



Leicester
City Council

MEETING OF THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

DATE: MONDAY, 10 JANUARY 2022

TIME: 5:30 pm

**PLACE: Meeting Room G.01, Ground Floor, City Hall,
115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ**

Members of the Scrutiny Commission

Councillor Westley (Chair)
Councillor Chamund (Vice Chair)

Councillors Ali, Aqbany, Byrne, Crewe, Gee and Rahman

Members of the Scrutiny Commission are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

For Monitoring Officer

Officer contact:

Jason Tyler (Democratic Support Officer):
Tel: 0116 454 6359, e-mail: Jason.Tyler@leicester.gov.uk

Leicester City Council, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

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- remain seated and maintain distancing between seats during the meeting;
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- make use of the hand sanitiser available;
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HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

USEFUL ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
ACM	Asbestos Containing Materials
AGSC	Annual Gas Safety Check
AHP	Affordable Homes Programme
ALMO	Arms' Length Management Organisation
APA	Alternative Payment Arrangements
ASC	Adult Social Care
AST	Assured Short Hold Tenancy
BAU	Business as Usual
B&B	Bed & Breakfast
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
BRE	Building Research Establishment
CBL	Choice Based Lettings
CIH	Chartered Institute of Housing
CIN	Children in Need
ciTAL	Citizens Advice LeicesterShire
CO	Carbon Monoxide
Co2	Carbon Dioxide
CORE	Continuous Recording of Lettings - independently compiled statistics of all Housing Association letting activity
CPO	Compulsory Purchase Order
CSC	Customer Service Centre
CT	Council Tax
CT	Community Transport
CTCE	Construction Training Centre of Excellence
DAR	Dial A Ride
DCPC	Driver Certificate of Professional Competence
DFG	Disabled Facilities Grant
DHF	Discretionary Housing Funds
DHP	Discretionary Housing Payments
DHS	Decent Homes Standard
DMA	District Management Area
DT	Digital Transformation
DTR	Duty to Refer
DVSA	Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EBS	Estate and Building Services
EHP	Empty Homes Premium
EHS	Empty Homes Strategy
EMH	East Midlands Homes
EOL	End of Life

Acronym	Meaning
EPC	Energy Performance Certificate
ERS	Emergency Repairs Service
Euro 6	The Latest Directive Set by The EU to Help Reduce the Level Of Harmful Pollutants Produced By New Vehicles.
EV	Electric Vehicle
EVCS	Electric Vehicle Charging Station
FHS	Future Homes Standard
FRA	Fire Risk Assessment
FS	Floating Support
FTA	Freight Transport Association
G&HS	Gas and Heating Services
GFT	Gas Fill and Test
GSIUR	Gas Safety Installation and Use Regulations
GVM	Gross Vehicle Mass
GVW	Gross Vehicle Weight (Same As GVM)
H&WB	Health and Wellbeing
HA	Housing Application
HAF	Housing Application Form
HB	Housing Benefit
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency
HEDNA	Housing Economic and Development Needs Assessment
HHSRS	Home Health and Safety Rating System
HMO	House in Multiple Occupation
Hol	Housing Online
HPO	Homelessness Prevention Officer
HR	Human Resources
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
HSE	Health and Safety Environment
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
IMT	Income Management Team
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Looked After Children
LAHS	Local Authority Housing Statistics
LHA	Local Housing Allowance
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area
MAM	Maximum Authorised Mass (Same As GVM)
MCHLG	Ministry of Housing and Local Government
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities, And Local Government
MS	Method Statement
MSO	Multi Skilled Operative
MSOA	Middle Layer Super Output Area
NOSP	Notices of Seeking Possession
NOX	Nitrogen Oxides
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework

Acronym	Meaning
ONS	Office Of National Statistics
OOH	Out of Hours
OR	Outreach
OT	Occupational Therapist
PATS	Passenger and Transport Services
PI	Performance Indicator
PIE	Psychologically Informed Environments
PLT	Property Lettings Team
PRS	Private Rented Sector
PSL	Private Sector Leasing scheme whereby private sector properties are leased by the council for use as temporary accommodation for homeless households.
QC	Quality Check
R&M	Repairs and Maintenance
RA	Residents Association
RA	Risk Assessment
RD	Revolving Door
RMA	Rent Management Advisor
RSI	Rough Sleeping Initiative
RSL/HA/RP	Registered Social Landlord / Housing Association / Registered Provider
RTB	Right to Buy
RTL	Repairs Team Leader
RTL	Ready to Let
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SH	Sheltered Housing
SLS	Selective Licencing Scheme
STAR	Supporting Tenants and Residents Team
T&L	Tenants and Leaseholders
TA	Tenants Association
TA	Temporary Accommodation
TARA	Tenants and Residents Association
TARS	Tenants Advice and Repairs Service line
TBC	To be confirmed
TC	Traffic Commissioner
UC	Universal Credit
ULEV	Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle
VED	Vehicle Excise Duty
VPLS	Voids and Property Lettings Service
VT	Voids Technician
WIP	Work in Progress
YTD	Year to Date

PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

FIRE/EMERGENCY EVACUATION

If the emergency alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building immediately by the nearest available fire exit and proceed to area outside the Ramada Encore Hotel on Charles Street as Directed by Democratic Services staff. Further instructions will then be given.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Appendix A

The Minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 29 November 2021 are attached and Members are asked to confirm them as a correct record.

