



Housing Engagement Board

Quarterly Meeting

17 July 2023 – 2pm to 4pm

Agenda Pack

Housing Engagement Board Agenda

Date: **Monday, 17 July 2023**

Time: **2pm – 4pm**

Venue: **Zoom (Virtual Meeting)**

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1. Ratification of East Co-option Board Member

Following the last meeting, Jackie Wrenn, the newly appointed HEB member tendered her resignation due to personal unforeseen circumstances.

The co-option vacancy and application documents were uploaded to SCDC's website on 17 April 2023. The vacancy was advertised in the May 2023 newsletters and regularly on Facebook.

We received four qualifying applications, which included two applications from the East area. A meeting to interview the East applicants was held on 12 June 2023. The final choice was agreed by the board members, however, as the meeting was not quorate the successful applicant will be ratified at this meeting and formally appointed to the board.

2. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair will welcome all present and apologies will be noted.

3. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of 50% of members.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 23 March 2023 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2023 are included for approval.

Housing Engagement Board
Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting
held on Thursday, 23 March 2023
from 2pm to 4pm via Zoom

Attendees: Cllr John Batchelor – Chair
Dave Kelleway – Vice Chair
Jim Watson
Les Rolfe
Margaret Wilson
Peter Tye

By Invitation: Julie Fletcher (SCDC – Service Manager – Housing Strategy)
Eddie Spicer (SCDC – Service Manager – Housing Assets)
Dave Armitage (SCDC – Resident Involvement Team Leader)
Debbie Barrett (SCDC – Housing Services Team Leader)
Bronwen Taylor (SCDC – Resident Involvement Officer) – Minute taker
Gina Manderson (SCDC – Housing Communications Officer) – Admin Support

Apologies: Peter Campbell (SCDC – Head of Housing)
Cllr Mark Howell (absent – no apology received)
Cllr Jose Hales (absent – no apology received)
Jackie Wrenn
Geoff Clark (SCDC – Services Manager – Tenancy and Estates)

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting at 2.01pm. He especially welcomed Jackie Wrenn, the new tenant representative, however added that she had sent her apologies for this meeting.

Apologies were received from Peter Campbell, Jackie Wrenn and Geoff Clark.

2. Appointment of Chair

The Chair advised that as per the Terms of Reference he had been appointed as the Chair for the first year and thereafter a new Chair was to be appointed, however, no nominations had been received.

Julie Fletcher said that nominations could be given, and seconded, at this meeting. She advised that Cllr Batchelor had chaired for the first year as this was a new board, and that it would give them an opportunity to get familiar with how the HEB ran. She added that the plan was to then have a tenant representative as the Chair.

The Chair said that the tenant representatives would need to give some thought as to who should be elected as chair, however, he would chair this meeting. He asked the tenant representatives to meet to discuss the appointment of a chair for the next two years.

Dave Kelleway said that his preference would be that a tenant representative would be the Vice Chair and that the Lead Member for Housing would be the Chair, as this had more power when decisions were made. He added that Cllr Batchelor had done a good job and he hoped that he would continue as the Chair.

The Chair said that he wanted to make sure that the board was in agreement.

The Board agreed to Cllr Batchelor continuing as the Chair for the next year.

Dave Kelleway said that the Terms of Reference needed to be reviewed as not only did the terms of office for the Chair and Vice Chair differ, but there had been a change in the terms in the co-option policy.

Dave Kelleway proposed that Cllr Batchelor chair the board for another year which was seconded by Margaret Wilson.

The Board were all in agreement.

Action by: Dave Armitage

3. Quorum

The meeting was quorate.

4. Minutes of previous meeting – 15 December 2022

The Chair referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2022.

Margaret Wilson said that the last sentence in item 6.3 should read “Eddie Spicer said that the problem was that people who hired the hall interfered with the heating system.”

Subject to the amendment, the minutes were approved by the board as a true reflection of the meeting.

Action by: Bronwen Taylor

Matters Arising from previous Meeting – 15 December 2022

The matters arising from the previous meeting are listed below for noting.

Item 4.2 – Forward Plan

Eddie Spicer advised that the issue that Margaret Wilson had raised with her shed, etcetera, were inspected early in January 2023 and the remedial works were booked for Wednesday 8 March 2023 for completion.

Margaret Wilson said that the job had not been completed properly, as there was still a problem with the brickwork, and asked how this could be resolved.

Eddie Spicer said that he had not received feedback since the work had been completed.

Margaret Wilson said that according to the paperwork and the system it had been completed, and asked how they could address this problem of closure.

The Chair said he thought that tenants were asked to sign off on a job once it had been completed.

Eddie Spicer said that they were asked to sign off and the tenants received a customer satisfaction survey to complete following the completion of the job.

Margaret Wilson said that she received a text to click on a link on her phone, but she was unable to do this on her phone.

The Chair said that we would be adopting a different system for customer satisfaction and would employ a professional company to do this work rather than the contractor.

Eddie Spicer confirmed that the contractor would still be doing their survey, however, we would be having a monthly external sample taken.

Item 5.3 – Sheltered Housing Schemes Audit Accounts

Martin Lee advised that they would be preparing the statements at the end of February 2023 / early March 2023 and would send them out in order that they could be displayed in each Communal Room from April 2023, the start of the new financial year. The statements would be the estimated costs for the Year 2023 / 2024.

Margaret Wilson said that they still had unresolved audited accounts and that they wanted to see all incoming and outgoing transactions, for example, service charges.

Julie Fletcher said that she would take this issue back to Martin Lee to look into.

Margaret Wilson referred to the communal room heating that was still coming on at odd times and said that she had spoken to the Sheltered Estate Officer who said that she would look into the issue. She added that the system had to be updated each week and was not designed for a communal hall.

Cllr Batchelor asked Eddie Spicer to investigate this issue.

Action by: Julie Fletcher and Eddie Spicer

Item 5.4 – Fixed Term Tenancies

Geoff Clark has provided an updated report on Fixed Term Tenancies which is included for noting.

Julie Fletcher advised that we would be contacting all tenants who were coming up to their 9 year tenancy by the end of April 2023.

Item 5.5 – Co-option Policy

Bronwen Taylor has added the word “leaseholder” to the policy documents where applicable.

Item 5.7 – New Repairs contract – Performance Review Joint Working Group

The HPP and HEB meeting dates have been set to be held after the working group’s meetings.

Item 5.11 – Damp and mould

Eddie Spicer advised that he had not received any issues from the Board members, however, a great deal of work was being done and a new policy would be ready soon.

Item 6.1 – Stigma

Margaret Wilson provided a summary of the national Stigma meeting she attended on 28 November 2022 and would report back under item 6.7.

Item 6.2 – Housing Strategy Review

Julie Fletcher advised that a questionnaire on the high level vision and objectives had recently been sent to the board. She said that this was much wider than our landlord services and covered all housing, and was a much more wider overarching strategy. She said that a lot of meetings had been held with stakeholders and that feedback would be provided in August / September 2023.

5. Standing Items

5.1 New Repairs Contract – Performance Review Joint Working Group

Eddie Spicer referred to the report included in the pack and advised that two meetings had been held. He said that they were looking at Key Performance Indicators and overall satisfaction, and that there had been no issues to discuss. He added that the meetings were useful and that the tenants feedback was valued.

The Chair asked about the restructuring of the voids targets.

Eddie Spicer said that Peter Campbell, Geoff Clark and he were doing research work on this and that voids reporting would be broken down into different categories of 5, 10 and 25 day voids, and then a section on major voids being the refurbishment of kitchens and bathrooms. He said that once all the data were collected, they would have a proposal for targets which should be ready by April 2023.

The Chair said that at the moment it would appear that there was no chance of getting to target as the vast majority were in the 25 day KPI.

Margaret Wilson asked to avoid the use of the word “void”.

Eddie Spicer apologised and said that it would not be used. He explained the different situations with delays of empty properties.

A discussion on the refurbishment of properties was held.

Margaret Wilson asked if prospective tenants could be consulted on new kitchens, etcetera, before they moved into a property.

Eddie Spicer said that it was difficult to always consult with incoming tenants as there was a 6 week lead time to refurbish, however, if a property was in an acceptable standard, tenants would be allowed to move in and the work would be done at a later stage. He added that they would then be consulted on the new kitchen or bathroom.

5.2 Forward Plan

Julie Fletcher referred to the Forward Plan included in the pack and asked if there were any items the board thought should be brought forward.

Margaret Wilson asked for an update on the progress of improving the website.

Julie Fletcher said that as this was the corporate website, the Communications team were currently looking at our intranet which was the basis for the website. She said they were looking at providers and the style in terms of what that may look like. She added that the improvement of the website was still in the early stages of development, however, we would look at improving Housing's pages on the website in the meantime.

Dave Kelleway said that the Garage and Land Review decisions made needed to come back to the HEB.

Julie Fletcher said that it would not go straight to Cabinet and she was not sure of what was contained in the Garage and Land Review, however, Bronwen Taylor had set up a meeting to be held in April 2023 for Kirstin Donaldson to discuss with the HEB. She said from that discussion we would look at what decisions, if any, and what process would be taken. She added that going forward, in terms of Cabinet decisions, they should come to the HEB first and we needed to get smarter internally to ensure that that happened.

5.3 Mutual Exchange Policy

Julie Fletcher advised that she was hoping to present the draft copy of the policy today, however, we were near finalising it and it would be distributed shortly. She said that the board would have an opportunity to review the document and make comments before meeting to go through it, and that the meeting would be set up after 26 April 2023.

5.4 New Tenant Representatives Complaints Portal

Julie Fletcher advised that we were in the process of tweaking a few questions on the electronic form and as soon as this had been finalised, we would provide training. She added that in the meantime, if there were any tenant queries that needed escalation, to send the details to Bronwen Taylor.

5.5 Key Amnesty Campaign

The Chair advised that the Key Amnesty Campaign ended on 28 February 2023 and that he was not aware of any keys being returned, however, it was a good way of raising

awareness of tenancy fraud. He added that the team were in the process of analysing the data and that a report would be sent out in due course.

6. New Matters

6.1 Communal Areas Review

Debbie Barrett said that there was a need for improvement and that there was no consistency in any of the communal areas. She said that they were already doing some work, examples being bike and bin storage areas and ensuring notice boards were kept up to date. She added that there was a good argument to have an increase in service charges in order to employ cleaners for the common areas.

Debbie Barrett said that she had spoken to some tenants and they all felt that they would like the communal areas to look better and to be safe. She said that she wanted to move forward with a consultation on service charges.

The Chair asked who was responsible for the communal areas.

Debbie Barret replied that SCDC was responsible for maintenance and repairs but not for cleaning these areas.

The Chair asked if there were any private owners.

Debbie Barrett said that there were some leaseholders, however, more investigation into this was needed.

Les Rolfe said that there were some very clean and tidy communal areas, however, when issues at communal areas on estate inspections were reported, it would appear that no actions or follow ups were made.

Debbie Barrett said that she would ask the HSOs to provide her with all the issues and she would investigate. She added that she would be checking on the issues raised on the estate inspections actions and records worksheet.

A discussion on issues in communal areas was held.

Dave Kelleway said that he thought it was a good idea to consult on service charges, however, we would need to check if leaseholders could be legally charged. He added that all recommendations should be referred to the HEB.

Peter Tye said that if cleaners were employed they would be able to provide feedback on the condition of the communal areas.

Action by: Debbie Barrett

6.2 Co-option of New Member

Bronwen Taylor advised that the co-option vacancy and application documents were uploaded to SCDC's website on 20 January 2023, as well as being advertised in the February 2023 newsletters and regularly on Facebook. She said that two applications had been received and as one of the applicants was from the East area, the applicant, Jackie Wrenn, had been duly elected onto the board. She added that emails were sent to both applicants on 7 March 2023 advising them of the outcome.

6.3 Review of Resident Engagement Framework

Dave Armitage said that the previous review was for 2020 – 2023 and that a meeting with the tenant representatives to discuss this would be held in May 2023.

6.4 Asset Management Strategy Action Plan

Julie Fletcher said that good progress had been made on some of the key actions and that eleven projects had been completed in the first year. She said a further two actions (highlighted in green) were on track to be completed by the target date and a further thirteen actions (highlighted in amber) were anticipated to be completed by the target date or the target date had been revised. She added that a further seven actions were dependent on other actions being completed before these could be started, the majority being down to the Housing Stock Condition Survey.

The Chair said that we would only see the results of the Housing Stock Condition Survey towards the end of the year.

Julie Fletcher said that it was on the Forward Plan for the first quarter of next year and that we were in the process of appointing the contractor.

Eddie Spicer said that it was due to start at the end of April 2023.

Dave Kelleway said that he was concerned about the delays with the policies, in particular the Green Measures policy (G5) which had a revised date of October 2023 and the renewal of the Grounds Maintenance contract which was due in September 2023. He asked if they were connected and should they not be considered together.

Julie Fletcher said the Grounds Maintenance contract was separate and the Green Measures policy was how we were going to double nature. She added that we have tried to be a bit more realistic with some of our targets.

Eddie Spicer said that the Grounds Maintenance contract would be procured in partnership with County Council, who were leading on this project.

Margaret Wilson said that she was a part of the Doubling Nature project and had not heard anything about this. She added that there were some enthusiastic tenants who were interested in making some improvements to a communal area and that she had spoken to Geoff Clark about it who said that SCDC could provide some funding, however, she had received no feedback since. She asked how the HEB would be involved in appointing the new grounds maintenance contractors.

