

Housing Activity Update

Date: 22 February 2024

Report of: Chief Officer, Housing

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

This report updates the Board on key areas of Housing Leeds activity during 2023/24, including:

- Council housing rent collection
- Council housing voids performance
- Council housing repairs and maintenance
- Damp, mould and condensation
- Asset management and investment
- Building Safety Act requirements
- Rehousing of residents from 11 large panel system high rise blocks
- Pressures on the Leeds Housing Register and homelessness
- Social housing regulation
- Complaints
- Housing digital improvement programme
- Housing Strategy

Recommendations

- a) The Scrutiny Board Housing, Environment and Communities is asked to note and comment on the update in relation to housing activity during 2023/24.

What is this report about?

- 1 This report's appendix contains detailed information about the activities and performance of Housing Leeds for 2023/24.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 The report gives the Board the opportunity to comment on, and provide scrutiny of, Housing's performance.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 3 The performance of Housing Leeds has an impact on each of the Three Pillars, which is reflected in the city's Housing Strategy.

Inclusive Growth – supporting communities in the communities to increase financial inclusion through investment in energy improvements to homes and support to maximise income, multi-agency work to provide enhanced support in priority neighbourhoods, maximising social value offered by contractors via procurement and contract management.

Health and Wellbeing – health and housing is a theme of the Leeds Housing Strategy, with priorities to raise awareness of health and housing issues and pathways across both sectors, strengthening hospital prevention/discharge housing pathways, particularly for people needing adaptations, with mental health issues or homeless/rough sleeping.

Climate Emergency – significant investment is underway in Council homes to increase the energy performance of homes in support of the reduction in climate emission targets through investment in insulation and efficient heating systems.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 4 Customer engagement is a practice that is well embedded within the Housing Service. There are a number of mechanisms used to seek customer input into priorities and approaches including the digital engagement tool (Your Voice Leeds) and the Tenant Voice Panel (tenants who have volunteered to provide input / feedback on policy approaches, communication methods etc. Where consultation and engagement has taken place relating to recent housing activity it is referenced in appendix 1.
- 5 Customer satisfaction information is collected quarterly for the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures, providing regular routine performance information which enables us to better understand positive and negative impacts on customer satisfaction, and respond with changes of approach accordingly.

What are the resource implications?

- 6 Resourcing pressures are identified within the relevant service area updates in appendix 1.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 7 There are a number of risks that are impacting on the Housing Service, including:
- The financial pressures the Council is facing, and on the Housing Revenue Account, may impact on future service levels. Building inflation is a significant risk to repairs and investment programmes.
 - Financial pressures on customers, exacerbated by the current Cost of Living Crisis, could potentially impact on rent collection, tenancy sustainability and homelessness.
 - The risk of poor tenant satisfaction results where the above risks have impacted on service delivery and performance.
 - Two key legislative changes – 2022 Building Safety Act and Social Housing (Regulation) Act will place new responsibilities on Housing Leeds as landlord to meet new building safety and regulation requirements.
 - A risk register is in place which is overseen by the Housing Leeds SMT, with significant corporate risks reported into the directorate risk register. For each of these risks plans are in place to closely monitor impacts and agree actions to minimise service impacts

What are the legal implications?

- 8 There are two key legislative changes which have impacted on the responsibilities of Housing Leeds in managing elements of its housing service. These are as follows:
- 2022 Building Safety Act – introduced new responsibilities for the management of high risk buildings to ensure that effective and proportionate measures are put in place to manage building safety. A summary of the government guidance is [here](#) and more detailed guidance is [here](#).
 - 2023 Social Housing (Regulation) Act – compliance with consumer standards, the introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures, and a more robust approach to regulatory monitoring. Details of the regulatory standards are [here](#).
- 9 Outlined within the appendix are updates on how Housing Leeds is making preparations for the introduction of changes in legislative responsibilities.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 10 This is not a decision report and so consideration of other options was not needed.

How will success be measured?

- 11 As above.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 12 As above.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Housing Activity Report – 2023/24.

Background papers

- None.