4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any petitions received in accordance with Council procedures.

6. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS OR STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any questions, representations or statements of case received in accordance with Council procedures.

7. TENANTS' AND LEASEHOLDERS' FORUM ACTION AND DECISION LOG

Appendix B

The Director of Housing submits for noting the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum Action Log from 25 November 2021.

8. TENANCY AND RENT SUPPORT **Appendix C**

The Director of Housing submits a report to outline the support offered and provided to Leicester City Council and HomeCome tenants.

Members are recommended to note the contents of the report.

9. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET (INCLUDING CAPITAL PROGRAMME) **Appendix D**

The Director of Housing submits a report, which describes the City Mayor's draft budget for 2022/23 including the Capital Programme.

Members are recommended to note the contents of the report and comment as appropriate prior to consideration at Council on 23 February 2022

10. FINAL REPORT OF THE HOUSING TASK GROUP: EXAMINING THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A CENTRAL HOUSING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR TEAM **Appendix E**

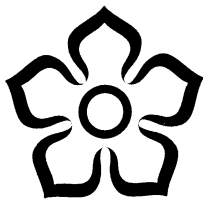
Councillor Westley submits a report that sets out the findings and recommendations of the Housing Scrutiny Task Group's examination of the proposal to establish a central housing anti-social behaviour team.

Members are asked to provide any comments on the report and in particular, on the recommendations prior to the report being submitted to the Overview Select Committee for endorsement.

11. WORK PROGRAMME **Appendix F**

The Commission's Work Programme is submitted for information and comment.

12. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: MONDAY, 29 NOVEMBER 2021 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Westley (Chair)
Councillor Chamund (Vice Chair)

Councillor Aqbany Councillor Rahman

In Attendance:

Councillor Cutkelvin – Assistant City Mayor (Housing and Education)

* * * * *

45. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ali, Byrne, Crewe and Gee.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair declared an interest as members of his family lived in Council accommodation.

The Vice-Chair declared an interest as a member of her family lived in Council accommodation.

Councillor Aqbany declared an interest as members of his family lived in Council accommodation.

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, these interests were not considered so significant that they were likely to prejudice the Councillors' judgement of the public interest. The Members were not, therefore, required to withdraw from the meeting.

47. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Commission held on Monday 4 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

48. CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair advised that the Task Group that examined the role of the proposed new anti-social behaviour team had met again on 3 November 2021 and agreed a number of draft recommendations.

It was confirmed that those recommendations would be included within a final report being prepared for submission to the Commission in due course.

49. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no Petitions had been received, in accordance with Council procedures.

50. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS OR STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that no Questions, Representations or Statements of Case had been received, in accordance with Council procedures.

51. KEY HOUSING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Director of Housing submitted a report, which provided an update on the progress of the key strategic priorities, as set out in the Labour Manifesto.

The Assistant City Mayor for Education and Housing commented on the significant progress on the manifesto commitments since February 2021, as well as the substantial headway made into the action plan tackling homelessness and the complex needs of women and BAME communities regarding housing.

It was noted and welcomed that the Division was on task for achieving their expected outcomes. It was however also noted that there was still much more to do to achieve the aims of the 2019 manifesto pledge.

The Chair asked that in relation to the pledge to provide 1500 homes, could it be confirmed how many of these will form part of the council housing stock, and how many new council homes had been provided to date, or have been committed to be provided.

The Director of Housing clarified that all new housing acquired would be made available to the public as housing stock on both a proactive and reactive basis.

It was also noted in response to a further question that estate wardens were being assigned to a number of areas across the city.

In conclusion, Commission members asked that the statistics be broken down into Wards for future understanding, for ease of future reference.

The Chair thanked The Assistant City Mayor and the Director for their update and advised that an update would be provided in due course.

AGREED:

1. That the report and progress concerning the Key Housing Strategic Priorities be noted;
2. That future updates be inclusive of statistics broken down by Wards;
3. That a further update be presented in due course.

52. HOME OFFICE BRIDGING HOTEL AND AFGHAN RESETTLEMENT ACCOMMODATION

The Director of Housing submitted a report, as previously presented to the Overview Select Committee (OSC), which provided a strategic update on the Home Office Bridging Hotel and the Council's offer to re-settle 10 Afghan families within the City.

It was noted that the Council had agreed to participate in the accelerated relocation of Locally Employed Staff (LES) who have been supporting the UK forces in Afghanistan. The scheme has been prioritised due to the withdrawal of military forces from Afghanistan, and the following escalation in violence.

The Afghan LES and their families were being offered relocation in recognition of the fact they were at increased personal risk, having worked side by side with coalition forces and officials.

The Home Office had placed a number of families within a bridging hotel in the City and work continued with the families in the hotel, providing them with wrap around and resettlement support that would reside in Leicester once longer-term accommodation had been identified for them.

The Minute extract from the OSC was also submitted for reference, as a detailed in the summary of the report. It was noted that the report had been noted and welcomed by that Committee and would form part of their ongoing work programme. It was therefore acknowledged that future standing item updates would be presented to OSC and not to this Commission.

