individual needs and putting the appropriate support in place at the earliest stage. This has proved very effective, although it is resource intensive. There is also an opportunity to look at the provision of trainer homes. The proposal is to expand the case conferencing approach for rehousing applicants and/or supporting tenancies.

Options for implementation of are:

- To expand the case conferencing approach for rehousing and/or supporting care leavers 16 – 25years old, to reflect recent changes within the Care Act.
- To expand the case conferencing approach for all applicants identified as requiring support and for vulnerable tenants where tenancies are found to be at risk.

3.7 Housing Pathways The success of the approach for the Housing and Children's Operational meeting has been used as a catalyst for the development of a housing pathways model which places individuals and their needs at the heart of the process and provides intervention and the provision of support, at the earliest possible stage. The Housing pathways model is a cross service development and initiatives to progress this further are included in service plans 2015/16 for Housing Leeds, C&YP services and Community Safety. Initial work has commenced with Adult Social Care to develop Housing Pathways for Vulnerable People to ensure housing, support and care lead support independent living.

3.8 Sheltered housing is designed to meet the needs of older people through the provision of sheltered housing support. The council currently operates a policy of letting sheltered homes to people aged 60 years and over, although housing associations let to people age 55 years and over. The provision of sheltered housing needs to be considered within the context of the whole housing market, availability of alternative housing offers and the aging population. Demand patterns for sheltered housing are very dependent on other housing available in local communities. The council manages some sheltered properties which have seen a fall in demand, mainly in upper floor flats which do not have lift access. A small number of flats in the east and south of the city have been reclassified as general needs accommodation and successfully let to people age 55 years old and over.

The option is to retain a clear age policy or move to a needs based approach to the allocation of sheltered housing where health and support needs in addition to the age profile are assessed to ensure effective housing and support services are delivered to older people. This approach could enable a tailored service design and direct the investment decisions to ensure the accommodation and the service are designed to meet tenant's needs and ensure the environment is adapted for



limiting illness and mobility. In developing options an overall consideration of housing for older people in general needs to be developed alongside a needs based approach to sheltered housing.

3.9 Age designations. There are 56,832 LCC properties across the city, 19,508 of these are flats and bedsits. 7,469 of the flats and bedsits currently have an age related LLP which represents 38% of this stock type. There are 148 LLPs in Leeds (this excludes the new build) covering 10,049 properties the majority of which are age related with 9 different age band criteria across the city. 7,032 properties in high rise blocks are let under an LLP.

In the main, age-related LLPs operate in low and high rise flats which were historically introduced to overcome potential lifestyle clashes in property types with poor sound insulation and in response to tenant preferences.

Appendix 1 gives the ward profiles showing the total number of LCC stock in the area, the number of flats and bedsits and the number of those which have LLPs based on age. This provides a clear position where current age related policies are concentrated and where they prevent access to housing. 13 wards have above the city average of age related LLPs. However, the disparities are striking when we compare further, for example, of the 843 flats in Bramley and Stanningley 617 which is 73%, have an age related LLP whereas in Hyde Park there are no age restrictions on any of the 1,126 flats. The table highlights the inconsistencies across the city and shows the limitations of access to housing for younger people in some of the wards.

The majority of these LLPs have been in place for many years and whilst they have been periodically reviewed, there has been little or in some cases, no change. There are a number of issues in operating LLPs within communities:

- There is potential for legal challenge due to changes in equalities legislation
- They make the judgement that tenancy behaviour is linked to age
- They restrict housing opportunities to younger people in some communities and result in concentrations in other areas

The development of the nine different age bands has occurred in an iterative way to tackle issues of low demand for certain property types and this has often led to 5 year age reductions. It is essential to simplify to a clear and consistent approach of bands which are understood and can be implemented; the proposal is for a maximum of three age / lifestyle related bands.

The recent introduction of LLPs for the new build properties to date have not included any age related criteria. The LLPs give preference for lettings to tenants who have demonstrated they have conducted their tenancy well in terms of having a clear rent account, no record of antisocial behaviour and maintaining their property inside and out to a high standard.

It is accepted that it may be appropriate in some circumstances for some homes to be designated for particular needs and / or age ranges, where the management of the block is tailored to meet the particular needs e.g. flats adjoining sheltered schemes which could be promoted as older persons housing with links to the sheltered scheme.

The vision for Housing Leeds is to review all of the current age related LLPs in their current form and place a greater focus will be put on strengthening processes linked to lettings and tenancy management to achieve harmonious communities. The review process will support the retention successful designations to ensure the stability of existing communities.

The High Rise Project will explore options further for the designation of particular blocks and make recommendations on a block by block basis.

A process and programme of reviews will be published, this will include full local tenant and ward member consultation on each existing LLP.

3.10 Local connection based on residence, family associations and employment is used as a deciding factor. The ward profiles give data showing the lack of affordable properties in the area which supports the restriction of lettings beyond local connection.

The housing waiting list is open to all, regardless of residence and local connection. However, only customers who can establish a local connection to the city of Leeds can be awarded Band A or Band B priority on the waiting list. 75% council properties are advertised giving preference based on housing need band. A customer without a local connection to Leeds would only be offered housing if no other customers are eligible.

The remaining 25% properties are advertised based on waiting time on the housing waiting list, and customers must be able to establish a connection to the ward. The priority band of the customer is not taken into account when making allocations through the quota.

The waiting time quota was introduced in 2011 to address concerns that the lettings policy was unfair to customers who had been on the housing register for a long time who felt they had little hope of being rehoused ahead of customers in housing need. The waiting time quota aims to improve community cohesion by increasing opportunities for customers with a local connection and with a long standing housing application to be rehoused. The quota system offers another route into housing and will assist people before their housing situation becomes so urgent that they warrant a priority award. Under the policy a customer in high housing need would not receive preference to move to or remain in an area they had a connection to, without the use of a local connection LLP.

As well as the 25% quota of all lettings in every ward being allocated to households who demonstrate a local connection, additional criteria operate for lettings of houses in some outer areas of the city – Wetherby, Garforth, Kippax and Rothwell, where there is high demand and little affordable housing. However, they do not apply in other areas of high demand. The proposal is to develop formulae based on demand and turnover which would be applied across the City.

3.11 High Rise housing is a substantial part of Council Housing in Leeds, with over 7500 households in 116 blocks across the city. Housing Leeds faces a number of challenges linked to high rise flats, including high investment need, energy efficiency, community safety, under-occupation, communal and grounds maintenance, day to day management issues and refuse and recycling.

The Housing Management Service has commenced a complete review of the management of high rise flats in the City to address these challenges and ensure they are positive places to live. Tenant satisfaction rates in High rise flats varies significantly and management and lettings practices have led to a lack of consistency in approach including our approach to children at height.

High Rise blocks could be designated effectively for the following purposes:

- Sheltered Housing – there are a number of MSFs which house a high proportion of older tenants, and due to lack of sheltered housing supply within the local area and the layout, they lend themselves to conversion to sheltered housing.
- Child Friendly Blocks – where there is limited supply of housing in the local area, a block is identified as of a safe design and there is a high number of children already living in the block, it is proposed that the block may be designated as being child friendly and that enhancements are installed, e.g. additional window security, communal playground etc. A key principle for re-housing and existing families with children in high rise is to ensure they have the priority and opportunity to move.

- Blocks for Young People – with enhanced security, tenancy management and housing support offered to support young people to manage tenancies well and access training and employment, following some of the principles of the MSF DHP Project.
- Blocks which encourage employment – with consideration to having a different rent and management model.
- The use of flexible tenancies will be considered to deliver change and support sustainability of high rise communities to be approved with the individual block strategies. The profile and mix of people within blocks is essential to create mixed sustainable communities, this could include relocation for tenants where the type accommodation is inappropriate.

The main lettings policy gives preference for lettings of houses to people with primary care of dependent children ahead of households with part time access to children who are regularly housed in low and high rise flats. The high rise profiles have revealed that the number of children living in high rise flats is significant but varies depending on the blocks. Details of household composition are being recorded through the Annual Home Visits to improve our understanding.

The high rise project aims to deliver an overall vision and remit for each high rise block which will determine who lives in the blocks and the nature of the investment required. It is proposed that a clear policy is developed for housing children at height, basing restrictions on rehousing households within flats on the following criteria:

- The construction type of the block meaning children should not be rehoused into a high rise block with open balconies or walkways, where there is a risk of falls
- Known issues with sound-proofing within blocks
- The number of children currently living in the block
- Availability of houses to let nearby.

It is proposed that there will be 2 main policies in place:

- Blocks which are identified as unsuitable for the rehousing of children under a specific age.
- Blocks which are identified as child friendly blocks - there is the opportunity for active development and investment by making external improvements to the blocks and surrounding areas, the provision of play areas for example.

3.12 New Build Homes delivered through the Council House Growth Programme including the homes delivered through the Little London, Beeston Hill and Holbeck Regeneration Programme have been subject to the development of LLP's. The LLPs balance priorities of meeting housing need and offering incentives to existing tenants who have conducted their tenancy well. None of the LLPs to date have included age as a criterion. The aim is to create stable and harmonious communities and evaluation to date demonstrates that the policy has been effective in identifying tenants who have conducted their tenancy well and that in the main they continue to do so in their new homes.

The proposal is to continue with community lettings policies for all new builds schemes and review annually following the first letting.

3.13 Other Criteria The council currently operates a 'Good Neighbour criteria' in four areas of the city where Housing and Community Safety have agreed the need to conduct checks on previous criminal and antisocial behaviour. The criteria seeks to address cases of family members being rehoused on the same estate where families have historical problems, for example, grown up

children being released from short term prison sentences being offered rehousing on the estate. Initial feedback suggests a number of positive outcomes including a reduction in reports of nuisance, but there is concern is that there may be displacement to other areas and further monitoring is required to confirm whether this is the case. Further monitoring of the impact of conducting checks on increased void times is also needed. It is proposed to review in light of the application of the new approach tenancy management annually.

Employment / Training At present 12 flats managed by the BITMO have a lettings policy giving preference to people in employment. This has been successful in assisting tenants in employment secure affordable housing. Employment preference received a very positive response in the consultation for the Beeston Hill and Holbeck properties, as did being in training for a keyworker profession. Providing affordable homes for low income households is a key element in supporting the council's objective of promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth as well as reaching out to people priced out of the housing market. It is proposed that employment and training as a consideration is retained in developing approaches where an employment preference for lettings could benefit local employers, tenants and residents, including high rise flats located close to major employment centres. The use of employment as a preference group could help reduce the impact of changes to housing benefit rules which affect under occupying council tenants of working age.

The review gives an opportunity to develop other community lettings policies including:

- A protocol with Adult Social Care to let a small number of properties as joint tenancies to tenants nominated by ASC where onsite support is available.
- Giving preference to members of the Armed Forces. This preference has received a positive response in consultation for the new build properties and supports Housing Leeds' commitment to the Leeds Armed Forces Community Covenant

### 3.14 Key principles / recommendations for consultation.

- Incorporate an assessment of current tenant's tenancy record and recommendation for transfer within the Annual Home Visit process.
- Implement a transfer policy to ensure existing tenants are rewarded and that tenants are able to move to more suitable homes that meet their needs and aspirations
- Implement good tenancy record and pre tenancy training systems
- Expand the case conferencing approach for rehousing for all vulnerable applicants
- Sheltered Housing - move to a needs based approach to the allocation of sheltered housing where health and support needs in addition to the age profile are assessed to ensure effective housing and support services are delivered to older people.
- Review all of the current age related LLPs in their current form and move to simplified system with a maximum of 3 bands and place a greater focus on strengthening processes linked to lettings and tenancy management to achieve harmonious communities. The review will be linked to the High Rise Project and designation of nature of the blocks and target audiences.
- Develop a formula to apply a City wide approach to local connection requirements and establish criteria to assess areas where there is limited supply and affordability issues in outer areas on the basis of supply and affordability.

- A clear policy is developed for housing children at height, linking restrictions to construction type of the block, the number of children living in the block and availability of houses to let nearby.
- Continue with local lettings policies for all new builds schemes and review annually following the first letting.
- The use of employment as a preference group could help reduce the impact of changes to housing benefit rules which affect under occupying council tenants of working age.