Julie Fletcher said that as the contract was in conjunction with County Council they may not have as much involvement with the procurement, however, they would still be involved with helping with the specifications, looking at the performance indicators, etcetera. She referred to the doubling nature activities and said that Dave Armitage would be getting involved with community grants and community activities.

6.5 Community Activities

Dave Armitage advised that he had met with all the tenant volunteers at the end of February 2023 and said that he was planning to arrange community activities, for example, litter picking, together with tenant volunteers, in order to make ourselves visible and to encourage residents to find out more about what we do. He said he would be sending out a schedule of planned events.

Action by: Dave Armitage

6.6 Summary of the National Stigma Meeting

Margaret Wilson referred to her report in the pack and said that she hoped that the board got the general gist, which was similar across the country. She referred to the HEB's involvement in the new Sheltered Estate Team Leader role and said that they had received dates at the last minute. She said that they needed to be involved in the process from an early stage.

7. Any Other Business (AOB)

7.1 Parking of vehicles on grass areas

Jim Watson referred to vehicles parking on the grass areas in Willingham and asked how stopping this could be enforced. He added that it had been reported but it would appear that no action had been taken.

Debbie Barrett said that this rule was in tenancy agreements and that this complaint was addressed, however it was difficult to enforce. She asked Jim Watson to send her the details of his complaint.

8. Proposed Meeting Dates for 2023 / 2024

The Chair referred to the proposed meeting dates for 2023 / 2024 as follows:

- 29 June 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 28 September 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 14 December 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 28 March 2024 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)

Bronwen Taylor said she would send out meeting invitations.

Action by: Bronwen Taylor

9. Closing

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 3:58pm.

4.1 Matters Arising from previous Meeting – 23 March 2023

The items raised at the previous meeting are below.

Item 2 – Appointment of Chair

Action: Dave Armitage to review the Terms of Reference document, in particular the terms of office for the Chair and Vice Chair, and the terms of the Co-option policy.

Report back: Dave Armitage to report.

Item 4 – Minutes of previous Meeting – 15 December 2022

Action: Bronwen Taylor to amend the last sentence in item 6.3 of the minutes to read “Eddie Spicer said that the problem was that people who hired the hall interfered with the heating system.”.

Report back: Bronwen Taylor has amended the minutes.

For noting.

Item 5.3 – Sheltered Housing Schemes Audit Accounts

Actions:

- 1.) Julie Fletcher to raise the issue of unresolved audit accounts with Martin Lee.
- 2.) Eddie Spicer to investigate the issue of the heating systems at the Communal Halls.

Report back:

- 1.) Dave Armitage to report.
- 2.) Eddie Spicer advised that this was looked at by Chris Brown who had spoken to the SHO's responsible and they were all happy with the operation of the system and they all knew how to use it, and were satisfied it was working appropriately.

For noting.

Item 6.1 – Communal Areas

Action: Debbie Barrett to look into the issues raised in communal areas at the formal estate inspections with HSOs.

Report back: Dave Armitage to report.

Item 8 – Proposed Meeting Dates for 2023 / 2024

Action: Bronwen Taylor to send out meeting invitations for meetings for 2023 / 2024.

Report back: The meeting invitations have been sent out.

For noting.

5. Standing Items

5.1 New Repairs Contract – Performance Review Joint Working Group

An update on the Repairs Contract is included for noting.



Resident Working Group

Update – June 2023

The Resident Working Group for the new contract with Mears, meet on a monthly basis with representation from stakeholders, 3 Residents (including 1 leaseholder) 3 representatives from Mears, and 3 from SCDC.

The main topics of these meetings are:

1. KPI review
2. Complaints Overview
3. Feedback From Residents
4. Feedback and comments from Core Groups
5. H&S concerns
6. Customer Satisfaction
7. Job response times and volumes
8. Social Value activities
9. Contract Commitments

The May meeting was postponed due to bank holidays and other leave.

The involvement of the residents is invaluable to me and our service as it provides a voice and opinions from our service users. The resident representatives are encouraged to communicate with the wider residents and obtain genuine feedback and comments which can be digested at these meetings and put to constructive use.

There is a high level of commitment and enthusiasm from the reps in being involved in the process and providing input into decision-making conversations and providing an independent voice.

It has been identified that there is a certain level of overlap between this group and the wider HEB / HPP, this has shown as apparent following a recent item of discussion on the complaints policy and procedures within SCDC and Mears, this has now been escalated to a more corporate level as the complaints policies and procedures can not be isolated to the contract group alone.

As part of the current HEB / HPP review, the activities of this group will be included and the integration with the HPP be improved.

Overall the group is serving its purpose very well, the energy and enthusiasm shown is a real testament to the resident's desire to be involved.

Eddie Spicer

5.2 Forward Plan 2023 / 2024

Julie Fletcher to provide an update on the Forward Plan which is included in the pack.

Housing Engagement Board – Forward Plan – 2023 / 2024

Date of Meeting	Topic	Description	Lead Officer	Decision Route
June 2023	Complaints	Review of yearly complaints handling statistics 2022 / 2023	Grace Andrews	For Information / Scrutiny
June 2023	Housing Service Plan	To approve the Housing Service Plan for 2023 / 2024	Julie Fletcher	For final sign off by the Lead Member for Housing
June 2023 Carried forward Project delayed. Appointment of temporary Policy Officer November 2022	Policy Review	To provide an overview of current policies – identify gaps and programme for reviews Verbal update on priority programme for policy reviews	Julie Fletcher	For Information
Briefing session to be arranged outside of HEB for tenant representatives March Summer 2023	Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy	Review of the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy	Julie Fletcher	Consultation
June 2023 September 2023	Homelessness Review	Review of Homelessness & Homeless Strategy	Heather Wood / Sue Carter	Consultation
September 2023	Damp and Mould Policy	To approve a damp and mould policy	Eddie Spicer	Lead Member for Housing or Cabinet – to be confirmed
September 2023	Improvement Plan	Update on the progress of the actions contained in the Improvement Plan	Julie Fletcher	For Information
September 2023	Grounds Maintenance	Re-tender of grounds maintenance contract. Tenant engagement to be part of the process to help shape KPs	Geoff Clark	For Information

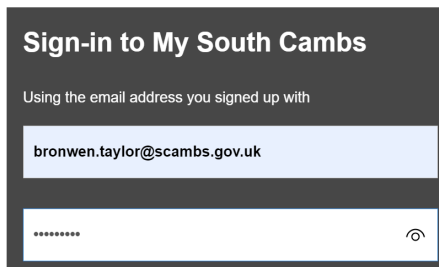
Date of Meeting	Topic	Description	Lead Officer	Decision Route
September / December 2023 [New]	Aids & Adaptations Policy	To consider the Aids & Adaptations Policy and make recommendations following wider tenant involvement	Policy Officer	Housing Engagement Board / Lead Member for Housing
December 2023	Resident Involvement Framework Review	Proposals for new framework to be brought to Housing Engagement Board	Dave Armitage	Dependent on outcome of review
June 2023 December 2023	Tenancy Policy	To approve the Tenancy Policy following the ending of fixed term tenancies	Policy Officer	Housing Engagement Board / Lead Member for Housing
December 2023 [New]	Introductory Tenancy Policy / Procedure	Linked policy / procedure to Tenancy Policy	Policy Officer	Housing Engagement Board / Lead Member for Housing
December 2023 [New]	Assignment & Succession Policy	Linked policy / procedure to Tenancy Policy	Policy Officer	Housing Engagement Board / Lead Member for Housing
January 2024 Carried forward The mobilisation of the Mears Contract has taken more time than expected. Currently working on some preliminary works around this but won't be progressing with residents until at least April 2023.	Empty Property Re-let Disposal and Standards	Consider findings and recommendations following the outcome of the project working group – Empty Property Re-let Disposal and Standards. Currently undertaking some internal process mapping to feed into the project working group	Eddie Spicer	Housing Engagement Board

Date of Meeting	Topic	Description	Lead Officer	Decision Route
March 2024 [New]	Communications Standard	To consider the Communications Standard and make recommendations following wider tenant involvement	Julie Fletcher	Housing Engagement Board / Lead Member for Housing
June 2024	Council Stock Condition Survey	Outcome of the Stock Condition Survey	Eddie Spicer	For Information
TBC	Together with Tenants Charter	Review what actions are required to achieve the Together with Tenants Charter	Resident Involvement Team Leader	Cabinet

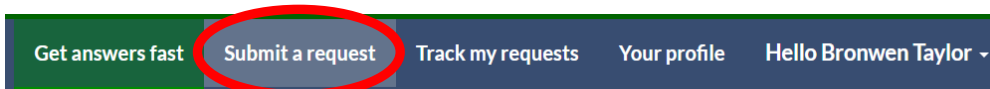
5.3 New Tenant Representatives Complaints Portal

The new Tenant Representatives Complaints Portal is available for tenant volunteers to use. Attached is the process to access the form on the portal.

- On the SCDC website, “Sign in” to the portal

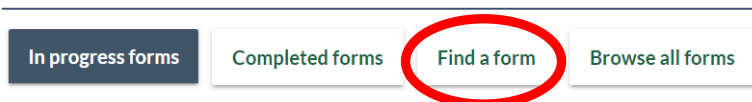


- Click on “Submit a request”

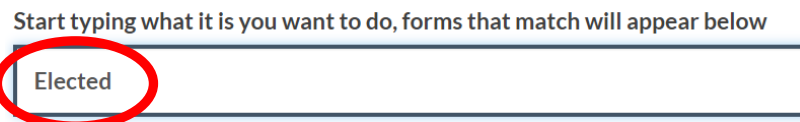


- and then on “Find a form”.

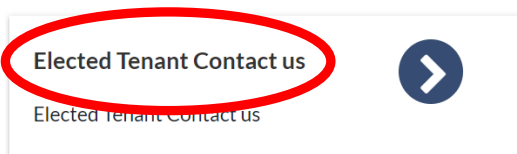
Submit a request



- Type in “Elected” and enter



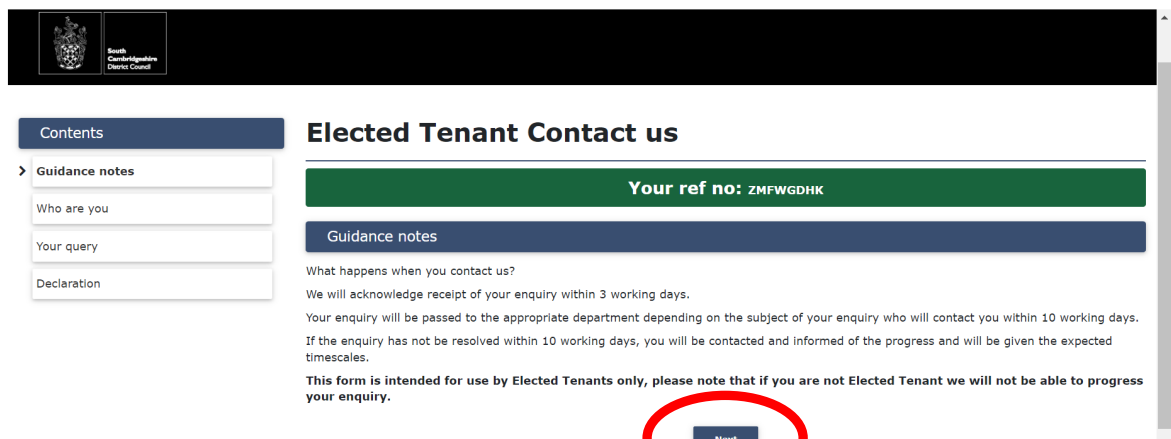
- This is the form. Click on it



- You will get to this page. Click on “Next” to start completing the form.

Submit a request

Elected Tenant Contact us



5.4 Key Amnesty

The Key Amnesty Campaign ended on 28 February 2023. A report is enclosed.

For noting.

Key Amnesty – Housing Engagement Board – 17 July 2023

Draft – South Cambridgeshire District Council – Corporate Fraud

Values:

- Connecting people, places and partnerships and working together
- Integrity and honesty to ensure that we are open and accountable
- A dynamic approach to the delivery of services with drive and energy
- Supporting innovation, doing things differently and better

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally plan (FFCL) broadly identifies the five focus areas, Govern, Acknowledge, Prevent, Pursue and Protect. Having robust arrangements and executive support to ensure anti-fraud, bribery and corruption measures are embedded through the organisation are key.

The Corporate Fraud Team was formed to align existing services and coordinate the approach to preventing and detecting fraud, bribery, and corruption across South Cambridgeshire. This centralised team enables the Council to focus its preventative and investigative resource to tackle different types of fraud that may occur against South Cambridgeshire District Council.

This document highlights focused prevention activity during the last financial year. Quarterly active accounts of counter fraud related activity undertaken over the financial year are provided to Audit Committee identifying fraud by type and levels. The Audit Committee considers quarterly reports as part of the framework of assurance to support the Annual Governance Statement.

In the current economic climate, there is an increased focus being placed on local government to protect public funds. The authority is an attractive target for fraudsters and is vulnerable to acts of bribery and / or corruption or irregularity. The current Cost-of-Living Crisis, compounded by financial recovery as the legacy of the Covid 19 Crisis, has broadened the scope and demand for anti-fraud services. Ongoing delivery of Central Government support packages and financial pressures have heightened incentive and risk of abuse.

South Cambridgeshire District Council currently manages over five thousand tenancies within the district. Social housing tenancy fraud is the second-largest cause of Local Government fraud losses. When housing supply is reduced by fraudulent tenancies local councils carry the financial burden of providing accommodation for the homeless.