The following key points were noted:

- The Chair thanked all those involved in helping the resettlement of refugees in the city, and the support and dedication the community provided towards helping those in needs.
- Members enquired about the Home Office representative stationed in Leicester City Bridging Hotel, they were informed by the Director of Housing that they were a representative associated with the Midlands Office.
- Members asked whether the housing provided to the refugees was the Council's own stock of Housing. It was clarified that, as stated in the report, that all accommodation currently in consideration or already procured is housing offered under private landlords, externally from the Council's own housing register.
- Concerns were expressed regarding about how refugees would pay for private housing and living expenses, the Director of Housing reassured that refugees assessed to be eligible for financial support will be supported by the Council, to be re-imbursed by Home Office over a three year period, which was in line with amounts received under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. It was noted that some applications had already been rejected, and Members stressed the importance of vetting the suitability of both housing and refugees for the financial support available.

The Chair thanked the Director of Housing for the report.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

53. REPAIRS, VOIDS AND GAS PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Director of Housing submitted a report, which provided an update on the performance of the Division's Repairs and Maintenance, Voids and Gas functions during 2021-22.

It was noted that the 2021-22 performance statistics used in this report were based on those at Q2 (to September 21). The report also provided an update on the continuing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on service delivery and an update about the implementation of service improvements that will drive improved performance into the future.

In response to a question from the Vice-Chair it was confirmed that the data showing weekly monitoring of outstanding works due to the Covid-19 pandemic was being considerably reduced across all categories.

In terms of the categories it was clarified that significant effort was made to ensure that the highest priority category works were completed, and that this was often affected by safeguarding issues as well as consideration of the time a job may be outstanding.

It was accepted that the current numbers of around 7600 outstanding jobs should be compared to the approximate 6000 requests that would be normally received pre-pandemic.

In response to questions it was noted that a feasibility study was in place to ensure that energy supply meters could be properly accessed and issues concerning case work would be taken up by the Director separately.

In respect of the numbers of outstanding jobs, the Assistant City Mayor (Housing and Education) asked the Commission to note that due to the pandemic, some tenants had demonstrated a reluctance for maintenance officers to enter their homes. This impact on the data was accepted by the Commission.

In conclusion and in response to further questions, updates were provided on works and progress at St Peters former Housing Office and at Goscote House.

AGREED:

That the report and update be noted.

54. EMPTY HOMES - UPDATE

The Director of Housing submitted a report, which provided information on the work of the Empty Homes Team to bring long term private sector homes back into use.

The Assistant City Mayor (Housing and Education) commented on the importance of ensuring that all empty homes were brought back into use and referred to the links to the homelessness strategy. The complex nature of Government requirements were referred to and it was hoped that revised legislative powers to provide greater devolved local governance would be forthcoming.

In response to questions the numbers of properties acquired under Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) was confirmed, together with an update on the success of the buy-back scheme.

In conclusion the Chair commented that it was always frustrating to hear of empty properties when so many people needed housing and that he fully supported and commended the work of the Empty Homes Team.

AGREED:

That the update be noted.

55. INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOUSING AND UPDATE ON HOSPITAL CLOSE

The Director of Housing submitted a report, which provided an update on the ongoing investment in council housing and specific one-off projects, including Hospital Close.

It was noted that the Division were responsible for around 20,000 council houses and needed to make sure that they continue to meet the Decency Standard, conform to all legislative health and safety requirements and meet the expectations of our tenants. An extensive capital programme ensured that homes were always being invested in and upgraded as well as a programme of planned maintenance work to ensure all elements of our homes continue to work and be safe.

The Chair asked for an update in relation to progress with the Leys, and in response it was advised that the project was due for completion in late Summer/Autumn of 2022.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

56. WORK PROGRAMME

The Commission's Work Programme was submitted for information and comment.

AGREED:

That the Work Programme be noted.

57. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 6:50pm.

Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum Action and Decision Log

25th November 2021

1) Welcome and apologies

Forum members present: Wendy Biddles, Phillip Allen, Peter Hookway, Jean Williams, Jill Rhys,

Apologies: Joe Carroll, Ann Green

Also present: Gurjit Minhas, Simon Nicholls, Helen McGarry

2) Actions from previous meeting

At the last meeting Chris Burgin stated that the estate work required, as a result of his recent visit to the Thurnby Lodge area, had been passed to the tenancy management service to progress. Helen McGarry to ask for an update on how this work is progressing.

Gurjit Minhas has spoken to Phillip Allen about incidents of anti-social behaviour and this has now been reported to the police.

Issues reported by Peter Hookway about the service received at an annual gas safety check have been dealt with by the Gas and Heating Services Manager. Peter has also received information relating to the ownership of parking land in the Beaumont Leys area.

3) The role of Housing Officers and Neighbourhood Housing Assistants

Gurjit Minhas, Head of Service for Tenancy Management, attended the meeting to give an overview of the Housing Officers and Neighbourhood Assistant roles.