### 3.15 Next Steps

Approve principles of standard and overall approach, full implementation plan at Executive Board in December 2015.

Review of principles to be considered by Environments & Housing Scrutiny Board November 2015

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 The council will consult on proposals with tenants and residents, customers on the housing waiting list, partners including Registered Providers, Supported Housing providers and local Ward members.

4.1.2 A detailed consultation programme will be drawn up in conjunction with the Tenant and Community Involvement Service. Key milestones will include formal consultation with Housing Advisory Board and the High Rise Group.

4.1.3 The consultation process will include a specific consultation process with Children's Services to assess the impact of children at height and the need to balance housing need and rehousing options optimal housing environments.

4.1.4 The consultation process will include a specific consultation process with Adult Social Care to ensure synergy between access to older people's housing, sheltered housing and extra care and ensure that this is linked to support & health needs

4.1.5 In order to ensure ongoing tenant involvement, the current officer led project group will invite a tenant representative from the High Rise Group to join the project team.

4.1.6 The council will seek feedback on the development of community lettings policies with external organisations including Age Concern and the Youth Council.

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

4.2.1 The council will conduct a full equality and diversity impact assessment as part of the review of LLPs to identify potential positive and negative impacts, and will develop an action plan to address any negative impacts identified.

### **4.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 The development of community lettings policies supports the council's ambition of being the best city in the UK, which is fair, open and welcoming to all. The links to the best council outcomes of:

- Improving the quality of life for residents, particularly those who are vulnerable or in poverty. LLPs are generally perceived by existing tenants as positive in establishing stable communities, but also restrict the choice of rehousing for other customer groups.
- Achieving the savings and efficiencies required to continue to deliver frontline services by rewarding tenants who abide by their tenancy agreement.

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

The development of community lettings policies will improve lettings outcomes and reward tenants who abide by their tenancy agreement and care for their property. This will provide value for money by improving tenancy sustainment, reducing void times and costs and improving outcomes for tenants and residents. This is balanced against the reallocation of resources to proactive tenancy sustainment through home visits and pre-tenancy training.

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

Under the Equality Act 2010 age discrimination is unlawful unless it can be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. A legal challenge could be made to an age related lettings policies on the basis of discrimination. If the policy is found to be unlawful discrimination, the claimant could be entitled to damages.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

Currently the main risk is for a challenge under the Equality Act relating to the use of age LLPs. The move away from age related preferences reduces the likelihood of a successful legal challenge on the ground of unlawful discrimination based on age. Other risks of continuing to operate LLPs in their current format include reduced demand for properties and the potential for under occupation in 2 and 3 bedroom high rise properties resulting from changes to Housing Benefit paid to under occupying tenants of working age.

There are also some risks associated with some of the proposals and options. Whilst there is evidence to suggest an appetite for change, there is a risk attached to the speed of implementation to removing age related LLPs. This is particularly relevant to popular and well established high rise blocks where the resident profile and demand still meet the current age related LLP. It is likely there will be resistance to change so a phased approach over 3 years with an annual review of the LLP is recommended for such blocks.

The proposals for reducing the number of LLPs and strengthening the way in which we carry out lettings and tenancy management will require changes to the way we work and a redirection of resources. The service needs to have the capacity to deliver such things as additional home visits and new initiatives such as Pre-tenancy training, without this impacting on core business and performance.

However, the development of LLPs under the new proposals will improve lettings outcomes and reward tenants who abide by their tenancy agreement and care for their property. This will provide value for money by improving tenancy sustainment, reducing void times and costs and improving

outcomes for tenants and residents. This is balanced against the reallocation of resources to proactive tenancy sustainment through home visits and pre-tenancy training. There may be additional cost implications to the development of new initiatives such as Pre-tenancy training but our approach will be an invest to save model bringing longer term financial benefits in preventing tenancy failures.

## **5 Conclusions**

The council has developed Community Lettings Policies based on a 'menu' of options to deliver sustainable, transparent and fair lettings criteria with the overall aim of moving towards an evidence-based approach to lettings. Examples include preference to tenants who can demonstrate they have kept to their tenancy agreement, people in employment/ training, and people who have completed pre-tenancy training and demonstrated a commitment to the rights and responsibilities of the council's tenancy agreement.

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 Housing Advisory Board note the contents of the report and the new approach to developing community lettings policies which builds on the success of new lettings criteria used for new build homes delivered through the council's Housing Growth Programme.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 List of local lettings policies

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<b>Area</b>	<b>Housing office</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>LLP</b>	<b>type</b>	<b>No. props</b>
Belle Isle	BITMO	Aberfield Drive various flats	35+	age	10
Belle Isle	BITMO	Aberfield Drive various flats	40+ / access only children 10+	age	12
Belle Isle	BITMO	Winrose Drive various flats	keyworkers/employment/local connection	Keyworker	12
Belle Isle	BITMO	Winrose Drive, Winrose Grove, Belle Isle Circus various flats	55+	age	40
Belle Isle	BITMO	Windmill Close	Good neighbour	Good neighbour	16
East	Burmantofts	Lupton Avenue various flats	35+	age	12
East	Burmantofts	St Stephens Road, Rigton Close, Rigton Drive, Nippet Lane various flats	40+/no resident children	age	84
East	Burmantofts	Naseby Grange	55+	age	98
East	Burmantofts	Brignall Croft, Gargrave Court, Scargill Grange	25+/no resident children	age	290
East	Burmantofts	Shakespeare Court, Shakespeare Grange, Shakespeare Towers	35+/no resident children	age	291
East	Chapeltown	Button Hill various flats	50+	age	7
East	Chapeltown	Town Street Walk various flats	50+	age	10
East	Chapeltown	Newton Lodge Close various flats	40+	age	16
East	Chapeltown	Potternewton Court	55+/no resident children	age	56
East	Chapeltown	Potternewton Heights	45+/no resident children	age	83
East	Gipton	St Albans Approach various flats	50+	age	6
East	Gipton	Buller Grove various flats	50+/no resident children	age	8
East	Gipton	Kimberley Road various flats	55+/no resident children	age	12
East	Gipton	Easterley Mount (12), Easterley Square(2)	50+	age	14
East	Gipton	Pembroke Grange and Pembroke Towers	55+/no resident children	age	84
East	Gipton	Oakland Drive	Local Conn	Local Conn	10
East	Gipton	Denbigh Croft, Denbigh Heights	55+/no resident children	age	90
East	Gipton	Brecon Rise and Brecon Court	55+/no resident children	age	92
East	Gipton	Gipton Gate East, Gipton Gate West	35+/no resident children	age	119

East	Gipton	Briarsdale Heights, Briarsdale Court, Briarsdale Croft	35+/no resident children	age	137
East	Gipton	Highways various flats	35+/children 10+	age	12
East	Gipton	Highways various flats	55+/no resident children	age	118
East	Gipton	Coldcotes Walk various flats	50+	age	8
East	Halton Moor / O'thorpe	Lakeland Court	45+/no resident children	age	58
East	Harewood	Bondgate 2 flats	35+/no resident children	age	2
East	Meanwood	Scott Hall Drive various flats	25+/no resident children	age	22
East	Meanwood	Stonegate Farm Close various flats	40+/no resident children	age	20
East	Moortown	Elmhurst Close various flats	40+/no resident children	age	15
East	Moortown	Saxon Green various flats	40+/no resident children	age	19
East	Moortown	Stonegates various flats	35+/no resident children	age	3
East	Moortown	Stonegates Road various flats	35+/no resident children	age	4
East	Moortown	Leafield Close various flats	40+/no resident children	age	5
East	Moortown	Queenshill Approach various flats	40+	age	6
East	Moortown	Fieldhouse Close various flats	40+	age	7
East	Moortown	Queenshill Drive various flats	40+	age	8
East	Moortown	Stonegate Road various flats	40+	age	11
East	Moortown	Leafield Towers	40+	age	59
East	Moortown	West Park Chase various flats	35+/no resident children	age	4
East	Moortown	Brackenwood Drive various flats	40+/no resident children	age	6
East	Moortown	Chandos Gardens various flats	35+/no resident children	age	12
East	Moortown	Brackenwood Green various flats(odds only)	40+/no resident children	age	12
East	Moortown	Lidgett Towers	30+/no resident children	age	54
East	Moortown	Norfolk House various flats	10+	age	2

East	Moortown	Leatham House various flats	10+	age	2
East	Moortown	Gray House	10+	age	2
East	Moortown	Leaconfield House Wetherby	10+	age	3
East	Moortown	Fairview House Wetherby	10+	age	3
East	Moortown	Birkmyre House	10+	age	3
East	Moortown	Rhodes House Wetherby	10+	age	3
East	Moortown	Hodgson House	10+	age	3
East	Richmond Hill	Saxton Gardens	45+	age	230
East	Seacroft North	Bailey Towers	40+/no resident children	age	60
East	Seacroft North	Brookland Towers	40+	age	60
East	Seacroft North	Seacroft Gate Blocks 1 & 2	40+/no resident children	age	118
East	Seacroft North	Barncroft Court, Grange, Heights, Towers	50+/no resident children	age	178
East	Seacroft South	Hollin Park Mount various flats	40+	age	4
East	Seacroft South	Hollin Park Avenue various flats	40+	age	4
East	Seacroft South	Inglewood Place	25+	age	18
East	Seacroft South	Dib Lane	40+	age	20
East	Seacroft South	Fearnville Close and Fearnville Drive	40+/no resident children	age	21
East	Seacroft South	Inglewood Drive	25+	age	44
East	Seacroft South	Parkway Court	35+/no resident children	age	87
East	Seacroft South	Parkway Grange	35+/no resident children	age	87
East	Seacroft South	Parkway Towers	25+/no resident children	age	98
East	Wetherby	all family houses 2B+	local conn	Local Conn	517
South	Garforth & Kippax	Family type housing	Local Conn	Local Conn	1038
South	Inner team	Cardinal Road, Cardinal Square, Cardinal Walk, Redhall Close, Redhall Crescent, Waincliffe Place	25+	age	83
South	Inner team	Meynell Heights	45+	age	94
South	Inner team	Crescent Towers	45+	age	96
South	Inner team	Beeston Hill and Holbeck new builds	excellent tenancy record 75% / other pref criteria 25%		76
South	Kippax	Various bedsits: Victoria Street, Allerton Bywater and Mount Pleasant Gardens	55+	age	38
South	Morley	Cottingley Heights	25+/no resident children	age	143

South	Morley	Cottingley Towers	25+/no resident children	age	144
South	Morley	Bank Street various flats	45+/no resident children	age	12
South	Morley	Bank Avenue various flats	45+/no resident children	age	45
South	Morley	Glen Grove: various flats	45+	age	8
South	Morley	Beacon Avenue: various flats	45+	age	8
South	Morley	Glen Mount: various flats	45+	age	11
South	Morley	Elmfield House various flats	45+/no resident children	age	12
South	Morley	Elmfield Court various flats	45+/no resident children	age	40
South	Morley	Birch Court various flats	45+/no resident children	age	44
South	Morley	Glen Road: Various flats	45+	age	51
South	Morley	Lewisham Court various flats	45+/no resident children	age	54
South	Rothwell	Lay Garth Place	55+	age	4
South	Rothwell	Carlton Lane	55+	age	4
South	Rothwell	Lay Garth Green	55+	age	12
South	Rothwell	Lay Garth Gardens	55+	age	19
South	Rothwell	Blackburn Court (various 1 bed flats and bedsits)	55+	age	24
South	Rothwell	Family type housing	Local Conn	Local Conn	751
South	Swarcliffe	Sherburn Court	55+	age	82
South	Swarcliffe	Primrose Road	55+	age	6
South	Swarcliffe	Field End	55+	age	10
South	Swarcliffe	Brooksbank Drive	55+	age	20
West	Armley	Town St various flats	30+	age	4
West	Armley	Fearnley Close various flats	40+	age	4
West	Armley	Second Ave various flats	30+	age	5
West	Armley	Tong Road various flats	30+	age	6
West	Armley	First Avenue various flats	30+	age	7
West	Armley	Parliament Place various flats	35+	age	10
West	Armley	Cheltenham St various flats	40+	age	27
West	Armley	Westerly Croft various flats	30+	age	45
West	Armley	Westerly Rise various flats	30+	age	45
West	Armley	Burnsall Gardens various flats	30+	age	46
West	Armley	Burnsall Grange	30+	age	95
West	Armley	Burnsall Croft	40+	age	97
West	Armley	Wortley Heights	35+	age	99
West	Armley	Poplar Court, Poplar Mount	21+	age	182
West	Armley	Wortley Heights, Wortley Towers, Clyde Court, Clyde Grange	Good neighbour	Good neighbour	396
West	Bramley	Flats in Bellmounts(15), Landseers (94), Newlay Lane(3), Rossefield (flats and bedsits)(111), Wellington Grove(16), Ashlea(7), Coal Hills(23), Intake Lane(10), Snowdens (81), Westovers(12), St Catherines(18), Upper Town Street(4)	35+	age	393
West	Bramley	Flats in Baths (12), Fairfield Close(27)	25+	age	39