Housing

It is estimated that more than 100,000 social homes in the UK are subject to some form of tenancy fraud. [Figure based on Protecting the Public Purse report 2012]. Although there are varying costs calculators associated with estimating the cost of loss, as a consequence of social

Key Amnesty – Housing Engagement Board – 17 July 2023

housing fraud, South Cambridgeshire District Council has adopted recommended guidance to use a calculator based on local accommodation costs.

The average cost of a detected tenancy fraud to the national public purse is approximated to £42,000 per property. Within our district the cost incurred is raised to an approximated £46,000 per property.

During the Month of February 2023 Corporate Fraud, in partnership with Housing, ran a Key Amnesty Campaign to raise awareness around social housing fraud and to provide an opportunity for those misusing social housing to return it. #Dotherightthing

Benefits of the campaign

The campaign supported the counter Fraud and Error Strategy to:

Raise awareness and vigilance which is promoted through provision of easily accessed resources to support the identification of fraud and to confidentially report suspicions of fraud on internal and external platforms.

Support intolerance towards fraud within South Cambridgeshire communities through publicity and education to highlight the cost of fraud to the community.

Provide accessible fraud awareness resources which empower the community to assist in identification and prevention.

Assure South Cambridgeshire communities that fraud is taken seriously by the Leadership Team and that both proactive and responsive approaches are adopted to prevent and detect fraud and ensure finite assets are not misdirected.

Social Media Reach

Between the period of 17 January 2023 – 28 February 2023, social media reached over 42,000 people.

Communities accessed information about housing fraud via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Media Coverage

The story was covered by:

Royston Crow

CambsNews

Cambridge Network

Cambridge Independent

TV West Anglia

Tenant Education

Tenants were written to directly in the interest of raising awareness of social housing fraud and explaining what social housing fraud might look like in a relatable way. Following the unprecedented circumstances of the Covid Pandemic, affecting the living arrangements of many, tenants were provided with an opportunity to return housing where it was not being used in accordance with tenancy agreements.

Increase in reports of Fraud

At the time of writing this document 13 April 2023, reports relating to housing fraud were compared over a relative period.

Between the period of 19 January 2022 to 31 March 2022, one (1) housing related referral was received compared to the period of 19 January 2023 to 31 March 2023 when sixteen (16) housing related referrals were received.*

- * Measurement only relates to housing fraud reports and excludes referrals relating to other fraud categories.

Tenancy Terminations

Housing reported 71 tenancy terminations in total in January and February 2023. In the same two months of the previous year there were 50. Housing report fluctuations each month between 20 – 40 individual terminations and the increase cannot be attributed specifically to the amnesty.

Notice was provided in writing for each termination of tenancy as prescribed in the standard tenancy agreement. The reasons for each termination described mirrored typical trends.

['Key Amnesty' to tackle misused South Cambs council properties | Royston Crow \(royston-crow.co.uk\)](#)

[South Cambridgeshire amnesty for housing fraudsters - CambsNews](#)

[Key Amnesty campaign to tackle misused Council properties in South Cambridgeshire | Cambridge Network](#)

['Hand in your keys - no questions asked' - month-long amnesty will tackle misused council properties in South Cambridgeshire \(cambridgeindependent.co.uk\)](#)

Key Amnesty – Housing Engagement Board – 17 July 2023

That's TV West Anglia on Twitter: "if you're in the situation, then you put your keys in an envelope with the address on it" Cllr John Batchelor from @SouthCambs told That's TV about their #dotherightthing campaign, which is aiming to try and recover some of their Council houses. <https://t.co/UD4BciYET0>" / Twitter





2023 Key Amnesty social media reach

Facebook

Boosted for a week as a Facebook advert

- January 17 general Key Amnesty info **Reach 11,450** and **Link clicks = 339**
- February 9 Suspect Fraud info **Reach 13,000** and **Link clicks = 129**
- *To boost a post for a week to a 16 miles radius around Cambourne of 18 – 65 year olds costs £50 per post. **Two boosts = £100 total spend***

Organic Facebook reach

- January 17 to February 28 = **Reach 7,500**

Twitter Impressions

- January 17 to February 28 = **Impressions 8,600**

Instagram

- January 17 to February 28 = **Reach 1,800**

5.5 Estate Inspections Report

Reports on the Estate Inspections held in April, May and June 2023 are enclosed for noting.

Estate Inspection – Summaries – April 2023

Sawston – 20 April 2023

Park Road, Maple Avenue, Saffron Road and Huntingdon Road

10 issues raised, which are as follows:

Park Road

- No issues to report.

Maple Avenue

- 1 is that of a tenant parking on the front lawn with no dropped kerb. A letter has been sent to the tenant.
- 1 issue is that the pathway behind properties are uneven and are trip hazards. They have been reported to Operations to resurface the pathways.

Saffron Road

- 2 are landscaping issues where pathways are overgrown. A request for a quote to clear has been sent to SP Landscapes.

Huntingdon Road

- 1 issue is that the pathway behind a few properties is uneven and is a trip hazard. It has been reported to Operations to resurface the pathway.
- 1 is landscaping issue where the pathway is overgrown or full of moss. A request for a quote to clear has been sent to SP Landscapes.
- 1 issue is an abandoned truck in the garage area. A request to identify the owner has been submitted and when received, a letter will be sent to the owner.
- 3 issues are telephone cables going through overgrown trees. A quote request has been sent to SP Landscapes to remove the branches.

Girton – 25 April 2023

Orchard Close (sheltered housing)

8 issues raised, which are as follows:

- 1 is a bin that is damaged and off its bracket. A request has been sent to the Waste team to replace the bin.
- 1 is a drain that has a concrete block covering it and it appears to have wires inside. This has been reported to SCDC Operations to investigate.

- 3 are landscaping issues with overgrown shrubs. A request for a quote to clear has been sent to SP Landscapes.
- 1 issue is that rubbish has been dumped in the communal area behind number 26. A letter has been sent to the tenant to enquire if it is their rubbish.
- 1 issues is that communal bins have not been emptied. The Waste team will be contacted to confirm that this is on a regular schedule.
- 1 issue is a loose drain cover on the pathway in front of numbers 31 and 32. A request has been sent to Operations to get this secured.

Ratings

The ratings are as follows:

Date of inspection	Village	Street / Area	Litter	Weeds	Regular grass cutting	Roughly cut grass	Communal area shrubs	Tenant's gardens
20 April	Sawston	Park Road & Maple Avenue	4	3	3	3	4	4
		Saffron Road & Huntingdon Road	3	3	4	N / A	N / A	4
25 April	Girton	Orchard Close	4	4	4	N / A	4	4

Estate Inspection – Summaries – May 2023

Gamlingay – 18 May 2023

Avenells Way and Blythe Way (both have sheltered housing)

9 issues raised, which are as follows:

Avenells Way – 6 issues

- 2 issues are trees in the courtyards near numbers 5 and 16 that need to be crowned. The SEO to report to SP Landscapes as part of programmed works.
- 1 issue is a lot of moss behind the communal hall needs clearing. The SEO to report to SP Landscapes.
- The first bay in the car park pathway opposite number 12 is uneven and has been reported to SCDC Operations.
- 1 issue is an overgrown tree in front of number 26. It was reported to SP Landscapes and work will be carried out on 27 June 2023.
- 1 issue is of 2 drains that need clearing. Dave Armitage to report and follow up with County Council.

Blythe Way – 3 issues

- 1 issue is a shrub cut is needed throughout the scheme. The SEO to check with SP Landscapes when this will be done.
- Trees outside number 25 need pruning. A quote request for the work to be done has been sent to SP Landscapes.
- 1 issue is of a raised kerb outside number 13. Dave Armitage to report to County Council.

Haslingfield – 25 May 2023

Wisbey's Yard and Chestnut Close

17 issues raised, which are as follows:

Wisbey's Yard (sheltered housing) – 7 issues

- 1 issue is that weeds need clearing from paving in the communal parking area. SP Landscapes to confirm when this will be done.
- 1 issue is that there is evidence that water may be sitting around drain covers. Operations to confirm when the drains were last cleaned.
- Slabs are cracked and broken on the pathway around the communal room. This will be reported to Operations to replace.

- Bins are blocking communal room meter cupboards. A tenant visit has been booked with number 10 to discuss that bins are being left in the wrong position and blocking access to the communal room meter cupboards.
- A drain across a footpath need lifting and resetting as it is possibly a trip hazard. This was reported to Operations to attend to.
- The area near the pond at the rear of some properties needs weeding and spraying. SP Landscapes have this on their list to do however due to birds / ducks nesting, this is on hold.
- A report from a tenant that the gravelled area at the front of the communal room is unkempt and that there is dog / cat poo in the gravel. No evidence of any of this was found while on the inspection and the tenant will be contacted to discuss her concerns.

Chestnut Close – 10 issues

- The trees on the public footpath in front of number 72 High Street needs cutting back. A letter will be sent to the tenant requesting it to be cut.
- 1 issues is that 2 wooden gates have been replaced and the old gates have been dumped on the communal grass area next to number 66 High Street. A request to remove them will be sent to the Refuse Removal team.
- 4 issues are overgrown hedges in tenants gardens and messy gardens need to be cleared. Letters will be sent to the tenants to clear.
- Wooden edging on the verge next to a footpath is loose. A letter will be sent to the tenant repair or remove.
- The grass verges at the entrance to the garage area needs cutting back and the whole area needs weeding. SP Landscapes will be asked to cut back and spray.
- The bins in front of numbers 37 and 39 have been left out on the pathway which are blocking access. Letters will be sent to the tenants to remove.
- The footpath between the High Street and Chestnut Close is overgrown and full of weeds. As it is not SCDC property, Dave Armitage will report this to the relevant authority.

Ratings

The ratings are as follows:

Date of inspection	Village	Street / Area	Litter	Weeds	Regular grass cutting	Roughly cut grass	Communal area shrubs	Tenant's gardens
18 April	Gamlingay	Avenells Way	4	2	2	2	3	3
		Blythe Way	4	2	2	2	1	2
28 April	Haslingfield	Wisbey's Yard	4	3	3	N / A	4	4
		Chestnut Close	4	2	2	N / A	N / A	3

Estate Inspection – Summary – 22 June 2023

Over

The Doles, Metcalf Lane, Drings Lane and Queens Close

14 issues raised, which are as follows:

The Doles – 3 issues

- 2 issues are overgrown hedgerows encroaching the footpaths, 1 in front of the GP surgery and the other in front of number 13. Ownership to be ascertained and then requests will be sent to cut it right back.
- 1 issue is that the pathways have large cracks and are a Health and Safety issue. A site visit with the Lands Surveyor is being arranged.

Metcalf Lane – no issues

Drings Lane – no issues

Queens Close – 11 issues

- 2 issues are the overgrown ivy and shrubs at the rear of flats 3 – 6 and flats 7 – 10. Quote requests to clear have been sent SP Landscapes.
- A letter will be sent to the tenant of flat number 10 to remove a dishwasher and tyres from the landing.
- A caravan is parked in one of the communal car parks. Once the owner is identified, a letter will be sent requesting them to remove it.
- In another communal car park, a skip is being used without permission for it to be there and a bin store has been erected. The residents of numbers 19 and 20 will be sent letters to remove the items.
- There is an issue with the front and rear entrance doors to all the blocks of flats being propped open. This will be reported to Debbie Barrett who is looking at issues in communal areas in all our blocks of flats.
- The following 5 issues have been raised with Mears to carry out work.
 - Soffits in all the flat blocks at Queens Close to be cleaned and the guttering to be cleared if necessary.
 - A down pipe in the rear garden to flat number 7 is broken.
 - The loft hatch in the block of flats 7 – 10 is loose.
 - The skirting near the communal rear door of the block of flats 11 – 14 is missing.
 - A dumped armchair to the right hand side of the block of flats 15 – 18 is to be removed.

Ratings

The ratings are as follows:

Street / Area	Litter	Weeds	Regular grass cutting	Roughly cut grass	Communal area shrubs	Tenant's gardens
The Doles Metcalf Lane Drings Lane	3	3	4	3	3	4
Queens Close	3	3	4	3	4	N / A

6. New Matters

6.1 Co-option of New Member (West Area)

Following the resignation of Peter Tye on 5 June 2023, the co-option vacancy and application documents were uploaded to SCDC's website on 22 June 2023. The vacancy was advertised in the July 2023 newsletters and regularly on Facebook.

The closing date for applications is 24 July 2023.

For noting.

6.2 Complaints

Enclosed is the Affordable Homes Complaints Performance report for 2022 / 2023.

Julie Fletcher to report.

