

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

Meeting to be held in Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR on
Thursday, 5th March, 2020 at 10.30 am

(A pre-meeting will take place for ALL Members of the Board at 10.00 a.m.)

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

B Anderson (Chair)	-	Adel and Wharfedale;
J Akhtar	-	Little London and Woodhouse;
J Bentley	-	Weetwood;
A Blackburn	-	Farnley and Wortley;
D Collins	-	Horsforth;
A Gabriel	-	Beeston and Holbeck;
P Grahame	-	Cross Gates and Whinmoor;
A Khan	-	Burmantofts and Richmond Hill;
P Gruen	-	Cross Gates and Whinmoor;
M Harland	-	Kippax and Methley;
N Sharpe	-	Temple Newsam;
K Brooks	-	Little London and Woodhouse;
T Smith	-	Pudsey;

Please note: Certain or all items on this agenda may be recorded

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A G E N D A

Item No	Ward/Equal Opportunities	Item Not Open		Page No
1			APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS To consider any appeals in accordance with Procedure Rule 25* of the Access to Information Procedure Rules (in the event of an Appeal the press and public will be excluded). (* In accordance with Procedure Rule 25, notice of an appeal must be received in writing by the Head of Governance Services at least 24 hours before the meeting).	
2			EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC 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. 2. To consider whether or not to accept the officers recommendation in respect of the above information. 3. If so, to formally pass the following resolution:- RESOLVED – 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: No exempt items have been identified.	

3		LATE ITEMS To identify 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 AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES To receive any apologies for absence and notification of substitutes.	
6		MINUTES - 6 FEBRUARY 2020 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020.	5 - 10
7		HOUSING REPAIRS UPDATE REPORT To receive a report from the Director of Resources and Housing updating members on progress following the recommendations of the Board's Working Group in September 2018.	11 - 38
8		REDUCING REPEAT CUSTOMER CONTACT - RECOMMENDATION TRACKING To receive a report from the Director of Communities and Environment which updates members on progress against the recommendations that emerged from the 2016/17 Inquiry by the then Citizens and Communities Scrutiny Board.	39 - 52

9		COMMUNITY HUBS UPDATE REPORT To receive an update report from the Director of Communities and Environment as to the progress and development of Community Hubs.	53 - 64
10		WORK SCHEDULE To consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2019/20 municipal year.	65 - 92
11		DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING 16 April 2020 10.30am (pre-meeting for all Board members at 10am). 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 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.	

SCRUTINY BOARD (ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES)

THURSDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY, 2020

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, J Bentley,
A Blackburn, D Collins, A Gabriel,
P Grahame, A Khan, P Gruen, M Harland,
N Sharpe, K Brooks and T Smith

78 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal.

79 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information.

80 Late Items

There were no formal late items.

81 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

82 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

There were no apologies for absence.

83 Minutes - 9 January 2020

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held 9th January 2020, be approved as an accurate record, subject to a minor change to minute 67 to read:

- *Councillor Jenkins attended as a substitute for Councillor P Gruen.*

Matters Arising

Minute 71 – Referral to Scrutiny: River Cleanliness. Members heard that an update would be provided at the Scrutiny Board meeting (Environment, Housing and Communities) to be held 5th March 2020, on the outcome of the multi-partner session. Additionally, the Board were informed that the Scrutiny Advisor would be providing Members with a copy of the response to the previous deputation.

84 Fuel Poverty Update

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 5th March, 2020

Agenda items 7 – Fuel Poverty Update, 8 – Energy Efficiency in Council Housing Stock and 9 - Carbon Reduction in the Private Rented Sector (PRS), were considered together by the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities).

The reports of the Sustainable Energy and Air Quality Team, and the Director of Resources and Housing, provided Members with information regarding the approach taken in Leeds to alleviate fuel poverty and promote affordable warmth, the energy efficiency activity undertaken with council housing stock, and the Council's approach in supporting carbon reduction in the private rented sector.

In attendance at the meeting were:

- Cllr Coupar, Executive Member for Communities
- Neil Evans, Director Resources and Housing
- Jill Wildman, Chief Officer Housing
- Rob Curtis, Programme Officer, Resources and Housing
- George Munson, Senior Project Manager, Resources and Housing
- Nahim Ruhi-Khan, Head of Strategy and Investment
- Mark Ireland, Service Manager, Private Sector Housing

The officers in attendance each provided Members with a presentation highlighting the following:

Energy and Fuel Poverty

- An overview of the Leeds housing stock, with specific mention to homes being predominantly D rated, and the ambition for stock to be As and Bs
- Key fuel poverty statistics in Leeds and England
- Switching homes from natural gas by 2030, with the possibility of moving to hydrogen or retrofitting heat pumps
- Leeds Affordable Warmth Strategy 2017 – 2030 (city wide projects, targeted areas and interventions)
- Area Renewal mixed tenure whole house retrofit and the benefits
- Historic domestic energy work

Private Rented Sector

- The issues facing the city, on-going work with landlords to improve energy efficiency, and the need to educate landlords about the changing regulatory environment associated with energy efficiency measures
- Transformational Insulation for Back to Backs (TIBB) - the 3m planned investment with priority areas Beeston and Holbeck, after the successful pilot scheme with Harehills in 2018/19.
- 85% have SAP rating D or below
- Investment in the group repair scheme, including obtaining monies as part of the Leeds Neighbourhood Approach in the Nowell's.
- Continuing to lobby Government to provide financial incentives such as the Private Sector Renewal Grant, along with tax changes and legislation changes in regard to public money (housing benefits to housing conditions including the SAP rating)

Council Housing

- Council Housing Investment including replacement of heating systems and boilers, installation of district heating systems into high rise blocks, installation of solar PV panels, loft and cavity wall installation and the replacement of single glazing to double glazing.
- District Heating & Leeds Pipes – 690 homes to be completed by September 2021.
- The reduction of carbon emissions by 11,000 tonnes per year and improved air quality.
- Tenant Support - Green Doctor in partnership with Leeds City Council
- The Shakespeare Court, Grange and Towers programme – external wall insulation in the high rise blocks has been completed
- The exploration of various new innovative projects such as Air Source Heat Pumps, Fitting the Future and Priority Neighbourhoods
- Ground Source Heat Pumps
- The upcoming challenges with inter-war estates, 1960's built high-rise and non-traditional properties in regard to investment
- Considerations for priority areas to deliver the ambition for the capital investment programme.

Members' discussed a number of matters including:

- A request for the revised presentation to be distributed to Members of the Board, to include the additional slide on the private rented sector.
- Members discussed in detail their support of the Executive Member for Communities, in suggesting to arrange a cross visit to Government with the intention of lobbying ministers about investment incentives, regulation/legislation changes, and innovative solutions to deliver improved energy efficiency across different housing sectors. Members heard about work that had been undertaken with the Heat Network Delivery potentially formed a source of evidence to take to central government. The Director of Resources and Housing re-iterated the existing strong case studies with Cross Green and Holbeck, and the need to make financial cases around problematic areas. The Scrutiny Board supported this and were keen for officers to look into the 'Leeds specific asks'.
- Clarity was sought about whether it was possible to enforce Selective Licensing in order to specify standards for owner occupier housing. Members heard the Government had been looking at a SAP rating C by 2030, but this was yet to be considered.
- Particular reference was made to the idea of focusing on insulating homes in an attempt to reduce the carbon footprint, as an alternate method to heating homes. Additionally, it was acknowledged that the apprentice levy could be factored in to growing in-house expertise.
- In responding to a query in regard to the Decent Home Standards, the Director of Resources and Housing explained that council housing had achieved the Decency Standard in 2012, with council stock having a thermal efficiency SAP rating D, and therefore reached the limit. The Executive Member for Communities added that the Standard was

outdated, and suggested that this form part of one of the 'asks' from the Local Authority.

- Clarity was sought on the considerations of using hydrogen as an alternative method of gas. Officers explained that a grant had been obtained for safety testing purposes as part of an exploratory third party pilot that could involve Leeds in its initial roll out, but the decision by Government had not yet been confirmed.
- Additional information was sought on plans for insulating public buildings. Members were informed that the Asset Management Strategy would look to reduce buildings by 20%, and the options available in terms of better energy performance for historic buildings.

The Chair expressed that good work had been undertaken, and welcomed the innovative ideas and thanked officers for their attendance.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the contents of the reports;
- b) Noted the challenges Leeds faces as well as the approach taken in Leeds to alleviate fuel poverty and to promote affordable warmth, the activity undertaken with council housing stock, and the Board welcomed the approach in supporting carbon reduction in the private rented sector;
- c) Requested that the information provided during discussions be actioned;
- d) Requested that the successor Scrutiny Board be minded to schedule a space on the work programme in the 2020/21 municipal year, and that an update on the progress be received.

Councillor Collins arrived at 11am, during discussion of this item.

Councillor Bentley vacated at 11:30am, during discussion of this item.

85 Energy Efficiency In Council Housing Stock

The item was considered alongside agenda item 7 – Fuel Poverty Update, and agenda item 9 – Carbon Reduction in the Private Rented Sector. Minute No. 84 refers.

86 Carbon Reduction in the Private Rented Sector

The item was considered alongside agenda item 7 – Fuel Poverty Update, and agenda item 8 – Energy Efficiency in Council Housing Stock. Minute No. 84 refers.

87 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's schedule for the remainder of the 2019/20 municipal year. Copies of the Board's work schedule and the minutes

of the Executive Board meeting held 7th January 2020 were appended to the submitted report.

Members discussed the items on the upcoming work schedule, regarding working groups on the following:

- Disposal of Green Spaces 27th January – Members were informed that an update following the meeting would be provided in due course;
- Car Parking Policy 17th February 12:30 – 14:00;
- Community Impact of Nuisance Fireworks 9th March 10am – 12:pm. Additionally, Members were informed that the working group had received an interest to attend from various partners.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities):

- a) Noted the matters outlined in the report
- b) Noted the Executive Board minutes
- c) Agreed the overall work schedule

88 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday 5th March 2020 at 10.00 p.m.

(The meeting closed at 12:05)

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Report of Chief Officer Housing

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 5 March 2020

Subject: Housing: Performance relating to Responsive Repairs and Voids

Are specific electoral wards affected?	☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	
Has consultation been carried out?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	☐ Yes ☒ No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:	
Appendix number:	

Summary

1. Main issues

- Further to the implementation of a Scrutiny Working Group in September 2018, as requested by this Environment, Housing and Communities (EC&H) Board, further analysis and investigation has been carried out to interrogate the performance of the Housing Responsive Repairs services provided across the city by Mears and Leeds Building Services. The current contractual arrangements have been in place following a competitive procurement process in 2011.
- Performance is currently reported and managed against the following contractual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Housing Responsive Repairs and Voids:

Responsive Repairs

- RR1 Same Day Fix (including Adapts)
- RR2 Repairs Completed Within Target (including Adapts)
- RR3 Appointments Kept
- RR6 Customer Satisfaction (The service provided by the workers who carried out the repair)

Voids (Empty Properties)

- EP1 Completions within 15 days (construction / refurbishment works)

- Performance is also reported against an internal indicator (non contractual), BV212 “Voids Overall Turnaround Time”, which includes activity around allocating and securing a letting.
- c. This report provides an overview of how the delivery of these services has performed across the city since 2018 (when the in-depth working group review was requested) up to present date, including relevant activity undertaken to improve performance and deliver continuous improvement.
- d. The performance of both Mears (South and West of the city) and LBS (East of the city) is being closely monitored and managed to ensure standards are improved or maintained across the city from 2021 as the services in the South are transferred into LBS and are re-procured in the West.
- e. It should be noted that the performance of either of the two PFI Contracts in Little London, Beeston Hill and Holbeck, and in Swarcliffe has not been considered by the working group, or in this report.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- Delivering a high performing housing repair and maintenance service supports the council's ambition for Leeds to be a compassionate and caring city that tackles poverty and reduces inequality. Through the provision of these services we ensure that our tenants, including some of the most vulnerable people in our city, are able to live in safe, accessible and well maintained homes.
- The services contribute to the following Best Council Plan ambitions:
 - a. Housing – in particular housing of the right quality, and the Best City key performance indicator of percentage of council housing repairs completed within target; and
 - b. Safe, Strong Communities – in particular keeping people safe from harm and protecting the most vulnerable.

3. Resource Implications

- High performance against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and continual improvement across the Housing Repairs and Voids service will in turn drive value for money and improved outputs for the service and customers.

4. Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Board:
 - a. note the contents of this report

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide an update on performance relating to housing responsive repairs and voids, following the establishment of the Scrutiny Working Group: Housing Repairs in September 2018.

2. Background information

- 2.1 This Environment, Housing and Communities (EC&H) Board requested further analysis and investigation around the performance of the Housing Responsive Repairs services provided across the city by Mears and Leeds Building Services in 2018. The current contractual arrangements have been in place following a competitive procurement process in 2011.
- 2.2 A report with performance data from August 2019 was also provided to the Board in October 2019 following the Executive Board paper relating to the 'Procurement of Housing Responsive Repairs and Voids Services for the West of the Leeds.'
- 2.3 The table below shows the current arrangements by numbers of council homes managed in each area of the city, as an indication of scale of service activity. It should be noted that the working group and this report has not considered properties managed under either of the two PFI contracts in the city – focusing on the services provided by Mears and LBS.

Area	Service Provider	No. homes
South	Mears	14,055
West	Mears	19,582
East	LBS	16,905
Total		50,542
PFI managed properties – excluded from this analysis		
LLBHH	SC4L	1,700
Swarcliffe	HCP	1,300

- 2.4 As per the October 2019 Executive Board Report, the decision has been taken to in-source the delivery of housing responsive repairs and voids services for the South of the city from 2021, meaning that Leeds Building Services (LBS) will deliver these services in the East & South of the city, with an external contractor to be procured for the West of the city. This will mean that LBS' housing responsive repairs and voids service delivery will expand by 83%; currently LBS cover approximately 33% of the city's homes (circa 17,000 of a total of circa 51,000 properties), which will increase to 61% (circa 31,000 properties) in 2021.
- 2.5 This report provides an overview of how the delivery of these services has performed across the city since 2018 (when the in-depth working group review was requested) up to present date, including relevant activity undertaken to improve performance and deliver continuous improvement.
- 2.6 The performance of both Mears (South and West of the city) and LBS (East of the city) is being closely monitored and managed to ensure standards are improved or maintained across the city from 2021 as the services in the South are transferred into LBS and are re-procured in the West.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 Performance is reported and managed against the following contractual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Housing Responsive Repairs and Voids:

Responsive Repairs

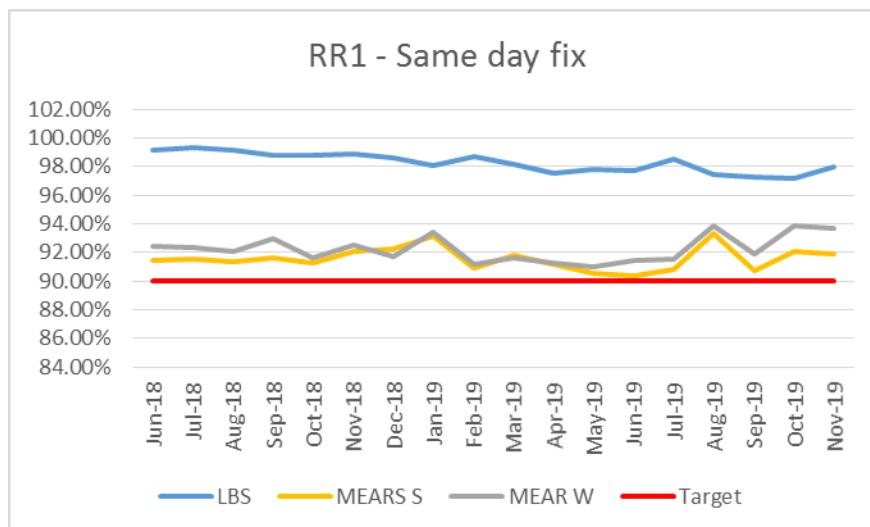
- RR1 Same Day Fix (including Adapts)
- RR2 Repairs Completed Within Target (including Adapts)
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- RR6 Customer Satisfaction (The service provided by the workers who carried out the repair)

Voids (Empty Properties)

- EP1 Completions within 15 days (construction / refurbishment works)
- Performance is also reported against an internal indicator (non contractual), BV212 "Voids Overall Turnaround Time", which includes activity around allocating and securing a letting.