West	Bramley	Flats in Fernbanks (39), Ganners (109), Langleys (27), Summerfields (71)	30+	age	246
West	Horsforth	Various - Holtdale Avenue, Close, Croft, Drive, Fold, Gardens, Garth, Green, Grove, Lawn, Place, Road, View and Way	Good neighbour	Good neighbour	272
West	Horsforth	Broadwalks (42), Springwell Close (10), Wilkinson Way (19)	40+	age	71
West	Horsforth	Windmill Lane (6)	40+	age	6
West	Kirkstall	Lea Farm Drive, Lea Farm Place, Lea Farm Grove: various flats	Good neighbour	Good neighbour	52
West	Kirkstall	Moor Grange Court	50+	age	58
West	Kirkstall	Iveson Grove various flats	45+	age	31
West	Pudsey	Andrew House (6), Blackett Street (3), Burton Street (12), Durham Court (6), East Court (6), Hainsworth Court (5), Hollin Park Road (8), Oakwell Court (6), Walton Croft (6): various flats	40+	age	52
West	Pudsey	Minster flats, Ripon House (9), Beverley Court (8), Durham Court (6), Lincoln Court (9), York House (9)	55+	age	41
West	Pudsey	New Street Grove (16)15, The Gardens (8)	50+	age	23
West	Pudsey	Acres Hall Avenue (27), Carlisle Road (3), Clifton Court (10), Fartown (8), Harley Rise (16), Highfield Green (16), Highfield Road (4), Lane End(4), Littlemoor Crescent (10), Rutland Court (18), Standale Crescent (8), Swinnow Gardens (4), Swinnow Green (7), Swinnow Road (11), Thorpe Road (16), Victoria Crescent(8), Washington Place (8) Westdale Drive (20), Westdale Grove (17), Westdale Road (12)	30+	age	226
West	Pudsey	Waterloo Road, Marsh View	55+, local connection to Pudsey, preference to Pudsey social housing tenants downsizing	age	8
West	Pudsey	Various: Crimbles Place (16) Claremont Grove (60)	50+	age	76
West	Pudsey	2-48 Chaucer Avenue (23), 1-39 Meadowhurst Gardens (31), 1-20 Mount Tabor Street (20), 21-27 Radcliffe Lane (4), 1-8 St Lawrence Close (8), 1-20 Tofts House Close (18), 31-53 Windmill Hill (12),	50+	age	116

West	Pudsey	Various: Rycroft Court (46), Rycroft Place (46), Rycroft Towers (46)	30+	age	137
West	Wortley	'Amber Cottage' Amberley Road	55+ and LC to Wortley	age	1
West	Wortley	Kitson Close	40+	age	2
West	Wortley	Toft Street	40+	age	2
West	Wortley	Privilege St	40+	age	4
West	Wortley	Privilege St	40+	age	5
West	Wortley	Thornhill Road	40+	age	6
West	Wortley	Hawkhurst Road	40+	age	6
West	Wortley	Amberley Gardens	40+	age	7
West	Wortley	Kitson Gardens	40+	age	8
West	Wortley	Thornhill Place	40+	age	11
West	Wortley	Evelyn Place, Silver Royd Hill, Marsden Street	55+, LC to Wortley, pref to Wortley social housing tenants downsizing	age	16
West	Wortley	Fawcett Gardens	30+	age	23
West	Wortley	Whincover Grange	50+	age	48
West	Wortley	Gamble Hill Croft	30+	age	93
West	Wortley	Addingham Gardens (12), Blackpool Place (4), Branch Road (3), Cow Close Road (7), Lower Wortley Road (5), Whingate Green (12), Gainsborough Place (8), Newton Square (10), Low Moor Side Court (16), Silver Royd Hill (11), Low Moor Side Close (3)	35+	age	91
West	Wortley	Farrow Green (20), Gamble Hill Close (5), Gamble Hill Drive (19), Fawcett Close (12), Silver Royd Close (7), Whincover Close (12), Whincover Bank (3), Whincover Grove (12), Whincover Hill (7)	40+	age	97
West	Wortley	Whincover gardens (40+)	40+	age	3
West	Wortley	Gamble Hill Grange	30+	age	98
West	Wortley	The Heights East and West	30+	age	119
	<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>10125</b>



Report author: Mike Camponi  
Tel: 07712 216963

**Report of Mike Camponi, Housing Manager, Leeds Homes**

**Report to Housing Advisory Board**

**Date: 10 November 2015**

**Subject: Promoting Tenant Mobility**

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 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**

Over recent years Housing Leeds has operated a number of mobility initiatives designed to support tenants secure a move to more suitable accommodation with mixed success.

However, underoccupation and overcrowding remain an issue - there are currently 1885 tenants on the housing register under occupying and 1322 who are overcrowded. Following an evaluation of the different schemes, Housing Leeds is proposing that a new scheme is implemented to encourage an increase in the number of mutual exchanges to facilitate best use of stock.

Details of the proposed scheme are outlined in the report, along with proposals for the marketing and communications for the scheme.

**Recommendations**

That Housing Advisory Board support the introduction of a new financial incentive scheme to promote mobility and increase the number of transfer moves secured through mutual exchanges by LCC tenants.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To provide an evaluation of tenant mobility incentive schemes operated in Leeds to date.
- 1.2 To consider other options available to encourage tenant mobility.
- 1.3 To recommend the best option on spending the remainder of the budget.

## **2 Background information**

2.1 With under occupation and overcrowding still being a big issue in the city for our tenants we need to continue in our efforts to tackle this problem. There are currently 1885 tenants on the housing register under occupying and 1322 who are overcrowded. The creation of more vacancies in high demand stock and stimulating demand for difficult to let stock continues to be an issue.

2.2 In the last six years we have managed three tenant incentive schemes to encourage mobility with the social rented sector in Leeds. These have involved increasing mutual exchanges, reducing under-occupation and overcrowding, releasing high demand stock and increasing demand for difficult to let stock. In addition to intensive promotion, incentives to tenants have included cash payments and payment of removal costs with varying degrees of success as outlined in the scheme summaries below.

### **2.3 Under-occupation incentive scheme 2008 – 2013**

Leeds City Council operated an under occupation incentive scheme between 2008 and July 2012 which offered downsizing council tenants a cash payment of £1000 per room released.

Over its lifetime the incentive scheme freed up 527 houses (888 rooms) across the city at the cost of £888,000.

The scheme was suspended in July 2012 ahead of Housing Benefit restrictions being introduced by the DWP which would have increased demand for the incentive beyond reasonable limits. It was replaced with a more focused Tenant Mobility Incentive Scheme without cash incentives.

### **2.4 DCLG Mobility Vanguard Project 2011 - 2013**

In 2011 Leeds was one of twelve authorities to be awarded funding by the DCLG to promote cross-tenure moves through exchanges and to encourage movement into the private sector to satisfy housing demand. A grant of £40K was awarded.

The funding was mainly used to employ a dedicated officer to promote cross tenure/boundary exchanges and provide a financial incentive of £100 initially for tenants to exchange which increased to £200 towards the end to ensure the funding was spent by the DCLG deadline.



The main outcomes were as follows:

- The combination of intense publicity and financial incentives produced good results for exchanges overall. The targeting of under occupiers in the latter half of the scheme contributed to the council's initiative to reduce hardship for those affected by the bedroom tax.
- The average of 20 to 25 mutual exchanges per month prior to the financial incentive scheme increased to an average of 40 per month representing an increase of over 48%.
- There was a big increase in Leeds tenants registering on the House Exchange website as a result of our campaign. In March 2012 there were 2538 tenants registered on the House Exchange website and this rose to 3395 tenants registered in April 2013, an increase of over 33%.
- Despite offering financial incentives to private landlords to rehouse council tenants in housing need there was no take up but Leeds Homes adverts did increase for the sector. The number of tenants being rehoused in the private sector also increased year on year.

For a detailed breakdown of statistics please see Appendix 1 attached. In summary it demonstrates the impact of this mobility scheme in 2013/14 when exchanges reached a peak particularly for tenants overcrowded and under-occupying. It also indicates more movement cross tenure with private landlords not necessarily associated with this scheme.

## **2.5 Tenant Mobility Incentive Scheme 2014 – 2015**

As the Mobility Vanguard Project ended, the council decided to earmark £200,000 from the HRA for 2014/15 to fund a new incentive scheme to promote tenant mobility.

The scheme offered tenants an incentive package worth up to a maximum amount of £1,000 to assist with the costs of a move, but there was no direct financial payment to the tenant.

1120 tenants who were either living in 1 bedroom properties and were overcrowded and tenants who were under occupying in 2 bedroom houses were contacted and invited to apply to the scheme to move through a mutual exchange. Applications were assessed by local housing offices who supported tenants with finding a new home and the moving process. 102 low demand properties were advertised through the incentive scheme.

Overall the outcomes were disappointing – only 1 tenant moved by mutual exchange and only 9 applicants moved to properties advertised with an incentive under the scheme. A fuller comparison of the three schemes is provided in Appendix 2.

We believe that the main reasons for the scheme's low take up are two-fold; firstly the scheme was quite complex and secondly it was launched at a time of significant change and so was not applied as effectively as it could have been.

### 3 Main issues

3.6 There are 2 main factors that have affected the success of the previous tenant mobility schemes:

- The level and type of incentive given to tenants to encourage a mutual exchange.
- The amount of staffing support that has been provided to tenants who are under-occupying or overcrowding to encourage exchanges.

3.7 There is evidence of demand from tenants for exchange services. In July 2015, Housing Leeds held the city's first 'Big Home Swap' event at the Civic Hall, which was attended by 250 tenants wanting to exchange. At the event tenants were advised on how a mutual exchange could improve their prospects for rehousing, registered on the House Exchange website and matched with potential exchanges using the Orchard matching function. Housing Associations were represented by Leeds Federated, Unity and Places for People to promote cross tenure exchanges.

#### 3.8 Proposed New Scheme

3.9 In order to simplify the process for all involved and to encourage maximum take up, it is proposed to have a similar financial incentive scheme to those that worked successfully on the previous under occupation and Mobility Vanguard projects. A financial payment has been shown to assist greatly with removal costs and act as an incentive to move.

3.10 One simple financial incentive is proposed of a £500 payment to any LCC tenants who exchange properties through a mutual exchange that are under occupying or overcrowded in order to release higher demand properties and assist those tenants affected by the bedroom tax. In order to encourage exchanges of this type and release pressure on the Housing Register we would make the incentive payable to both parties with exception of any Housing Association tenants involved in the exchange. Council tenants in arrears would be expected to use the payment to help clear them. It is proposed that the level of resources made available to fund the incentive part of the scheme are capped at £190k and that the scheme operates on a first come first served basis to ensure the total budget is not exceeded.

3.11 Low cost promotion of the scheme would include the Tenants Newsletter, Leeds Homes media, LCC website and LCC Twitter and Facebook accounts. Printed material in the form of promotional flyers, posters and targeted communication with under occupied and overcrowded tenants would incur additional cost. Additional Homeswap Events implementing lessons learned from the July 2015 event are planned.

3.12 More targeted information and communications would be given to eligible tenants as part of the management of the day to day relationship with tenants,

via Annual Home Visits, arrears conversations linked to underoccupation cases and rehousing conversations.