Affordable Homes Complaints Performance

April – March

2022 / 2023

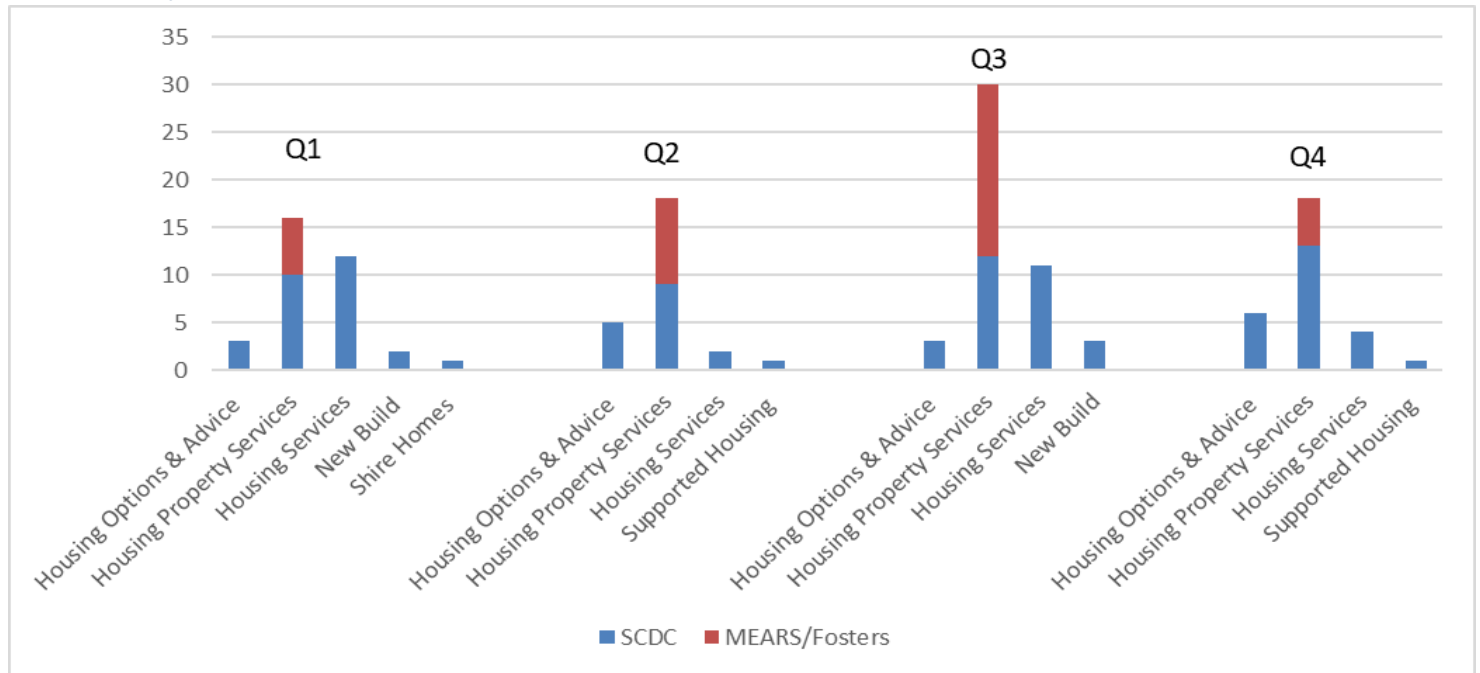
Looking back at previous years

Financial year	Total Number of stage 1 complaints	Total Number of stage 2 complaints	Total Number of stage 3 complaints	Total number of properties end of year General Needs and Housing for older people (GN & Hfop)	% of stage 1 complaints to properties
2022 / 2023	112	23	1	5,378	2.08%
2021 / 2022	145	16	3	5,345	2.71%
2020 / 2021	100	11	1	5,281	1.89%
2019 / 2020	61	8	4	5,279	1.15%
2018 / 2019	81	7	4	5,259	1.54%
2017 / 2018	77	3	2	5,243	1.46%
2016 / 2017	64	2	0	5,241	1.22%
2015 / 2016	79	3	0	5,274	1.49%
2014 / 2015	91	7	1	5,286	1.72%
2013 / 2014	89	5	0	5,307	1.67%

Volume of Complaints

Complaints received during quarter, broken down by stage	Q1 April – June	Q2 July – September	Q3 October – December	Q4 January – March	Year-end totals
Stage 1 = Expression of dissatisfaction that is not able to be resolved at first contact so requires investigation and response from Service Manager	30	20	39	23	112
Stage 2 = Unresolved at stage 1 so investigation required by Head of Service	4	6	7	6	23
Stage 3 = Housing Ombudsman	0	0	1	0	1
Total	34	26	47	29	136

Volume by Service Area



Complaints received falling within the SCDC Theme

Theme	Q1 Total	%	Q2 Total	%	Q3 Total	%	Q4 Total	%
Lack of communication	3	9%	1	4%	8	17%	1	3%
Failure to act	11	32%	7	27%	14	30%	8	28%
Service Delivery	2	6%	5	19%	13	28%	4	14%
Not understanding processes	2	6%	5	19%	0	0	4	14%
Staff Conduct	7	21%	5	19%	2	4%	4	14%
Misinformation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charges	2	6%	0	0	2	4%	0	0
Other	7	21%	3	12%	8	17%	8	28%

Year-end SCDC Theme totals by Service Area

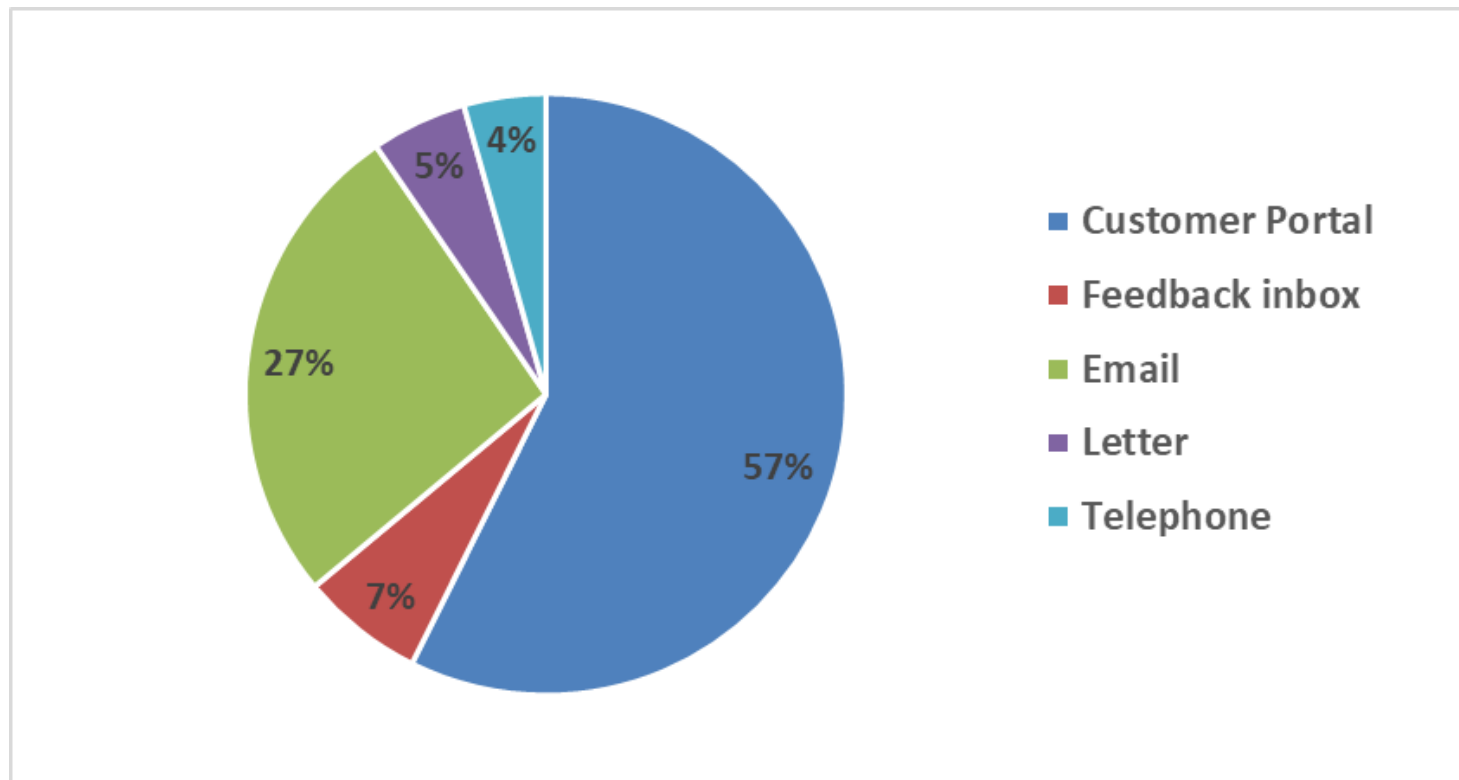
SCDC Theme	Year-end totals	%	Housing Options & Advice	Housing Property Services	Housing Services	New Build	Supported Housing	Shire Homes
Lack of communication	13	10%	2	7	4	0	0	0
Failure to act	40	30%	0	28	7	3	0	0
Service Delivery	24	18%	3	21	0	0	0	
Not understanding processes	11	8%	5	3	3	0	0	0
Staff Conduct	18	13%	7	6	2	0	1	1
Misinformation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charges	4	3%	0	2	3	0	0	0
Other	26	19%	0	16	9	1	1	0

Complaints received falling within the HouseMark Theme

Theme	Q1 Total	%	Q2 Total	%	Q3 Total	%	Q4 Total	%	Year-end totals
Allocations	1	3%	2	8%	3	6%	1	3%	7 (5%)
ASB	2	6%	0	0	0	0	2	7%	4 (3%)
Estate Services	2	6%	2	8%	0	0	0	0	4 (3%)
Rent & Services	1	3%	0	0	0	0	2	7%	3 (2%)
Repair & Maintenance	15	44%	14	54%	32	68%	15	52%	76 (56%)
Staff & Customer Service	7	21%	6	23%	2	4%	4	14%	19 (14%)
Tenancy Management	3	9%	0	0	5	11%	1	3%	9 (7%)
Other	3	9%	2	8%	5	11%	4	14%	14 (10%)

Method Complaints Received

All quarters combined

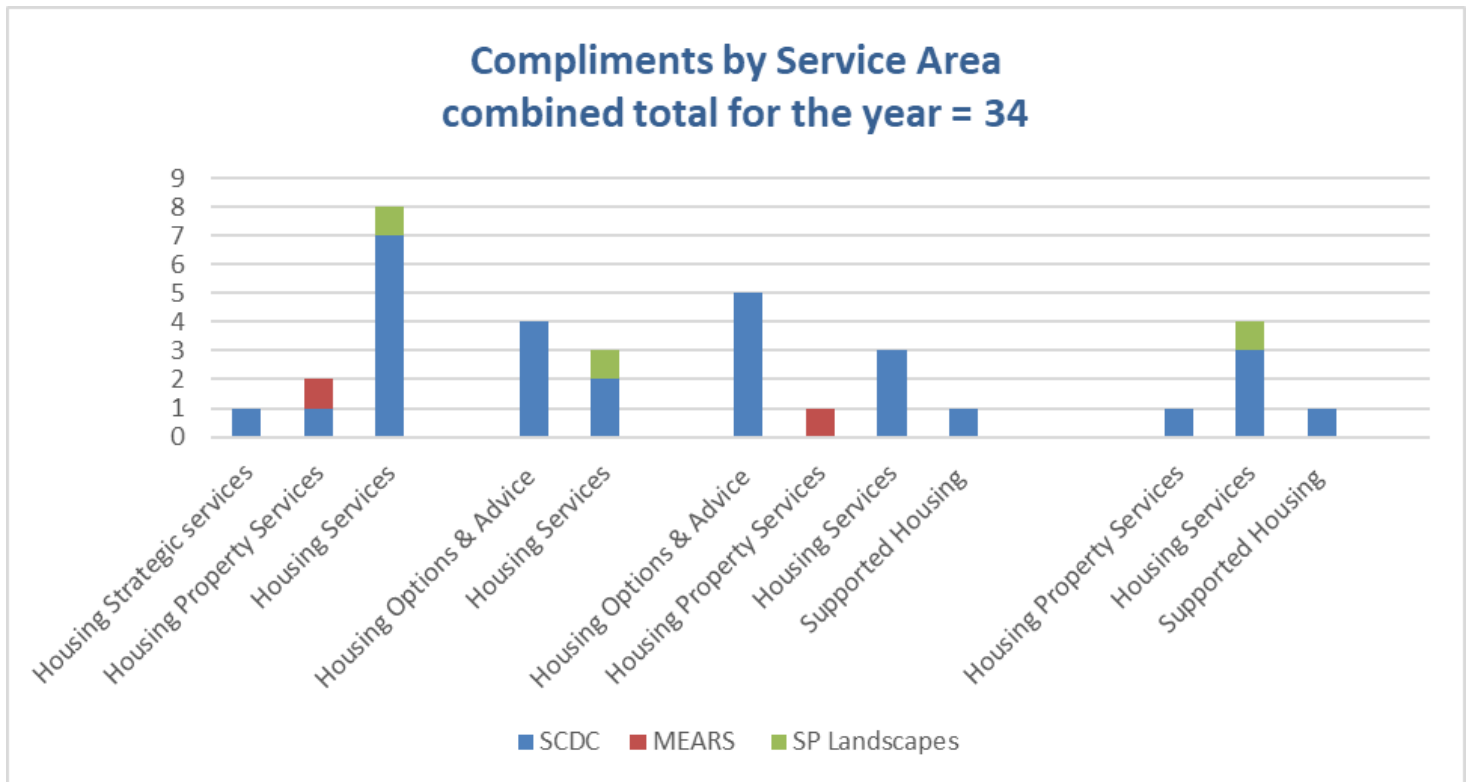


Complaints response times / targets

Response times / targets	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year-end totals
Number of complaint responses sent within quarter (Includes roll-over from previous quarters)	29	28	38	33	128
Number of complaint responses that were sent within target timescale (Includes stage 1 & stage2)	27	23	33	28	111
% of complaints responded within deadline (non – YTD includes stages 1 & 2) (SX121) (Target 80%)	93%	82%	87%	85%	87%
How many upheld = closed in favour of complainant	17	12	23	18	70 (55%)
Not upheld = closed not in favour of complainant	11	13	11	12	47 (37%)
Partly upheld = closed partly in favour of complainant	1	3	4	3	11 (9%)

Caseload

Number of open complaints at end of the quarter	4
Number of open complaints that have exceeded target timescale at the end of the quarter	3
Receipt date of oldest open complaint at end of quarter	13 February 2023 (stage 2) relates to an allegation that happened in 2019
Number of days oldest complaint has been open for at end of quarter	46



Below are some of the compliments received: -

- *“ I am writing to say how much I have appreciated the work you all do. I want you to know that what you do is acknowledged to be so valuable.”*
- *“Thank you is rather inadequate term to explain how I am grateful”*
- *“I am writing to commend the team which undertook the task. The gentlemen worked consistently hard, neatly, considerately, and with good humour. Their teamwork was excellent and their skills first-rate. The job was completed within a week and the area was left tidy afterwards”*
- *“ I cannot convey how happy I am, thank you so much for seeing this project to this stage”*
- *‘Thank you ***** and your team for the help that you gave me and children when we needed support. We have come a long way since then and that’s mainly down to you”*

6.3 Policy Review

Julie Fletcher to report

6.4 Service Plan and Resourcing

The Housing Service Plan and appendices are enclosed.