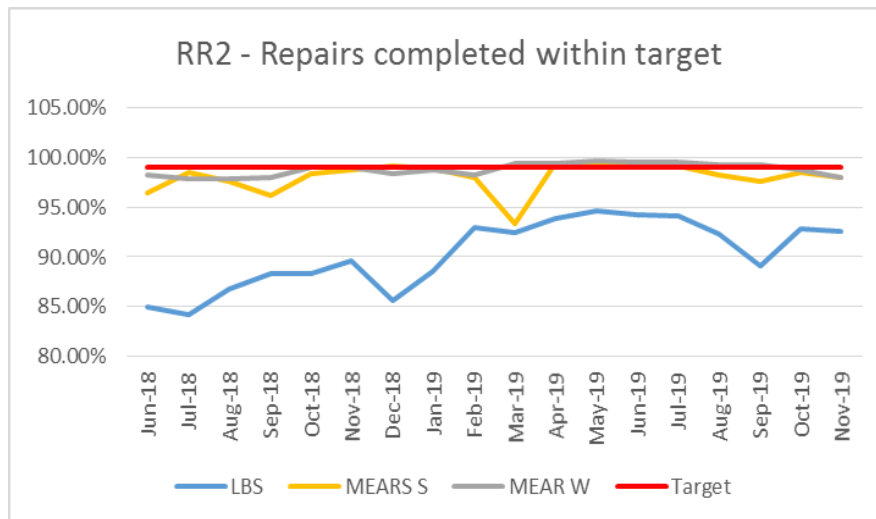
3.2 Historic data: Overview of LBS and Mears - June 2018 to December 2019

- 3.2.1 **Graph 1: RR1- same day fix:** Demonstrates an improvement on average across the city and consistently above target. LBS are performing better than the external contracts, which is interpreted to be a positive in terms of LBS' increasing service area.

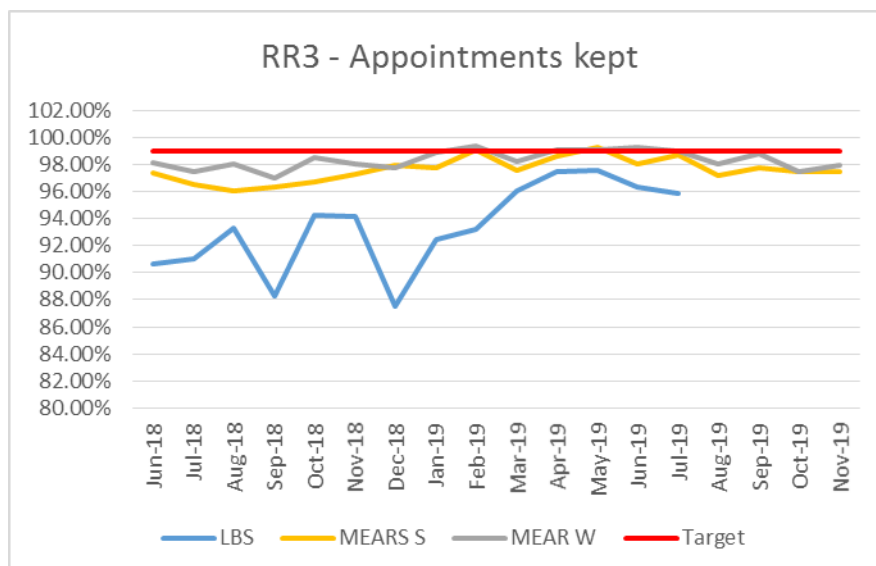


3.2.2 Graph 2: RR2 – repairs completed within target: Graph two shows a general improvement on average across the city, moving towards the target of 99%.

LBS has made substantial progress in the period (June 2018 achieved 85%, and November 2019 achieved 93%) and actions are being implemented to continue this trend – these include restructuring the planning team to ensure that operational planning becomes more efficient and alterations to the ICT system to ensure more dynamic scheduling in geographical areas. These positive trends show great potential and need to continue to ensure that service improvements are experienced by the tenants.

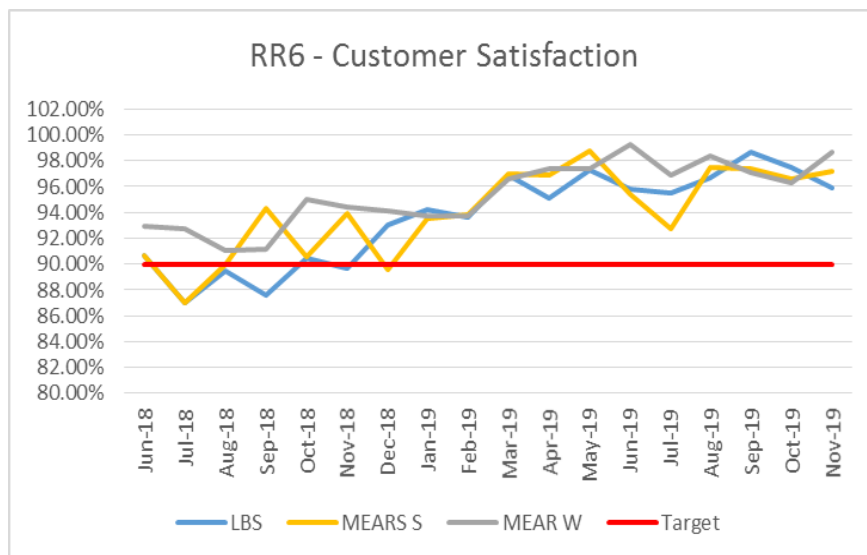


3.2.3 Graph 3: RR3 – appointments kept: The results for the external contract remain static just below the target and LBS were improving steadily towards the target. LBS appointment results are not currently available for RR3 (appointments kept) due to IT issues. However a manual workaround is being implemented so accurate figures can be reported.



3.2.4 Graph 4: RR6 – Customer Satisfaction: Customer Satisfaction is currently above target for all Contracts. It has improved on average across the city and is consistently about the target.

Actions being taken to try and embed continuous improvement for LBS. Further developments to on way text system, so that the tenant can text back instead of calling and is reminded of the appointment. Further developments have been made to the Total Optimize system (the dynamic workforce scheduling tool), which promotes itself as increasing staff productivity, reducing travel costs and times and increased KPI's, including Customer Satisfaction.



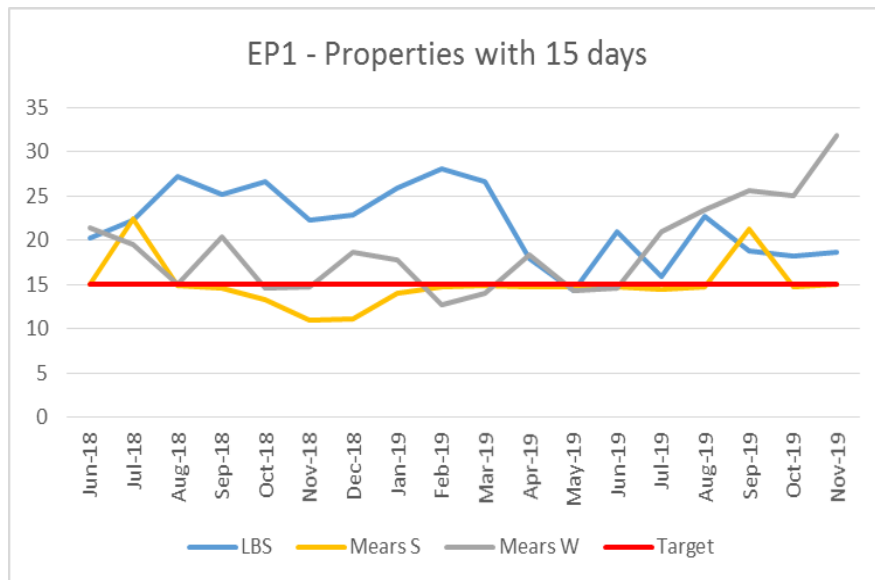
3.2.5 Graph 5: EP1 – Turnaround of works on void properties within 15 days

Performance against this target is clearly outside our expectations and requirements. In order to address this, a complete review of the whole voids and lettings process is underway, and a dedicated Task and Finish Group has been established to identify where immediate and longer-term improvements can be made.

Mears S performance has remained static around the target for the reporting period, whilst Mears W average days in void has increased since summer 2019.

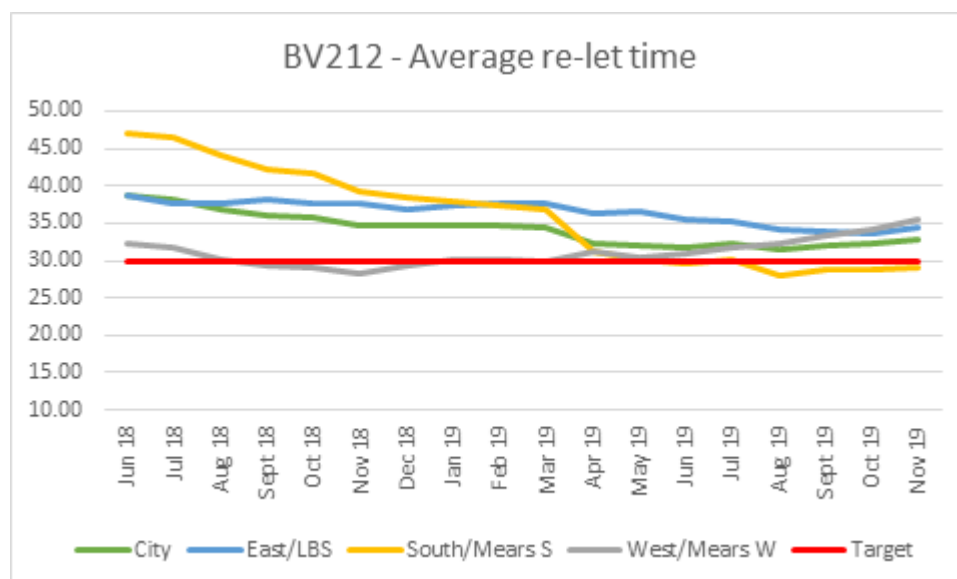
On average LBS performance is generally improving with a downward trend towards the target of 15 days.

Mears West Voids –the dip in performance is being carefully reviewed as this clearly is having a negative impact. Contractual mechanisms are being implemented, with Early Warning Notices being issued and deductions applied. A further performance report has also been submitted by Mears detailing actions to help improve performance.



3.2.6 Graph 6: BV212 – Average re-let time

Performance against this target broadly reflects performance against EP1, with effective action required to address issues of low performance. A detailed analysis of the data for this period has commenced and this shows an increase in the amount of external works, disrepair prevention works and plastering being carried out. While this clearly therefore takes more time and consequently negatively impacts on KPI performance, this is contributing positively to the overall quality of the home so careful consideration is being given to assess how best to address this. The dedicated Task and Finish Group mentioned above is taking this into account when considering standards, requirements, communications and timescales when re-letting properties. Future performance indicators for new contractual and internal arrangements are also being developed to incentivise better performance and behaviours.



3.3 External Contracts: In order to continue to drive service improvements through the Mears contracts, Leeds City Council are working in partnership with Mears through the regular Operational Core group and strategic core group meetings. These

forums are used to analyse performance and agree practical action plans where relevant. The contract promotes robust monitoring processes to be formally implemented, including issuing Early Warning Notices to pre-empt negative outcomes for customers prior to them occurring. The contract allows for formal frameworks to be in place to monitor progress of these workstreams and actions plans, identifying trends for early intervention if required.

Some specific examples include:

- External works for Voids – agreed to raise on separate order so works can start immediately from date of VP1
- Consistency of application of Technical Specification – toolbox talks to be arranged
- Damp profiling leading to an increase in clear cavities – LCC to provide equipment and training

3.4 Based on recommendations made by the Scrutiny Board Working Group and a CiH Working Together to Rethink Repairs & Maintenance report (Appendix a), Housing Leeds have established a “Rethinking Repairs” project which is focussing on process and system developments that have been identified as contributing to service improvements. Many of these tasks and workstreams interface with the work being undertaken to re-commission the Housing Responsive Repairs and Voids service across the city from 2021, influencing service requirements and performance indicators that will be delivered by our contractor(s) and internal provider.

3.4.1 **Contact centre and customer experience** – A full end to end review of the repair raising process will be carried out as part of the Re-thinking repairs project. This will involve all stakeholders including the contact centre, face-to-face customer service and Housing Management and will aim to streamline the number of avenues tenants can raise repair requests, making the customer experience the tenant receives broadly consistent. In addition this project aims to work with the contact centre on a number of initiatives to improve the customer experience, for example, working to automate how customer repair satisfaction responses are captured, with the aim of providing higher volume and more robust data in order to help drive further service improvements.

3.4.2 **Improving accuracy of repair raising** – This project will aim to channel all repair requests through a dedicated, trained team in order to reduce the number of inaccurate repair requests raised at the point of ordering. This project will also review and revise where necessary, key operational procedures in order to drive customer excellence, efficiency and cohesion between teams. For example, improving the ability for mobile working for LBS and technical officers as well as improving the planned and non-urgent repair work process. This review has already improved the access/no access process to be developed and included in the tender documentation for the West contract commencing in 2021.

3.4.3 **Decoration and lettings standards** - One of the key aims of this project is to improve tenant and customer satisfaction with the decoration and lettings standard. By rolling out a self-service repairs portal for the tenant to raise a repair online 24/7, at their convenience it will allow the service to operate more effectively in a growing digital environment and will provide guidance to tenants on repair timescales and expectations. In addition this project will work with IT teams to help develop a suite of monthly reports which identify high frequency

users of the service in order to help encourage interventions to react to these including targeted visits, disrepair prevention and targeted property MOT's, which will help improve the decoration and lettings standard of the properties within Leeds.

- 3.4.4 **Voids standards and lettings process** – A full end-to-end review of the standard of Leeds City Council void properties is being undertaken to improve outcomes for the customer. This review includes standards of refurbishment works, communications and updates for tenants prior to moving in and timescales and will include an appraisal of the opportunities to enhance the current Letting Standard by carrying out energy efficiency works during the void period.

- 3.5 Overview of partnership working with LBS to drive service improvements: LBS Change Project team are working closely with the Procurement team and Contract Project Managers to work on the Procurement strategy to ensure compliance across the sub-contractors and Key performance measures are put in place to help drive service improvements.

- 3.6 Interrogating our data: Work is being undertaken to drive more accurate performance reporting and robust data. Data is analysed on a weekly basis by Trades to highlight trends and identify any issues.

- 3.7 Responsive Repairs data reconciliation meetings are held with Mears and LBS to ensure the data is accurate and a true reflection of the work carried out.

- 3.8 New arrangements post 2021: how we can drive more positive, customer focussed behaviour

- 3.8.1 Revising our KPIs – monitoring what matters

A new KPI Framework has been developed, which includes a robust Performance and Payment mechanism for our external Contractors. The Performance mechanism also includes a Performance Improvement plan which will be used to ensure actions are taken if the Service provider fails to achieve the performance target. There are also more Customer focused KPI'S and Management Information required to identify a true picture of the Service being delivered, which will again help drive performance improvements.

- 3.8.2 Engaging with our customers

Prior to the Repairs and Investment Group which was held 18th November 2019, this group were sent the proposed new KPI'S for feedback. Following this feedback careful consideration was taken to review the feedback and proposed a reporting format which could be understood by all.

- 3.8.3 Producing accurate data

Data will continue to be integrated and scrutinised as part of the Performance Management Framework. Any anomalies will be dealt with at the monthly data reconciliation meetings with the Contractors.

- 3.8.4 The increase in this service provision by LBS supports greater direct control of service delivery, maintaining excellent knowledge in-house about council assets.

- 3.8.5 Externally procured contracts will provide opportunities for effective performance benchmarking.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.2 The following consultation and engagement has taken place with regards to the service provided for responsive repairs and voids in the city:

4.2.1 Feedback from the working group established by this Scrutiny Board in 2018 has (together with recommendations from the CiH report) informed the scope of works for the rethinking repairs project, and the basis on which performance against KPIs is monitored

4.2.2 Bi-monthly reporting into the Repairs and Investment Group (a forum available to support/work with the whole housing property function)

4.2.3 Bi-annual Star Survey takes place to gather residents feedback on the service provided. The next survey is due to take place in Autumn 2020, so feedback will be incorporated where relevant and possible into contractual and internal arrangements, along with service improvement plans for Housing

4.2.4 Customer feedback is received in relation to KPI RR6 (Customer Satisfaction) as reported above

4.2.5 Each new tenant is given the opportunity to participate in a satisfaction survey 3-4 weeks after moving into their homes

4.3 The Executive Member has been briefed as part of the ongoing meetings with Chief Officer Housing, and also as part of the development of this specific Scrutiny report.

4.4 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.4.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration screening and impact assessment was completed as part of the overarching Housing responsive repairs and voids programme, including the decisions on service delivery arrangements post 2021. This impact assessment was provided to the Executive Board and this EH&C Scrutiny Board in October 2019.

4.4.2 No specific findings relevant to the performance of this service provision were identified.

4.5 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.5.1 Delivering a high performing housing repair and maintenance service supports the council's ambition for Leeds to be a compassionate and caring city that tackles poverty and reduces inequality. Through the provision of these services we ensure that our tenants, including some of the most vulnerable people in our city, are able to live in safe, accessible and well maintained homes.

4.5.2 The services contribute to the following Best Council Plan ambitions:

- Housing – in particular housing of the right quality, and the Best City key performance indicator of percentage of council housing repairs completed within target; and
- Safe, Strong Communities – in particular keeping people safe from harm and protecting the most vulnerable.