- 3.13 If the scheme is to be a success, it is critical that staff proactively promote the scheme to eligible tenants. The Leeds Homes Team Manager will co-ordinate the overall framework to ensure a consistent approach is taken across the city and to co-ordinate citywide communications and marketing. The local application of the scheme will be co-ordinated by Lettings Teams within Area Housing Offices to ensure that the scheme is actively promoted to individuals as part of rehousing and arrears conversations. Scheme outcomes will be monitored regularly by local housing teams in order to monitor the success of the scheme.
- 3.14 Other ways of promoting mobility include:
- Active promotion to relevant tenant groups including under occupying and overcrowded tenants
  - Managing the mobility initiative through a core steering group to represent all stakeholders, including tenants representation
  - Promoting cross boundary moves for tenants in employment to fulfil DCLG's Right To Move
  - Investigating the feasibility to a tenant transfer policy to make it easier for existing tenants to move e.g. with a good tenancy record priority award, to be nearer job on other side of city, etc.
  - Create chain lettings to maximize rental income and minimize income loss and void costs
  - Promote low cost home ownership option for existing tenants through Help to Buy (including providing cash incentive)
  - Use of national and regional web based platforms e.g. HomeSwap Direct, Letshelpyou, Homefinder UK.
- 3.15 Promotion of the initiatives listed above could produce longer term benefits by adapting good practices on a permanent basis, however, we would prioritise expected outcomes to cover only mutual exchanges by tenants under occupying or overcrowded
- 3.16 With the initiatives listed above a high degree of staffing resources and allocation of time would be required to achieve a successful outcome. A more focused method of spending the funding and minimum input from staff, but at the same time ensuring maximum impact on tenants ability to move, would produce a quicker outcome by the end of the financial year.
- 3.17 A second Homeswap event is booked for 26<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and is being actively promoted to tenants, for example, in the next tenant newsletter.

- 3.18 There are currently over 3500 tenants registered for an exchange but many more on the housing register who will have not considered this option to achieve their rehousing aspiration.
- 3.19 The benefits to Housing Leeds of promoting mutual exchange include giving tenants another options to secure a move to an area and home of their choice both in the council and housing association sector, as well as reduced void times and costs.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

The proposals are based on the evaluations of previous schemes. No formal consultation has taken place but internal feedback from Housing Leeds has produced support. The next steps will be to undertake formal consultation with tenants via Voice of Involved Tenants Across Leeds (VITAL) and ward members.

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

The proposal in this report has no adverse implications for the Council's Policy on Equality and Diversity, or Cohesion and Integration.

An EIA screening document has been completed and is included in the associated documents

### **4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

The proposal promotes the vision of the Council's Tenancy Strategy 2013-2015 to create more opportunities for people to live independently in quality, affordable housing.

The scheme supports the following best council objectives for 2013 – 17:

- Ensuring high quality public services – promoting mobility improves the housing offer by increasing the choices available to social landlord tenants looking to move to more appropriate housing.
- To be fair, open and welcoming with an economy that is both prosperous and sustainable so all our communities are successful. This service will support the council's desired outcomes of improving quality of life for residents and contribute to the economy by welcoming tenants from outside Leeds to take up employment or training opportunities.
- Becoming an efficient and enterprising council – the service will help deliver efficiencies by mitigating the adverse impact of benefit changes, both on individuals affected by Housing Benefit changes and to the council as a social landlord in terms of rent loss due to long term void properties and under occupation.

#### 4.4 Resources and value for money

£200k was allocated in the 2015/16 to fund tenant mobility incentives. The table below indicates how far the budget available for 2015/16 would extend under the proposals. Out of the original £200,000 about £5000 has already been spent on the previous incentive scheme leaving roughly £195,000 remaining to be spent on the new scheme.

#### Proposed budget

Item	£
Publicity and promotional materials	3000
2 x citywide Big Home Swap events at the Civic Hall	2,000
377 Incentive payments @ £500 per tenant exchanging	188,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>195,000</b>

It is unlikely that the full budget allocation for 2015/16 will be spent due to the new scheme being launched in the latter half of the year; it is therefore projected that there will be a budget underspend. It is a significant priority for us to promote tenant mobility and best use of stock, and so it is proposed that the budget for 2016/17 remains at £200k, with a cap on incentive payments of £190k.

There are no major resource implications related to this report as all identified activity can be managed by existing teams within Housing Leeds

Leeds Homes will monitor the service closely to ensure that appropriate customers are being targeted and paid incentives. Value for money will be achieved from savings on void reductions, repair and turnaround costs and improved tenant satisfaction.

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

There are no specific legal implications related to this report

This report is not subject to Council call-in procedure.

#### 4.6 Risk Management

The proposal is assessed as posing a low risk to the council as there is adequate budget provision and in setting a cap to the budget for incentive payments made there is no risk of a budget overspend.

### 5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Housing Leeds is committed to maximising tenant mobility in order to ensure the best use of housing stock. Mutual exchanges offer a low cost solution to

encouraging tenant mobility for Housing Leeds and so it is proposed that this mechanism is encouraged as far as possible.

- 5.2 This proposal will free up some high demand larger properties as well as tackle some of the housing problems for existing tenants in the city. The scheme would be simple to understand and easy to administer in comparison with previous initiatives.

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 That Housing Advisory Board support the introduction of a new financial incentive scheme to promote mobility and increase the number of transfer moves secured through mutual exchanges by LCC tenants.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

None

## **Appendix 1 – Performance Information**

### **1. Mutual Exchanges**

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

Year	Mutual Exchange (LCC - LCC)	Mutual Exchanges Within Leeds (LCC - RSL)	Mutual Exchanges Outside Leeds (LCC - RSL or Other LA)	Total
2014/15	336	56	14	406
2013/14	509	51	18	578
2012/13	445	59	20	524
2011/12	371	55	14	440
2010/11	350	75	10	435
2009/10	297	49	8	354
2008/09	307	64	16	387

## 2. Mutual Exchanges by type

Year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Type to Type	207	189	174
Overcrowded	108	190	118
Under Occupying	175	190	103
Not Known/Other	34	9	11
Total	524	578	406

## 3. Number of Lettings and Transfers

Year	Transfers (LCC to LCC)	Lettings To Tenants of Another LA	Lettings to RSL Tenants	Lettings to Private Landlord Tenants	Letting to Others	Total
2014/15	867	31	138	1063	2410	4509
2013/14	1240	35	146	1198	2595	5214
2012/13	1123	34	122	1014	2640	4933
2011/12	1163	30	130	897	2756	4976
2010/11	1253	48	197	849	2731	5,078
2009/10	1185	44	221	735	2932	5,117
2008/09	1087	36	146	606	2755	4,630

## 4. Number of Tenancy Terminations

Year	Moved Into RSL Property	Moved To Private Landlord	Total Terminations
2014/15	222	650	4800
2013/14	237	596	5360
2012/13	212	574	5370
2011/12	211	559	5548
2010/11	210	580	5281
2009/10	162	575	5251
2008/09	147	376	5074

## Appendix 2

	<b>Under-occupation incentive scheme 2008 – 2013</b>	<b>Mobility Vanguard Project incentive scheme 2011 - 2013</b>	<b>Tenant Mobility Incentive Scheme 2014 – 2015</b>
<b>Pros</b>	£1K per bedroom acted as an incentive to encourage tenants to move	Simple to understand	Potential to tackle under-occ, low demand and release high demand
	Easy to understand	Low cost incentive worked	Could assist tenants who couldn't afford to pay removal costs up front
	Tackled the under occupation ahead of the housing benefit charge across the city	High take up lead to improved performance on mutual exchanges	Low cost – average claim was £217
		Tenant awareness and opportunities to move were enhanced	
		RP nomination performance increased following amendment for under –occupier moves	
		Increase in private landlord adverts	
		Increase in House Exchange registrations	
<b>Cons</b>	Acceptances onto the scheme had to be managed proactively to ensure budget kept to	Mutual exchanges between private sector tenants and LA or RP tenants were ruled out for legal reasons	Timing coincided with the restructure of housing management services which impacted on performance.
	Stringent checks on property condition by surveyor and rent account checks were conditional to acceptance on scheme	Incentive wasn't applied to RP tenants to encourage more moves from that sector.	Too resource intensive as staff time was taken up to repeatedly contact customers and verify receipts, often to no avail.
	The scheme became financially unviable once HB restrictions on under occupiers was introduced in April 2013	Funding ran out fairly quickly	The scheme was overly complex and difficult for customers to understand.
	Tenants had to be formally accepted onto the scheme and were not able to claim a payment retrospectively if they hadn't.		Customers did not claim the incentive and staff did not have the time to contact them to encourage claims.
	Tenants living in lower demand homes were not eligible to join the scheme		
	High void costs on properties released which had not been factored into the scheme's budget.		





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**Report of**        **Environment and Housing**  
**Report to**        **Housing Advisory Board**  
**Date:**            **November 2015**  
**Subject:**        **High Rise Project Update**

Are specific electoral Wards affected City wide	<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 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

1. The High Rise Project was established following the Housing Management Review recognising the need for some specific work to be undertaken with high rise housing to address a number of issues. Full time project management for this project was put in place in April 2015 and a project plan and key work-streams were presented to Housing Advisory Board in May 2015. This report provides an update on progress made to date.
2. As part of the High Rise project work, 2 areas were chosen, Clydes and Wortleys and Lincoln Green, to pilot new approaches to improving customer satisfaction in high rise blocks. This report provides an update on work ongoing in the pilot areas and details next steps.

### Recommendations

Housing Advisory Board is invited to note progress to date with the high rise project and actions to be undertaken and discuss proposals outlined in the paper.

- **Purpose of this report**

1.1 To provide an update to Housing Advisory Board on progress with the High Rise project, which will include the delivery of a number of work strands including :

- Housing Management...- including extensive pilot project in Clydes and Wortleys;
- Investment Strategy;
  - Repairs and Maintenance;
  - Enhanced Community Safety

**2.0 Background**

2.1 High rise housing is a substantial part of Council Housing in Leeds, with over 7500 households in 116 blocks across the city. Housing Leeds faces a number of challenges linked to high rise flats, including high investment need, energy efficiency, community safety, under-occupation, communal and grounds maintenance, day to day management issues and refuse and recycling.

2.2 A project group was established in 2013 to investigate the issues and to develop a strategy for high rise housing, with Chris Simpson taking up the project lead on a temporary basis. Full time project management was put in place from April 2015 to help drive the high rise work forward. A project plan has since been developed and a Project Board established to help provide strategic leadership to deliver the identified outcomes.

**High Rise Project Aims**

2.3 The central objective of the High Rise Project is to develop a clear High Rise Strategy, defining the future role and vision for high rise in Leeds, and using that to develop a clear, long term investment strategy.

2.4 This objective will be met via the completion of supporting objectives detailed below. There are 3 clear stages to the project:

- **Stage 1** – Agree a purpose/vision for each high rise block/cluster with clear housing management models to meet that vision.
- **Stage 2** – Develop a 10 year investment programme designed to deliver the agreed vision for High Rise;
- **Stage 3** – High Rise Strategy - including Investment Strategy and Marketing Strategy agreed for implementation.

**MSF Tenant survey**

2.5 In July 2014 the High Rise Advisory Group commissioned a survey to gauge the views of all high rise tenants to help inform the overall evidence base. It was conducted through a postal survey sent to all high rise households (both LCC and the 8 PFI Blocks) to both tenants and leaseholders.

- 2.6 Nearly a third of tenants (31% or 2,374 responses) responded to the survey, and a number of issues and themes were identified. A brief summary of the main findings is below:
- 75% are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live;
  - 71% satisfied with their block as a place to live;
  - 78% reported feeling safe in their block with 73% reporting they had not experienced any ASB in the previous 6 months;
  - For Sheltered blocks there was very high level of satisfaction, ranging from 94% to 96% across the range of questions (compared to 68% to 76% for general needs LCC tenants).
  - Responses varied across the blocks, with 29 blocks reporting high satisfaction (88% or higher) with their block as a place to live, with 18 blocks reporting low satisfaction (45% or less).
  - Citywide, the main issues emerging from the survey (ranging from 20-22% reported as a major problem) are drug use or dealing, rubbish or litter, car parking and noisy neighbours. There were also a number of issues reported around the cleaning and maintenance of the blocks.
  - In terms of the upkeep of the block, the most reported major issue for high rise residents overall is the cost of their heating, a major issue for two in five respondents, 41%. Concern about heating is a key theme for Leeds City Council. More than one in five respondents (21% - 25%) identified three other major issues – rubbish chutes and /or waste disposal, lifts, and how well the heating works.
- 2.7 From reviewing the findings of the tenant survey, and exploring some of the issues raised further through walkabouts in a number of blocks, and discussions at the High Rise Advisory Group, The Project Board identified a number of issues that could be undertaken that could have a big impact on tenant satisfaction. These were reported to Housing Advisory Board at the May meeting and included cleaning, repairs, heating, tenant involvement, security and anti-social behaviour. This report provides an update on progress made in tackling these issues.