Housing Officers carry out approximately 35 different activities. However, the activities that require most of their time are:

- Investigating and acting on reports of anti-social behaviour
- Undertaking welfare visits to identify the support needs of tenants
- Taking enforcement action where tenancy conditions have been broken

- Progressing property and estate issues, such as investigating reports of abandoned properties and abandoned vehicles, dealing with communal cleaning issues, supporting gas gain entries, issuing keys for door entry systems, providing a range of advice, for example on condensation and pests
- Housing Officers are involved in patch works with local tenants, councillors and the police to help identify environmental improvements
- Housing Officers are also Building Responsible Officers for our flats and maisonettes. They must ensure that any actions identified from fire safety inspections are completed.

Neighbourhood Housing Assistants main duty is to carry out fire safety inspections. These involve checking way lights, fire alarms, signage and to ensure items are not left in communal areas that may cause an obstacle if the building needs to be evacuated due to a fire. The Neighbourhood Housing Assistants also report incidents of fly tipping to the Estate Wardens for removal.

Gurjit Minhas advised the meeting that the Housing Scrutiny Commission task force set up to look at the way we deliver anti-social behaviour services has been completed. A proposal will now be considered in early 2022 to set up a centralised Housing team to initially investigate reports of anti-social behaviour by council tenants. Where enforcement action is required these cases will be progressed by the Councils Crime and Anti-social Behaviour Unit. Tenants will still be able to report incidents of anti-social behaviour to their Housing Officer.

Action – Jean Williams raised concerns that mattresses and furniture are continually being dumped in the St Matthews area. Work to continue by the Tenancy Management service to address the issues, to include promoting the Councils bulk rubbish collection service.

∞ **Action** – Jean Williams suggested there was a need for a specialist mental health team within STAR to support the growing number of tenants with complex needs. As a longer-term action Gurjit Minhas to consider this suggestion.

Action – Jill Rhys raised a general issue of people throwing litter out of vehicles. Gurjit Minhas to pass these concerns to the Council's Environmental Services.

Action – Jean Williams stated people were experiencing difficulties contacting the Noise Nuisance Team, also that there was a shortage of equipment to monitor noise levels. Gurjit Minhas to contact the service to report these issues.

4) Update on District Heating

Simon Nicholls attended the meeting to provide an update on a project relating the district heating scheme, for which we have approximately 2,900 users across the city.

The Government has set a requirement for all organisations providing a district heating scheme assess whether it is cost effective for individual meters to be fitted into properties to record individual energy use. To meet this requirement the Council has employed consultants to survey a range of flats and maisonettes in the city to see if this is feasible. The Government has set a deadline of

September 2022 for this feasibility work to be completed. Simon stated he would return to a future Forum meeting with the findings of this work. He also stated that a Government requirement was that full consultation needed to take place with tenants and leaseholders on the district heating scheme before any work commenced.

5) Update of the Tenant Involvement Review

The report proposing a review of our tenant involvement activities was taken to the Housing Scrutiny Commission in October and agreement was given that this review takes place. Helen McGarry will be arranging a meeting with the Forum members in January to seek their views on current arrangements and areas for improvement.

6) Agenda items for the next meeting

It was agreed that topics for the next meeting would be improvements to Customer Service and the role of the Works Planner.

Topics for future meetings were identified as being:

- • The role of the Leaseholder Officers, to include leaseholder charges
- The out of hours repairs service
- An update on the Voids service, to include void times and how long work takes when this is carried out by contractors

7) Any other business

Helen McGarry advised the Forum that consultation would shortly be starting on the Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme proposals for 2022 / 23. A meeting of the Forum will take place on the 16th December 2021 to present the proposals and seek the feedback from Forum members.

Action - Jean Williams raised concerns that a security door in St Matthews needs to be replaced as the PAC keys keep breaking down. Issue to be reported to the Repairs Service.

8) Dates of next meeting

16th December 2021 1.00 – 2.30 pm – Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme consultation

January 2022 – Tenant involvement workshop – Date to be confirmed

10th February 2022 1.00 – 3.00 pm – Tenant Forum meeting



Briefing Note – Tenancy Support (Housing Services)

Housing Scrutiny Commission: 10th January 2022

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin, Director of Housing

Report Author: Gurjit Kaur Minhas (Head of Service Tenancy Management and STAR)
0116 454 5144
Charlotte McGraw- (Head of Service Income Management Team)
0116 454 5167

1. Summary – Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to outline the support offered and provided to Leicester City Council and HomeCome tenants. Support is provided by Homeless Services to applicants prior to a tenancy being offered. The Tenancy Management and STAR service provide support to tenants usually once they are in their tenancy, to help them sustain and maintain their accommodation. The Income Management Team support tenants in paying their rent and claiming benefits in order to help them sustain their tenancies.

