

Housing Activity Update

Date: 21 October 2021

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

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- This report is to provide an update to the Board on key areas of Housing Leeds activity during quarter 1 of 2021/22 including the following:
 - Council housing tenancy management and rent collection
 - Council housing repairs and maintenance
 - Council housing voids and lettings
 - Customer contact / engagement
 - Retirement Life / adaptations
 - Homelessness / Housing Options
 - Private rented sector regulation
 - Housing Strategy Review
- A detailed update is provided in Appendix one of this report.
- An update has not been provided in relation to Council Housing investment programmes as this will be covered one a separate item on this agenda.
- Housing is a theme in the Best Council Plan, with priorities to ensure housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places, minimise homelessness through a greater focus on prevention, providing the right housing options to support older and vulnerable residents to remain independent and improving the energy performance of homes and reducing fuel poverty.

Recommendations

Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board are asked to note and comment on the update in relation to housing activity during quarter 1 2021/22.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 The Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board requested an update on housing activity as part of its forward plan.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 2 The report will provide an update to the Board on housing activity along with an opportunity for Board members to provide comment and scrutiny.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 3 Customer engagement, using user centred design principles is well embedded within the housing service. Where customer consultation and engagement has taken place during quarter 1 this is included within the attached update.

What are the resource implications?

- 4 Resourcing pressures are identified within each service's update.

What are the legal implications?

- 5 There are no legal implications in relation to this update.

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

- 6 A number of risks were impacting on the housing service during quarter 1, as follows:
 - COVID safe working practices continue to impact on resourcing of some activity, along with the risk of further changes in COVID restrictions into the Winter which may impact further on service delivery and resourcing.
 - Supply chain / labour market pressures which are restricting the availability of some building supplies and workforce, impacting on repairs and investment service delivery.
 - Transfer of the repairs and maintenance service for the south of the city from Mears to Leeds Building Services and potential impacts on service delivery during a period of change.
 - Financial pressures on the Housing Revenue Account and wider Council and how this may impact on future service levels.
 - Financial pressures on customers linked to the removal of the additional Universal Credit payment, Furlough, COVID Support Grant and free school meals during holidays and potential impacts on rent collection, tenancy sustainment and homelessness.
 - The risk of dips in customer satisfaction where the above risks have impacted on service delivery and performance.
- 7 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.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

8 The housing service is closely aligned to all 3 key pillars:

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 provided 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.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

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

b) How will success be measured?

10 As above

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

11 As above

Appendices

12 Appendix 1 – Housing Activity Report – Quarter 1 2021/22

Background papers

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