### **3. Update On Progress**

- 3.1 Significant work has been undertaken with the Environment and Housing Performance and Intelligence team to develop further analysis and profiling of each of the blocks across the city. Each block now has a 'block on a page' profile, detailing all the key information about the block, and both tenant and housing officer perceptions. The profiles have proved useful to understand the issues within the different high rise blocks, and support housing officers to develop action plans to help drive improvements within the blocks. We are also making use of the information to help inform work around how the blocks fit into the wider vision for our housing offer in Leeds. These profiles are available on sharepoint and an example of one (Wortley Heights) is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The project is being developed in 4 key work areas,
- Housing management;
  - Investment;
  - Repairs and Maintenance;
  - Enhanced Community Safety.

An update on current progress within each of these strands is provided below.

### **3.3 Housing Management**

Historically, issues in high rise blocks have been dealt with on an individual needs basis rather than in a strategic, planned way. This has resulted in conditions varying across the 3 former ALMO areas. The lack of strategic investment, and the way the blocks were historically managed has contributed to a concentration of vulnerable people within the blocks. This approach has no doubt contributed to the significant issues we are seeing in a number of high rise blocks, and led to a negative perception / stigma associated with high rise as an option when people are looking for somewhere to live in the city.

The ultimate goal for the project is to make high rise somewhere people choose to live rather than where people are forced to live because there is little alternative. To achieve this we need to have a more proactive housing management approach to build mixed communities and ensure that issues are dealt with quickly.

In developing a new approach we have explored a number of options for the management of all 116 high rise blocks, to put in different housing management models in different types of block where necessary. Work is currently ongoing with Area Housing Managers to look at the full range of accommodation on offer across the city, to ensure that the proposals for high rise fit in with the wider availability of housing. This is due to conclude in the next few weeks.

There are currently a number of options that are being considered which are summarised below.

#### Families in Blocks

There are a significant number of children currently living in high rise flats across the city. Often this is where existing tenants have had children, or where there are no houses available within the area the tenants choose to live. There are also a number of tenants, particularly those from Eastern Europe where high rise living is more common, who actively choose to live in this type of accommodation. There are a number of issues with children at height, ranging from noise disturbance to other tenants to the safety of children, particularly where there are open balconies/walkways and heating issues as well as the lack of play facilities on offer.

We are currently exploring blocks which have the potential to be considered 'family friendly' blocks. If we pursued this option, an assessment would need to be made of all accommodation in each proposed area, to see where the need and demand for this type of accommodation was. These would require the appropriate investment to ensure that they were suitable for family accommodation. The block could then be promoted as family friendly. Work is currently ongoing to develop costings for the investment that would be needed should this be pursued. It is proposed that individual lettings policies are developed in line with the vision for each block.

#### Intensive/Transitional Blocks

We are exploring whether there are some blocks which are aimed at people who need short term, transitional arrangements (average 2-3 years). These blocks would need a different type of investment, focusing on security, controlled entry and a more intensive housing management approach. This would enable proactive management and support to tenants and deliver more sustainable communities and environments.

#### Conversion to sheltered

As part of the piece of work we are undertaking to map out accommodation for each area of the city to ensure we have an appropriate offer for all types of people and ages, we have identified some areas

where there is a lack of suitable sheltered accommodation. We are working up proposals to convert two or three blocks to sheltered blocks to complement the existing service.

We are also looking at the possibility of investing in certain blocks as retirement blocks as a stepping stone to sheltered accommodation. This would be primarily aimed to older people who do not need sheltered support but want a quality / quiet environment

#### City Centre Offer

There are currently around 12,500 flats in Leeds City Centre, and it is estimated that fewer than 100 of these are affordable to city centre workers on minimum wage and zero hours contracts, this would reduce travel costs and create greater sustainability.

Housing Leeds has a number of high rise blocks on the fringe of the city centre that could lend them to being marketed for lower paid workers. An option is to offer some flats at affordable rents (80% of market rents) rather than social rents and use the additional resource to invest in the stock. This could either be on the basis of whole blocks or a number of flats within several blocks. Appropriate investment in areas such as security and investment would be needed to make this work, but it would both fill a gap in the market, and generate additional income into the HRA budget.

#### Tenant Communications and Involvement

The MSF Survey highlighted that communication and engagement with high rise tenants needs to be improved. This is an aspiration strongly supported by the High Rise Advisory Group, a key branch of the wider Tenant Engagement Framework.

The service continues to invest in the High Rise Advisory Group (meeting bi-monthly) and the High Rise Advisory Forums (approximately 6 monthly) and we use these forums to be able to engage with a relatively small (between 40 and 50) but influential number of high rise tenants in this way.

As part of a wider review of tenant involvement, a discussion took place at the High Rise Advisory Group to develop some options for how we could improve the offer to tenants specifically aimed at high rise.

The recommendations are that the following areas are prioritised:

- The instigation of an email bulletin to the 1585 tenants living in high rise blocks who we currently have an email address for. We will work to increase the number of tenants that can sign up to this service as work develops. Tenants can be invited to design and give the service direction on content.
- A review of local surgeries by Housing Officers, so the service is clear what surgeries are happening where and where new surgeries could be supported by the service. These could be targeted or prioritised in blocks with the lowest satisfaction with access to services. These could be for a period of time or longer term.
- A health check of the notice boards in place and ensuring up to date / quality information is included. Making better use of the tools we already have to communicate. Observations to date are that the quality and relevancy of material displayed in public/entrance lobby areas is mixed. This work would also entail the identification of clear 'owners' of managing the material in these areas and direction in terms of what should be displayed.

We are also working with corporate colleagues to pilot a new 'user centred design' approach across the council. Workshops are being planned with key officers over the next 3 months.

### Quality of Cleaning

A concern the quality of cleaning was evident in the MSF survey, this can be broken down into the quality of cleaning, and the perceived time that cleaners are spending in each block. There are also issues in some blocks around the level of rubbish that needs to be removed by cleaners, impacting on the time available for cleaning. This is being considered in a review of waste and recycling.

Through the High Rise Advisory Group we have established time limited review/ working group to work with tenants, housing management and cleaning staff to look at improvements to service delivery. A series of joint site inspections and workshops are taking place throughout October and November, and a set of recommendations / actions will be taken to a future project board.

### Waste and Recycling

The MSF Survey identified a significant number of tenants who had identified rubbish as a major concern within their block. There is a perceived disparity between collection intervals e.g. once per week in some blocks, twice a week in other blocks nearby, based on historical differences and needs to be addressed to ensure we are providing consistent services.

The High Rise Project Board agreed that as a pilot project, a review would take place within the Lincoln Green area to determine issues and trial potential solutions. An audit of current provision within the 16 Lincoln Green blocks has taken place, with no major issues identified. A full report is being taken to the next Project Board it is proposed we introduce a 6 monthly review of the blocks to ensure that any future issues are flagged up and dealt with quickly. Once considered it is proposed that we move on to another area of the city to review other blocks.

The main issues to emerge from the review are around a need for better tenant education around waste and recycling, and a more active approach to enforcement. There is a significant issue around bulky waste, currently there is no service offered to tenants living in flats. Discussions are underway with Localities and CEL to agree a pilot scheme to test how a bulky waste service to high rise could operate. Further work is underway to look at where we can expand recycling provision, particularly in blocks that currently do not have facilities. In particular, the review has highlighted need for improved recycling facilities at Roxby Close, Gargrave Court and Shakespeare Grange.

### Review of garages

There have been concerns raised with garages which are in poor condition and attract anti-social behaviour. A review of garages is now underway to assess the number of sites, current condition of garages, and ways we can maximise income levels from existing sites.

## **3.4. Strategic Investment:**

The majority of investment in high rise over the last 15 years has been focussed on the interior of dwellings (kitchens, bathrooms, rewires etc) to achieve the Decent Homes standard, rather than on communal areas and facilities. As a result, the council managed blocks require improvements to lifts, externals, and communal areas. We aim to develop an investment strategy for high rise that will address the strategic needs of all 116 blocks in a much more coordinated, planned way. A report will be taken to Executive Board in the new-year.

The investment programme will consist of a number of elements:

#### Heating & Energy Efficiency

The energy efficiency of the blocks differs and whilst they don't all conform to current building regulations they perform adequately for the building type. A 10-year investment strategy is being developed in order to ensure the maximum value from this programme, future proofing the blocks. Consultants have been appointed with a specific remit of considering the thermal performance and heating requirements of the blocks and developing a 10-year investment strategy and procurement programme for these elements. They are due to report back in December 2015 and will feed into the development of a wider investment programme.

#### Communal Areas

The communal areas of the blocks have been surveyed and the data collected is currently being collated and analysed to develop a detailed investment programme for works to communal areas. This will be combined with the consultant's information report on heating and energy efficiency to produce a comprehensive 10-year investment programme for communal works, heating and energy efficiency. It is anticipated that this will be completed by March 2016.

There is c£70m allocated in the Investment Plan over the next 10 years for improvements to heating, energy efficiency and communal areas.

#### Structural Works

Some blocks require moderate surface structural repairs. The blocks requiring this work have been identified from steeple-jack surveys and prioritised by consultants. Works are also due to commence shortly on repairing and improving the staircases on the Clayton blocks. Fourteen Reema construction blocks may also require more significant structural repairs. Discussions are ongoing with consultants regarding the extent of works required and the associated risks. In total there is just over £20m currently allocated in the Investment Strategy over the next 10 years for these works.

#### Lifts

An ongoing £1.5m p.a. (c£17m over the next 10 years with inflation) is allocated in the Investment Plan for this work, with a detailed replacement programme. Lift replacements are prioritised on the basis of age and condition.

#### Fire Safety

There has been significant investment in Fire Safety works to the blocks in recent years, including the installation of fire doors, sprinklers and fire compartmentation works. There has been some discussion with High Rise Advisory Group around the recent fire safety brochure that was issued to tenants, and an amended version has been developed specially for high rise tenants.

### **3.5. Repairs and Maintenance**

In May 2015, a recommendation was approved by the Housing Advisory Board to develop a better way of delivering repairs to communal areas in high rise blocks. Due to the way requests for repairs are processed, it is common that communal repairs go unreported which leads to communal areas with outstanding repairs and causing them to look unwelcoming and causing customer dissatisfaction. Not dealing with these repairs effectively could lead to communal areas deteriorating and increased repair costs in the long run.

Responsive repairs to communal areas in high rise blocks are reported via a number of sources including; Tenant reports; Daily checks by the cleaning teams; and quarterly audits by Housing Officers. Currently

these repairs are raised through the normal repair reporting procedures and assigned to the repair service providers without an appointment but with a target date which matches the priority of the repair (emergency – attend within 3 hours and complete within 24hrs, priority – 3-7 working days, general – 20 working days, Batched/Planned – 60 working days).

Because there is no fixed postal address for communal areas, there is no repair confirmation slip sent when the repair is raised as there would be for a repair to an individual home. This has been commonly raised by residents as a problem as often there is uncertainty as to whether repairs have been reported or not. As the repairs are raised without appointment, it is for the workforce planners to schedule in the repairs within the target timescale. At present, given that there is no single point of contact for communal repairs; customer satisfaction on an individual basis is not monitored for communal repairs.

Following the recommendation, discussions have taken place with Construction Services and Mears to develop the proposal for a planned approach to carrying out communal repairs in high rise blocks. Both service providers have agreed to the proposal and the service commenced in the Mears, West and North West area on 5 October 2015. A first week review has taken place and it has been agreed that we would carry out a joint visit to the initial blocks, along with tenant representatives, in order to assess impact and ensure the timeliness and duration of visits is appropriate and delivers value for money. The initial schedule picked up 67 blocks between 5 October and 11 November. The service will roll out to the remaining East (Leeds Building Services) blocks, along with the South blocks serviced by Mears on 7 December, subject to a two month review of the service and assurance that the service provides resident satisfaction, efficiency and affordability.