Peter Campbell to report.

Report to:	Housing Engagement Board (HEB) 17 July 2023
Lead Officer:	Peter Campbell – Head of Housing

Housing Service Plan for 2023 – 2024

Recommendations

1. That the Housing Engagement Board (HEB) note the Housing Service Plan for 2023 – 2024, as set out at Appendix A, and discuss key priorities / challenges for 2024 / 2025 for the development of next years' Service Plan and budget priorities.

Reasons for Recommendations

2. Final sign-off of the Service Plan is the responsibility of the Head of Service, Peter Campbell, before publication to the Corporate Management Team. Whilst this is primarily an internal document that each service area completes annually, it is important that the Housing Engagement Board feed into its development relating to the landlord services and have oversight of progress. It should be noted that the Service Plan covers all functions of the Housing Service, not just those relating to our responsibilities as a housing landlord.

Purpose

3. The purpose of the report is to acknowledge the current service plan and to discuss what key priorities and challenges the housing service faces over the next year. This will form initial discussions for the preparation of the development for the next Service Plan and budget setting for 2024 / 2025. Many of the priorities will remain the same as for this year based on the approved Asset Management Strategy, with a key focus on the impacts of the cost of living crisis, working towards net zero carbon targets and energy efficiency of our homes and meeting new regulatory requirements.
4. At a strategic level, the Housing Engagement Board are asked to consider whether there are any further key priorities that the service should take into account and whether there are any key actions not already identified.

5. Any additional priorities will need to be considered in the context of budgetary constraints. Further detailed information relating to the financial position of the housing service is provided at Appendix B.

Details

6. The [Corporate Business Plan](#) sets out the overall objectives for the Council, which in turn have an influence on the priorities and actions within the Housing Service Plan. Service Plans are also an opportunity to highlight the key projects and challenges for each service area and the relationship between departmental inter-dependencies.
7. The Service Plan is a standard template used for all services. The document is internally focused and may therefore be of a technical nature, the detail of which is not presented in a way for general publication. The Service Plan is split into four sections.
8. Section 1 sets out the service vision, mission and background. The vision has been taken from the approved Housing Asset Management Strategy which is also relevant to the whole Housing Service. It sets out the five primary functions of the Housing Service as well as providing a brief overview of the financial budgets overall. Further detail relating to the budgets will be discussed at the meeting.
9. Section 2 gives a brief highlight of some of the main accomplishments over the last year, what lessons have been learnt and also an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Housing Service.
10. Section 3 sets out the delivery plan as to how the Housing Service will contribute to the Corporate Business Plan priorities, as well as setting out our Business as usual service delivery and key activities. Many of these activities are also identified as key actions within the Asset Management Strategy.

Background Papers

Appendices

Appendix A: Housing Service Plan for 2023 – 2024

Appendix B: Housing Services Budget Information

Report Author:

Julie Fletcher : Service Manager – Housing Strategy

Telephone: (01954) 713 352

Housing Service Plan for 2023 – 2024

Section 1: Service Vision, Mission, and Background

Service Vision:

Homes should be so much more than just bricks and mortar. Places to feel safe and secure, where communities thrive and grow.



Our vision is supported by having a future-proofed data driven service that enables informed and robust decisions to be taken.

Service Mission Statement:

To provide good quality, sustainable homes that are affordable to live in and where people choose to live.

The Housing Service has five primary functions:

1. Housing Property Services

Service Manager Housing Assets – Providing property maintenance services to over 5,750 homes, including both responsive repairs and capital works to ensure homes are maintained at a decent standard. The Council’s housing stock comprises its highest value assets and its repair and maintenance costs form its largest liability. The housing stock is valued at over £585.9 million (Social Housing Value) and at over £1,566 million (open market value with vacant possession) (valuation dated 31/03/2022), therefore successful long-term planning for its sustainable future is vital, including working towards our net zero carbon targets.

The service also supports the two housing companies owned by the Council:

Ermine Street Housing and Shire Homes.

2. **Housing Services**

Service Manager Tenancy & Estates – The Tenancy & Estates Team delivers a range of customer focused services that combine to fulfil a vital role in meeting the housing and welfare needs of our Tenants and Customers. As well as providing a housing management service for our tenants, we also provide additional estate management services on our sheltered schemes, as well as the management of our gypsy & traveller sites.

3. **Housing Strategy and Development**

Service Manager Housing Strategy – providing a strategic lead on housing issues within the district including assessing housing needs, working with developers, and housing associations to negotiate the affordable housing provision on new developments. The service also includes resident involvement and policy development, performance management across the department and the administration of disabled facilities and repairs grants.

4. **Housing New build**

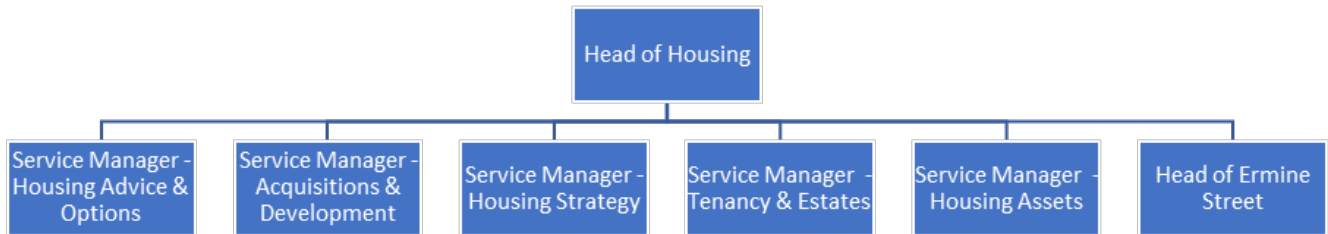
Service Manger Acquisitions & Development – delivering new council homes, including council homes for rent and shared ownership by way of S.106 acquisitions and direct delivery on council-owned sites. The New Build Service also leads on the delivery of community facilities at Northstowe: including a Community Centre, Sports Pavilions and Civic Hub.

5. **Housing Advice and Options**

Service Manager Housing Advice and Options – providing a housing advice and homelessness prevention service which fulfils the council's statutory duties to homeless households including rough sleepers and helps people to remain in their homes for as long as possible through the provision of specialist support. This service also fulfils the Council's statutory obligations in relation to the allocation of social housing through a choice-based lettings scheme and helps to develop other accommodation options including the Council's Private Sector Leasing scheme delivered by Shire Homes Ltd.

6. **Ermine Street Housing**

Head of Ermine Street Housing – Council owned company that acquires homes on the open market and lets to private tenants using assured shorthold tenancies. The company also leases 150 homes from the Ministry of Defence. The business activity provides an income stream for the Council.



Background:

This service plan covers both strategic housing functions of the Council and its landlord role. The service plan for Affordable Homes should be read in conjunction with the [Greater Cambridgeshire Housing Strategy \(2019-2023\)](#), the [Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023](#) and the [Housing Revenue Account \(HRA\) Asset Management Strategy 2021-2026](#). Following the outcome of the tenant satisfaction survey undertaken in 2022, a service improvement plan is currently being developed.

Monitoring of the Service Plan is completed by our Housing Services Management Team and progress reported in our [Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholder](#) published in Autumn, as well as up to date information contained in our [Tenant and Leasehold news](#)

Finance: (approved by Council in February 2023)

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – is a ring-fenced account containing the income and expenditure on running the councils housing stock / social housing

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Capital*	Budget 2022 / 2023	Budget 2023 / 2024
Planned Improvements to Existing Stock	£7,991,000	£8,347,000
Other Improvement Costs	£195,000	£71,000
Council New Homes Programme	£15,662,000	£32,007,000
Other, that is, Shared Ownership Repurchase, upfront land assembly costs	£175,000	£175,000
Total HRA Costs (Capital)	£24,023,000	£40,600,000
Revenue	Budget 2022 / 2023	Budget 2023 / 2024
Cyclical Maintenance (Revenue)	£1,666,000	£2,072,000
Responsive Repairs (Revenue)	£4,043,000	£4,242,000
Staffing Costs	£3,629,900	£4,071,230
Service Costs	£1,534,640	£1,669,790

Recharges	£2,343,650	£2,354,170
Interest payment on PWB Loan	£7,192,810	£7,192,810
Contribution to capital financing**	£9,162,000	£14,914,000
Depreciation***	£7,290,000	£7,436,000
Total HRA Costs (Revenue)	£36,862,000	£43,952,000
Income received – from rents and other funding sources	-£34,844,000	-£37,468,000

* Capital costs are financed from right to buy receipts and other capital receipts (such as shared ownership receipts, sale of land and money received in lieu of affordable housing on developments)

** Contribution to capital financing is the amount of capital expenditure (in this case the new build programme) financed from rental income in year.

*** The amount charged as depreciation within the revenue account can be used to finance the improvements to existing stock.

General Fund (GF) is the main revenue account which includes day-to-day income and expenditure on the provision of services

Housing General Fund (GF)	Budget 2022 / 2023	Budget 2023 / 2024
Housing Strategy, Enabling & Development	£354,900	£378,570
Homelessness – Expenditure	£1,488,600	£1,557,150
Housing Allocations	£134,910	£140,990
Private Sector Leasing Scheme	£581,770	£683,500
Sub Regional Home-link Service	£148,690	£148,020
Traveller Sites – Whaddon & Milton	£433,860	£437,800
Improvement Grants (Disabled Facility Grants & Repairs)	£961,590	£1,073,330
Visiting Support	£351,890	£363,030
Community Lifeline Alarms	£182,200	£186,960
Housing Company (Ermine Street Housing)	£886,170	£962,240
Grounds Maintenance	£164,080	£169,050
General Fund equity-share properties	£311,780	£324,900
New Build Programme	£17,800	£70,100
Total General Fund Costs – Housing	£6,018,240	£6,495,640
Income received – from grants and other funding sources	-£3,475,860	-£3,472,610

Bids and Savings

- Minor restructuring of housing service which is funded by disestablishing several roles and offering a small saving of around £40,000.

Section 2: Where are we now?

Accomplishments

- Supported the delivery of **529** (estimated) affordable homes across the district, working with housing providers and developers
- Supported the completion of the 'pods' at Emmaus, Landbeach to provide move-on accommodation
- Set up resident involvement groups to help monitor the performance of contractors and help to shape the service provided to tenants
- Involved Tenant Reps in the recruitment of key house roles
- Introduced a formal estate inspection process supported by Tenant Reps to help us ensure our estates are kept clean, safe, and tidy
- Successfully achieved DAHA accreditation (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance)
- Ukrainian guests – Wider housing team played a key role in supporting welfare. More specifically a tailored housing advice team was created to manage and support all Ukrainian guests coming out of hosted accommodation.
- Housing advice team – moving away from appointment-based system to be more responsive and efficient.
- Visiting support – significant increase in referrals.
- Sub Regional Home-Link – making more use of e-forms which is saving considerable time.
- Shire Homes Lettings – taken on **11** additional properties and a further **10** agreed.
- Allocated in excess of **435** properties, including **331** council properties
- Prevented or relieved **214** cases of homelessness
- Procured a new long-term Repairs contract to provide stability to the repairs service for the coming years with cost-effective provision of Responsive Repairs, Empty Properties for relet, and Planned works, the contract comes with the additional benefits of assistance with Asset Management and stock Decarbonisation to help us achieve our Net Zero targets, there are also many social value benefits and activities embedded within the contract, such as regular coffee mornings across the district to promote digital inclusion, energy advice workshops and the opportunity for minor repairs during these. The contract has secured and increased many local jobs and increased the opportunity for training apprentices within the business
- We have secured £1.7m of Gov funding through the SHDF (Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) This will help us deliver a large amount of energy efficiency works to our lower performing properties over the next 2 years, this has been a collaboration

between ourselves and our repairs contractor as part of the added benefits provided under the new contract.

- A table of works delivered is being compiled
- Completed a district wide tree audit which will allow us to programme future tree surgery works and better maintain our tree stock
- Introduced an on-line sign-up service for new tenants of our council properties and garages creating a more efficient system.
- Transferred all of our land asset data from a legacy system to a bespoke management system – Orchard Asset.
- Worked with colleagues in our Corporate Fraud Team to introduce a key amnesty to help raise awareness on the topic of Tenancy Fraud.