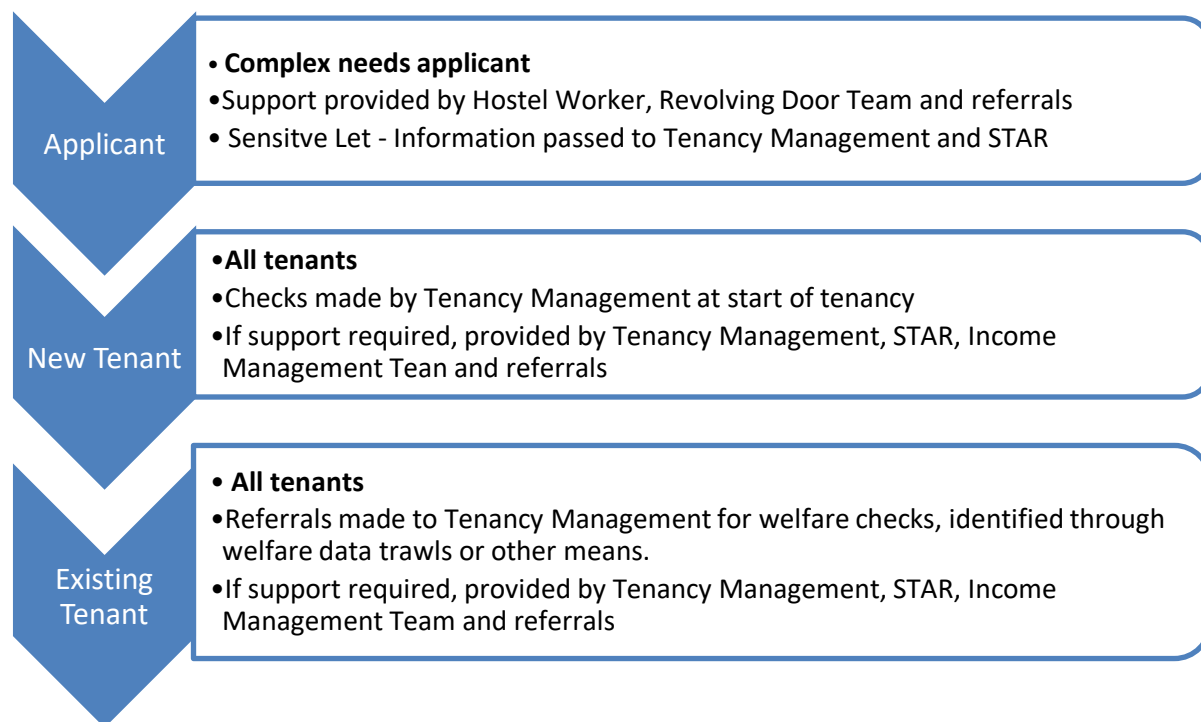
2. Background

- 2.1 Leicester City Council manages approximately 20,000 council tenancies. One of our key responsibilities as a social landlord is to support tenants and prevent homelessness, this is set out in the Tenancy Standard which is regulated by central government. The Housing Ombudsman also has legal powers to ensure we provide good customer service.
- 2.2 Increasingly we are re-housing people with additional support needs, who need help setting up a new home and accessing services to cope with living independently. This maybe because it is their first tenancy, or they have health needs, including poor mental health and/or substance misuse issues. Many people do not have support from family or friends and are isolated.
- 2.3 Social Housing is prioritised and allocated to applicants in the greatest housing need. There are now more vulnerable people being rehoused from challenging backgrounds. The profile of tenants has changed with people often having multiple support needs. With the Everyone in Initiative we have also seen more people being re-housed who have chaotic lifestyles and complex needs. Often refugees who are new to the country, will have come from traumatic backgrounds and will not have support networks and need help to access services to sustain their tenancies.
- 2.4 Not everyone with complex needs requires support, some tenants cope well independently or have family and friends to assist. We target support to those tenants that really need our help and that is why we carry out checks, assessments and have an eligibility criterion for the STAR service.
- 2.5 During the pandemic it has been challenging to provide the level of support some of our tenants require especially with the lack of secure and confidential interview space in local offices. Some of our tenants can pose a risk to our staff as well as

being vulnerable themselves, therefore home visits are not always appropriate. We do sensitively monitor and manage this risk to keep everyone safe.

2.6 For non – council and private rented sector tenants the Council commissions P3 to provide tenancy support.

3. Detailed Report – Support Provided



3.1 Prior to tenancy - for complex cases

3.1.1 An applicant is allocated a support worker after initial assessment when entering temporary accommodation. Dependent upon the assessment this can be a hostel support worker or a support worker from the Revolving Door Team who pick up the most complex and difficult to engage service users.

3.1.2 Support is provided to coach and navigate through the process of stabilisation and progression at the right time into independent or semi-independent accommodation, dependent upon the applicant's need.

3.1.3 Service users are encouraged and supported to register with GP (Inclusion Health Care) and other services relevant to their individual circumstances. This can include, Adult Social Care, Street Lifestyles, Criminal Justice, Homeless Mental Health services, Probation, Turning Point, Department for Works and Pensions, St Mungo's, other Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.

3.1.4 Other support offered:

- Support to create Housing Online account
- Maximisation of income.
- Liaison/support with relevant agencies involved
- Next steps and options for re-housing with Applicant

- Discuss what steps for the service user to move out of homelessness and sustain independent living.

3.1.5 Support is dependent on applicants' individual requirements and pertinent to their specific needs. This can include, income maximisation, establishment of immigration status, enhanced engagement with services and improving interactions with agencies. A holistic approach is taken to give the greatest opportunity of success in ending an individual's homelessness.

3.2 Transition – Sensitive let process for complex cases only

3.2.1 Once an individual is ready for independent living, a Direct Let request is completed from the available properties ringfenced for the single homeless pathway, along with a STAR risk assessment. Careful consideration is given to match to an appropriate property, taking into account area preferences and areas that applicants may not be able to live in as a result of potential restrictions.