It should be noted that a similar approach is already in place to address the high volume of repairs to communal lighting and this is now done on a planned/cyclical basis. Therefore, the scope of this project is to pick up general repairs to communal areas which are predominantly repairing and adjusting doors and windows, replacing glass, floor tiles, isolating plaster repairs, damage to paintwork etc.

#### What will the new approach involve?

Having discussed the requirement with the service providers, the extent of the service has been agreed as:

- A small multi-skilled team of operatives will visit each block on a scheduled basis. The schedule will be determined following the findings of an initial round of visits and the demand for each block. It is accepted that some blocks will require more frequent visits than others and also that different communication channels may be required for sheltered housing blocks. The enhanced service will be communicated to stakeholders initially and a schedule developed and shared once the frequency of cycle for each block is determined.
- The team will do an initial walkthrough of each block with an officer from Housing Leeds, Property and Contracts - Responsive Repairs team, and Housing Management, to determine overall condition. The team will then proceed to complete all outstanding repairs during the visit. It is envisaged that some repairs, like floor tiling or other components which may be deteriorating but not in an immediate poor condition, may be scheduled in for a future visit.
- The team will make a record of all completed repairs and observations and display this in the notice board in each communal area so that all work is visible to residents and visitors to the block. The record will be available to residents groups, housing officers during environmental audits etc.



- Upon completion, targeted sample post inspections will take place through the Responsive Repairs team to ensure that quality standards for the repairs are met. This will allow better monitoring of communal repairs and quality standards.
- In order to ensure that emergency and urgent repairs are recorded and completed appropriately and that the Council mitigates its overall risk associated to repairs; individual repair reports will continue to be ordered on an ad-hoc basis until the initial review of the service has been completed.

### **3.6. Enhanced Community Safety:**

Anti-social behaviour and fear of crime was highlighted as a significant issue in the 2014 tenant survey and has been raised at the High Rise Advisory Group. This has been a key theme for the high rise project and Housing Leeds are working closely with, LeedsWatch, LASBT, the Police and other agencies to look at further ways we can provide an enhanced service for residents; including the installation of a citywide CCTV and concierge system remotely monitored via the city's 24/7 control-room, plus a pro-active use of Anti-Social Behaviour tools. Much of this is being piloted as part of an innovative project within the Clydes and Wortleys blocks which, if successful, would be rolled out across the city.

#### Roll out of CCTV

A CCTV network has existed in the former East North East Homes area which was extended to blocks in the South of the city, preparations are underway to further extend the network to all blocks throughout 2016/17.

At present, not all of the cameras situated in high rise blocks are connected to the City's LeedsWatch CCTV control-room, which will be addressed as part of the upgrade and installation scheme. This will enable all high rise blocks to be part of a citywide virtual concierge system that should significantly improve tenant safety and support more proactive housing management and enforcement where required. It would also allow us to offer an enhanced service in areas where there are particular issues, linking more effectively with Leeds ASB Team and the Police.

Together, these systems will provide residents with a more dynamic communication and response system, where information, advice and support can be provided around the clock. The systems will also be used to gather intelligence and develop appropriate response for issues including:

- Tenancy breaches;
- Criminal offences;
- Managing visitor access ;
- Anti-Social Behaviour; and
- Provide reassurance and improve resident confidence.

The approach is being piloted as part of the Clydes and Wortleys Improvement Project, and will be evaluated to ensure effective roll this out across the city. Work is in development but it is envisaged that, we would have 3 levels of service available:

- 1.1 Virtual Concierge – established in all 116 blocks;
- 1.2 Virtual Concierge plus enhanced physical patrols
- 1.3 Virtual concierge plus dedicated physical presence.

Work is taking place to establish a framework for the purchase of technical hardware. It is expected that this will be in place early 2016. The installation of CCTV cameras in the West and the technical connection to the City's control-room is expected to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

### Enhanced Resources to address anti-social behaviour

The Council are keen to deliver a proactive approach to council housing estates, in particular high rise blocks and have agreed to fund the approach. LASBT will review the approach and remit of the officers and additional resources to focus on particular areas of need. Initially this will focus on the Clydes and Wortleys pilot area. In the longer term the resource will be used across the city, addressing hot spots, this will offer an opportunity to tackle the persistent ASB areas of concern.

### **3.7. Clydes and Wortleys Improvement Project Pilot**

The Clydes & Wortleys blocks have struggled with long term entrenched issues; the reputation and concentration of issues has led to low demand resulting in many vulnerable people being housed in the blocks due to limited choice and the need for quick rehousing. The vulnerability of many of the tenants has been a barrier to tenants challenging behaviours and it is assumed that there is a significant level of under-reporting.

Tenant satisfaction has been consistently much lower than the city average for a number of years. The main concerns of tenants are: the upkeep of the block, the heating bills and the reliability of the lifts, and drug use or dealing and drunk or rowdy behaviour.

In March 2015, Housing Leeds set up a multi-agency group to develop an action plan for transforming and improving conditions for tenants. Through the High Rise Project, it was agreed that this would form a pilot to trial a number of initiatives which, if successful, could potentially be rolled out to blocks facing similar issues across the city. An action plan was developed Appendix 2 and in July 2015 the Environment and Housing SLT approved funding to implement the pilot scheme.

The aim of the pilot is to support and challenge tenants and their behaviours to transform the reputation of the blocks and make them a destination of choice. A fundamental shift in approach is supported by a multi-agency project group which is taking a holistic and comprehensive approach to change. The action plan is based around three key themes - Physical Investment; Housing Management and Multi-Agency Interventions.

### **Current Position**

The pilot project includes 4 Blocks; Clyde Court (99 flats), Clyde Grange (98 Flats), Wortley Heights (99 flats) and Wortley Towers (99 flats) covering 395 flats in total. There are no leaseholders in the 4 blocks.

## Tenant Profiles (From MSF Survey August 2014)

<p><b>Clyde Court</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Largely male population with above average young population. A third of tenants aged 31 – 40 years old</li> <li>• A quarter of the new tenancies in the last 12 months were tenants aged 26 - 30 years old</li> <li>• Below average White population (55%). Above average Black African population with 33% Black African.</li> <li>• Below average English speaking population. Above average Tigrinya speaking population.</li> <li>• Below average levels of disability in the block, One school age child.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Clyde Grange</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Above average young population and male population. A third of tenants aged 31 – 40 years old</li> <li>• Majority of new tenancies in the last 12 months to tenants aged 26 to 50 years old.</li> <li>• Below average White population (64%). Above average African Caribbean with 25% African Caribbean</li> <li>• Below average English speaking population. Above average Tigrinya speaking population.</li> <li>• Below average levels of disability in the block at 17%</li> <li>• Above city average number of school age children with 13 in the block</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wortley Heights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Majority of tenants (83%) in the age range 31 - 60 years old,</li> <li>• Just under half of the new tenancies in the last 12 months, tenants aged 31 - 40 years old</li> <li>• Below average White population (69%), above average African Caribbean population (23%).</li> <li>• Below average levels of disability in the block</li> <li>• Some school age children</li> </ul>	<p><b>Wortley Towers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very large young population, with a third of tenants aged 31 - 40 years old.</li> <li>• Three in ten new tenancies in the last 12 months, tenants aged 16 – 20; and a third aged 26 – 30 years old</li> <li>• Below average White population (65%) above average Black African population (27%).</li> <li>• Below average levels of disability in the block</li> <li>• Above city average number of school age children with 12 in the block</li> </ul>

### Action Plan

There are a number of actions that are already being put in place to help address some of the issues in the 4 blocks. Additionally, we have worked with colleagues in Housing Leeds Property and Contracts, and other agencies to develop a detailed action plan that will enable us to make a real step change in the blocks. We have developed 3 strands to take this work forward: Physical Investment; Housing management actions; and multi-agency actions.

Some of the desired outcomes for the pilot include:

- Increased tenant satisfaction with the services delivered and the overall neighbourhood;
- Improved quality to the inside of the blocks and immediate neighbourhood;
- Greater engagement with tenants living in the blocks;
- Increased employment opportunities for tenants;
- Improved links with Housing services and partner agencies;
- Reduced debt and rent arrears;
- Increased tenancy sustainment;
- Increased demand to live in the 4 blocks;
- Decreased number of voids;
- Increased rent collection.

### **Physical Investment:**

- Controlled access system so that the door fob only allows entry and exit at the tenancy floor, only one way access to stairwell, no return unless the tenant goes to the ground floor external exit. This is already in common use in the private sector and meets all health and safety requirements.
- Enhanced CCTV to include cameras on all floors and lift monitored through LeedsWatch.
- Use of new technology to monitor excess use. This will help provide intelligence that can be shared with Police/LASBT to help identify persistent criminals, dealers etc
- Digital noticeboard to provide performance information, send information on fire safety, service charge activities and promote resident involvement activities, good behaviours etc
- Communal area decorating and external landscaping to create a safer, secure by design environment.
- The Bio Mass system currently being installed in the Clydes will be operational for December 2015 and deliver a very efficient cost effectively heating system. We are exploring the best heating solutions for the Wortleys through a wider piece of work with ARUP.
- Free Wi-Fi has been negotiated for the Clydes as part of a citywide pilot project;

### **Tenancy Management**

- First year is an introductory tenancy which is robustly adhered to. This will be followed by a new fixed term 2 year tenancy which is renewed unless breach or the tenancy is no longer appropriate.
- Additional targeted resources to include a Team Leader, Housing Officer (Support), and dedicated LASBT resources to initiate zero tolerance on ASB or substance abuse. The intensive / enhanced Housing Management Service will provide in-depth support and challenge to the tenants, creating individual personalised plans to create effective and well managed tenancies, supporting tenants to manage their tenancies effectively and addressing their individual support needs.
- Engineer a mixed community with role models. Encourage active tenants that are engaged with their neighbours and the community in Armley
- New Local Lettings Policy to target tenants in employment (specifically low paid city centre workers) to take up new lettings within the blocks.
- Development of a virtual Concierge supported by an enhanced 24/7, 7 days a week security patrol (emphasis on out of hours service) to monitor access, patrol the blocks, respond to complaints and generally improve the sense of safety and security for residents of the 4 blocks. Will work closely with LASBT and the Police to ensure enforcement actions are undertaken quickly.

### **Multi agency working:**

- Housing Leeds in partnership with the Inner West Community Committee, Public Health have provided resources to support a newly created PEP (Personal Empowerment Project) Housing Worker. This builds on an existing GP led resource in the West of the city and is commissioned through Barca, a Third sector organisation. The PEP worker will work with individuals living in the 4 blocks who are experiencing challenges, including social isolation, mental health issues, substance misuse or debt problems. They will work in a person centred, solution focused way to help people address the issues they face and build on the support available through Housing Leeds to ultimately improve residents quality of life and help sustain tenancies. The PEP worker has now been recruited and will be on site late October/Early November 2015.

- Work with LASBT and WY Police to make best use of HRA funded additional resources to ensure that we make a step change in the quality of life for people living in the 4 blocks and the wider community. Discussions are taking place to secure an additional 3 police officers and 3 PCSOs.
- Work with Employment and Skills to target support packages for unemployed tenants;
- Targeted work to support vulnerable people, and in particular families and look at the potential for rehousing them in more appropriate accommodation where necessary.
- We will also be exploring tenant involvement opportunities at each stage of the project across Housing Leeds and our partners. This included a tenant representative on the recruitment panel for the PEP worker and work with corporate colleagues to develop a user centred design approach.

### **Evaluation**

- Evaluation of the scheme to evidence measured improvements 6, 12 and 24 months into the project. This will include tenant satisfaction surveys and evaluation of the PEP project.
- We are also carrying out appropriate research looking at what other Local Authorities and housing associations are doing with their high rise stock, to learn from successes and also where things have not worked. This will include visiting other areas.

### **Next steps**

Delivery of the action plan will make a step change in conditions for residents in the 4 Blocks and should lead to a significant increase in tenant satisfaction. This pilot will help determine what has the biggest impact on improving tenant satisfaction in high rise, with the view to rolling out some of the initiatives to other blocks across the city.