Learning:

- Flexibility – being flexible has helped to maximise the funding for Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)
- Importance of corporate buy-in – helped towards successfully achieving the DAHA accreditation (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance)

SWOT Analysis (risk and opportunity references added to allow cross-reference with risks and opportunities later in the document):

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff commitment and knowledge • Joint working arrangements • Clear policy direction through a range of strategies, including Asset Management Strategy, Homelessness Strategy & Housing Strategy. • Ability to adapt to newly arising challenges, such as through the pandemic and refugee schemes • Strong team spirit, willingness to collaborate, adaptable and resourceful • Strong commitment to learn and develop and support colleagues • New contracts to enable a refreshed operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of capacity to benefit from external funding • Lack of resources making it difficult to cover both newly arising challenges and the day job • Lack of clear succession planning with potential loss of knowledge / skills • Data quality and lack of resources to support the Housing Management System • Dispersed administration of managing land assets • Administration processes and technology advancement • Corporately a lack of resource, expertise and appropriate skills for the identification and delivery of new gypsy & traveller provision and other specialisms • Do not celebrate successes
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) project – improving services to those experiencing domestic abuse • Improve provision of affordable homes (Shire Homes lettings, Councils, RPs) • Homeless prevention to help people remain in their current homes • Funding opportunities • New housing management system – online portal • Build on resident engagement through new framework and tenant satisfaction survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased homelessness and rent arrears due to affordability challenges. • Increase demand for social housing following a number of external factors including cost of living increases, Ukraine crisis and other refugee demands. • Identification of the need to provide additional provision for gypsy & traveller sites following outcome of Assessment due Summer 2023. • Government policy changes. • Scarcity and cost of materials • Availability and cost of contractors

Section 3: Delivery Plan and Progress Reporting

This section provides details of Business Plan objectives the service will be responsible for delivering (Table 1) and other actions (that are not taken directly from the Business Plan) for delivery by the service (Table 2).

Guidance for Tables 1 and 2:

Guidance on providing quarterly updates	Abbreviations
<p>When providing quarterly updates, please check you have answered the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why does it matter / what impact does this have? - Do you have any evidence to support / quantify your comment (i.e., how many, what feedback has been received etcetera)? - By when (avoid vague phrases like “in due course,” and use phrases like “by the end of Q3)? <p>Business Plan updates will be reported publicly, so in addition to the above please check that you would be happy to read this comment out in front of Councillors, members of the public and the media.</p>	<p>Business Plan Priority headings are abbreviated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GLBE = Growing local businesses and economies - HTA = Housing that is affordable for everyone to live in - GTOC = Being green to our core - MCC = A Modern and Caring Council

Table 1 – 2023 – 2024 SCDC Business Plan Outputs to be Led by the Service

2023 – 2024 Business Plan Outputs	Lead Officer	Deputy / Second Lead Officer	Position at end Q1 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Jun 23)</i>	Position at end Q2 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Sep 23)</i>	Position at end Q3 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Dec 23)</i>	Position at end Q4 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Mar 24)</i>
HTA – 1ai) 75 new affordable homes completed for rent and / or shared ownership as part of the Council’s new build programme (Q4)	Kirstin Donaldson	-	KPI measured at end Q4 only. No completions in Q1 however this was as expected	-	-	-
HTA – 1bi) Agree new carbon reduction standards for properties we develop ourselves and incorporate into new developments (Q4)	Kirstin Donaldson	-	Exploring options and feasibility; discussing lessons from other LA’s including Norwich City Council. Met NCC with elected members in June.	-	-	-
HTA – 1d) Delivery of new homes for refugees (quantity and timescales to be confirmed subject to additional funding details)	Peter Campbell	Kirstin Donaldson / Atef Sayed	Total of 40 acquisitions agreed 20/20 new build / existing market. Total of 10 completed in Q1 split 3/7 NB/EM.	-	-	-
HTA – 2ci) Consult on a Housing Strategy to shape our Housing activity (Q1)	Julie Fletcher	Uzma Ali	High level consultation on aims and objectives of Strategy held with key staff, members and key stakeholders. Followed by individual meetings with key stakeholders and staff. January – March 2023. Briefing session for staff on Affordable Housing Requirements held 28/06/2023. Drafting of document ongoing.	-	-	-

2023 – 2024 Business Plan Outputs	Lead Officer	Deputy / Second Lead Officer	Position at end Q1 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Jun 23)</i>	Position at end Q2 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Sep 23)</i>	Position at end Q3 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Dec 23)</i>	Position at end Q4 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Mar 24)</i>
HTA – 3ai) Use Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and stock data to create a costed 5-, 10- and 15-year plan for the improved energy efficiency of Council housing (Q4)	Eddie Spicer	Alex Pelling	Stock condition surveys are underway, due completion Q3 and results due by end of Q4, during Q1 2025 work will start on the long term plan for retrofit balance and planned programmes for the next 5-10-15-20 years	-	-	-
HTA – 3a ii) Carry out a Stock Condition Survey on all stock (Q4)	Eddie Spicer	Alex Pelling / Wayne Newman	Started on site May due to complete on site in Dec 2023 with review analysis Q1 24	-	-	-
HTA – 3bi) Completion of energy efficiency improvement works as part of relet works on empty properties (Ongoing)	Eddie Spicer	Wayne Newman	Any potential retrofit works are considered during the empty properties period.	-	-	-
GTOC – 3bi) Plant 35 trees across two sites on our own estate, as part of the Treescapes fund (Q4 subject to funding)	Geoff Clark	-	With the support of our grounds maintenance contractor 34 new standard trees and 228 whips were planted across both sites in March / April. We also have a 3 year maintenance programme in place.	-	-	-
GTOC – 3bii) Create wildflower areas on four sites located across the district on our own estate (Q2)	Geoff Clark	-	The 4 sites now have a new grass cutting regime, that has allowed wildflowers and grasses to flourish.	-	-	-
GTOC – 3biii) Undertake a pilot using alternative methods to control weed growth, avoiding harmful environmental impacts (timescale tbc)	Geoff Clark	-	This is still work in progress we haven't identified a suitable site yet to take this work forward.	-	-	-
GTOC – 4di) Install solar PV array at Elm Court sheltered housing scheme, over (Q3)	Eddie Spicer	Alec Pelling	Due to agree final spec Q2 and start on site Q3	-	-	-
GTOC – 4dii) Complete energy retrofit assessments of communal rooms, identify feasible improvements, and agree delivery plan (Q12)	Eddie Spicer	Alex Pelling	Work issued, these will be carried out during Q2	-	-	-
MCC – 1di) Introduction of annual tenant satisfaction survey to allow implementation of new performance monitoring under new requirements by the Social Housing Regulator (Q1)	Julie Fletcher	Grace Andrews	Consultants appointed to undertake annual survey in October. In the process of implementing repair satisfaction surveys on a monthly basis. First surveys to go out in July to those that had a repair undertaken during April – June 2023.	-	-	-
MCC – 5ei) Complete at least 8 estate inspections (note inspections take place over an 8-month period) (Q4)	Geoff Clark	Debbie Barrett	Formal Estate inspections carried out by officers and supported by tenant reps have commenced and will continue through the summer months	-	-	-

2023 – 2024 Business Plan Outputs	Lead Officer	Deputy / Second Lead Officer	Position at end Q1 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Jun 23)</i>	Position at end Q2 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Sep 23)</i>	Position at end Q3 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Dec 23)</i>	Position at end Q4 <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Mar 24)</i>
MCC – 6ai) 100% compliance with landlord safety checks to council housing (including, electrical safety, gas installations and where appropriate fire risk assessments and water safety tests) (Q4)	Eddie Spicer	Alexandra Pelling	Continually ongoing, Q2 will see a full review of compliance actions and a full review of the corporate fire strategy for HRA stock communal areas and Sheltered schemes following changes in regulations in 2019 / 2020 and 2022	-	-	-
MCC – 6bi) Support 200 new clients through the housing department's visiting support service (Q4)	Debbie George	-	61 new clients taken on during Q1. Currently supporting 98 clients in total.	-	-	-
MCC – 6bii) Spend disabled facilities grant and repairs grant to allow people to live independently and safely in their homes (Q4)	Julie Fletcher	Alasdair Gladman	Better Care Fund Allocation received from County 2023 / 2024 – £787,144 (tbc) Spend within Q1 – £72,285 Committed Spend – £338,412 Pipeline – £323,886	-	-	-
MCC – 6bvi) Support tenants facing mental health issues to maintain their tenancies and prevent homelessness	Geoff Clark	-	We employed a mental health worker on a 2 year fixed term contract in January. This officer is now working intensively with a number of identified cases, providing support and enhancing life skills through innovate solutions tailored to each client.	-	-	-
MCC – 6dii) Support further requests to aid and support refugees, should they be located in the district (Q4)	Sue Carter / Heather Wood	Sue Hinawski	Team have supported requests as required (that is, supported Uttlesford District Council respond to arrivals from Sudan by loaning Housing Advice staff for two days).	-	-	-
MCC – 6gi) All staff complete mandatory domestic abuse training and targeted training updated for roll out to specific roles (Q1)	Sue Carter / Heather Wood	-	Work is underway with HR to review the mandatory training relating to Safeguarding (including Domestic Abuse training). Initial focus is on delivering Safeguarding training (Mandatory training related to Adults with Care and Support needs delivered in June 2023). Work on targeted DA training scheduled for Qs 3&4.	-	-	-
MCC – 6gii) Role out and promotion of a network of Domestic Abuse Champions across the organisation (Q1)	Sue Carter / Heather Wood	-	Domestic Abuse Champions identified and trained. Ongoing work to embed their role is now required.	-	-	-
MCC – 7bi) Delivery of the Interim Community facility (Q1)	Kirstin Donaldson	-	Excellent progress made. Utilities connections delayed practical completion, now programmed for 5 July 2023.	-	-	-

Table 2 – Other Actions (including Service Improvement / Mission Critical / Risk Mitigation / Support for other service) for Delivery by the Service:

Action Description and Target Timescale	Lead Officer	Deputy / Second Lead Officer	Q1 Update (for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Jun 23)	Q2 Update (for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Sep 23)	Q3 Update (for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Dec 23)	Q4 Update (for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Mar 24)
Increase support to those in financial hardship, including those in privately rented accommodation, through enhanced money advice support.	Heather Wood / Sue Carter	-	These roles help to assess affordability, provide budgeting advice, signpost to specialist services and develop a training package for new tenants. The service has received 157 referrals since October 2022 with 69% being positively helped either through positive change, financial gain or homeless prevention.	-	-	-
Shire Homes Lettings – push on properties to help meet housing need, at least 15 self-contained properties throughout the year	Louise Moulding	Sue Carter / Heather Wood	Shire Homeless Lettings have increased their property numbers by 10 so far during Q1, these are all properties through a Housing Association.	-	-	-
Gain a better understanding through data analysis of reasons for refusal and ensure any learning is shared with Housing Strategy to inform new developments.	Heather Wood / Sue Carter	Charles Clay	Reports provided and shared.	-	-	-
Work with housing associations to minimise barriers to housing (such as requesting rent in advance to secure viewing).	Heather Wood / Sue Carter	Charles Clay	Work is ongoing – some is undertaken. Most work is on an ad-hoc case-by-case basis, but liaison work is underway with one of the larger housing associations.	-	-	-
Work with the DAHA steering group and Domestic Abuse champions to implement any recommendations and good practice following DAHA accreditation.	Heather Wood / Sue Carter	-	Current focus is on updating Safeguarding training and practice in general. Planning to refocus on the DAHA recommendations in Qs 3&4	-	-	-
Lifeline delivery service, following new contract Jan 2023 and in preparation for the digital change over	Geoff Clark / Sue Carter / Debbie George	Susan Hinawski	Planning in progress for digital change over, which will need to be complete by 2025.	-	-	-
Implementation of the Housing Service Improvement Plan following the tenant satisfaction survey carried out in May 2022	Julie Fletcher	Peter Campbell	Drafting of Communications Standard underway. Consultation with staff and tenant reps and tenants more widely in Q2.	-	-	-

Action Description and Target Timescale	Lead Officer	Deputy / Second Lead Officer	Q1 Update <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Jun 23)</i>	Q2 Update <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Sep 23)</i>	Q3 Update <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Dec 23)</i>	Q4 Update <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Mar 24)</i>
Complete Gypsy & Traveller and Boat dwellers accommodation needs assessment by January 2024	Julie Fletcher	Peter Campbell	Consultants appointed. Face to face surveys underway, as well as stakeholder engagement.	-	-	-
Review resident involvement activities, including role of HEB & HPP (Housing Performance Panel) by October 2023	Julie Fletcher	Dave Armitage	First meeting held with tenant reps to discuss framework 23/5/2023. Draft proposals to be presented to tenant reps in Q2.	-	-	-
Undertake an appraisal of all the non-housing assets, including land and garage sites.	Geoff Clark / Kirstin Donaldson	-	On – going appraisal of garage sits is allowing us to prioritise improvement works / refurbishments or disposal based upon condition / demand. We will also be recruiting a designated lands officer in the next quarter who will take this work forward.	-	-	-
Allotments owned by the Council, next steps following review	Geoff Clark	-	We are working with a couple of Parish Councils on improving / extending allotment land. Again, our new lands officer will take this forward.	-	-	-
Housing Management System. Customer Portal + other enhancements / additional programmes	Martyn Hilliam	Geoff Clark	Customer portal to be launched shortly which will allow tenants to have access to a greater number of on-line services. Tenancy Analytics module will help with sustaining tenancies	-	-	-
Review standards within internal communal areas within blocks of flats, such as corridors and stairwells	Debbie Barrett	Geoff Clark	On-going programme of assessing blocks of flats – link in with work Eddie / Alex taking forward around health and safety compliance.	-	-	-
Undertake further modelling and analysis to understand the pressure points in more detail following confirmation of the government rent cap	Peter Campbell	-	-	-	-	-
Improving data information held and risk mitigation in terms of data storage	Peter Campbell	-	-	-	-	-
Provide support for council tenants and those seeking housing advise who are impacted by the cost-of-living crisis	Heather Wood / Sue Carter / Geoff Clark	-	Support available through the money advice service within Housing Advice.	-	-	-