3.2.2 Cases are sent through to Tenancy Management to make checks. The Direct Let application includes information about:

- the history of the applicant
- which property they are being matched too
- the household make up
- outcomes of risk assessments and other relevant information

3.2.3 For each case the Tenancy Management Service will check:

- for previous tenancies
- the appropriateness of the property and location they are being matched too
- Needs of the applicant:
 - Have they complex needs?
 - Have they appropriate support in place?
 - What are the contact details of support workers?
 - What are their key risks?

3.2.4 Location – Factors considered are:

- What is the makeup of other households in the location?
- If the applicant is chaotic and has complex needs, may be more appropriate to rehouse with other singles
- We also consider the potential of ASB and if the location has had a history of ASB and if residents need some respite from chaotic individuals

3.2.5 Based on the information on the locality and the needs of the applicant a decision is made by the Heads of Service to either get more information, approve, or not approve the match. A joint Sensitive Lettings Policy between Homelessness Services and Tenancy Management has been developed to embed this sensitive letting process. This will consider both applicants and properties that require a sensitive let to ensure that the impact on the Community is considered.

3.3 Once Re-housing is agreed

3.3.1 Risk and support information is shared by Homeless Services with Tenancy Management. Hostel staff will make applications for Community Support Grants (CGG)

for furniture if the tenants require this. Once it has been agreed the tenant is to be rehoused, any complex cases that meet the STAR eligibility criteria are referred to the service and risk information shared.

3.4 Once in a tenancy – tenancy management support

3.4.1 We have recently launched a Tenancy Support Procedure which focuses on early reporting and intervention to support successful tenancies. Each tenant is made aware their main point of contact is their Neighbourhood Housing Officer (NHO).

3.4.2 This aligns with the demand for the NHO to focus on providing more support and a person-centred service and move away from the enforcement role with the proposal to create a separate Central Housing ASB team.

3.4.3 For all tenants regardless of their needs the procedure always advises staff to focus on providing the best Customer Service by being polite and professional. To treat everyone fairly with respect and dignity and adhere to data protection regulations. Tenants will also be encouraged and supported to use online facilities where possible to make service requests. The aim of the procedure is to ensure a consistent service is delivered that puts tenants and residents first.

3.4.4 Information on new tenants is passed onto Tenancy Management by Homelessness Services or the Property Lettings Team. However, NHOs are also instructed to interrogate council systems themselves to identify any support needs, support workers or risk in relation to the new tenant.

3.4.5 If it is identified that the tenant requires support to sustain their tenancy, a welfare visit or check will be carried out, a welfare case will be opened, and a welfare support plan will be developed by the NHO.

3.4.6 The NHO will provide low level advice and assistance and make referrals and signpost as appropriate. Referrals for support are often made to:

- Income Management Team – who now also have specialist Rent Management Advisors to help tenants with financial and welfare benefit support.
- UAVA – for domestic abuse support
- Sanctuary Safe Homes Team – for domestic abuse, for home security measures
- STAR – for tenancy support for vulnerable and/or complex cases
- Children’s Services – for child safeguarding and support
- Adult Social Care – for adult safeguarding and support
- Turning Point – for alcohol and/or drug dependency support
- GP or Community Mental Health Team – for health needs
- Fire Service – to carry out home fire safety checks

3.5.7 The NHO will work in partnership, across multiple agencies providing early and comprehensive interventions, to provide a holistic service to tenants who are in complex situations.

3.5.8 NHOs will maintain contact and monitor cases to ensure the support provided was effective and successful outcomes achieved for the individual using the welfare support plan.

- 3.5.9 NHOs have been advised to escalate cases to senior management if referrals are not accepted by other service areas and they feel that the tenant needs that service. It should be noted that not every tenant who requires support wants to engage, this can be out of choice or because their lifestyle is so chaotic. Thresholds for other support services have also increased, therefore, the capacity to provide people with all they support they require is not always available.
- 3.5.10 To be proactive, the service carries out a welfare data trawl and interrogates information available on tenants, to identify which tenants may require a welfare visit. Other services can also refer cases for a welfare check or visit, referrals are made by the Repairs Service, the Police and others as they come across tenants who they think may require additional support. NHOs may themselves identify the need for a welfare check when dealing with other issues for a tenant. The need for a welfare visit can happen at any point during a tenancy, in September 2021, 304 welfare visits were carried out across the City by the service.
- 3.6.11 Case example of NHO assisting tenant in new property to settle in and access services. This is his feedback:

A huge thank-you from me to you two, I'm delighted with the flat, more delighted with the way people are coming together in support to make this happen in trying times for all of us. You've both been very instrumental in helping keep me going through testing times. Blessed by the weather, today too, been like a spring day here, though it's dropping to near zero tonight. Give yourselves a pat on the back and have a great day!!