A full delivery plan with timescales is currently being developed; the main emphasis is on ensuring that the enhanced security offer (including CCTV, concierge service and controlled access) and the tenancy management actions (including new local lettings policy, flexible tenancies, and intensive management) will be in place to commence in the new year. A communications and engagement plan is being developed, to involve tenants throughout the project.

## **4. Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

Tenants, staff and wider stakeholders were fully involved in the development of the MSF Tenant Survey and this engagement with tenants will continue throughout the life of the high rise project. Work is underway with the tenant involvement team to determine how best tenants can be involved in each area of work, but in particular in work to determine the make-up and future vision for each block. In addition, the High Rise Advisory Group will be fully involved in the development of the project and will be updated regularly throughout the life of the project.

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

Housing Advisory Board members are being asked to note the progress being made with the High Rise Project, and as such, a decision is not being made. Individual EIAs will be carried out on particular areas of work where required.

### **4.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

High rise housing is a priority of the Housing Advisory Board. The development of a high rise strategy and investment plan will be delivered in line with the Council's policies and procedures

and is designed to deliver an improved and more cost effective Housing service for high rise tenants across the city.

The work of the High Rise project will contribute towards the delivery of a number of Best Council and City priorities.

Enhanced security measures will support the delivery of the Safer Leeds outcome, that; 'People in Leeds are safe and feel safe in their homes, in the streets, and the places they go'.

#### 4.4 Resources and value for money

One of the main aims of the high rise project is to determine the most efficient and effective way of using resources to develop the best offer for high rise tenants in Leeds. The High Rise Strategy and Investment Plan will ensure that all investment is determined in a consistent, fair and effective way across the city.

A number of the actions identified throughout this report will need significant resources to be delivered. Some of them will be resourced within existing budgets by changing the way we work, while others will require specific funding. The project team are currently exploring resource options to ensure that actions can be funded.

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

None at this stage. The report is an update paper and is not subject to call in.

#### 4.6 Risk Management

A risk register has been developed for the project as a whole and will be monitored throughout the project by the project manager and project board.

### 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 This report highlights the progress that has been made to date with the high rise project, and provides an update on a number of pieces of work that are now underway with the ultimate aim of improving customer satisfaction for high rise tenants. Housing Advisory Board will be kept fully informed as the project develops.

### 6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Housing Advisory Board is invited to note progress to date with the high rise project and actions to be undertaken and discuss proposals outlined in the paper.

### Background documents<sup>1</sup>

- Appendix One - Example of a Block Profile
- Appendix Two Clyde's & Wortley's Improvement Plan

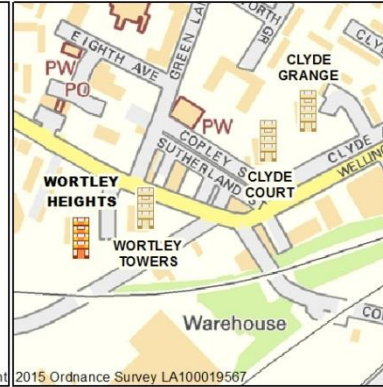
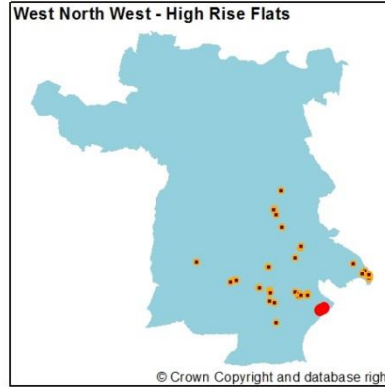
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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

### Block Profile (2015)

### Tenant Profile (2015)

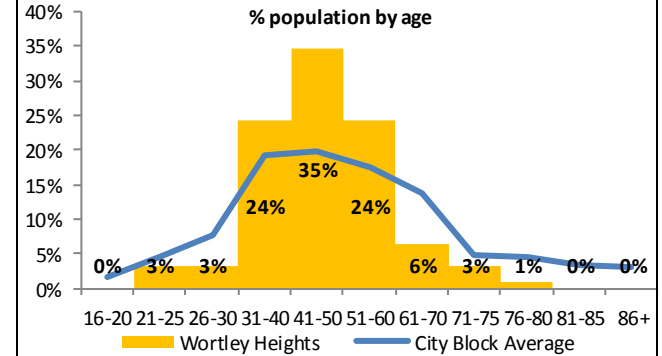
Name of Block	Wortley Heights
Typology	Mixed
Location	City Centre fringe
Area	West
Ward	Armley
NHO	Armley
Sheltered	N
PFI	N
LLP	Age 35 or Over
Date of build	1965-1974
Type of block	Wimpey H Block



Council tenant flats	99	Leasehold flats	0	Total flats	99	Storeys	17
One bedroom	32	Two bedrooms	66	Three bedrooms	1	Bedsit	0

Gender	Wortley Heights	City Block Average
Female	30%	37%
Male	70%	63%

Above average male population



Small young population, mainly middle aged population, small older population.

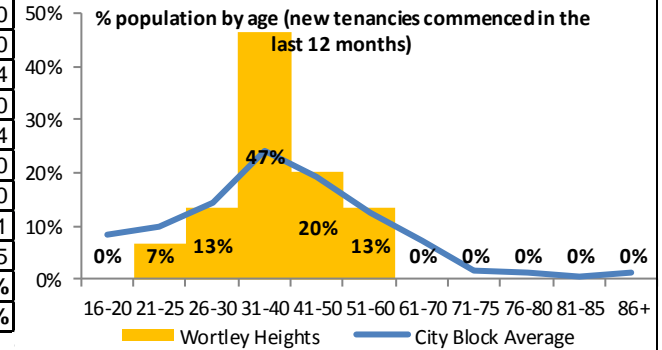
Ethnicity	Wortley Heights	City Block Average
Arab	0.0%	0.1%
Asian	7.9%	5.3%
African Caribbean	22.5%	17.5%
Gypsy Travellers	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed Race	0.0%	2.7%
Other	1.1%	2.5%
White	68.5%	71.8%

Below average White population, near average Black African population, above average White Other population,

Language	Wortley Heights	City Block Average
Arabic	0.0%	0.7%
English	54.6%	74.6%
French	2.1%	0.3%
Kurdish	0.0%	1.4%
Polish	1.0%	0.9%
Somali	0.0%	0.4%
Tigrinya	2.1%	2.3%
Unknown	40.2%	19.4%

Below average English speaking population, 40% of population language is unknown,

Disability	Count
Long term health condition	0
Dementia	0
Physical impairment	4
Visual impairment	0
Speech impairment	4
Hearing impairment	0
Learning impairment	0
Mental health problems	1
Consider themselves disabled	5
<b>% block pop. with disability</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>% city block pop with disability</b>	<b>21%</b>



Small young population, Large middle aged population, no older population.

Children and Families (2014)	Wortley Heights	City Block Average
Number of school age children	4	5
Number of families		

### Tenure, Rent and Other Block Information (January 2015)

Tenancy Duration	Block	City Block
Under 6 months	11%	4%
6 months - 2 years	18%	18%
2 years - 5 years	21%	22%
5 years - 10 years	27%	22%
10 years or more	24%	35%

Tenancy Turnover Apr 14-Dec 14	Tenancy Turnover	5%
Abandoned	0	Welfare reform-transfer 0
Admitted to hospital/hostel	0	ASB 0
Death of tenant	2	Misc 0
To live with relatives/friends	1	Rent arrears 0
Rehoused in housing assoc	0	Notice given before moving in 0
Moved to private landlord	1	Committee tenancy terminated 0
Private house purchase	0	Sent to prison 1
Clearance-transfer	0	Emigrated 0

Benefit Contribution	Block	City Block
No contribution	40%	40%
Less than 50%	5%	3%
50-99%	17%	16%
100%	38%	40%

Underocc charge	↓ 24%	↑ 12%
Rent arrears	↑ 33%	↓ 37%

Flats advertised and bids (Mar 15)	1B	2B
Flats advertised	1	2
Average bids per prop	33	9.5
City Block Average	54	17

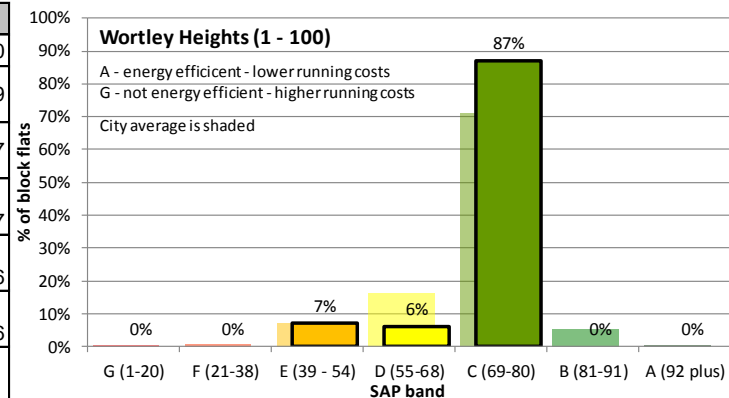
Garages in vicinity	
Void garages	

## Repairs (2012-15)

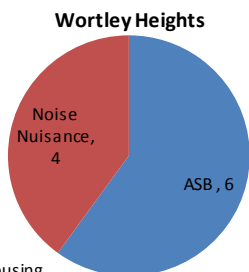
Number of Repairs Completed				
Wortley Heights	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Total
<b>Total Repair Works</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>1468</b>
Major Repair Works				
Flat Repairs	10	8	12	30
Block Repairs	1	0	0	1
<b>Total Major Repair Works</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>31</b>
Responsive Repair Works				
Flat Repairs	310	330	370	1010
Block Repairs	185	168	74	427
<b>Total Responsive Repair Works</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>1437</b>

## Energy

	Block	City
Average SAP rating	72	70
Block CO2 usage (kg/yr)	401	219
Average CO2 usage by flat (tonnes/yr)	4052	3307
Average lighting costs	£85	£57
Average space heating costs	£283	£256
Average water heating costs	£137	£126
Main heating source	Electric Storage Heaters	



## ASB/Noise Nuisance (2014-15)



LASBT and Housing  
Leeds ASB Siebel Enquiries

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## Tenant Perceptions (August 2014)

Tenant Satisfaction	Wortley Heights	City	Residents' view on the main priorities for the Block	% respondents
Satisfaction with block as a place to live	↓ 45.5%	↑ 71.0%	Communal doors, entry systems, intercom	61%
Satisfaction with neighbourhood	↓ 50.0%	↑ 75.0%	Lifts	59%
Satisfaction with internal cleaning	↑ 81.8%	↓ 77.0%	Cost of their heating	56%
Satisfaction with external cleaning	↑ 74.2%	↓ 69.0%	Drunk or rowdy behaviour	55%
Tenants who feel safe in the block	↓ 65.5%	↑ 78.0%	Car parking	54%
Tenants reported ASB in last 6 months	↑ 20.0%	↓ 28.0%		

Overall satisfaction with the block is below average, satisfaction with neighbourhood is low,

## Housing Management Perceptions (2015)

	Condition	Comments
Entrance foyer	poor	condition of the entry system and intercom is good. Entrance panels need to be reinforced as the keep getting smashed. Flooring is mismatched. Regular damage caused to entry system and intercom.
Stairwells	poor	paintwork is good and flooring is poor. Blood stains from drug use and markings on the wall.
Chute rooms	good	operation of hopper heads is excellent.
Communal areas	good	paintwork is good and flooring is good.
Communal facilities	n/a	
Lifts	very poor	Floor is lifting, stains and bad smells.
CCTV	poor	No CCTV in lift.
External Conditions	excellent	paintwork is excellent, landscaping around the block is excellent, lighting is excellent, railings are excellent, parking areas are very poor. More parking needed

Tenancy Turnover	High
Investment issues	More CCTV. Additional parking has been approved.
Local perception	Not an area people are proud to live in due to issues with drugs and rough sleeping.
Heating	Storage heaters are old and not very functional
Key Management issues	Security
Top three priorities	Tackling drug use and rough sleeping Parking Drunken and rowdy behaviour
Action Planning	Change chute doors to stop people using room to take drugs. Drug lighting in stairwells. Renew CCTV in lifts. Improve parking area and place restricted parking signs.





