

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

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 documents¹

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

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