Climate Emergency

4.5.3 At Full Council on 27 March 2019, Leeds City Council passed a motion declaring a Climate Emergency. In addition, the Leeds Climate Commission have proposed a

series of science based carbon reduction targets for the city so that Leeds can play its part in keeping global average surface temperature increases to no more than 1.5C.

4.5.4 The Climate Emergency will be fully taken into account when considering our future repairs and void strategy. Contractual targets are already set and managed with regards to amount of waste sent to landfill by both LBS and Mears (Target for Reduction in landfill is set at 97.6%). The procurement activity being undertaken will continue to monitor this, in addition to seeking to appoint contractors who can demonstrate they have arrangements in place within their organisation which reduce their impact on climate change, along with also being required to demonstrate what measures they will put in place to reduce emissions as a result of travelling. Specific performance indicators relating to the climate emergency are being carefully considered and developed for the contracts and internal arrangements post 2021.

4.5.5 The end to end review of

4.6 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.6.1 The continual monitoring and management of performance against contractual and non-contractual indicators is being undertaken irrespective of any specific procurement activity. Nonetheless there are irrefutable links with the upcoming re-commissioning of the city-wide responsive repairs and voids services which is being managed and reported on by a dedicated project team and Programme Board, chaired by the Chief Officer of Housing.

4.6.2 High performance against the KPIs and continual improvement will in turn drive value for money and improved outputs for the service and customers.

4.7 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.7.1 This report is for information and updates only, therefore there are no legal implications.

4.7.2 The future procurement and internal commissioning of the future Housing Responsive Repairs and Voids services is being managed as a separate project and is therefore following all required legal, contractual and decision-making processes through these project governance processes.

4.8 Risk management

4.8.1 Risk of underperformance against these indicators, resulting in negative customer experience, reduced value for money outputs (due to excessive down time / multiple visits per job / reduced income due to voids taking longer to turnaround).

5. Conclusions

5.1 Performance continues to be robustly monitored and managed across the service. Despite there being a general upwards trend which should be acknowledged, there continues to be areas where performance is not meeting targets or expectations so appropriate and focussed action is being taken to drive continuous improvements.

6. Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Board:
 - a. note the contents of this report

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 Report to the EH&C Scrutiny Board on 17 October 2019: Future delivery of citywide housing repairs and voids services (item 47):
<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1091&MId=8620>
- 7.2 Report to the EH&C Scrutiny Board on 28 June 2018: Performance Report (item 11):
<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1091&MId=8404&Ver=4>

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.

Innovation and Repairs Transformation

Summary

All social landlords face unprecedented challenges over resources and business plans. Every area of spend must now not only justify itself in terms of its impact upon residents but also demonstrate a respectable rate of return on investment in the business and its property assets. Any money that is not being efficiently invested in repairs and maintenance means lower investment in the Council's overriding priority of increasing supply to meet demand for social and affordable housing.

“With up to one third of operating costs going into repairs and maintenance, what this is spent upon and how this delivered are now under exacting and ever closer scrutiny. The traditional repairs delivery models led primarily by either simple tenant demand for reactive repairs or by the predicted lifecycle of components in the case of planned maintenance will no longer match the value and economy thresholds now expected.”

Rethinking Repairs, Chartered Institute of Housing

Alongside this financial challenge social landlords are now grappling with new fire safety requirements and likely changes to building regulations. In common with other landlords we are working hard on rebuilding the trust and confidence of residents in our commitment and ability to keep tenants safe at all times.

This paper introduces the principal insights and learning from a recent CIH Working Together Repairs project which involved fifteen landlords and two national repairs contractors.

Making Sure Repairs Add Value

Repairs and maintenance is still the flagship service in social housing which shapes tenants' judgement about their landlord. Repairs has, therefore, been viewed as a service and investment priority. It follows from this that making what is spent on repairs relevant and always a proper contribution to sustaining the assets is critical.

The traditional model of tenant led demand typically generates a pattern of uneven distribution with a small proportion of intensive users of the service yet up to a third not requesting or receiving any repairs visits. This disparity in how the service is allocated means that future decisions over what repairs are undertaken should be more consistently aligned with a clearly articulated and transparently managed rights and responsibilities agenda.

Repairs and maintenance practitioners must be at the forefront of cultivating a new relationship with residents that embraces a duty of candour and is inclusive, engaged and responsive to resident concerns. The structures of resident engagement and how asset management and repairs and maintenance are undertaken need to be reformed and invigorated to match these expectations.

An overriding strategic challenge for social landlords is: *how to optimise the value obtained from delivery of repairs and maintenance services and ensure all investment contributes to business objectives.*

The CIH project undertook an evidence-based examination of good practice in repairs and maintenance service design and operation, and through peer group evaluation made an objective appraisal of the results and outcomes. This also included critical appraisal of new delivery models, assessing what works well and what needs fixing and defining next best practice.

“Our conclusion is that the sector needs a paradigm shift in its approach to repairs and maintenance which disrupts both the established delivery models and the typically sterile terms of debate, for example, over in house or outsourced provision.”

The genuinely important issues and concepts for a modern repairs service have been redefined and include:

- **Designing and implementing a new collaborative approach based upon a clear and common purpose that effectively aligns and coordinates input between the delivery provider and the client and across the landlord team to optimise use of resources and collective effort**
- **Driving down cost and minimising waste by extending component life where a repair will be effective and adopting a consistent testing regime prior to component renewal**
- **Measuring what is important both for residents and for the building asset and testing that the service is adding value**
- **Understanding the drivers of cost and value in repairs and maintenance and harnessing these to improve outcomes**
- **A new deal with residents that is an explicit partnership to look after homes and neighbourhoods**
- **Application of commercial thinking and practice to protect investment and asset value**

This entails a root and branch overhaul of strategic objectives and partnerships to result in new clienting and delivery models based upon collaboration which can evidence the value that is being added both to the asset and to residents' lives.

From the outset project members were highly ambitious about what they wanted to achieve through Working Together and an explicit aim was to *disrupt* certain elements of traditional practice.

The ***Working Together to Rethink Repairs*** project concluded that the rigid and prescriptive frameworks and rules articulated in the mid noughties by the Audit Commission and through the Decent Homes programme were:

- *Unfocused in their understanding and definition of how to add value to building assets*
- *Profligate in condemning viable building components to premature renewal*
- *Contributed to an unsustainable illusion of entitlement around repairs expectations*

However, these assumptions were found to still be shaping today's assumptions about what the sector is here to deliver and the design of most repairs business models.

For example, replacing *better for less*, which is arguably a slippery and ultimately unsustainable boast, with the term *simpler and more effective* could describe the new agenda.

“The current climate of economic austerity makes an unbridled customer first agenda unrealistic and there is a need for candour in acknowledging this if an appropriate level of resources is to be invested into the fundamental priority of keeping tenants safe at all times.”

It is inappropriate to pretend that social housing can offer the significantly higher service standards that have been promulgated in the past and which would be the envy of other tenures. Services and business direction need to be driven with a serious commercial edge that makes the most of the available resources.

The principal findings will irreversibly change the approach of the sector to repairs and maintenance:

Repairs and Maintenance Matters: the things we need to challenge and change if the sector is to deliver genuine investment value for tenants through repairs and maintenance:

- ***No more repairs that don't add value to the stock:***
Continuing financial constraints affecting the sector mean there is a pressing need to ensure repairs and maintenance is adding value as investment in the stock and is not just seen as an on-demand service to tenants. Repairs and maintenance should form an integral part of strategic asset management, delivering resident focused place based investment that improves the building asset, the wider neighbourhood and the community and keeps residents safe at all times
- ***New models of repairs delivery must move away from absolute user sovereignty which is unaffordable and instead be based upon a radically revised understanding and application of resident entitlement:***
The new relationship with residents should replace entitlement with partnership. Looking after homes requires an active, mutual and long-term partnership with residents that landlords must invest in. We need to replace the old thinking and vocabulary of the Audit Commission KLOEs with a set of new models and corresponding objectives and measures of performance and delivery that look beyond the traditional range of customer focused metrics.
- ***Repairs must contribute to strategic landlord objectives and become a core element of the landlord team:***
Repairs and maintenance must make a wide-ranging contribution to core housing management objectives of tenancy sustainment, successful households and viable neighbourhoods where people want to live; creating new ways to work collaboratively with and support housing managers so repairs and maintenance shares the benefits and advantage of privileged access to residents and becomes a ***super partner*** to housing management
- ***New model workforce for repairs and maintenance:***
A modern repairs service will be resilient with a hierarchy of skills including craft ability but include effective personal organisation, wider problem solving, timely communication with and technical advice for tenants, property inspection and for broader advocacy on behalf of the landlord

- ***Repairs objectives must include commercial sustainability:***
Landlords should embrace a credible and commercial definition of great customer service that addresses the tension between delivering a high-quality repair offer and living within available resources;
- ***Resident engagement and inclusion:***
Landlords should listen to and work with residents to co-create the solutions to repairs and maintenance challenges. This depends critically upon generating the trust and credibility needed through open and two-way communication that supports resident engagement. A key expectation that residents have of landlords is that staff are entirely candid in their communication and dealings with them.

1. *Application of sector led collaborative techniques to radically shrink the cost of repairs and maintenance whilst driving up investment value delivered in tenants' homes:*

The sector must deliver a new and interrogatory model of cost and performance monitoring for repairs and maintenance which focuses upon:

- Identifying high spend properties and proactively remedying the root causes of high expenditure
- Tracking properties with high numbers of reactive repairs to evidence why these repairs are arising and setting targets to reduce this
- Examine high spend jobs to ensure the underlying reasons can be addressed as part of planned maintenance -
- Active interventions to ensure resident responsibility repairs are managed in line with policy
- Tracking compliance with all legislative and health and safety requirements to guarantee resident safety
- Ensure there is an intelligent link between reactive and planned repairs and with the wider repairs policy
- Robust monitoring of planned works including financial penalties to ensure providers are held accountable for any latent defects that may arise over an extended period
- Regular involvement of residents in sense checking the outputs and reports from service monitoring and in interpreting the data in the context of resident and local community experience

2. *Provision of an evidence based examination of good practice in R & M service design and operation and an objective appraisal of the results and outcomes*

- Promoting alternatives to reactive repairs through planned pre-inspection and remedy programmes and adoption of critical measures of success that should apply
- Ensuring that preventative maintenance results in a medium-term reduction in overall costs and extends component life and value
- Challenging the conventional assumptions around component life cycles and perceived need for blanket renewal which always results in premature removal of some serviceable elements
- Planned on demand: adopting a fully flexible approach to renewal which is premised upon tenant demand and upon the tested condition of each component

3. *Addressing the fact that traditional repairs delivery models will not match the value and economy thresholds now expected*

- Intelligent use of data generated by response maintenance to track where high expenditure being committed
- Analysis and evaluation of materials utilisation to understand how different components perform
- Improved diagnosis, remedy and prevention of damp and condensation problems and support for residents in combatting

- Adopting an effective learning approach to resident feedback and through exacting post inspection of work quality

With these objectives in mind the project examined:

▪ ***A number of sector leading initiatives:***

- *Riverside's 'Think Homes' and Property MOT programme which aims to reduce responsive repairs costs by proactively bringing homes up to standard*
- *Incommunities' 'Planned on Demand' approach which overturns traditional assumptions about planned replacement of components*
- *New approaches to performance measurement and management that focus on value added to the asset*
- *What social landlords can learn from the commercial approach of the private rented sector*

▪ ***Things that are ripe for disruption:***

- *Asset management and repairs and maintenance Performance Indicators are not measuring value*
- *The traditional landlord and tenant relationship which doesn't address mutuality or drive household and community success*
- *Dysfunctional working within and between organisations that generates noise, tension and waste*
- *How the repairs and maintenance workforce of today can become an integral part of the landlord team*

▪ ***The need for a new kind of 'commercial' approach:***

- *Learning from how the new private rented sector institutions are approaching repairs and maintenance*

Key Challenges and Opportunities facing repairs and maintenance:

- ***Eliminating waste and inefficiency:*** how can landlords shrink high repair costs and still add value for the tenant and for the building asset
- ***Adding value to the asset:*** repairs spend must deliver not only in meeting resident demand but also as investment in sustaining the stock
- ***Ripping up the old:*** the responsive planned dichotomy is no longer a helpful distinction or rubric for prioritising improvement in property condition; traditional assumptions should be set aside, and new thinking deployed to identify value
- ***New repairs offer:*** managing tenant expectations from the earliest stage in the housing process and continually incentivising and reinforcing good behaviour from across the organisation
- ***Engineering a paradigm shift in favour of high value R+M activities:*** critical appraisal and evaluation of new delivery models to test innovation and evaluate what is being delivered
- ***New model operatives:*** recognised as members of the landlord team and contributing to service redesign; customer facing, trusted, multiskilled, articulate and valued
- ***Great customer experience:*** effortless contact with the service, provision of timely information on repairs delivery and opportunity to feedback on what went well and what can be improved; confidence in landlord's intention to meet standards consistently

- **Better understanding and application of data to drive performance and value:** monitoring and management attention aligned to property needs and customer expectations
- **Procuring for success:** finding and retaining partners to work collaboratively to reduce costs and improve impact
- **Resilient and successful households:** ensuring repairs and maintenance contributes to securing wider landlord and strategic community goals
- **Productive dialogue with tenants:** setting clear expectations and empowering tenants who can to take responsibility

Disrupting Repairs and Maintenance - New Opportunities and Solutions

Rewriting the Rules:

Repairs and maintenance is more than just a service to tenants; it should be part of the core investment in the physical assets of the business. It is not simply an on-demand service to residents but should be an investment in sustaining safe, warm and comfortable homes

- A good repairs service is about much more than just turning up on time and fixing on the first visit, whatever the cost
- We must end the obsession with Decent Homes which too often condemns serviceable components to premature abandonment
- We need a preventive maintenance approach designed to anticipate repairs needs, producing lower levels of reactive demand
- We must test and verify the impact of planned programmes on reactive repairs and be prepared to change the approach to meet the new best value standards

Integrating repairs and maintenance with strategic asset management

- Repairs and maintenance activities and priorities should be directed towards sustaining the building assets and enhancing the lives of residents – it is about more than turning up on time and fixing on the first visit whatever the cost
- New thinking is needed to develop models of provision that are relevant for today's needs: much recent investment including in decent homes has condemned serviceable components to premature abandonment
- The sector needs a preventive maintenance approach designed to anticipate repairs needs and significantly lower reactive demand. Landlords should promote a partnership with tenants that supports their responsibility to look after their homes
- Planned maintenance on demand that is designed to extend the life building components and replace only when they become unserviceable – just in time renewal
- Development of KPIs that measure the value added to the asset, the value secured to the business and the beneficial impact or social value for the resident and the community
- Application of business analysis tools that can identify avoidable or abortive expenditure and suggest alternative maintenance solutions
- Evaluation of planned maintenance programmes to test and verify their impact on reducing reactive repairs demand

Collaborative working with housing management and across the landlord team

We must cultivate collaborative working with housing management and across the landlord team to deliver stronger, shared outcomes and outputs for residents, the building asset and to meet housing need

- We must get out of our silos and develop a shared understanding and appreciation of how cross-team working can deliver mutual benefits
- We must see repairs as just one facet of a 'fit for purpose' home, recognising the wider importance of repairs for estate and neighbourhood sustainability

- Repairs and housing teams must work collaboratively together to deliver tenancy sustainment and reduce the incidence and costs of re-housing
- Creating a clear understanding of the benefits that are realisable from collaborative working with housing management
- High level objectives of more successful households, fit for purpose homes and a place based focus on estate investment in neighbourhoods and communities which gives residents a real say over estate budgets
- Engaging early with residents to establish clarity around the share of responsibilities for repairs and maintenance that is set out in the tenancy agreement and repairs policy
- Integrated approach to tenancy sustainment and to re-letting and rehousing which reduces the incidence and cost of rehousing
- Colocation of repairs with housing management and caretaking teams and establishing a shared resident focused culture
- Devolution of budgets and input for housing management and for residents in expenditure decisions

Forging a new and productive partnership with tenants and residents

We must forge a new and productive partnership with tenants and residents based around mutual obligations

- As landlords, we must invest in an active, mutual, long term partnership with residents that strengthen mutual trust and confidence
- Repairs teams must be involved in helping tenants prepare for their tenancy and in providing a proactive tenancy induction programme promoting mutual rights and obligations in the repairs policy
- Both landlords and tenants need to embrace a robust approach to rewards and sanctions so that the right behaviours are reinforced and errant behaviour is seen to be sanctioned
- Looking after homes requires an active, mutual and long-term partnership with residents that landlords must invest in so that we reach a wider cohort of tenants and leaseholders
- Developing mutual trust and strategically transforming behaviour over the longer term
- Repairs teams must play their part in helping tenants secure pathways out of dependency and towards independent living yielding more successful households

A resilient and capable repairs and maintenance workforce for the future

We must have a resilient and capable repairs and maintenance workforce that has the defined skills and experience needed to deliver the new, modern service