3.6 Support for complex cases – STAR

- 3.6.1 Cases referred to STAR need to meet the criteria attached at Appendix 1; this was introduced in April 2021. STAR provide tenancy support to vulnerable council tenants, some with very complex needs, some cases are intensive drug and alcohol users, with poor mental health, suicidal, chaotic and/or ex street homeless. During the Income Rent Support Pilot in 2021, STAR have not been supporting Income Management Team referrals, this has led to a reduced waiting list for the STAR service from 90 to 30 cases. However, referrals to the service have remained consistently high as more complex cases have been coming through.
- 3.6.2 The STAR service will really get involved and provide wrap around support; the service is committed to stabilising the tenancy to prevent homelessness by:
- Making initial contact, often to do this staff will telephone the tenant, drop visit, find out from other agencies where the tenant is if they are not responding to contacts. Sometimes this involves searching for tenants on the streets!
 - If the tenant is part of Project Protect or Street Lifestyle cohort, where STAR attends regular meetings the relevant agencies will coordinate a handover, prior to the tenancy commencement date.
 - Once contact is made the worker will in conjunction with the tenant, assess their needs and develop a personalised support plan and carry out a benefits check
 - Support is prioritised to ensure the tenant has their benefit entitlement, essential furniture, utilities, food, debt management support and income is maximised.

- STAR workers will advise the tenant of their responsibilities but are not responsible for any tenancy enforcement action
- Assistance with budgeting, applications to charities for financial support and help building life skills
- Depending on the needs of the tenant the service will liaise with and refer to Turning Point, Mental Health Services, GPs, Adult Social Care and charities, to get tenants all the support and help that they are eligible for and that is available to them, acting as a gate way to services.
- The service will also call multi-agency meetings to co-ordinate and strengthen the support provided for very complex or safeguarding cases
- The support aims to enable the tenant to become independent, consider volunteering or steps on the pathway to work and as tenants are able to cope better on their own an exit strategy is agreed
- There are a cohort of tenants who STAR work with, who will never cope without support and the service has remained with them to provide support longer term.

3.6.3 **The STAR AMAL team** was set up in 2015 to resettle Syrian refugees through the government foreign aid funded Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. The team worked with 45 families with 106 children who were resettled in Leicester over a 5-year period. STAR AMAL has specialist training, knowledge and specific experience of working with newly arrived refugees and has extensive experience of the practicalities of managing refugee families fleeing conflict and persecution.

3.6.5 Leicester has now agreed to participate in the relocation of Locally Employed Staff (LES) who have been supporting the coalition forces in Afghanistan. The Afghan LES and their families are being offered relocation in recognition of the fact they are at increased risk of intimidation, having worked side by side with coalition forces and officials. The STAR AMAL team are now working with families supporting them in temporary accommodation, and eventually will be supporting 10 families to be resettled primarily in Private Rented Sector accommodation in Leicester.

3.7 Performance/ Outcomes 2020 -21

- Overall Tenancy Sustainment – **96.8%**
- Tenancy Management Welfare checks – **5098** (Majority of these due to Covid)
- STAR Tenants supported – **585**
- STAR Tenants supported short term– **1,407**
- STAR Income maximised – **£969,180**
- STAR Referrals received over last 12 months – **941**

3.8. Case Examples

3.8.1 STAR – Housing Related Support Worker assisted a single parent family who moved into a new tenancy during the lock down last year, no family or friends to help and in debt with utility company. Tenant was convinced she would not cope with the tenancy. This is her feedback:

I'd like to thank you for helping me and my family.
You have helped me so much, just when we needed it.
To you it's maybe nothing much, it's just your job, but I don't think u understand how much of the strain you took of my hands. Always kept in touch, reassured me things would be ok.
And always professional.
When I moved in this house I felt I was set up to fail.. with the eon situation and no help from anyone as we was in the middle of the COVID.
I appreciate you and what you do so much.

Forever grateful

3.8.2 STAR – Housing Related Support Worker assisting young pregnant homeless woman to set up home in new tenancy. No one to help or assist her in new tenancy. This is her feedback:

I just want to start of by thanking you for everything you have done and currently are doing. I don't know how much I can thank you, and the STAR team. The amount of support I feel I have received from you guys is incredible.

Prior to speaking to you I felt anxious, alone and upset. Within minutes of speaking to you, I felt such a difference and felt like a weight was lifted off my shoulders. You have never failed to show kindness through your voice. This shows me that you are completely dedicated to your work in helping people and also take it very seriously. You made me feel so much better and I felt like I had the support system I needed especially through this difficult journey of being pregnant for the first time and homeless.

You have helped me in so many ways already and always upheld my dignity. This has made me really appreciate you and the STAR team.

Once again, Thank you always for everything you do and continue what you guys are doing, because you are putting smiles on people's faces and bringing light to our situations

3.9 Future Provision

3.9.1 We are exploring the potential of recruiting intensive support workers to work within STAR to support the more complex and chaotic cases, which are now more common. STAR and Tenancy Management staff have received training on supporting people with drug and alcohol dependencies, poor mental health and people who hoard. There is a hoarding procedure developed by the service to help officers identify the severity of hoarding and support people in these circumstances.

3.9.2 As we are increasing stock through acquisitions we are looking at the potential of having some units, which we can use as shared/ trainer accommodation for people

with complex needs to develop their skills to live independently before offering longer term accommodation.