## Appendix 2: Clydes and Wortleys Action Plan.

			use existing suppliers or potentially a waiver.
Replace flooring in foyer and stairwell	Jon andrews	To be agreed – by april 2016.	Jon Andrews pulling together delivery plan.
Waste and Recycling facilities/improvements	Actions subject to result of Lincoln Green pilot work.		
<p>Heating / Energy Efficiency Improvements. (Bio-mass being installed in Clydes, options need to be considered for Wortleys.)</p> <p>Heating is the single biggest issue raised across high rise in the city and therefore improving the efficiency and cost to residents would have a huge impact in the blocks.</p>	<p>Being explored through ARUP work.</p> <p>Jon Andrews</p>	<p>To be agreed following ARUP report December 2015.</p> <p>Biomass scheduled to be installed in Clydes by December 2015.</p> <p>Wortleys prioritised for potential replacement to more efficient E7 ssystem subject to conclusion of ARUP work.</p>	Jon Andrews pulling together delivery plan.
<p>Improvements to external neighbourhood</p> <p>Landscaping, fencing etc – to be designed with resident</p>	Jon Andrews	<p>To be agreed – by April 2016.</p> <p>Priority to ensure secure by</p>	Jon Andrews pulling together delivery plan.

## Appendix 2: Clydes and Wortleys Action Plan.

<p>involvement.</p> <p>Kerb appeal – work on canopies, upgrades to entrance etc</p> <p>Landscaping and upgrades to canopies and entrances would have a big impact on the general aesthetics of the blocks and help change the image/perception of the blocks. This is particularly important in attracting new tenants.</p>		<p>design environment.</p>	
<p>Free wifi for residents in Clydes blocks.</p> <p>(Needs consideration around if we would be prepared to fund this as part of service offer at end of 12 month pilot period – and also if this is something we would like to fund in the Wortley blocks.)</p>	<p>Jon Andrews</p>	<p>By autumn 2015</p> <p>No cost to council or residents during 12 month pilot period.</p>	<p>Jon Andrews pulling together delivery plan.</p> <p>Scheduled for Clydes by December 2015.</p>

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### Housing Management:

There are already a number of actions in place that will make a major impact on tenant satisfaction in the blocks:

- We have reduced patch sizes for Housing Officers;
- There is now dedicated housing officer presence in the Clydes and Wortleys to strengthen housing management and the relationship with tenants.
- Additional support through an enhanced income management offer will be in place from October 2015 to help support tenants in financial difficulty or who are likely to be affected through welfare changes.

There are also a number of further actions that we have proposed that would incur additional costs detailed below:.

## Appendix 2: Clydes and Wortleys Action Plan.

<b>Housing Management Delivery Plan</b>			
<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Name change.	ML/GV to explore how we would do this.	Summer 2016	To be explored once main actions have been delivered. Would be good to look at tenant involvement in determining any name change.
<b>Lettings and Advertising</b>			
<p><b>Local Lettings Policy</b></p> <p>It is proposed to give preference to applicants in work or apprenticeship schemes to help break down the poor reputation the block has. Given the blocks location close to the city centre it is hoped this will also increase demand.</p> <p>Letting policy to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employment preference;</li> <li>- Excellent tenancy;</li> <li>- Good neighbour.</li> </ul>	Gerard Tinsdale /Lynne Hamshaw	<p>Draft policy to be pulled together over next 2 weeks</p> <p>Consultation with tenants, ward members, people on waiting list throughout October.</p> <p>Analysis and final draft developed during November.</p> <p>New local lettings policy in place by December 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>GT/LH to develop draft policy based on existing;</b></li> <li>- <b>GT to brief Ward members (including discussion to gauge interest around expanding policy to incorporate the wider Clyde Estate)</b></li> <li>- <b>GT to organise consultation event at New Wortley Community Centre.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Pre-tenancy training</b></p> <p>Pre-tenancy training for all new/prospective tenants. Approach to be piloted in Clydes and Wortleys before potential roll out across city.</p>	Kath Brammall/ Lynne Hamshaw/ Gurmeet Viridi	To be aligned with Lettings policy process for December 2015.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Neighbourhood Services to develop content (KB/LH)</b></li> <li>- <b>New Housing Support Officer post to coordinate roll out (GV)</b></li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Clydes and Wortleys Action Plan.

<p>This could have a big impact in ensuring that tenants are fully equipped to cope with the unique circumstances involved in living in a high rise flat, and ensure they know what is expected of them throughout their tenancy.</p>			
<p><b>Housing support</b></p> <p>Support package to be developed for existing and potential tenants for any additional support needs identified through pre-tenancy training.</p> <p>Dedicated Housing Officer (Tenancy support) for the 4 blocks, to work with PEP worker to support tenants and improve tenancy sustainment.</p> <p>Additional support is important in taking an early preventative approach to work with tenants to address issues before they reach crisis point, which in the long term will require significantly less resources than the current approach. It will help prevent tenancy breaches, terminations, arrears.</p>	<p>Gurmeet Virdi (supported by Lynne Hamshaw)</p>	<p>October 2015 in line with recruitment process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>GV to draft objectives for Housing Officer (Tenant support) and share with group.</b></li> <li>- <b>GV to feed into recruitment process to ensure right person is appointed.</b></li> <li>- <b>Role needs to be aligned with PEP Worker once in post to ensure no overlap. (GV)</b></li> </ul>
<p>Marketing of properties and explore use of Rightmove etc to change way we Let.</p>	<p>Gurmeet/Martyn to explore.</p>	<p>By April 2016</p>	<p><b>ML to pick up with Liz Cook following meeting with Jonathan Morgan.</b></p>

**Appendix 2: Clydes and Wortleys Action Plan.**

<p>Possibility of exploring potential to advertise properties on a flatshare basis?</p>			
<p><b>Tenancy Management</b></p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated Team leader role to strengthen the management of the blocks.</li> <li>• First year is an introductory tenancy which is robustly adhered to. Any breach and the tenancy is terminated</li> <li>• First year introductory is followed by a new fixed term 2 year tenancy which is monthly (monthly debit so a month's rent due up front)</li> <li>• Enhanced Housing Officer role so that any breach is thoroughly and properly investigated leading to action;</li> <li>• Zero tolerance on tenancy breach, particularly ASB etc</li> <li>• Enhanced Housing officer presence on site</li> <li>• Physical presence on site for first 6 months through Concierge (look at out of hours service through LeedsWatch?)</li> </ul>	<p>Gurmeet to explore.</p> <p>Would need new tenancy strategy.</p>	<p>November 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Gurmeet to draft DDN for Liz to agree pilot for new tenancy agreement</b></li> <li>- <b>Need to be clear with staff and tenants what we mean by zero tolerance approach – and take action where we can.</b></li> <li>- <b>ML to discuss concierge with LeedsWatch to look at physical presence for initial 6 months.</b></li> </ul>

## Appendix 2: Clydes and Wortleys Action Plan.

<b>Tenant Involvement</b>			
<p>User Centred Design approach to engaging with tenants to explore further actions that could be undertaken.</p> <p>Approach agreed by CLT 23/6 with Clydes and Wortleys to be a pilot for the approach corporately.</p> <p>Involving tenants in developing further actions will allow more ownership of the outcomes and hopefully help deliver increased tenant satisfaction.</p>	<p>Matt Lund / Martyn Long / Ian Montgomery</p>	<p>Ongoing - November 2015 to February 2016.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Workshops currently being arranged to develop new approach (ML to coordinate)</b></li> <li>- <b>Initial proposals on specific high rise engagement/communications developed at High Rise project Board (1/9) and High Rise Advisory Group (14/9). ML and IM to action.</b></li> </ul>

<b>Multi agency actions</b>			
<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	
<p>PEP Worker</p> <p>Potential PEP / Housing approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early intervention and proactive approach with tenants by linking housing staff with PEP worker</li> <li>• Can build on positive interventions started by the DHP project and contribute to sustainability of tenancies post DHP</li> <li>• Tenancy visits good opportunity for</li> </ul>	<p>Tim Taylor</p>	<p>PEP worker in place by November 2015 (Recruitment taking place w/c 7 September)</p>	<p>PEP Worker has now been recruited to start mid October 2015.</p> <p>TT/YD currently developing evaluation framework. TT/ML to meet with Jackie Fox regarding how to link in with evaluation for wider project.</p> <p>ML/GV/TT/YD to discuss induction process for PEP worker to tie into general housing induction, and a joint induction with Housing Support officer and potentially new PCSO</p>

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<p>PEP / Housing staff to link with tenants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can link with tenant consultation on capital infrastructure improvements</li> <li>• Office space has been identified within Clyde Grange with Housing staff to ensure the new member of staff can liaise with Housing staff and be easily accessible by tenants.</li> <li>• Recruitment of post if finance identified would take 3 months</li> </ul> <p>Ensure service user involvement in recruitment/selection process.</p> <p>Potential Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of Anti-Social Behaviour</li> <li>• Timely payment of rents</li> <li>• Improved Mental Health of residents</li> <li>• Residents satisfaction improves</li> <li>• Rents paid on time</li> <li>• Access to primary care</li> <li>• Access to other services</li> </ul> <p>£15k approved by Inner West Councillors – remaining £35k funded through Housing Leeds.</p>			<p>resources. (Look at forming a multi-disciplinary team)</p>
<p>Increased police / PCSO presence</p> <p>Work with LASBT/Police to look at greater presence at key times. In</p>	<p>LASBT/Housing Management</p>	<p>November 2015</p>	<p>Additional PCSO resources have been identified but not yet allocated/recruited.</p> <p>Discussion at next High Rise Project Board re:</p>



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particular funding has been approved for additional PCSOs to work with ASB team – need to explore how we could best use this additional resource in Clydes and Wortleys.			how we can best utilise this resource across wider housing leads outcomes, and how it will fit in with other resources being put into Clydes and Wortleys.
Targeted action at known criminals/ asb	LASBT	Ongoing – from November 2015	Linked to above.
Targeted work aimed at unemployed tenants through employment and skills team .	Jane Hopkins	Ongoing – From November 2015	JH to link in to existing services and look at where they could be customised to Clydes and Wortleys. ML to link into group.

### Evaluation:

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What	Who	When
<p>It is important that in order to determine if this pilot project has been successful, and which elements have had the greatest (if any) impact on tenant satisfaction, that we build in a full and robust evaluation process. This will need to be explored further but some actions are outlined below.</p> <p>Need to explore with corporate team best method of utilizing resources to achieve this.</p>	<p>Martyn Long / Simon Foy</p> <p>Frank</p>	<p>Before project commences.</p>

## Appendix 2: Clydes and Wortleys Action Plan.

Survey to all tenants before at Midpoint and in one year to assess impact.	Perrins/Jackie Fox	March 2016  September 2016.
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### Communication and engagement

What	Who	When
Communication and Engagement Plan that links key activities throughout project.	Martyn Long	ML to develop full plan.  Communication to go out October detailing results from previous survey, and what we are doing to improve things in the blocks. ML Drafting.  Launch event during November 2015.

# Housing Advisory Board

## Forward Plan

10<sup>th</sup> November 2015



Deadline for first drafts	Deadline for final drafts after Chair's brief	Item	CO/Author
Tuesday 10 November 2015			
Deadline for reports to Neil Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October 2015 4 pm  <b>Chair's Brief Wednesday                      21st October 2015 at 10.00                      am</b>	Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2015 12 noon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Leeds (HRA) Revenue Financial Position - Quarter 2 - 2015/16</li> <li>• Housing Leeds Capital Financial Position Period 6 2015/16</li> <li>• Performance Report</li> <li>• Effective Housing Management and Lettings Policies</li> <li>• Promoting Tenant Mobility</li> <li>• High Rise Project Update</li> <li>• Briefing Note prepared on behalf of VITAL (Voice of Involved Tenants across Leeds)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HAPs</li> <li>○ High Rise</li> <li>○ LTF</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Richard Ellis  Stephen Boyle  Debra Scott Liz Cook Mike Camponi Martin Long  Tenant Reps

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> <li>• Customer Service Standards / Local Service Offer to Tenants</li> <li>• Housing Strategy Updates</li> </ul>	R Ellis/Stephen Boyle/Helen Semianczuk Debra Scott Mandy Sawyer Rob McCartney 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>	