- We must have in place a resilient blend and hierarchy of skills based around craft ability, communication, advice, wider landlord perspective etc.
- Repairs operatives must all be proactive problem solvers, with a flexible 'can-do' approach
- We must make use of the repairs visit by the operative to identify and capture any potential property or tenancy concerns
- The repairs workforce of the future will be resilient and display a hierarchy of skills that begin with craft ability and completion of the whole repair so additional trade visits are not required but will also include...
- Communicating with, advising and educating tenants; inspecting and surveying the property; application of new technology; landlord eyes and ears when visiting to identify any concerns that need attention particularly around health and safety
- More opportunities for transitioning between asset management and housing management and for women to work in R+M
- Development of complementary skills for a craft based repairs and maintenance workforce that enable right first time completion
- Enhanced communication skills to articulate the mutual obligations around repairs that the Tenancy Agreement expects
- Coaching and advising tenants on looking after their home
- Problem solvers with a flexible, can do approach
- Making use of the repairs visit to note and make sense of any property or tenancy issues that may be apparent, assessing how the tenancy is being managed and looking out for any potential health and safety and compliance concerns

Defining and establishing a commercial approach to housing repairs and maintenance

- Adopting a commercial definition of great customer service: addressing the tension between delivering a high-quality repair offer and living within available resources
- Learning from good practice in the private rented sector: maximise rent, minimise expenditure and generate high levels of tenant satisfaction and retention
- Proposing and recommending new freedoms that would allow the benefits of a more commercial approach to be realised
- Deposit based upon six weeks rent, inventory at check in and check out, two months' notice requirement, tenant responsible for professional clean at the end of the tenancy and for all costs that are not fair wear and tear

- 'Whole life' approach to material selection that considers long term maintenance and repair arrangements
- Fully integrated IT systems covering all aspects of management and maintenance

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Scrutiny Working Group – Environment, Housing and Communities**Housing Repairs – 26 September 2018****In attendance**

Cllr Barry Anderson
Cllr Ann Blackburn
Cllr Dawn Collins
Cllr Peter Gruen
Cllr Paul Truswell

Officers in attendance

Neil Evans - Director of Resources & Housing
Rob Goor - Responsive Repairs Service Manager
Simon Costigan - Chief Officer, Property & Contracts
Sandra Pentelow - Principal Scrutiny Officer
Helen Gray - Governance & Scrutiny Officer

Apologies were received from Councillors P Grahame and A Khan

Purpose of the working group

- 1.1 At the Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) meeting held 28th June 2018, some Members raised concerns regarding housing repairs services, responsiveness and outcomes; and contracted services provided by MEARS. The Board established a Scrutiny Working Group to consider the performance of both Mears and Leeds Building Services and provide comments or recommendations if necessary.
- 1.2 Supporting documents provided to the working group included
 - Report providing a summary of the existing repair arrangements
 - Key Performance Indicator Data, September 2017 – July 2018 for Leeds Building Services / Mears Repairs

Background

- 1.3 The existing repair arrangements in place across the City were initially introduced following a procurement exercise undertaken in 2011 for four packages of work;
 - Responsive, voids and planned works in West
 - Responsive, voids and planned works in South
 - Gas service and maintenance in West
 - Gas service and maintenance in South

At that time, the service within the East of the City was already being undertaken by the Internal Service Provider (ISP), Leeds Building Services (LBS).

- 1.4 All four contracts in West and South were awarded to Morrison Facility Services (MFS) on an initial contract period of 5 years. In 2012 Mears Group PLC bought out MFS and all four contracts were 'novated' from MSF to Mears
- 1.5 The Working Group received detail of the various extensions of time awarded to the contracts and the current contracting arrangements as at September 2018.
- 1.6 The Working Group considered and compared the performance data recorded for LBS and Mears against the following targets during the period September 2017 to July 2018:
RR1 Same Day Fix
RR2 Repairs Completed Within Target (Including Minor Adaptations)
RR3 Appointments Kept (Including Minor Adaptations)
RR6 Customer Dis-satisfaction with the service provided by the Workers who carried out the repairs.
Customer Satisfaction with the service provided by the Workers who carried out the repairs.

Discussions of the Working Group

- 1.7 The working group discussed/made observations on the following
- Comparisons of the skills base and staff retention of the Mears and LBS workforce
 - The entry level qualifications required, opportunities for training and in-house apprenticeship programmes and links to the Employment & Skills Service
 - The role of ward Councillors in local housing matters; such as estate walkabouts; and report-back mechanism/follow up work on any identified repairs to Members
 - Stock control and stock requests
 - The limitations of and plans to replace the current ICT system
 - The intention to create a business plan, including a review of the service and its capacity, to support future steady growth of the service
 - The future delivery of homes and extra care housing by LCC
 - The satisfaction survey methods undertaken impartially by LCC contact centre

Outcomes of the Working Group

- 1.8 The working group recognised the role of the contract performance management structure in influencing performance and encouraging consistency through the monthly operational meetings established to discuss performance data and identify areas for improvement.
- 1.9 The working group acknowledged the complaints process in place operated by LCC Housing Services which placed the onus on the relevant contractor to respond directly to the complainant in the first instance. If dissatisfaction remained, LCC would escalate the issue.
- 1.10 Members identified the need to be provided with figures showing the total number of homes covered by these contracts, the number of complaints received, the number

of complaints escalated and the number of complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman. This information will be circulated to all Board members.

1.11 The working group recognised the steps being taken. The working group also recognised that further work is still to take place.

1.12 The working group raised the following areas as requiring focus going forward:

- The need to identify issues through the diagnostics centre, put things right quickly enough and well enough
- The need to ensure the right staff, with the relevant skills and equipment are available quickly enough
- The management of how complaints are escalated and resolved
- The arrangements for out of hours services
- Review how compensation payments are calculated for loss of time/stress caused as a result of a complaint
- To review the issue reporting/progress tracking mechanisms of matters raised during walkabouts
- A review of the services which LCC LDS could realistically provide as the service grows and a review of in-house capacity to support the growth of LBS
- Outcome of the implementation of the change programme
- Outcome of the implementation on new ICT systems and support
- A review of Mears working practices to identify possible efficiencies to benefit tenants and whether Mears has the opportunity to compare its performance against other service providers
- A review of the availability of local information for ward councillors – a one-stop app

RECOMMENDATION

- a) To note the contents of the report, the information provided at the meeting and the discussions
- b) To report back to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) in due course
- c) To request a further report be provided to Members after implementation of the ICT, to provide updated housing repair data; overview of the replacement ICT system and outcome of consideration of the Business Case with proposals for the future.

1.13 Post Meeting Note: - Further information has been requested on behalf of the working group regarding outline dates for the implementation of improvement measures and impact assessment. This is currently (as at 16 November 2018) in pre-project planning stages. Approximate dates will be provided in the next month and once received will be shared with all members of the Scrutiny Board so enable the Board to determine when a review could next be scheduled into the work programme.

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Report author: Rebecca Atherton (ext. 88642) / Wendy Allinson (ext. 271298)

Report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support and Director of Communities and Environment

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 5 March 2020

Subject: Reducing Repeat Customer Contacts through Tackling Failure Demand – Tracking of scrutiny recommendations/desired outcomes

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	☐ Yes	☒ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	☐ Yes	☒ No

Summary of main issues

1. This report sets out the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry into Reducing Repeat Customer Contacts through Tackling Failure Demand.
2. Scrutiny Boards are encouraged to clearly identify desired outcomes linked to their recommendations to show the added value Scrutiny brings. As such, it is important for the Scrutiny Board to also consider whether its recommendations are still relevant in terms of achieving the associated desired outcomes.
3. The Scrutiny recommendation tracking system allows the Scrutiny Board to consider the position status of its recommendations in terms of their on-going relevance and the progress made in implementing the recommendations based on a standard set of criteria. The Board will then be able to take further action as appropriate.

Recommendations

4. Members are asked to:
 - Agree those recommendations which no longer require monitoring;
 - Identify any recommendations where progress is unsatisfactory and determine the action the Board wishes to take as a result.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report sets out the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry into Reducing Repeat Customer Contacts through Tackling Failure Demand

2 Background information

- 2.1 In 2016/17, The Scrutiny Board (Citizens and Communities) conducted an inquiry into reducing repeat customer contact through tackling failure demand. This inquiry concluded in March 2017 and a report setting out the Scrutiny Board's findings and recommendations was published in April 2017.
- 2.3. In July 2017, the Scrutiny Board received a formal response to the recommendations arising from this review. A further update was provided to the Board in March 2019. Updates from both meetings are reflected in Appendix 2.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Scrutiny Boards are encouraged to clearly identify desired outcomes linked to their recommendations to show the added value Scrutiny brings. As such, it is important for the Scrutiny Board to also consider whether its recommendations are still relevant in terms of achieving the associated desired outcomes.
- 3.2 The Scrutiny recommendation tracking system allows the Scrutiny Board to consider the position status of its recommendations in terms of their on-going relevance and the progress made in implementing the recommendations based on a standard set of criteria. The Board will then be able to take further action as appropriate.
- 3.3 This standard set of criteria is presented in the form of a flow chart at Appendix 1. The questions in the flow chart should help to decide whether a recommendation has been completed, and if not whether further action is required.
- 3.4 The Board is asked to determine a position status for each recommendation. Details of progress against each recommendation are set out within the table at Appendix 2.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Where internal or external consultation processes have been undertaken with regard to responding to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations, details of any such consultation will be referenced against the relevant recommendation within the table at Appendix 2.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Where consideration has been given to the impact on equality areas, as defined in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme, this will be referenced against the relevant recommendation within the table at Appendix 2.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 During the original inquiry and in subsequent update discussions, the Scrutiny Board has acknowledged the importance of continuing efforts to become an efficient and

enterprising organisation, in line with Best Council ambitions, particularly within the very challenging context of reduced central Government funding and increasing demand-led cost pressures.

- 4.3.2 In its original inquiry the Scrutiny Board highlighted the importance of ‘getting the basics right’ as the Council seeks to continue to deliver and commission good quality public services; keep to budgets and deadlines; maintain assets effectively; and streamline internal processes and systems. These have remained areas of interest to the Board.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.3 When considering changing ways of working, the Board is reminded that climate change and sustainability should be a key area of focus.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1 Details of any significant resource and financial implications linked to the Scrutiny recommendations will be referenced against the relevant recommendation within the table at Appendix 2.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 This section is not relevant to this report.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Scrutiny recommendation tracking system allows the Scrutiny Board to consider the position status of its recommendations in terms of their on-going relevance and the progress made in implementing the recommendations based on a standard set of criteria. This report sets out the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry Reducing Repeat Customer Contacts through Tackling Failure Demand.

6 Recommendations

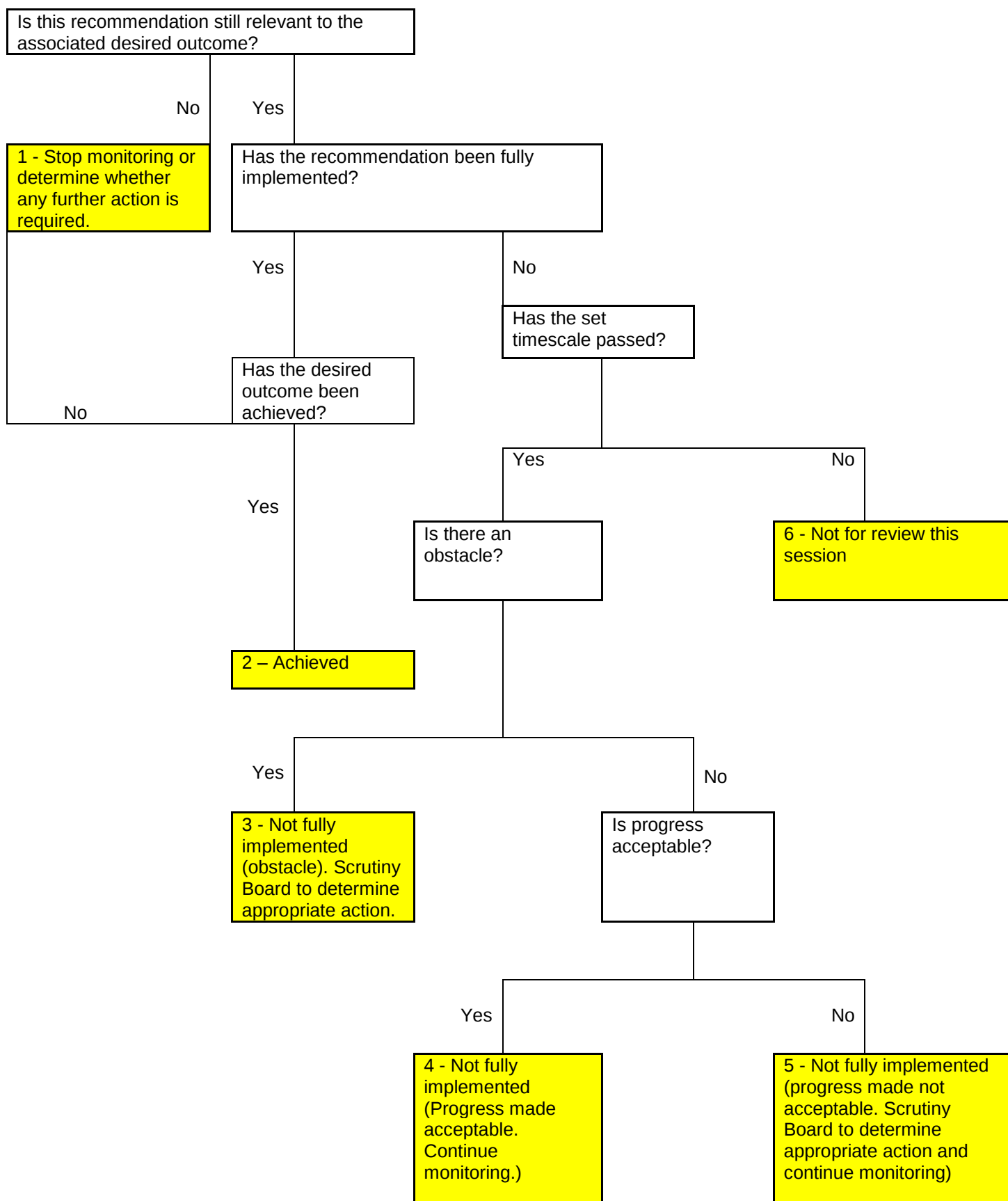
- 6.1 Members are asked to:
- Agree those recommendations which no longer require monitoring;
 - Identify any recommendations where progress is unsatisfactory and determine the action the Board wishes to take as a result.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

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.

Recommendation tracking flowchart and classifications:
Questions to be considered by Scrutiny Boards



Position Status Categories

- 1 - Stop monitoring or determine whether any further action is required
- 2 - Achieved
- 3 - Not fully implemented (Obstacle)
- 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 5 - Not fully implemented (Progress made not acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 6 - Not for review this session

Desired Outcome – That an effective process is developed to ensure that customers receive the right housing repair work first time.

Recommendation 1 – That the Director of Communities and Environment engages with Scrutiny on the findings arising from the co-location pilot scheme involving housing repair specialist staff at the Contact Centre and in determining longer term options for ensuring that customers obtain the right housing repair work done first time.

Formal response:

- The initial three month period for the co-location pilot scheme has been extended for a further three months. There has already been a reduction in work queues to responsive repairs as CSOs are able to access specialist advice and service updates while the customer is still on the phone.
- A plan is in place to train CSOs in booking damp inspections, which are currently the biggest single reason for a CSO contacting responsive repairs. The customer will get the correct appointment (either a repair or an inspection) at first point of contact and there will be less follow up work for responsive repairs.
- Work is underway with Mears looking at the high number of repairs booked with incorrect SOR codes and how this can be improved through a mixture of better diagnostics by CSO (see below) and correct codes accessible in Orchard.
- Officers from Customer Services and Officers from Responsive Repairs are meeting regularly to improve the repairs guidance in the workbook. Move from team/ council focused to customer/diagnostic focused.

Previous Update:

The initial co-location pilot came to an end after the co- located staff from the repairs team had rolled out a programme of training. The training has better equipped CSO's to field complex and damp related repairs and book technical inspections directly without relying on passing on referrals to another team. This approach has led to a reduction in 'pass on's' with the overwhelming majority of repairs flowing through the contact centre being booked in with a repair operative or for the more complex repairs, a pre-inspection booked at the first point of contact. Prior to this, all requests for technical pre-inspections were work queued to the repairs team meaning an unnecessary layer of contact.

A citywide review of SOR codes is underway and nearing conclusion. This will lead to a simplified and consistent way of raising orders to both Mears and Leeds Building Services. The purpose of the review is to ensure a comprehensive and accurate list of task codes for front line staff to select when raising orders which will in turn improve the accuracy of repairs raised. This will also ensure an accurate allocation of time is allocated to the operative for them to complete the allocated task. The review is also running alongside a review of the diagnostic software which is used by all frontline order raising staff. This review will ensure that the right questions are asked during the order raising process and that staff have an easy to use tool for selecting and ordering the correct task code relating to the reported repair.