Action Description and Target Timescale	Lead Officer	Deputy / Second Lead Officer	Q1 Update <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Jun 23)</i>	Q2 Update <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Sep 23)</i>	Q3 Update <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Dec 23)</i>	Q4 Update <i>(for completion by Lead or Deputy at end of Mar 24)</i>
New Homeless strategy for 2023 / 2028 with linked Action Plan which reflect current trends and pressures	Heather Wood / Sue Carter	-	Work underway to complete final draft of Homeless Review and Strategy, with the aim of completing consultation during Q3.	-	-	-
Work with national, regional, and local partners to support the needs of refugees; Asylum Seekers and those from Ukraine	Heather Wood / Sue Carter	-	Working jointly with partners including the Strategic Migration Partnership and Cambridge City Council and to date have provided: 10 properties for Afghan families. Assisted XX Ukrainian households into alternative accommodation to prevent their homelessness including through Shire Homes Lettings. Regular communication with Serco providing district information with regards suitability of areas to help them accommodate Asylum Seekers.	-	-	-
Deliver 2 new sports pavilions, community centre and civic hub (containing health, library, and community facilities) at Northstowe	Kirstin Donaldson	-	Sports Pavilion 1 practical completion scheduled Q2, on target. Community Centre planning submission scheduled Q2, on target. Civic Hub enabling discussions with Homes England underway.	-	-	-
Identify and deliver opportunities to invest in publicly accessible electric vehicle charge points in priority locations in the district, working with partners – pilot installations of fast EV (Electric Vehicle) Chargers at Sheltered Housing Schemes for public use, and install one rapid charger for public use Schemes evaluated and 2 pilot schemes currently in plan. Working with the Climate & Environment Team. Additional scheme at Elm Court identified	Eddie Spicer Geoff Clark Kirstin Donaldson Being led by the Climate & Environment Team	-	Two pilot schemes – charging point now fitted and in operation	-	-	-

Green to Our Core Actions

- Increase the number of Council homes each year to support people on lower incomes. These will include high energy standards and renewables
- Identify and deliver opportunities to invest in publicly accessible electric vehicle charge points in priority locations in the district, working with partners – pilot installations of fast EV Chargers at Sheltered Housing Schemes for public use, and install one rapid charger for public use
- Review community rooms and other small sites to identify and deliver opportunities for carbon reduction
- Develop carbon reduction targets for council homes as part of the Asset Management Strategy
- Identify and deliver new opportunities to plant trees, establish wildflower strips and in other ways enhance nature on our own estate, in consultation with residents

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Actions

- Complete Gypsy & Traveller and Boat dwellers accommodation needs assessment
- Review resident involvement activities, including role of HEB & HPP
- Tenant satisfaction survey outcome Improvement Plan, including a focus on the de-stigmatization of council tenants.

Operational Key Performance Indicators

The Regulator of Social Housing has created a new system for assessing how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services (see Appendix 1 for timeline). This will require all registered providers to generate and report tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) as specified by the regulator. As a provider of more than 1,000 dwellings we will need to report on 22 measures every year – 12 will come via Tenant perception survey and 10 via generated management information (performance indicators) as seen in Table 1. We are not restricted from collecting or publishing additional performance measures or information alongside the TSMs see Table 2 for our additional performance measures

Table 1

Regulators Code	Measure / Performance Indicator
TSMs collected from tenant perception surveys	
TP01	Overall satisfaction
TP02	Satisfaction with repairs
TP03	Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair
TP04	Satisfaction that the home is well maintained
TP05	Satisfaction that the home is safe
TP06	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them
TP07	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them
TP08	Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect
TP09	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints
TP10	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well
TP11	Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to
TP12	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour
TSMs generated from management information	
CH01	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord
CH02	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales
NM01	Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord
RP01	Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard
RP02	Repairs completed within target timescale
BS01	Gas safety checks
BS02	Fire safety checks
BS03	Asbestos safety checks
BS04	Water safety checks
BS05	Lift safety checks

Appendix 1



Table 2

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Targets	Lead Officer
Number of households with family commitments who have been accommodated in B&B for longer than 6 weeks Cumulative	Target = 0 Intervention = 1	Sue Carter / Heather Wood
AH215 – % Successful Homeless preventions as a proportion of all homelessness cases closed Year to date	Target = 50% Intervention = 45%	Sue Carter / Heather Wood
SH375 – Average SAP (EPC) rating of self-contained general needs dwellings Quarterly	Target = 70.00 Intervention = 65.00	Eddie Spicer / Alexandra Pelling
AH211 – Average days to re-let Housing stock Monthly	Target = 17 days or less Intervention = 25 days	Geoff Clark
AH204 – % satisfaction with responsive repairs (obtained via transactional surveys) Quarterly	Target = 95% or above Intervention = 90%	Eddie Spicer
AH224 – Number of new build council house completions Year to date	75 at year end (2023 – 2024)	Kirstin Donaldson

Business Plan Outcomes

Outcome	Lead Officer (and Deputy)

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24**

Head of Housing Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2023/24

Introduction

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has been prepared in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 and the Local Government Act 2003. Under this legislation the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has the power to issue directives in respect of appropriate income and expenditure items.

The balance on the HRA stood at £5.3million as at 31 March 2022, after a surplus of £2.2 million was made in 2021/22. A deficit of £2 million is expected in 2022/23 followed by a deficit of £0.5 million in 2023/24.

The capital programme has been reprofiled to move £11M into 2023/24 for the acquisition of additional homes. These acquisitions will be part funded (40% or 50% for larger properties) with government grant and are to be used to house refugees who fall under certain, named migration schemes. In the longer term, these homes will revert to general needs when no longer needed for refugees. These acquisitions will be managed within the existing capital budget but the program has been re-profiled for the £11M to be spent earlier than originally planned. The higher capital spend in 2023/24 will be part financed by the use of ear-marked reserves in addition to capital reserves and the grant funding.

The HRA Self Financing system came into effect on 1st April 2012, under which councils now keep all rents in exchange for an allocation of housing debt. At the end of 2011/12 councils were required to pay to the Government their notional HRA surplus, as determined by the self-financing settlement. The Council borrowed £205 million in the form of 41 maturity loans, with rates ranging between 3.44% and 3.53%. The loans have varying maturity dates, with the first £5 million due to be repaid on 28 March 2037 and the last on 28 March 2057.

The current debt repayment strategy for the HRA, not to set-aside resource to repay housing debt, but to instead invest resource in new build housing, assumes the need to re-finance the borrowing when loans mature. The potential debt repayment or re-investment reserve stood at £8,500,000 on 1 April 2022, with the current assumption being that this will be re-invested over the next 3 years to extend the life of the business plan.

The Council has produced a thirty year HRA Financial Plan for a number of years. However, with the advent of self-financing, this has taken on more prominence. The Financial Plan is reviewed and updated annually to check actual progress against the plan and where necessary make amendments.

Management and Maintenance

Management costs in 2022/23 are lower than originally budgeted due to beginning the year with vacant staff posts, which were held vacant throughout the year, These will be recruited to in 2023/24 as part of a wider restructure.

The effect of the rising rate of inflation throughout 2022 can be seen in the Repairs and maintenance costs, which have increased more than expected in 2022/23. Mears were awarded a new contract in October 2022 to deliver an improved response repairs and maintenance service to our housing tenants. £300,000 has been added to the budget in 2023/24 to allow for a stock condition survey of all council owned homes.

Major Repairs Reserve

This is a statutory reserve credited with depreciation in respect of the housing stock each year, with funding then in the Housing Capital Investment Plan, to meet the capital cost of works to HRA assets, or alternatively to repay housing debt. The Major Repairs Reserve balance as at 1 April 2022 was £2.5 million, and it is planned to use this balance to support the HRA capital programme over the next 3 years.

Capital Expenditure

The HRA capital programme was agreed at Cabinet in December 2022 and the levels of direct revenue contributions to capital expenditure are based on the required level of funding after other sources of capital funding are taken into account and after affordability is assessed. The programme has been reprofiled over the 5 year period to include the acquisition of approximately 30 homes in the next year, which will be part funded by government grant.

Proposed Rent Increase

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24**

From April 2020 local authority rents have been regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing, alongside housing associations and other registered providers. Rent increases had been limited to an increase of up to CPI plus 1% (based upon CPI at the preceding September) but the Government has limited social housing rent increases from April 2023 to 7%. (September CPI was 10.1% which could have led to a potential rent increase of 11.1% under the existing guidance). The proposed rent increase is therefore 7% from April 2023.

Interest on Receipts and Balances

HRA interest income is higher in 2022/23 than originally assumed due to the higher interest achieved on deposits following the increases to the Bank of England base rate. Interest receipts are projected to reduce in subsequent years as balances held in reserve are utilised to fund the business plan.

Interest Payable on Loans

This is for the servicing of loans the Council has taken to fund the self-financing debt settlement

Minimum HRA Balance

The Council's previously agreed minimum level of balance to be achieved is £2 million; this is expected to be achieved in 2022/23 and 2023/24 through the appropriation of ear-marked reserves.

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Summary**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24		
	Actuals	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Supervision & Maintenance General	5,180	5,487	5,100	5,535	-	5,535
Supervision & Maintenance Special	1,312	1,691	1,710	1,769	-	1,769
Rents, Rates & Other Charges	277	225	250	254	-	254
Repairs & Maintenance	5,244	5,351	5,709	6,334	(21)	6,314
Management & Maintenance Total	12,013	12,755	12,769	13,892	(21)	13,872
Capital Charges	6,902	6,902	7,290	7,436	-	7,436
Corporate Management Charge	353	330	287	296	-	296
Democratic Representation Charge	293	337	316	342	-	342
Provision for Bad or Doubtful Debts	50	140	80	140	-	140
Treasury Management Charge	44	73	67	80	-	80
Expenditure Total	19,655	20,537	20,809	22,187	(21)	22,166
Charges for Services & Facilities	(1,200)	(1,342)	(1,262)	-	(1,347)	(1,347)
Contribution from General Fund	(145)	(163)	(410)	-	(374)	(374)
De-Minimus Receipts	(21)	(3)	(3)	-	(3)	(3)
Garages	(362)	(370)	(381)	-	(402)	(402)
Gross Rent of Dwellings	(29,582)	(31,668)	(31,484)	-	(34,182)	(34,182)
Ground Rents	(11)	(13)	(11)	-	(11)	(11)
Other Income	(100)	(104)	(70)	-	(68)	(68)
Income Total	(31,421)	(33,663)	(33,620)	-	(36,386)	(36,386)
Net Cost of Service	(11,765)	(13,126)	(12,812)			(14,220)

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Summary**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24		
	Actuals	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Net Cost of Service	(11,765)	(13,126)	(12,812)	-	-	(14,220)
Interest Receivable on Balances	(1,159)	(960)	(1,224)	-	(1,082)	(1,082)
Interest Payable on Loans	7,193	7,193	7,193	7,193	-	7,193
Pension Deficit Funding	206	206	206	216	-	216
Net Operating Income	(5,526)	(6,688)	(6,638)	7,409	(1,082)	(7,894)
Revenue Funding of Capital Expenditure	3,933	9,162	9,162	14,914	-	14,914
IAS 19 (Pension Cost) Reversals	(621)	(613)	(508)	(537)	-	(537)
Transfer From Earmarked Reserve	-	-	-	-	(6,000)	(6,000)
Appropriations Total	3,312	8,549	8,654	14,377	(6,000)	8,377
Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year	(2,215)	1,861	2,017	21,786	(7,082)	483
Balance Brought Forward	(3,097)	(5,312)	(5,312)			(3,295)
Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year	(2,215)	1,861	2,017			483
Balance Carried Forward	(5,312)	(3,450)	(3,295)	-	-	(2,812)

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Supervision and Maintenance General**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24			
	Actuals	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Housing Repairs Administration	2,070	2,097	1,952	2,170	-	2,170	This budget is for the housing repairs team, administration and surveyors as well as software licence costs
New Homes Programme	337	293	242	223	-	223	This budget provides for the revenue costs associated with the Council's new homes programme. Such costs include the management and administrative costs which cannot be capitalised plus any abortive costs incurred when a particular site does not proceed.
Registration of HRA Land	5	9	5	5	-	5	The budget provides for the revenue costs associated with the payment of land registry fees.
Resident Involvement	206	227	199	240	-	240	This budget is for activities working with tenants and leaseholders. We have established a Housing Engagement Board and Housing Performance Panel with tenant representatives.
Self Build Plots	29	15	-	-	-	-	This project (preparing plots of HRA for sale as self-build plots) has ended. Existing plots of land will be considered for redevelopment by the New Homes Programme team or , if appropriate ,sold on the open market .
Supervision & Maintenance General	2,533	2,847	2,702	2,898	-	2,898	This budget is for the housing management team, covering housing officers and neighbourhood support as well as management and administration. There were some posts held vacant during 2022/23, which account for the reduced spend in 2022/23. These posts will be recruited to in 2023/24 as part of a wider restructure.
Grand Total	5,180	5,487	5,100	5,535	-	5,535	