As part of the replacement of the current repairs order raising systems; Housing Leeds are exploring ways of introducing more innovative repair reporting means for tenants including enabling tenants to self-order basic repairs through an online portal and submit photographs and video media in order to more accurately establish causation and therefore improve diagnosis and right first time levels.

Current Update – Feb 2020

Following the initial co-location activity, Housing Leeds now provide a rolling programme of training to all repair ordering staff across different customer outlets to ensure consistent standards. In addition, process changes have been rolled out across the service to ensure that reports of damp are handled better and technical inspections are booked at source to avoid unnecessary delays.

The learning from the co-location activity as well as other feedback mechanisms is driving a programme of improvement activity called 'Rethinking Repairs' which will include an end to end review of the repair ordering process and a redesign of current repair reporting channels.

The work to harmonise and simplify the citywide repair ordering process is now complete with order raising staff now using the same diagnostic software maps and task codes to raise repair orders regardless of geographic location.

Introducing an effective self-service portal for tenants to book their own repairs remains a key priority for Customer Access and Housing Leeds and this is currently being developed as part of the replacement of current Housing ICT systems. Effective self-service will free up resources to enable more complex repairs to be better and more robustly diagnosed.

A joint piece of work between Housing Leeds and Customer Access is currently being developed to review further the customer experience of reporting a repair across all of our different contact channels (contact centre, housing office, community hub and online) - from the first point of contact right through to the repair being completed.

This service design work may highlight the need for co-location of other specialist teams from Housing Leeds to help to upskill CSO's in particular problem areas and will enable the service to have a better understanding of issues that customers are reporting from their perspective.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6)

Desired Outcome – These mechanisms are put in place to ensure that customers receive timely notifications of any service assessment appointments and planned works.

Recommendation 3 – That the Director of Communities and Environment leads on undertaking a review of the Council's automated systems of sending notification letters and also seeks to maximise the use of modern communication technologies, including text alerts or emails, to speed up notifications to customers in relation to any assessment appointments and planned works.

Formal response:

- It was acknowledged during the enquiry workshops that repair confirmation letters for emergency repairs are particularly unhelp to customers as they arrived after the repair is completed. This function has now been turned off in the repairs ordering system.
- Right to Repair legislation requires confirmation letters for repair appointments to be sent out and therefore the function will not be turned off for non-emergency repairs. However,

through the project to replace the current repairs ordering system, the use of more innovative notifications (text and email) is being developed.

Previous Update:

Confirmation letters for emergency repairs remain turned off.

The replacement repair ordering system has not yet been implemented and it is likely that it will be the end of the year before it is. In the design and configuration there are two main elements that will improve the current position.

It will be possible to configure the preferred communication method for individual tenants in the new system and therefore repair confirmations will be set up to be sent out instantaneously by SMS text or email with the option to still send letters for tenants who's preference this is. The self service module in the new system will also enable and promote tenants 'self-serving' around repairs and tenants having online access to repair and appointment information will reduce the reliance on the Council sending out confirmations in the future.

Current Update – Feb 2020

As the Housing ICT system has not yet been replaced, it has not been possible to deliver the full range of benefits through the new system. However, some initial work has taken place with colleagues in Customer Access & Housing Leeds working with current tenants to develop improved repairs processes based on tenants needs.

The outcomes to date include improved communication between contractors and tenants with a focus on the timing and quality of SMS text reminders and making it easier for tenants to re-arrange repairs.

As these processes are reliant on the contractors / Leeds Building Services own systems, improvements are being introduced ahead of the replacement of the Housing Leeds ICT systems.

Same position as last update re final paragraph. As the CIVICA Cx system has not yet been implemented, it has not been possible to deliver these benefits. The system is due to go live quarter 3 2020/21.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6)

Desired Outcome – That appropriate resources are put in place to undertake the task of effectively simplifying benefit notification letters to customers.

Recommendation 4 – That the Director of Communities and Environment leads on looking at the feasibility of establishing a task force with the appropriate software and legal expertise to focus on finding an effective means of simplifying existing benefit notification letters that will not be open to legal challenge.

Formal response:

A clear objective was set to review all key customer letters and notifications and make appropriate changes to simplify the wording, in order to reduce avoidable and repeat contact. This work is progressing well. A target has been set to reduce avoidable contact where we can, by April. A major piece of work been undertaken to overhaul Benefit notifications. Examples of the changes that have been made are as follows:

- 37 paragraphs have been amended, fixing either faults or to make the notification simpler for the customer and less confusing.
- All letters now only (and rightly) request that customers tell us about their income changes when the claim is still “live and in payment”.
- Appeal rights on all letters are now consistent for each tenure type.
- An “age related” program review has been carried out and this has resulted in a reduction of 8,000 notifications being issued per year. Most of these were issued where there was no change to entitlement and legislation did not force us to notify the customer. These letters have also being reviewed to make them more understandable for the customer.
- Extensive work has been completed on the landlord letters. Information on overpayments is much clearer and explains why recovery is being made from them. The landlord notifications now promote a link to the council’s website, enabling landlords to access additional information held for their tenants.
- In addition to the above, a number of changes have been made to the Council Tax Bills to help reduce avoidable contact (e.g. nil balance bills), help explain how their bill is calculated and signpost charge-payers to additional information.

Further work is intended to actually summarise the benefit notification but this is subject to a much wider piece of work around customer self-service. Whilst provisional work is underway, realistic progress is not likely to be made until the second half of this financial year. As this will require extensive testing, go live of such may not actually be until 2018/19.

Good practical examples of changes made include:

- Previously notification letters were sent out to customers informing them that there was no change to the amounts payable. This caused confusion amongst customers and caused unnecessary telephone contact. These “no change notifications are no longer sent out, which will have a big impact on reducing avoidable contact.
- The wording in letters to customers regarding Council tax support and housing benefit has been improved so that they are much clearer. For example:
 1. Council tax support and housing benefit statements were often confused by customers as a bill they needed to pay the wording has been changed to state “This is not a bill, this is a statement, and you have nothing to pay”.
 2. Letters regarding changes to benefit calculations and customers entitlements which is changing in accordance with bedroom requirement policies. For example the amount of benefit payable when children reach five and ten changes, these letters are now much clearer, giving customers a good understanding of why their benefit amount have been altered.
 3. The wording in letters regarding the “single room exemption” and effect on customers has also been simplified.

Previous Update:

Regrettably the intended work has not materialised in 2018/19 due to resources being focussed on the preparation for the introduction and impact of Universal Credit. It is intended to re-baseline notifications in 2019/20 and scope what we wish to develop.

Current Position – Feb 2020

The impact of Universal Credit Full Service adjusted the emphasis of this work as ALL new working age claims for help with Housing Costs, with the exception of Supported Exempt Accommodation and Temporary Accommodation cases, now go through the Universal Credit Gateway rather than being a claim for Housing Benefit.

Since October 2018, when Full Service was introduced, there has been a decline of 31% in the number of Working Age Housing Benefit cases. The numbers of Supported Accommodation and Temporary Accommodation cases are minimal but the nature of the claims means that they are administratively heavy.

The next major step of the Universal Credit programme is Managed Migration which Government has advised can be anytime up to 2023. This is when all remaining Housing Benefit working age cases will transfer over to the DWP with the exception of Supported Accommodation and Temporary Accommodation cases.

Members may wish to note that the implementation of Universal Credit has resulted in a natural decline in contact at the contact centre specific to Housing Benefit of nearly 25% in the rolling 12 month comparison January to December against the previous year and over 40% reduction in the rolling 3 months October to December against the corresponding period the year previous.

Not discounting the major change, and the need to balance the amount of resource put into notifications for a reducing work area, there has been additional amendments to notifications but not to the extent of establishing a task force of software & legal expertise as the time taken to develop an improved notification would not guarantee reduced contact nor give a return on the time invested and is not considered a good use of resource given the expected decline as managed migration to UC progresses.

Members can be assured though that extensive work continues to be undertaken within the area of Council Tax. There are 350,000 billed households and our objective is to simplify bills, letters & processes for charge-payers so they have a clearer understanding of correspondence received, reduce contact and promote on line self-serve facilities.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6)

Desired Outcome – That the Council's Interactive Voice Response telephony system continues to be development and remains fit for purpose.

Recommendation 5 – That the Director of Communities and Environment undertakes a review of the Council's current Interactive Voice Response telephony system to identify possible improvements, including the feasibility of introducing a voice telephone input option as part of the system.

Formal response :

The current IVR menu has been amended to ensure that we direct customer calls quickly and easily to the appropriate officer within the contact centre.

Changes:

- The Leeds Housing Options(LHO) IVR menu has been merged with the main Housing Leeds menu to ensure that all housing contact is delivered via one IVR process and enables all call types to be captured and directed quickly and concisely.
- The Housing Leeds menu now includes divert out to LHO, Benefits and Choice Based Lettings options preventing unnecessary transfer for customers and ensuring these are dealt with by the dedicated trained staff where needed
- The new LHO menu ensures emergency cases are informed of correct concise steps to follow, now promotes additional contact methods of drop in sessions and advises of timescales for cases
- The Choice Based Lettings menu option links direct to information capture for housing forms. This releases CSO time on the phone lines as these form requests can be completed out of hours
- The wording has been updated on all areas of the menu with clear advice and information for a better customer experience
- There is also appropriate signposting to the website for further information where appropriate
- Unnecessary information has been removed and transferred to the web with qualifying audio links
- Further work has been planned in to review the contractor information that is provided as part of the IVR menu.
- The option to provide a voice-activated system to direct customers to the appropriate menu options and person to speak to is being explored. The facility is available, but we are assessing the costs and associated benefits with installing such a feature.
- There is a greater customer focus with less recorded information and options are based on identifiers that customers will understand (postcode), rather than what is meaningful to council (contractor).

Previous Update:

- We have recently procured an automated voice activated system which will be applied to our general enquiries number initially, but will then be applied to all our main lines. We hope to implement soon after 1 April 2019, with a later phase extending this facility to calls for individuals.
- While we have made some improvements to the existing IVR over the last 12 months, we have just initiated a full and fundamental review of the system with the aim to simplify the messages and use customers to help us get it right. We are starting with Housing and Council Tax services.

Current Update – Feb 2020***EVR (Enhanced Voice Recognition System)***

As part of phase 1 Customer Access are introducing the EVR onto the golden number line, which is the main number for the council switchboard. The system was tested with members of

the public in October to confirm that they could navigate how it works prior to go live. The go live of this system is now planned for mid/end of February. There have been a couple of delays to the go live of this project due to changes to IT procedures and operational restrictions such as the general election and purdah which prevent IT system deployments.

The next steps for this project is to review the system once it has gone live to ensure that it is working as expected. If successful Customer Access will review and propose other service telephone lines that it could possibly be applied to. The service will also review the additional functionality which is available through this system such as being able to ask secondary questions on the menu or look to direct calls for named individuals.

Review of IVR and Customer Experience:

Customer Access have introduced telephony design principles from Feb 2019, which provide governance ensuring that the customer experience is now the focus of any change to the IVR menu.

In October 2019 the service created an automated change management process to ensure that all relevant officers are informed of and can contribute to all upcoming changes. Using these two new ways of working the service has already reviewed the Council Tax line IVR to ensure that it is streamlined and updated in line with the design principles.

The next steps for this work is to review additional IVR menus in this way including those currently in place for Housing Leeds calls.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6)

Desired Outcome – That appropriate investment is made into robust customer service data collection and analysis to inform longer term strategic planning.

Recommendation 10 – That the Director of Communities and Environment works with the Director of Resources and Housing to explore opportunities for further investment into robust customer service data collection and analysis to assist with longer term strategic planning.

Formal response :

Investment into this will be developed and done so by gaining feedback from customers via the “Voice of the Customer work”. This work will be commenced once the work is complete on providing a replacement system to prepare for the decommissioning of Siebel.

Previous Update:

- We have been hampered in this particular recommendation since the decommissioning of Siebel in 2017. A Customer Relationship Management system is essential to provide the level of insight required to assist meaningful longer term planning around identifying service improvements. DIS, with Customer Access, have been developing a replacement CRM system in-house, and have made excellent progress. It is hoped the new system could be live in hubs and the contact centre within months.
- We have procured, on a trial basis, a customer survey system which provides us with voice of the customer and allows us to target improvements based on customer

experience and views. This was introduced in January 2019 and is providing an important aspect of customer insight to help us target improvement initiatives.

Current Update – Feb 2020

Customer Access are currently in the process of rolling out a new Customer Relationship Management system across their face to face sites which will collect information on what types of housing enquiries are being dealt with in the community hubs and one stop centres. This new CRM is already in use at the City Centre Hub, Compton Centre and St Georges Centre and is being rolled out across the city over the coming months. This will improve the level of insight for Customer Access as to the types and numbers of housing enquiries being received across the city.

Customer Access have recently introduced a new process to capture feedback from customer service officers on a regular and ongoing basis so that they have a clear view as to what are the current issues for housing tenants from the people dealing with them at first point of contact.

Issues highlighted by customer services officers are passed directly to the performance and relationship officers in Customer Access who then work with colleagues within Housing Leeds to resolve any that they can and then feedback to the customer services officers, what actions have been taken and any procedural changes made.

Housing Leeds are also developing a performance report to compare data across all customer access channels including contact centre call data, housing office call data, web traffic data and contractor data (call data and number of repairs raised).

By analysing this data on a monthly basis, Customer Access and Housing Leeds can identify and analyse trends and compare and contrast different access channel data to look at correlations. This will also allow us to identify any anomalies/increases and undertake discovery work to understand reasons behind this and develop service improvements incorporating User Centred Design principles.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6)

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Report author: Susan Murray Tel: 07891 271299

Report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support and Director of Communities and Environment

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 5 March 2020

Subject: Community Hubs – General Update and Tracking of scrutiny recommendations/desired outcomes

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	☐ Yes	☒ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	☐ Yes	☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	☐ Yes	☒ No

Summary of main issues

1. This report sets out the ongoing building progress to create Community Hubs and also how the services are being developed within the Community Hub. In addition it also sets out the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry into the development of Community Hubs.
2. Scrutiny Boards are encouraged to clearly identify desired outcomes linked to their recommendations to show the added value Scrutiny brings. As such, it is important for the Scrutiny Board to also consider whether its recommendations are still relevant in terms of achieving the associated desired outcomes.
3. The Scrutiny recommendation tracking system allows the Scrutiny Board to consider the position status of its recommendations in terms of their on-going relevance and the progress made in implementing the recommendations based on a standard set of criteria. The Board will then be able to take further action as appropriate.

Recommendations

4. Members are asked to:
 - Note the progress on the roll out of Community Hubs
 - Provide any feedback on the roll out, design and direction of the programme.

- Agree those recommendations which no longer require monitoring;
- Identify any recommendations where progress is unsatisfactory and determine the action the Board wishes to take as a result.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report sets out the ongoing building progress to create Community Hubs and also how the services are being developed within the Community Hub. In addition it also sets out the progress made in responding to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry into the development of Community Hubs.

2 Background information

- 2.1 During 2015/16, the Scrutiny Board (Citizens and Communities) agreed to undertake an inquiry into the development of Community Hubs. The inquiry concluded in March 2016 and a report setting out the Scrutiny Board's findings and recommendations was published in May 2016.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 In concluding its inquiry, the former Citizens and Community Scrutiny Board set out the following principles to determine how and where Community Hubs were to be developed. We are still using these principles,
- Community Hubs should be close to local shopping zones.
 - The identification of a potential Community Hub will be based on an analysis of existing and future demand and proximity to other Hub sites.
 - Each potential Community Hub will be assessed on the basis of whether it demonstrates Value for Money. VFM to be determined through a demand v cost assessment.
 - As well as individual site assessments, geographical assessments based on a VFM analysis will be undertaken to ensure no over-provision of community hub services within a given geography.
 - There is an expectation that the service review saving of £420k will be delivered.
 - That there isn't a 'one size fits all approach' to the provision of Community Hubs and that services offered will be dependent on the space available.
 - The programme will focus on asset rationalisation and service integration in delivering a sustainable network within the city.