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Supervision and Maintenance Special**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24			
	Actuals	.	.	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000's			£000's	£000's	£000's	
Communal Areas	13			55	-	55	This budget covers the management & insurance costs of our flat blocks across the district. Leaseholders pay a service charge based on the costs associated with their block
Outdoor Maintenance	328			367	-	367	This covers grass cutting, tree, hedges and other ground works in the district.
Sewage Disposal - Housing Sites	(0)			4	-	4	This budget covers the running costs of the Council owned pumping stations located in the district.
Sheltered Housing	972			1,343	-	1,343	Sheltered Scheme for the over 65 providing accommodation, communal facilities, alarm system and Estate Officers.
Grand Total	1,312	1,691	1,710		-		

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Rents, Rates and Other Charges**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24			
	Actuals	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Other Charges	73	72	79	82	-	82	This is third-party management charges (predominantly estate charges on new build schemes, which are payable for the upkeep of communal spaces and roads) and water/sewerage charges for Sheltered Housing communal rooms.
Rents, Rates, Taxes & Insurance	190	145	161	162	-	162	Business rates, insurance payable on HRA property.
Stock Valuation	14	9	9	9	-	9	Annual valuation of the council owned housing stock.
Grand Total	277	225	250	254	-	254	

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Repairs and Maintenance**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24			
	Actuals			Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000's			£000's	£000's	£000's	
Communal Areas	54			77	-	77	This budget covers the maintenance (including regular emergency light testing) of our flat blocks across the district. Leaseholders pay a service charge based on the costs associated with their block
Housing Repairs Planned	1,102			2,072	-	2,072	This budget covers the planned cyclical repair programmes, including heating servicing, external decoration and electrical surveys. £300,000 has been added to the budget in 2023/24 to carry out a stock condition survey of all council owned homes.
Housing Repairs Response	4,017			4,114	(21)	4,093	This budget covers the responsive repairs programmes, including repairs on change of tenancy and maintenance of disabled adaptations as well as the responsive repairs contract. In October 2022, a new contract was awarded to Mears, to deliver an improved repairs and maintenance service to tenants.
Sewage Disposal - Housing Sites	9			8	-	8	This budget covers the repairs and maintenance of the council owned pumping stations located in the district.
Sheltered Housing	62			63	-	63	This budget covers the maintenance of the Communal rooms and facilities on the Sheltered Housing schemes across the district.
Grand Total	5,244	5,351	5,709				

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Other Expenditure**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24			
	Actuals	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Corporate Management Charge	353	330	287	296	-	296	Allocation of costs to the HRA for services provided within the General Fund relating to the overall management of the authority, including the heads of paid service and leadership team.
Democratic Representation Charge	293	337	316	342	-	342	Allocation of costs to the HRA for services provided within the General Fund relating to the cost of Member meetings and support.
Provision for Bad or Doubtful Debts	50	140	80	140	-	140	The bad debts provision is based on the level of arrears expected at the year end. The assumed level of arrears in 2022/23 is not expected to increase as much as originally anticipated. However, the potential impact of rising prices for cost of living is expected to result in increasing levels of arrears. Consequently, the provision has been increased to £140,000 for 2023/24.
Revenue Funding of Capital Expenditure	3,933	9,162	9,162	14,914	-	14,914	The direct revenue contributions made to partially fund the HRA capital programme can vary quite significantly. It will depend on: the level of capital investment each year, in particular the size of the housebuilding programme; other capital funding available; and the affordability of the contribution in terms of the surplus funds generated on the HRA.
Treasury Management Charge	44	73	67	80	-	80	The costs here relate to the allocation of managing the HRA cash balances, provided within the General Fund by the Treasury Management team.
Grand Total	4,673	10,042	9,912	15,773	-	15,773	

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Capital Charges and Interest Payable on Loans**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24			
	Actuals	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Depreciation	6,902	6,902	7,290	7,436	-	7,436	Depreciation is based on the value of HRA assets and the expected useful lives of assets and components. The Probable Outturn figures for 2022/23 and Original estimates for 2023/24 reflect the revised average expected useful lives of the Council dwellings. The calculation has resulted in an increase in depreciation charges in both years.
Self Financing Interest	7,193	7,193	7,193	7,193	-	7,193	Annual interest payments on the debt portfolio, which comprises loans totalling £205 million at fixed rates between 3.44% and 3.53%. The loans have varying maturity dates, with the first £5 million due to be repaid on 28th March 2037 and the last loan on 28th March 2057
Grand Total	14,095	14,095	14,483	14,629	-	14,629	

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Property Related Income**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24			
	Actuals	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Charges for Services & Facilities	(1,200)	(1,342)	(1,262)	-	(1,347)	(1,347)	This is the income received in the form of service charges for special services provided by the HRA, such as sheltered housing provision, lifeline alarm provision and sewerage services. Also included is service charges paid by leaseholders living in HRA owned flat blocks, equity-share and shared-ownership properties where the HRA is responsible for maintaining the fabric of the property. The reduction in the probable outturn follows the reclassification of £180,000 income as Contribution from General Fund rather than a service charge.
Contribution from General Fund	(145)	(163)	(410)	-	(374)	(374)	This is the contribution made towards grounds maintenance costs of housing land in relation to properties that have been sold under the Housing Right to Buy legislation and the contribution for general fund owned properties managed within sheltered housing schemes. The increase in the probable outturn follows the reclassification of £180,000 income as Contribution from General Fund rather than a service charge in addition to higher grounds maintenance costs to be recovered.
De-Minimus Receipts	(21)	(3)	(3)	-	(3)	(3)	This budget includes individual receipts below £10,000 from the sale of HRA land
Garages	(362)	(370)	(381)	-	(402)	(402)	Rental income from garages / storage units. Income has increased following refurbishment of some garage blocks during the year. Garage rents in 2022/23 will be increased by 7.0%
Gross Rent of Dwellings	(29,582)	(31,668)	(31,484)	-	(34,182)	(34,182)	Rental income from council homes. Rents in 2023/24 will be increased by 7.0%
Ground Rents	(11)	(13)	(11)	-	(11)	(11)	This relates to Ground rent received from leasehold properties which remains static.
Other Income	(100)	(104)	(70)	-	(68)	(68)	Payments received from Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) and wayleaves.
Grand Total	(31,421)	(33,663)	(33,620)	-	(36,386)	(36,386)	

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Estimates 2023/24
Interest Receivable on Balances**

	2021-22	2022-23		2023-24			
	Actuals	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
External Interest Receivable	(1,137)	(940)	(1,201)	-	(1,053)	(1,053)	This is the interest received on general and ear-marked revenue balances, any funds set-aside in the major repairs reserve or the revenue debt repayment reserve and any unapplied capital balances. The expected interest income for 2021/22 is higher than originally budgeted due to the rise of the Bank of England base rate.
Internal Interest Receivable	(22)	(20)	(24)	-	(30)		This is the interest received on the small amount of internal lending to the General Fund from the HRA.
Grand Total		(960)	(1,224)	-	(1,082)	(1,082)	

**Head of Housing
Housing Revenue Account
Subjective Analysis 2023/24**

	Employee Expenses	Premises Related Expenses	Transport Related Expenses	Supplies and Services	Contracted Services	Depreciation and Impairment Losses	Support Services	Internal Recharges	Total Expenditure	Fees & Charges	Government Contributions	Misc Income	Other Contributions	Total Income	Net Expenditure
Supervision & Maintenance General															
Housing Repairs Administration	1,357,800		20,000	98,100	2,500		705,770	(14,480)	2,169,690						2,169,690
New Homes Programme	394,150	-	2,000	126,900	-		167,680	(468,000)	222,730						222,730
Registration of HRA Land				5,300					5,300						5,300
Resident Involvement	152,200		900	46,100			40,570		239,770						239,770
Self Build Plots				-					-						-
Supervision & Maintenance General	1,742,810	-	20,000	207,440			829,990	97,270	2,897,510						2,897,510
Supervision & Maintenance Special															
Communal Areas		22,370					32,720		55,090						55,090
Outdoor Maintenance	-	347,350		5,500			13,850	-	366,700		-			-	366,700
Sewage Disposal - Housing Sites		1,600					2,280		3,880						3,880
Sheltered Housing	744,940	234,480	25,000	110,850			232,120	(4,220)	1,343,170						1,343,170
Wardens TV Licences				-					-						-
Rents, Rates & Other Charges															
Other Charges		82,410							82,410						82,410
Rents, Rates, Taxes & Insurance		162,390		-					162,390						162,390
Stock Valuation				9,380					9,380						9,380
Repairs & Maintenance															
Communal Areas		34,580		-	42,840				77,420						77,420
Housing Repairs Planned		426,040		493,640	1,152,310				2,071,990						2,071,990
Housing Repairs Response		-		12,600	4,101,300				4,113,900			(20,770)		(20,770)	4,093,130
Sewage Disposal - Housing Sites					8,000				8,000						8,000
Sheltered Housing		10,500			52,500				63,000						63,000
Other Expenditure															
Corporate Management Charge								296,090	296,090						296,090
Democratic Representation Charge								342,220	342,220						342,220
Provision for Bad or Doubtful Debts				140,000					140,000						140,000
Revenue Funding of Capital Expenditure						14,914,000			14,914,000						14,914,000
Treasury Management Charge								80,310	80,310						80,310
Capital Charges															
Depreciation						7,435,740			7,435,740						7,435,740
Interest Payable on Loans															
Self Financing Interest						7,192,810			7,192,810						7,192,810
Income															
Charges for Services & Facilities										(1,291,760)		(36,140)	(18,900)	(1,346,800)	(1,346,800)
Contribution from General Fund										(373,840)				(373,840)	(373,840)
De-Minimus Receipts										(3,000)				(3,000)	(3,000)
Garages										(401,540)				(401,540)	(401,540)
Gross Rent of Dwellings										(34,181,970)				(34,181,970)	(34,181,970)
Ground Rents										(10,730)				(10,730)	(10,730)
Other Income										(16,900)				(16,900)	(16,900)
Interest Receivable on Balances															
External Interest Receivable												(1,052,900)		(1,052,900)	(1,052,900)
Internal Interest Receivable												(29,520)		(29,520)	(29,520)
Other															
IAS 19 (Pension Cost) Reversals	(536,570)								(536,570)						(536,570)
Transfer From Earmarked Reserve													(6,000,000)	(6,000,000)	(6,000,000)
Grand Total	4,071,230	1,321,720	67,900	1,255,810	5,359,450	29,542,550	2,024,980	329,190	43,972,830	(36,279,740)	-	(1,139,330)	(6,070,450)	(43,489,520)	483,310

	2022-23	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	Original Estimate	Probable Outturn	Original Estimate	Original Estimate	Original Estimate	Original Estimate	Original Estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure							
Supervision & Management - General	5,487	5,100	5,535	5,701	5,872	6,048	6,230
Supervision & Management - Special	1,691	1,710	1,769	1,804	1,840	1,877	1,915
Repairs & Maintenance	5,351	5,709	6,314	6,314	6,630	6,961	7,309
Depreciation – t/f to Major Repairs Res.	6,902	7,290	7,436	7,808	8,198	8,608	9,038
Debt Management Expenditure	73	67	80	82	84	85	87
Other Expenditure	1,032	933	1,032	1,053	1,074	1,096	1,118
Total Expenditure	20,537	20,809	22,166	22,762	23,698	24,675	25,697
Income							
Rental Income (Dwellings)	(31,668)	(31,484)	(34,182)	(36,574)	(37,880)	(39,166)	(40,531)
Rental Income (Other)	(487)	(461)	(481)	(490)	(500)	(510)	(520)
Service Charges	(1,342)	(1,262)	(1,347)	(1,374)	(1,401)	(1,429)	(1,458)
Contribution towards Expenditure	(163)	(410)	(374)	(381)	(389)	(397)	(405)
Other Income	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
Total Income	(33,663)	(33,620)	(36,386)	(38,822)	(40,174)	(41,506)	(42,917)
Net Cost of HRA Services	(13,126)	(12,812)	(14,220)	(16,060)	(16,476)	(16,830)	(17,220)
HRA Share of operating income and expenditure included in Whole Authority I&E Account							
Interest Receivable	(960)	(1,224)	(1,082)			(347)	(368)
HRA (Surplus) / Deficit for the Year	(14,086)	(14,036)	(15,303)			(17,177)	(17,589)
Items not in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account but included in the movement on HRA balance							
PWLB Loan Interest	7,193	7,193	7,193	7,193	7,193	7,193	7,193
Interest payable on additional borrowing				50	175	313	425
Pension Deficit Funding	206	206	216	220	225	229	234
Appropriation from Ear-Marked Reserve		0	(6,000)	(2,500)			
Direct Revenue Financing of Capital	9,162	9,162	14,914	12,549	9,606	9,861	10,361
IAS 19 (Pension Cost) Reversals	(613)	(508)	(537)	(547)	(558)	(569)	(581)
(Surplus) / Deficit for Year	1,861	2,017	483	403	(164)	(151)	43
Balance b/f	(5,312)	(5,312)	(3,295)	(2,812)	(2,409)	(2,572)	(2,724)
Total Balance c/f	(3,451)	(3,295)	(2,812)	(2,409)	(2,572)	(2,724)	(2,681)

7. Any other Business (AOB)

Any additional issues to be raised.

8. Meeting Dates for 2023 / 2024

- 28 September 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 14 December 2023 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)
- 28 March 2024 (Zoom / venue to be confirmed)

9. Closing