4 Community Hubs progress since last Scrutiny Board

During 2019/2020 the following progress has been made

Phase 3 Hubs	Location	Works/Property Saving/Impact
Phase 3 - Year 1 Schemes 2018/19		
Aireborough and Guiseley Community Hub	Aireborough Leisure Centre	Guiseley Library moved into the refurbished Leisure Centre October 2019
Armley Community Hub	Armley Library and One Stop Centre	This scheme is on site and has refurbished in two phases so the building can stay open. Phase 1 the refurbishment of the Community Hub side of the building is finished and open. The library half of the building (phase 2) is underway. The whole building will reopen on 6 April 2020.
Gildersome Library (in Community Centre) Scholes Library and Whinmoor Library	N/A	Closure of these Libraries was agreed by Executive Board. Plans need to be made to close these sites
Gipton Housing Office (Coldcotes)	N/A	Housing enquiries have moved and are dealt with from existing Community Hub network (mainly Compton Centre). Housing staff have relocated into Compton Community Hub. The Compton Centre has had a mini refurb to create additional space to deal with more enquiries and the library has also been refurbished
Halton Community Hub	Halton Library	Update 2019 was - It was anticipated that a Community Hub would be formed on Halton library site by increase size of existing building by adding staff facilities, lift and meeting space on new (part) first floor space. However, further work with our NHS partners has presented a further option of a joint building with GP and clinical services within the Halton Medical Centre. We are carrying out a feasibility study with the NHS to see if an improved solution for both partners can be achieved. This may allow the disposal of the Halton Library and the purchase of the Health Centre with lease/rent income benefits from the GP and other health services. In November 2019 the NHS advised us the building was no longer available. In January 2020 the NHS have asked to meet as they have done further work on their health requirements and this would allow space for the Council. At present 2 schemes are being worked up
Harehills Community Hub	Compton Centre	Works to improve customer flow, refresh library, new cafe and improve layout is complete.

Burmantofts Community Hub and Library	Burmantofts Housing Office	An opportunity arose due to the need to refurbish the housing office. Rather than reopen as a Housing Office this will reopen as a Community Hub 19 February 2020.
Hunslet Community Hub	Hunslet Library	This opened August 2019
Kirkstall Neighbourhood Housing Office	N/A	Housing enquiries moved and dealt with at Headingley and Hawksworth Community mini Hub. Housing Office retained for local office base only.
Farsley Community Hub	Farsley Library	Refurbishment work began 19 February 2020 and will take approx. 3 months
Kirkgate Market Community Hub & Library	Leeds Kirkgate Market	An opportunity to create a Hub in the Events area. We are now co-located with market trader's enquiries. Opened in October 2019.

5 Future Community Hub schemes – 2020/2021

5.1 The following sites are in the planning process as part of the Phase 3 Year 3 Community Hub schemes. Their development is subject to Executive Board approval in March 2020.

- Crossgates Library
- Beeston Library
- Calverley Library
- Wetherby Library and One Stop Centre
- Holt Park Library

6 Major Highlights

6.1 In February 2020 we have had the first Mobile Community Hub delivered. There will be 4 in total. The Mobile Community Hub will visit wards where there is no Community Hub building and the ward is a priority neighbourhood or has areas of deprivation.

6.2 For the Summer Holidays 2019 Community Hubs received Dept. of Education funding to run a healthy holiday scheme at 10 sites. This saw Hubs deliver a programme 4 days a week for 6 weeks 4 hours a day. A massive challenge on top of day to day business but so rewarding. Aimed at children up to 12, a range of physical and cultural activities were provided. Because of the funding we were able to use sport coaches to run physical activities, we used professional story tellers and had a touring theatre group. Our Librarians also ran activities. The hot meal was prepared by Catering Leeds with some food provided by Fareshare and some purchased. 655 children took part as did 184 parents with 3,000 meals served by 279 volunteers, contributing a total of 1,100 volunteer hours. We have applied for funding to run the scheme during summer 2020 and will find out the outcome in March 2020. In addition the Community Hubs ran a Council funded scheme during the Christmas 2019 school holidays and will also run a scheme during Easter 2020.

6.3 The Northern Gambling Clinic which is a partnership between the Council, NHS and Gamcare is delivering services from 6 Community Hubs to residents who have a gambling problem or families who are affected by gambling. This is the first clinic of its kind outside London. Since its launch in October 2019, 409 one to one sessions have been delivered. 7 new residents a week are accessing the service.

- 6.4 Events galore – the Community Hubs are being used for Community events such as Talent competitions, Youth clubs, Markets for local residents to sell crafts, Yoga, Zumba Pilates, Thai-chi, Tennis, chess clubs.
- 6.5 The service has launched a new reading programme aimed at 0 to 5s called Ready Steady Readers across all sites. This is aimed at improving the reading schools of pre-school children and to foster a love of reading. We had two mobile story buses delivered in February 2020 which will visit children's centres, priority neighbourhoods and community stops where stories will be read to the children.
- 6.6 Co-location with the Post Office – we have 2 Post offices co-located in Community Hubs at Seacroft and Headingley This co-location safeguards the Post Office remaining local and is appreciated by residents. It brings new customers into the Council's buildings.
- 6.7 Social Prescribing - In the East North East area of the city the North Leeds Social Prescribing Service – Connect Well co locates at the Reginald Centre Community Hub, this comprises a team of 8 wellbeing coordinators. This has been the case for the last 3 years now, with mutual benefits for Council customers and public Health patients.

As part of this arrangement the Council and the CCG have co-funded a Project Development Worker (PDW) post that has acted as a bolt on to the service. The PDW post is there to be responsive to any gaps there may be in local provision e.g. if a social prescriber needs to refer a patient or customer onto a course/class /activity or group to cater for a particular need but it doesn't yet exist, the PDW role is to set this up. This ensures that emerging need is catered for and we are able to provide a comprehensive level of tailored, bespoke support to the community. In order to make this sustainable the PDW utilises Asset Based Community Development principles – engaging local 'community champions' who are offered training and support to take over the running of the groups/activities independently.

City Wide: In October 2019 the Social Prescribing contract was awarded on a city wide basis (not area). The Community Hubs are part of a consortium that was awarded this contract which includes Barca Leeds, Community Links & Leeds Mind. This will provide funding for a PDW role in each area of the city meaning we can expand the work we have had such success with in the East/North East area already.

7 Tracking of Recommendations

- 7.1 Scrutiny Boards are encouraged to clearly identify desired outcomes linked to their recommendations to show the added value Scrutiny brings. As such, it is important for the Scrutiny Board to also consider whether its recommendations are still relevant in terms of achieving the associated desired outcomes.
- 7.2 The Scrutiny recommendation tracking system allows the Scrutiny Board to consider the position status of its recommendations in terms of their on-going relevance and the progress made in implementing the recommendations based on a standard set of criteria. The Board will then be able to take further action as appropriate.
- 7.3 This standard set of criteria is presented in the form of a flow chart at Appendix 1. The questions in the flow chart should help to decide whether a recommendation has been completed, and if not whether further action is required.
- 7.4 To assist Members with this task, the Principal Scrutiny Adviser, in liaison with the Chair, has given a draft position status for each recommendation. The Board is asked to confirm whether these assessments are appropriate and to change

them where they are not. Details of progress against each recommendation are set out within the table at Appendix 2.

8 Corporate Considerations

8.1 Consultation and Engagement

Where internal or external consultation processes have been undertaken with regard to responding to the Scrutiny Board's recommendations, details of any such consultation will be referenced against the relevant recommendation within the table at Appendix 2.

8.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

Where consideration has been given to the impact on equality areas, as defined in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme, this will be referenced against the relevant recommendation within the table at Appendix 2.

8.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

The Board identified during the inquiry that the on-going development of the Community Hub approach addresses a number of Best Council Plan objectives in terms of supporting communities, tackling poverty and promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

8.4 Resources and Value for Money

The Community Hub refurbishments are all undertaken in-house by Leeds Building Services. The fit-out of the inside of the buildings is undertaken by a company who have gone through a competitive process.

8.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.

8.6 Risk Management

This section is not relevant to this report

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 This report provides a general update on the development of Community Hubs and enables the Scrutiny Board to track recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry into the Development of Community Hubs. The Scrutiny recommendation tracking system allows the Scrutiny Board to consider the position status of its recommendations in terms of their on-going relevance and the progress made in implementing the recommendations based on a standard set of criteria.

10. Recommendations

10.1 Members are asked to:

- Note the progress on the roll out of Community Hubs
- Provide any feedback on the roll out, design and direction of the programme.
- Agree those recommendations which no longer require monitoring;
- Identify any recommendations where progress is unsatisfactory and determine the action the Board wishes to take as a result.

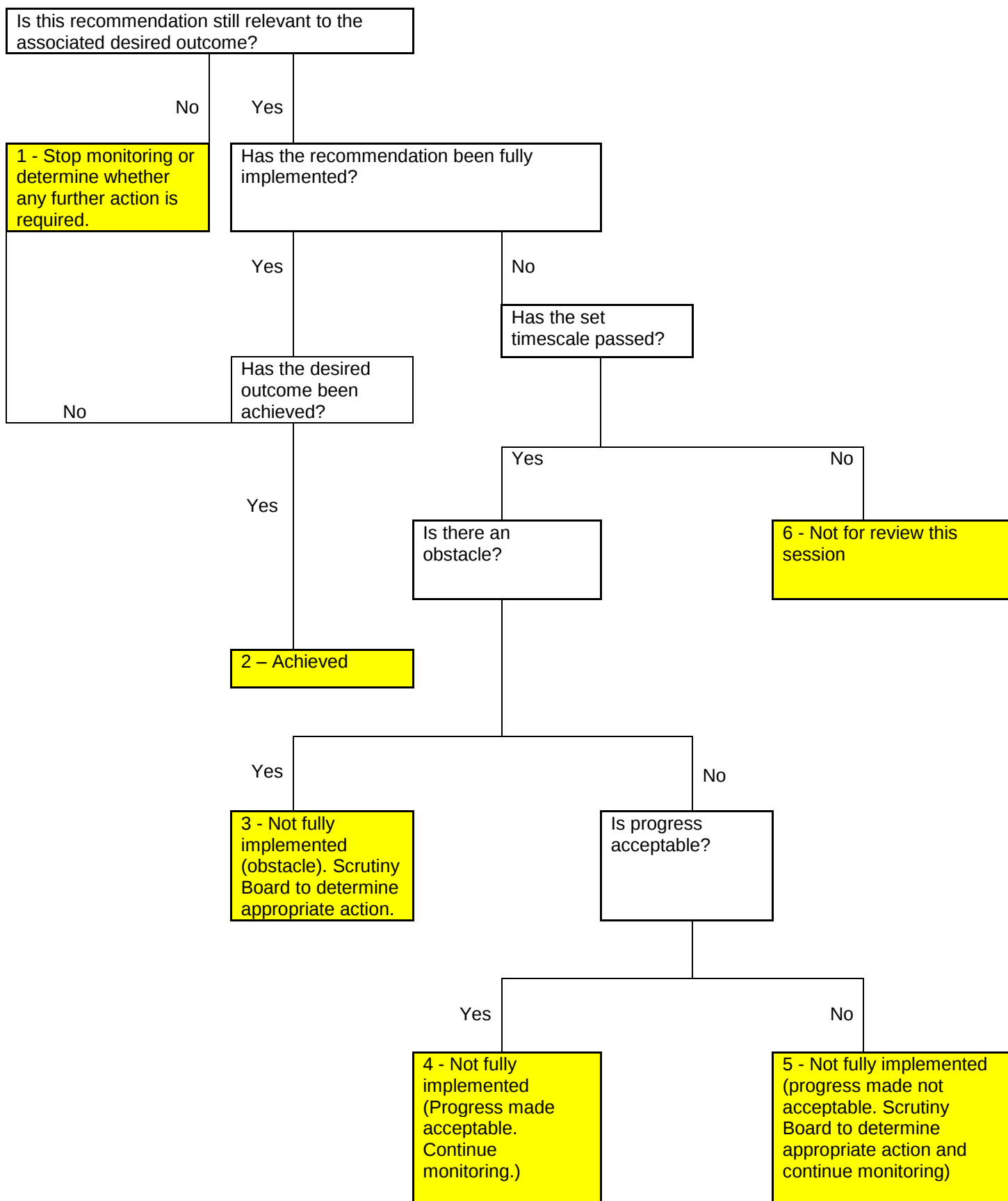
11. Background documents¹

11.1 None.

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.

Appendix 1

Recommendation tracking flowchart and classifications: Questions to be considered by Scrutiny Boards



Position Status Categories

- 1 - Stop monitoring or determine whether any further action is required
- 2 - Achieved
- 3 - Not fully implemented (Obstacle)
- 4 - Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 5 - Not fully implemented (Progress made not acceptable. Continue monitoring)
- 6 - Not for review this session

Desired Outcome – That local Parish and Town Councils are actively engaged in the development and roll out of the Community Hub network.

Recommendation 2 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) works closely with the Chief Officer Customer Access and the Area Leaders to ensure that, where appropriate, local Parish and Town Councils are also actively engaged in the development and roll out of the Community Hub network.

Formal response in October 2016

We will ensure that as Community Hubs are developed that relevant Parish and Town Councils are included in any consultation and engagement activity.

Position in April 2017

This is an ongoing piece of work as Community Hub options are developed. An example of where this has already happened is with the development of the Horsforth Community Hub, where good relations with the Parish Council have been developed. It is expected that more extensive engagement will happen through the development of options linked to the Phase 3 programme.

Position September 2017

As part of the consultation for phase 3 this will be included. The Community Hubs we are currently working on do not have a Parish Town Council so this has not been applicable (Hawksworth Wood, Bramley, Dewsbury Road).

An example is consultation has been undertaken with Otley Town Council on the Otley Community Hub and their aspiration to make the refurbished building as energy efficient as possible.

Position March 2019

Consultation continues where applicable.

An example is consultation has been undertaken with Otley Town Council on the Otley Community Hub and their aspiration to make the refurbished building as energy efficient as possible.

Position February 2020

None of the Community Hubs in progress have a parish or Town Council. The Consultation we did with Otley Town Council has seen a successful bid by the Council for Solar Panels on the Community Hub and these will now be installed.

Position Status (categories 1 – 6)

Desired Outcome – That all possible options are explored within the Council to assist in providing affordable transportation facilities for customers requiring access to Community Hub provisions.

Recommendation 3 – That the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) leads on working with other directorates to explore all possible options for providing affordable transportation facilities for customers requiring access to Community Hub provisions, such as maximising other council funded transport services that may otherwise only be utilised during certain periods of the day.

Formal response in October 2016:

We will ensure that this is considered as the Community Hub network expands and services are introduced where residents need to travel or be transported to the Hub.

Position in April 2017:

This is an ongoing piece of work as Community Hub options are developed. An example of where this is currently being looked at is the provision to transport people from local Community Hubs to learning provision (provided by Leeds City College) at the new Deacon House Hub in North Seacroft.

Position September 2017:

We will see how the access at Seacroft is improved by the use of the transport. As we develop Community Hubs we will look for opportunities to use council funded transport services. This may be particularly useful as we go into phase 3 of Community Hubs.

Position March 2019

We are setting up a scheme where we can provide prepared bus tickets for people job searching or going to job interviews. This has been funded by 8 of the Housing Advisory Panels.

Position February 2020

Due to the success of the bus ticket scheme we have continued to run this and have received further funding from the Housing Advisory Panels. We are working on a way to use spare capacity during the day for drivers from passenger transport to take out the mobile community hubs and story buses

Position Status (categories 1 – 6)

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Report of Head of Democratic Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities)

Date: 5 March 2020

Subject: Work Schedule

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	☐ Yes ☒ No
Has consultation been carried out?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	☐ Yes ☒ No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the remainder of the current municipal year.

2. Background information

- 2.1 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. In doing so, the work schedule should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 The latest iteration of the Board's work schedule is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration and agreement of the Scrutiny Board – subject to any identified and agreed amendments.
- 3.2 Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 12 February 2020 are also attached as Appendix 2. The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and note the Executive Board minutes, insofar as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board; and identify any matter where specific scrutiny activity may be warranted, and therefore subsequently incorporated into the work schedule.

Developing the work schedule

- 3.3 When considering any developments and/or modifications to the work schedule, effort should be undertaken to:
- Avoid unnecessary duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue.
 - Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.
 - Avoid pure “information items” except where that information is being received as part of a policy/scrutiny review.
 - Seek advice about available resources and relevant timings, taking into consideration the workload across the Scrutiny Boards and the type of Scrutiny taking place.
 - Build in sufficient flexibility to enable the consideration of urgent matters that may arise during the year.
- 3.4 In addition, in order to deliver the work schedule, the Board may need to take a flexible approach and undertake activities outside the formal schedule of meetings – such as working groups and site visits, where necessary and appropriate. This flexible approach may also require additional formal meetings of the Scrutiny Board.

Developments since the previous Scrutiny Board meeting

- 3.5 A joint working group took place on 27 January involving members of the Environment, Housing and Communities, Strategy and Resources and Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Boards to consider the Council’s approach to the disposal of green spaces.
- 3.6 A note of the meeting, including the recommendations made by members, is included at Appendix 3. Members of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board are asked to formally agree the statement. It will also go to the Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth and Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Boards for information.
- 3.7 A further joint working group took place with the Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth Scrutiny Board on 17 February to discuss Parking Management. A further note will follow summarising the outcomes of that session.
- 3.8 A further working group is due to take place to discuss Nuisance Fireworks on **9 March 2020 10am - 12pm**. This will include members of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board and a number of representatives from partner organisations.

4. Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The Vision for Scrutiny states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director(s) and Executive Member(s) about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include 'to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme'.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the best council objectives.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 When considering areas of work, the Board is reminded that influencing climate change and sustainability should be a key area of focus.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.
- 4.4.2 The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.

Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:

- Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;
- Avoid duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue;
- Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 This report has no specific legal implications.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 This report has no specific risk management implications.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. The latest iteration of the Board's work schedule is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration and agreement of the Scrutiny Board – subject to any identified and agreed amendments.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to consider the matters outlined in this report and agree (or amend) the overall work schedule (as presented at Appendix 1) as the basis for the Board's work for the remainder of 2019/20.
- 6.2 Members are asked to specifically confirm their response to formal statement detailing the discussion and recommendations made at the recent working group on 27 January.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

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.



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2019/2020 Municipal Year

June	July	August
Meeting Agenda for 13 June 2019	Meeting Agenda for 11 July 2019	No Scrutiny Board meeting scheduled.
Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference and Sources of Work (DB) Performance Update (PM) Credit Union (Exec Board referral) (PSR)	Formal Response – Waste Inquiry Report (RT) Draft Waste Strategy for Consultation (PDS) Finance - Out-turn Report 2018/19 (PM) LASBT Review Update (PSR) –EXB on 26 June.	
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2019/2020 Municipal Year

September	October	November
Meeting Agenda for 12 September 2019	Meeting Agenda for 17 October 2019	Meeting Agenda for 14 November 2019
Climate Emergency Advisory Committee – Priorities and Work Programme (PSR) Parks and Greenspace Strategy – Early Consultation (PDS) Car Parking – current strategic position, how this supports climate change, implementation and enforcement of TRO's (x ref waste inquiry) (PSR)	Inquiry into Leeds' response to Grenfell - (RT) Standards in Private Rented Sector – Monitoring and Regulation (including energy efficiency) (PSR) Housing Responsive Repairs & Voids Services (PSR) Consider request for scrutiny (Cllr Wadsworth)	**MOVED TO DECEMBER**
Working Group Meetings		
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2019/2020 Municipal Year

December	January	February
3 December	Meeting Agenda for 09 January 2020	6 February 2020
Inquiry into Kerbside Collection and Recycling (RT) & Response to Cllr Wadsworth's referral for scrutiny Referral to scrutiny (Cllr Campbell): Sale of green spaces in the context of the climate emergency Referral to Scrutiny (Cllr Firth): Proposals for Temple Newsam Referral to scrutiny (Cllrs Carter/Robinson): Impact of the anti-social use of fireworks on Leeds Communities	Performance report (PM) Financial Health Monitoring (PSR) and 2020/21 Initial Budget Proposals (PDS) Best Council Plan Refresh (PDS) Reducing Poverty and improving Financial Inclusion – Current position, challenges and response, including impact of Universal Credit. (PSR) Priority Neighbourhoods update (PSR) Referral to scrutiny (Cllrs Lamb/Harrington): cleanliness of the River Wharfe	Climate Change – Energy efficiency in Council House Stock (PSR) Fuel Poverty
Working Group Meetings		
	2-4pm 27/1/20: Disposal of green spaces JOINT – EHC, IIIG, S&R	12.30-2.30pm 17/02/20: Car Parking Policy JOINT – EHC, IIIG
Site Visits		

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response



Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing and Communities) Work Schedule for 2019/2020 Municipal Year

March	April	May	Unscheduled Items
Meeting Agenda for 05 March 2020	Meeting Agenda for 16 April 2020	No meeting scheduled.	
<i>Cllr Lamb due to attend pre-meet for River Cleanliness update.</i> Housing Repairs – Response Management, contractual arrangements and performance Progress update following working group 26 Sept 18. (PSR) Reducing Repeat Customer Contacts (RT) Development of Community Hubs – Update position (PSR)	Clean Air Zone – post implementation (January) review (PSR) Council House Growth Programme – progress report (PSR) Agree Scrutiny Inquiry Report(s) (if any)		Universal Credit – themed session on service user experience River Cleanliness - TBC
Working Group Meetings			
10am-12pm 09/03/20: Nuisance Fireworks			
Site Visits			

Scrutiny Work Items Key:

PSR	Policy/Service Review	RT	Recommendation Tracking	DB	Development Briefings
PDS	Pre-decision Scrutiny	PM	Performance Monitoring	C	Consultation Response

- Further progress on P&C Strategy required early 2020

EXECUTIVE BOARD

WEDNESDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 2020

PRESENT: Councillor J Blake in the Chair

Councillors A Carter, R Charlwood,
D Coupar, S Golton, J Lewis, L Mulherin,
J Pryor, M Rafique and F Venner

137 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED – That, in accordance with Regulation 4 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated as exempt from publication 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 public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:-

- (a) That Appendix 2 to the report entitled, 'Delivering the East of Otley Relief Road and Housing Allocation', referred to in Minute No. 140 be designated as being exempt from publication in accordance with paragraph 10.4(3) of Schedule 12A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that Appendix 2 contains information that sets out the principles of a Collaboration Agreement between the Council and developers which is yet to be fully agreed and contains information that is commercially sensitive, which relates to the financial or business affairs of third parties. It is therefore considered that it is in the public interest for this element of the report to be designated as being exempt from publication on the grounds as detailed above.

138 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared at the meeting.

139 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th January 2020 be approved as a correct record.

CLIMATE CHANGE, TRANSPORT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

140 Delivering the East of Otley Relief Road and Housing Allocation

Further to the Minute No. 18, 26th June 2019, the Director of City Development submitted a report providing an update on the positive progress which had been made on the various strands of the East of Otley development project. Also, the report sought approval regarding the 'Authority to Spend' £2.245m to enable the completion of critical preliminary works, which would enable the full costing of the East of Otley Relief Road (EORR) scheme to take place, the submission of a planning application and the

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 18th March, 2020

provision of essential information which would inform the Collaboration Agreement.

In presenting the submitted report, the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development highlighted the level of affordable / social housing proposed as part of the development, together with details of the wider benefits for Otley town centre.

Officers responded to a Member's enquiries regarding the process for the drawdown of the Housing Infrastructure Fund grant, the associated development viability check and in relation to potential issues arising from the complexity of the project.

Responding to a specific enquiry regarding the potential impact upon sports pitches, it was emphasised that any development would require appropriate planning consent and in securing this, any replacement of pitch provision would need to be agreed with Sport England as a statutory consultee and also with the affected sports clubs.

Following the consideration of Appendix 2 to the submitted report, designated as being exempt from publication under the provisions of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(3), which was considered in private at the conclusion of the meeting, and which included officers providing further information to the Board in response to Members' enquiries on the content of the exempt appendix, it was

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the continued positive progress which is being made on the East of Otley scheme, including entering into contract with Homes England for the Housing Infrastructure Fund, be noted;
- (b) That the proposed environmental measures to be implemented as part of the design and delivery of the EORR and the wider East of Otley development to help towards supporting the reduction of the climate impacts that the scheme may have, be noted;
- (c) That the drawdown of £2.245m from the Capital Programme (Scheme 33010) for the provision of funding to cover further fees and additional costs to progress the EORR project up to and through the planning process, be approved; and that the necessary Authority to Spend be delegated to the Director of City Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development; with it being noted that these costs will be recovered to the Capital Programme following the first drawdown of the Housing Infrastructure Fund grant in respect of the costs associated with the EORR or from the landowners via the Collaboration Agreement in respect of the costs incurred as part of the wider residential led mixed use scheme;

- (d) That the positive progress which has been made towards completing a Collaboration Agreement, as set out in exempt Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be noted, and that approval be given for the necessary authority to be delegated to the Director of City Development to enable the Director to enter into detailed terms with developers of the East of Otley site;
- (e) That the detail, as set out in exempt Appendix 2 to the submitted report in terms of potential claims for compensation under Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 (LCA 1973) and the Agricultural Holdings Act, be noted;
- (f) That the positive progress which has been made in relation to the disposal of the Council's land within the East of Otley allocation, be noted, and that the intention to enter into an Agreement with Persimmon Homes to facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and development at the East of Otley site also be noted;
- (g) That it be noted that the Head of Land and Property will be responsible for overseeing the detailed terms of the disposal and the agreement.

141 Connecting Leeds: Corn Exchange Gateway

The Director of City Development submitted a report which outlined the next steps for delivering the detail design and construction of the Corn Exchange Gateway as part of the 'Connecting Leeds' programme, and which sought specific approvals regarding injections into the 'Connecting Leeds' programme and the associated authorisation of expenditure.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, it was acknowledged that a level of disruption was being experienced as a result of the work being undertaken in the city centre, however, the multi-agency approach being taken to mitigate such disruption was highlighted. The importance of an effective communications strategy was emphasised, with assurance also being provided that liaison continued to be undertaken with bus operators on such matters.

Also in response to a Member's enquiry, the Board was provided with further information regarding the traditional Department for Transport (DfT) methodologies used when appraising such projects, with it being noted that liaison continued to take place with colleagues in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority appraisal team and also with the DfT. It was highlighted that representations were being made to the DfT regarding the need for appraisal methods to give appropriate recognition to the different modes of transport and active travel provision that cities such as Leeds were aiming for.

Emphasis was also placed on the importance of ensuring that robust enforcement mechanisms were put in place to maintain the transport systems which were established in the city centre via schemes such as this in order to maximise the benefit for those using them.

In conclusion, the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development highlighted that a number of funding streams affecting projects in the city centre had tight timescales, and although work was ongoing to minimise levels of disruption wherever possible, such timescales did create challenges and meant that it was necessary for some projects to be progressed at the same time.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress which has been made since April 2016 in developing the programme of schemes for construction benefiting from the 'Connecting Leeds' funding, together with the subsequent public consultation responses, be noted;
- (b) That the injection of £6.1m from the City Centre Package programme (funded by the West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund) into the 'Connecting Leeds' programme, for the design and delivery of the Meadow Lane aspect of the Corn Exchange Gateway Scheme and its associated linkages into the city centre core, be approved;
- (c) That the injections of S106 Developer contributions of £905,564 for the Corn Exchange Gateway scheme, be approved;
- (d) That expenditure of £21.5m from the 'Connecting Leeds' Capital Programme, which will be used to carry out detail design and construction of the Corn Exchange Gateway, be authorised;
- (e) That it be noted, that subject to consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development, the Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation will approve the final version of the designs for construction;
- (f) That it be noted that the public realm proposals for the Corn Exchange will also be subject to further approval when such proposals have been refined and developed.

HEALTH, WELLBEING AND ADULTS

142 The Quality of CQC Regulated Services operating in the Leeds City Council boundary

The Director of Adults and Health submitted a report detailing the progress which had been made in achieving and sustaining an improved trend in the quality of regulated services operating within the Council boundary. In addition, the report set out the work which was being undertaken within the Adults and Health directorate and with wider partners to ensure improvements in the quality of services were being maintained and provided details of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection outcomes for social care providers since 2017.

Members welcomed the content of the submitted report, with emphasis being placed upon the need to continue to promote and embed good practice in

such services. A Member also specifically highlighted the positive work being undertaken in respect of Home Care provision.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Board, officers undertook to thank those teams who had been involved in the supportive actions taken to improve the quality of care provided in the independent sector.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the steady improvement made in the quality of the regulated care sector as a result of the Council's focused action, be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that the Best Council Plan target of 80% of all CQC regulated care services be rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' has now been met and exceeded;
- (c) That it be noted that the Deputy Director of Integrated Commissioning will be responsible for continuing the work throughout the next year, with partners, to raise the quality of regulated adult social care services in the city;
- (d) That on behalf of the Board, officers be requested to thank those teams who have been involved in the supportive actions taken to improve the quality of care provided in the independent sector.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

143 Director of Children and Families

On behalf of the Board, the Chair welcomed Sal Tariq OBE to the meeting, as it was his first attendance at Executive Board following his recent appointment as Director of Children and Families.

144 Child Friendly Leeds Annual Report

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which provided an update on the key areas of work currently being undertaken by the Child Friendly Leeds team.

In presenting the submitted report, the Executive Member for Children and Families provided further detail on a number of the initiatives being undertaken as part of Child Friendly Leeds, highlighted the role of the Child Friendly Ambassadors across the city and referenced the award for Public Services which had been presented to the Council at the National Leadership Forum for the Child Friendly Leeds city centre initiative.

Also, it was noted that the Director of Children and Families was scheduled to submit a report to the March 2020 Executive Board presenting statistical information regarding Looked after Children in Leeds.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board was provided with further information regarding the Child Friendly Leeds ethos which, via a cross-directorate and multi-sector approach, aimed to improve outcomes for all

children and young people across the city, with additional focus being placed on those who were from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In response to a Member's request, officers undertook to provide Executive Members with further statistical information regarding those children and young people who were benefitting from the range of initiatives delivered as part of Child Friendly Leeds.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the progress which has been made since 2012 on the ambition for Leeds to be a Child Friendly City, be supported;
- (b) That the work which has been developed in supporting the role and remit of the Corporate Parenting Board in terms of enriching the lives of children and young people in care and care leavers, be supported;
- (c) That the work of the Child Friendly Leeds team and the focus of the team on achieving the Council's Child Friendly ambitions, be supported;
- (d) That the partnership approach being adopted by the Child Friendly Leeds team and its partners to enhance the life experiences of children in care and care leavers through the development of an 'enrichment offer', be endorsed;
- (e) That the Enrichment Newsletter, as appended to the submitted report, which provides a more in depth understanding of the enrichment offer as it evolves, be noted;
- (f) That the broader impact which the development of the ambition has had on the Council's capacity to make progress in terms of the obsessions and priorities regarding children and families services, as expressed in the Council's Children and Young People's Plan, be supported;
- (g) That further statistical information regarding those children and young people who are benefitting from the range of initiatives delivered as part of Child Friendly Leeds be provided to Executive Members in due course.

145 Approval to Spend for the Refurbishment of the former Burley Park PRU to Support Early Years Provision and LCC Office Space

The Director of Children and Families and the Director of City Development submitted a joint report presenting the background to, and proposals regarding the refurbishment of the former Burley Park Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), and which sought authority for Capital expenditure to facilitate the construction work and for the associated fees to facilitate the refurbishment.

Members welcomed the proposals detailed within the submitted report.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That capital expenditure for the sum of £1,800,000 from Capital Scheme number 33043/000/000 for the construction work and associated fees to facilitate the refurbishment of the vacant Burley Park PRU building, be authorised, with it being noted that this sum includes the value for the refurbishment of both the nursery provision and the Leeds City Council office space together with a client held contingency commensurate with a project of this size and complexity;
- (b) That it be noted that the Asset Management and Regeneration team will be responsible for the implementation of the works as described in the submitted report;
- (c) That approval be given for Shire View to be declared as surplus to the Council's requirements.

LEARNING, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

146 Determination of School Admissions Arrangements for 2021/22

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which sought approval of the Local Authority Admissions Policy and Admissions arrangements for entry to voluntary controlled and community schools in September 2021.

Responding to a Member's enquiry regarding the high demand for secondary school places in North Leeds, the Board received further information on how such demand was linked to levels of provision in other parts of the city, with details being provided on the actions being taken to manage the situation as a whole.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That in determining the school admissions arrangements for 2021, the admissions policies for the Leeds Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary and Secondary schools, as detailed at Appendices A and B to the submitted report, be approved, with approval also being given to the one year reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Roundhay All Through School (secondary site) to 210 for 2021;
- (b) That the following be noted:-
 - (i) That the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Allerton High School has been permanently increased from 189 to 220;
 - (ii) That there are no changes to the admission policy for Primary and Junior schools;
 - (iii) The Co-ordinated schemes for admissions arrangements for entry in September 2021, as detailed at Appendices C and D to the submitted report, and that there are no changes to the 2020 arrangements other than updates to timelines and to some minor wording to ensure procedural accuracy;

- (c) That the resolutions of the Board in respect of this submitted report, as detailed within this minute, be exempted from the Call In process, for those reasons as set out in paragraph 4.5.2 of the submitted report;
- (d) That it be noted that the officer responsible for the implementation of such matters is the Lead for Admissions and Family Information Service, and that the date for implementation (i.e. determination of the policies) is no later than 28 February 2020, with the policy being published by 15 March 2020.

(The Council's Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules state that a decision may be declared as being exempt from the Call In process by the decision taker if it is considered that any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's, or the public's interests. In line with this, the resolutions contained within this minute were exempted from the Call In process, as per resolution (c) above, and for the reasons as detailed within section 4.5.2 of the submitted report)

147 Outcome of consultation and request to approve funding to permanently increase learning places at Allerton Grange School from September 2021

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting the outcome of a consultation exercise regarding a proposal to expand secondary school provision at Allerton Grange School and which sought a decision to fund the delivery of a scheme to create the additional learning places required.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the publication of a Statutory Notice on a proposal to permanently expand secondary provision at Allerton Grange School from a capacity of 1200 pupils to 1500 pupils in years 7 to 11, with an increase in the admission number from 240 to 300 and with effect from September 2021, be approved;
- (b) That provisional approval for Authority to Spend (ATS) of £4.8m (based on a Department for Education (DfE) funding rate of £16,056 per new secondary place) to deliver the proposed permanent expansion of Allerton Grange School, be granted;
- (c) That it be noted that the implementation of the proposal is subject to funding being agreed based upon the outcome of further detailed design work and planning applications, as indicated at sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.3 of the submitted report, with it also being noted that the proposal has been brought forward in time for places to be delivered for 2021;
- (d) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Head of Learning Systems.

148 Outcome of consultation to establish a new specialist free school in Headingley from September 2021

Further to Minute No. 107, 25th November 2019, the Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken regarding a proposal to establish a new 150-place specialist free school for children and young people aged 4-16 at Rose Court, Buckingham Road, Headingley, and which sought permission to launch the competition stage of the free school presumption process in order to identify a preferred sponsor to run the new school.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken on the proposal to establish a new 150-place specialist free school for children and young people aged 4-16 at Rose Court, Buckingham Road, Headingley, be noted;
- (b) That the commencement of a free school presumption process under the terms as set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (section 6A), which allows the Local Authority to launch a competition seeking to identify a preferred sponsor to run the new free school, be approved;
- (c) That it be noted that the responsible officer for the implementation of such matters is the Head of Learning Systems.

COMMUNITIES

149 Addressing Food Poverty in Leeds: Ensuring Residents have Access to Affordable, Nutritious Food

The Director of Communities and Environment and the Director of Adults and Health submitted a joint report presenting information regarding the current position in respect of food poverty in the city and which outlined a number of areas in which the Council was working with partners in the voluntary, health and private sectors to address this issue.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the work undertaken to tackle food poverty and insecurity, as set out within the submitted report, be noted, and that the partnerships and joint working established to support families out of poverty, be acknowledged;
- (b) That the work of the Leeds Food Partnership be endorsed, with it being noted that this group helped Leeds achieve the Bronze Sustainable Food Cities Award in 2019 and is working on an action plan for partners across the city to achieve the Silver Sustainable Food Cities award in 2021;
- (c) That the concerns around residents' ability to access a reliable and sustainable quantity of affordable, nutritious food, as outlined in the submitted report, be noted, together with the ways in which the Council

and partners can do more to improve co-ordination, awareness and access to food provision.

150 Director of Public Health

On behalf of the Board, the Chair paid tribute to and extended her thanks to Dr. Ian Cameron, as he was attending his final Board meeting prior to retiring from his position as Director of Public Health.

INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND CULTURE

151 2020/21 Revenue Budget and Council Tax report, including reports on the Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy

Further to Minute No. 128, 7th January 2020, the Chief Officer, Financial Services, submitted a suite of reports regarding: proposals for the City Council's Revenue Budget for 2020/21 and the Leeds element of the Council Tax to be levied during the same period; proposals regarding an updated Capital Programme for 2020-2024 and also a proposed updated Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21.

(A) 2020/21 Revenue Budget and Council Tax

RESOLVED -

- (a) That Council be recommended to note the recommendation of the Council's statutory officer (the Chief Officer – Financial Services) that the proposed budget for 2020/21 is robust and that the proposed level of reserves is adequate, as set out at Section 12 of the submitted report;
- (b) That Executive Board recommends to Council the adoption of the following:-
 - (i) That the revenue budget for 2020/21 totalling £525.7m, be approved. This means that the Leeds element of the Council Tax for 2020/21 will increase by 1.99% plus the Adult Social Care precept of 2%. This excludes the Police and Fire precepts which will be incorporated into the report to be submitted to Council on the 26th February 2020;
 - (ii) That approval be given to grants totalling £65.7k to be allocated to parishes;
 - (iii) That approval be given to the strategy at Appendix 9 of the submitted report in respect of the flexible use of capital receipts;
 - (iv) That in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, Council be recommended to approve the budget with:-
 - An increase of 2.7% (CPI+1%) in dwelling rents;
 - A 2.4% RPI increase in charges for all District Heating schemes;
 - The service charges for low/medium and multi-storey flats being increased by RPI of 2.4%;
 - The charge for tenants who benefit from the sheltered support service being increased to £14.71 per week to

- reflect full cost recovery. The charge being eligible for Housing Benefit;
 - The subsidy for tenants who are not eligible for benefits but receive the sheltered support service being set at £4.71 per week. Therefore the amount payable by these tenants will increase from £8 per week to £10 per week;
 - Any overall increase to tenants in respect of rents, service and sheltered support being no more than £3.50 per week.
- (v) That in respect of the Schools Budget, approval be given to the High Needs Block budget for 2020/21, as set out in paragraph 5 of the Schools Budget Report as detailed at Appendix 8 of the submitted report;
- (c) That Executive Board's approval be given to authorise officers to grant relief against business rates liability in line with Business Rates Information Letter (1/2020), for which the Council will be fully compensated for any loss of income;
- (d) That Executive Board's thanks be conveyed to Scrutiny Boards for the comments and observations made as part of Scrutiny's consideration of the Council's Initial Budget Proposals.

(B) Capital Programme Update 2020 – 2024

RESOLVED –

- (a) That Executive Board recommends to Council:
- (i) the approval of the Capital Programme for 2020-2024 totalling £2,009.9m, including the revised projected position for 2019/20, as presented in **Appendix A** to the submitted report;
 - (ii) the approval of the MRP policy statement for 2020/21 as set out in **Appendix C** to the submitted report; and
 - (iii) the approval of the Capital and Investment Strategy as set out in **Appendix D** to the submitted report;
- (b) That Executive Board approval be given to the following injections into the Capital Programme:-
- £146.0m of annual programme injections as set out in **Appendix A(iii)** and listed at **Appendix A(iv)** of the submitted report, to be funded by £129.7m Leeds City Council borrowing and £16.3m of specific resources;
 - £75.9m of major programme injections, as set out in **Appendix A(iii)** and listed at **Appendix A(iv)** of the submitted report, to be funded by £54.1m Leeds City Council borrowing and £21.8m of specific resources;
 - £322.2m of other injections, primarily relating to the roll forward of the HRA Programme and annual capital grant allocations, as set out in **Appendix A(iii)** of the submitted report, to be fully funded by specific resources.

- (c) That it be noted that the above resolutions to inject funding of £544.1m will be implemented by the Chief Officer (Financial Services).

(C) Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21

Members extended their thanks to finance officers for the work that had been undertaken in the re-profiling of the Authority's borrowing, with the financial benefits for the Council being noted.

Responding to a Member's request for further information on the London Inter Bank Overnight Rate (LIBOR) dispute as referenced within the submitted report, officers undertook to provide the Member in question with a separate briefing on such matters.

RESOLVED -

- (a) That the Treasury Strategy for 2020/21, as set out in Section 3.3 of the submitted report be approved by the Executive Board, and that the review of the 2019/20 strategy and operations, as set out in Sections 3.1 and 3.2, be noted;
- (b) That the proposals for forward funding, as detailed in 3.3.6 to 3.3.9 of the submitted report, be noted by Executive Board;
- (c) That full Council be recommended to set the borrowing limits for 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, as detailed in Section 3.4 of the submitted report and to note the changes to both the Operational Boundary and the Authorised limits;
- (d) That full Council be recommended to set the treasury management indicators for 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, as detailed in Section 3.5 of the submitted report;
- (e) That full Council be recommended to set the investment limits for 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, as detailed in Section 3.6 of the submitted report.

(The matters referred to in Minute Nos. 151 (A)(a) – 151(A)(b)(v) (Revenue Budget and Council Tax); 151(B)(a)(i) – 151(B)(a)(iii) (Capital Programme) and 151(C)(c) – 151(C)(e) (Treasury Management Strategy), given that they were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In)

(Under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.5, Councillors A Carter and S Golton both required it to be recorded that they respectively abstained from voting on the decisions referred to within this minute)

RESOURCES

152 Best Council Plan 2020 to 2025

Further to Minute No. 131, 7th January 2020, the Director of Resources and Housing submitted a report presenting the Best Council Plan for 2020 to 2025 for the Board's consideration and approval that it be recommended for adoption by Council on 26th February 2020.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That full Council be recommended to adopt the Best Council Plan 2020 to 2025, as detailed at annexe 1 to the submitted report, at its meeting on 26th February 2020;
- (b) That Scrutiny Boards and others be thanked for their comments throughout the development and consultation processes which have informed the proposed Plan;
- (c) That, subject to the Best Council Plan being adopted by Council on 26th February 2020, it be noted that further development and graphic design work will take place prior to the publication and launch of the Best Council Plan 2020 to 2025 around 1st April 2020.

(The matters referred to within this minute, given that they were decisions being made in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, were not eligible for Call In)

153 Financial Health Monitoring 2019/20 – Month 9 (December)

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report which presented the Council's projected financial health position for 2019/20 as at Month 9 (December 2019) of the financial year.

Responding to a Member's enquiry, the Board received further information on the causal factors regarding the deficit position in respect of the Business Rates Collection Fund, as at month 9 of the financial year, together with the actions being taken to correct the position in future years.

In response to a Member's enquiry on the Council's current underspend regarding the Early Years block of the Dedicated School Grant (DSG), the Board received further information on how the underspend occurred, which related to the disparity between how the Government calculated funding and the payments made by the Council. Also, it was noted that given the underspend, consideration was being given to potentially increasing the hourly rate paid in 2020/21 to childcare providers in the city. However, it was also noted that the Council was permitted to use DSG block underspends to offset over-spending blocks, and as such the correct balance needed to be struck.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the projected financial position of the Authority as detailed within the submitted report, as at Month 9 of the 2019/20 financial year, be noted;
- (b) That with regard to the risk that the budgeted level of capital receipts may not be receivable in 2019/20, the progress which has been made to date and the fact that work is ongoing to identify budget savings proposals which will contribute towards the delivery of a balanced budget position in 2019/20, be noted.

154 North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool

The Chief Officer (Financial Services) submitted a report which provided an update on the successful application for a new 2020/21 North and West Yorkshire 50% Retention Business Rates Levy Pool and which sought agreement to: the formation of a new Joint Committee to oversee that Pool; the associated governance arrangements and also the Leader's position on the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the update on the new 2020/21 North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool, as detailed within the submitted report, be noted;
- (b) That the revoking of the 2019/20 North and West Yorkshire 75% Retention Business Rates Pool on 31st March 2020 be noted, and that agreement be provided to disband the current North and West Yorkshire Pool Joint Committee on the same date;
- (c) That agreement be given to appoint the Leader to a new Joint Committee to oversee the new 2020/21 North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool, with such a Joint Committee consisting of the Leaders of the Authorities as specified in paragraph 3.3.3 of the submitted report and to have the Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix C;
- (d) That the Memorandum of Understanding for the 2020/21 North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool, as presented at Appendix B to the submitted report, be noted and agreed;
- (e) That the Terms of Reference for the 2020/21 North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool Joint Committee, as presented at Appendix C to the submitted report, be noted and approved;
- (f) That the City Solicitor be delegated with the necessary authority to seek the formal agreement of the other 12 members of the Pool to the new arrangements.

DATE OF PUBLICATION: FRIDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY 2020

**LAST DATE FOR CALL IN
OF ELIGIBLE DECISIONS:** 5.00 P.M., FRIDAY 21ST FEBRUARY 2020

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**Joint Scrutiny Working Group (Environment, Housing and Communities, Strategy and Resources,
Infrastructure, Investment and Inclusive Growth) – 27 January 2020**

Approach to the Disposal of Green Spaces

Notes: Rebecca Atherton, Principal Scrutiny Advisor

Scrutiny Board Member Attendees:

Scrutiny Board	Member	Ward
IIIG SB / S&R	Cllr Cunningham	Armley
IIIG SB	Cllr Dawson	Morley South
IIIG SB	Cllr R Grahame	Burmantofts & Richmond Hill
IIIG SB	Cllr Taylor	Horsforth
IIIG SB	Cllr Truswell (CH)	Middleton Park
EH&C	Cllr Anderson (CH)	Adel & Wharfedale
EH&C	Cllr Akhtar	Little London & Woodhouse
EH&C	Cllr A Blackburn	Farnley & Wortley
EH&C	Cllr Collins	Horsforth
EH&C	Cllr Gabriel	Beeston and Holbeck
EH&C	Cllr Khan	Burmantofts & Richmond Hill
EH&C	Cllr Gruen	Crossgates and Whinmoor
EH&C	Cllr Smith	Pudsey
S&R	Cllr Almass	Beeston & Holbeck
S&R	Cllr Chapman	Rothwell
S&R / EHC	Cllr Harland (CH)	Kippax and Methley
S&R	Cllr Jenkins	Killingbeck & Seacroft
S&R	Cllr Mckenna	Armley

Executive Board Attendee:

Cllr James Lewis	Executive Member for Resources
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Officer Attendees:

Mark Mills	Head of Asset Management
Chris Gomersall	Head of Land and Property
Kathryn Holloway	Team Leader, Major Projects
Debbie Kirk	Service Development Manager

Recommendations

A - The Chair to recommend to the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee that they consider reviewing the criteria currently used to determine whether or not the disposal of small green spaces can be progressed.

B – Officers to consider adding an additional item to the seven criteria against which garden sales are currently assessed to include the potential impact of any disposal on tree planting.

C - Officers to explore the inclusion of ward member comments regarding specific planning applications in Plans Panel reports.

D - The Chair to write to the Minister of Housing and Planning to lobby for stronger powers to attach recommendations to small greenspace sales so as to have the capacity to restrict the nature of future building works that could otherwise be progressed as a result of permitted development rights. This would be applicable where there is a reasonable concern that such works could be contrary to key Council priorities such as flood risk mitigation or the declared Climate Emergency.

E – The Chair to write to the Chief Planning Officer to advocate the attachment of stronger recommendations to garden land sales when considering the future use of the space in the context of key Council Priorities such as the Climate Emergency.

F – Officers to explore options to include a specific standard recommendation as part of garden land sales that any subsequent building work should deliver a permeable surface, for example in the case of drive ways, to reduce flood risk.

G - Explore options for a proactive approach to identifying small green spaces that can be brought into use in order to deliver community benefits in inner city areas – for example, through planting.

Meeting Notes

Introduction

1. Officers delivered a presentation to members outlining the types and scale of designated greenspace in the city.
2. Background was provided about the processes officers follow with regard to the sale of garden land and the typical nature of such sales. Officers reminded members that they do not proactively pursue sales of garden land and that decisions about whether or not to sell are generally determined by pragmatism.
3. The established process for the disposal of larger sites was also outlined and it was noted that in these disposals are heavily monitored with key sites referred to Executive Board for approval.
4. Cllr Lewis provided information about the ongoing review of the Asset Management Strategy.

Environmental Impact of Garden Land Sales

5. The environmental impact of garden land sales was discussed in relation to cases of encroachment and for sales where land is being retained as greenspace within a private garden.

6. Members noted that they are consulted about local garden land sales. However, in the context of ongoing work being carried out by the Biodiversity Sub-Group of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee it was suggested that advice is sought from Parks and Countryside to establish whether the green space in question could be a potential site for planting.
7. Members suggested an additional item should be added to the list of criteria applied to garden land sales to consider whether the green space could be used for tree planting.
8. Cllr Lewis responded to member concerns about the future use of garden land having a detrimental environmental impact by citing examples of sales that have not progressed due to a failure of a buyer to secure planning permission. He also noted that where green space is retained as "flat grass" inclusion in a private garden can actually enhance biodiversity.
9. Scrutiny members queried whether conditions could be imposed upon the future development in the case of garden land sales – for example, requesting that permeable surfaces are used for drive ways. The contributory impact of non-permeable building materials to flood risk was highlighted. The use – and limitations – of restrictive covenants was explored.
10. Members considered ways in which to reduce the environmental impact of 'verge hardening.'
11. Members were advised that changes to national policy would need to be secured in order to impose conditions on future land use that prevent activities ordinary house holders could otherwise progress as a result of permitted development rights.
12. Members reiterated the need to ensure, as far as is possible, sales of small spaces do not amount to "garden grab" housing sites.

Ward Member Views on Planning Applications

13. Scrutiny Board members asked for clarification about the weight given to the comments of local ward members about individual applications that are to be considered by a Plans Panel. Members considered an example of member comments regarding a site in Armley not appearing to have influenced the final shape of a development, despite ward members' support being stated as conditional upon specific community obligations being met given it required a loss of green space. It was agreed that officers should explore whether ward member comments can be included in Plans Panel reports.

Inner City Areas

14. Members raised particular concern about the loss of small green spaces in inner city areas where overall access to green space is limited. The role of green space in promoting health and wellbeing was discussed.
15. Officers were asked to explore a proactive new policy whereby small green spaces in the inner city can be used to provide a local benefit, for example by planting.

Maintenance of Small Green Spaces

16. Members queried the approach to small areas of land which residents wish to maintain to a higher standard than will be achieved via a standard Council service. The logistical arrangements

for maintaining planted sites on an ongoing basis were discussed. The increasing costs of maintenance were highlighted as a consideration particularly in the case of maturing trees.

17. Members were advised that plans are being developed for planting sites as part of the Asset Management Strategy review with Parks and Countryside providing a commitment to initial maintenance.
18. The impact of maturing trees on housing was noted and the need for long-term planning of planting within or near new developments discussed.

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