4. Income and Rent Support Pilot

- 4.1 Over the past six months the Income Management Team have delivered the Income and Rent Support Pilot. The pilot delivered all financial and welfare benefit support for Council tenants in-house by the Rent Management Advisors (RMAs). IMT faced extremely tough challenges due to the introduction of Universal Credit and ongoing changes to tenant benefits due to Welfare Reform. They faced added pressures when the pandemic hit which exacerbated the challenges due to the state of the economy and restrictions on possession actions. This led the team to explore other creative possibilities to help maximise rental income and reduce rent arrears.
- 4.2 There are ongoing concerns around the significant financial and economic uncertainty, impact on tenants following the cessation of the governments job retention scheme (furlough), the potential surge in the number of redundancies which may affect many of our tenants. The impact of the £20 UC uplift which has now been removed by the Government.
- 4.3 The pilot expanded the RMA remit from the main objectives of setting up new UC claims, email addresses bank account, trouble-shooting UC claims and providing UC related training. Prior to the commencement of the pilot, the protocol was that officers within IMT made referrals to STAR for any issues relating to tenancy sustainment. During the pilot referrals for non-financial related support continued in line with STAR criteria and tenants already receiving support from STAR continued to receive their support. The pilot commenced on 12th April 2021 and ended on 12th October 2021. Following a successful pilot a decision was taken on 8th November 2021 at LMB to make the pilot permanent.

5. Income Management Team & Support for Tenants

- 5.1 Arrears prevention is a top priority for IMT, and staff are highly trained in a range of areas including Welfare Benefit regulations, the legal framework for rent recovery and the sensitive approaches to debt collection. The RMAs are no exception to this, and in preparation for the pilot they undertook specialist training, delivered by external partners which supplied them with the right skills and knowledge to enable them to support Council tenants. A procedure for the pilot was also designed to help provide a framework and outlined responsibilities and expectations from RMAs and officers within IMT. For every referral the RMA received, they designed a support plan which mapped out the support required and timescales to deliver the actions. This could only be designed for those tenants that engaged with the service.
- 5.2 The team were already providing an income maximisation service to all tenants. This included carrying out benefit calculations to establish entitlements, helping to make Claims for benefit and carrying out effective liaison between tenant and benefit departments to resolve claim disputes. Effective partner relationships between IMT and various department/agencies i.e. Housing Benefit and Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) encouraged timely resolutions to tenant benefit claim and queries. Where further specialist support was required, the

specially trained RMA's worked in partnership with other advice providers and arranged for this support to be provided for example, Citizens Advice.

- 5.3 When tenants fall into financial difficulties and are unable to pay the rent, RMAs are available to provide support and guidance offering basic money advice. As the RMAs are in-house within IMT, they were able to help and support early on, to avoid matters getting worse for tenant and from a rent collection perspective. The team have been carrying out multi-agency meetings where appropriate to explore tenants options and prevent homelessness. The RMAs have actively participated in these meetings during the pilot and were available to attend and provide input at short notice and on any last-minute urgent cases as the team priorities, objectives and goals are the same.
- 5.4 During the last **6 months**, the RMAs received a total number of **280 referrals** which compares to, **273 referrals in the previous 12 months** for 2020/21 before the commencement of the pilot. This is a substantial increase in the number of referrals received where tenants have been identified in need of welfare benefit and / or debt support. The next step is to open up referrals to be received from any organisation and other internal teams.
- 5.5 From the 280 referrals received, IMT would normally have dealt with **159** of these cases under the normal referral route for RMAs as the predominant support was **UC related**. IMT would have referred **77 to STAR**, under the previous operating procedures where tenants required support with welfare benefits and basic debt advice. A total of **44 referrals** would have been worked on collaboratively with STAR, as tenants had a combination of UC and other welfare benefit / debt related needs for example, support with applying for Personal Independence Payments (PIP).
- 5.6 Feedback from STAR shows that IMT made up over 50% of their referrals in previous years but over time this has reduced. In the last 12 months STAR have received a total number of **941 referrals** from various agencies and **15%** of these referrals were sent by IMT. In the 6-month period before the pilot started, STAR received **561 referrals** with **24%** of these referrals from IMT however, since the start of the pilot this figure has dropped down to only **2 referrals** being made to STAR which is a substantial reduction in numbers. STAR waiting list has reduced in 2021 to **30 tenants** compared to the previous **80 tenants** and they continue to provide specialist support to the most complex cases in connection to other tenancy related issues.
- 5.7 The team measured the number of cases which both IMT and STAR worked on simultaneously. IMT identified from the 280 cases, only **10 cases** were already open to STAR and this were predominantly on cases which involved the Revolving Door Team. This figure is based on statistics collated by staff and may vary slightly. Despite this slight overlap, the teams were able to support the tenants with the Welfare Benefits and confer jointly on cases to produce good outcomes for the tenants.
- 5.8 A waiting list was introduced as there was potential for referrals to outweigh the RMA capacity. However, the average wait time for referrals to be allocated was only **2 working days**. The current active caseload is **151 cases** and currently each RMA manages **25 cases** on average at any given time.

- 5.9 The referrals were marked within a priority banding high, medium, and low. **High** defines tenants at immediate risk of homelessness i.e. pending evictions which amounted to **15%** from the 280 referrals received. **Medium** priority referrals were tenants who were at risk of court possession proceedings equated to **73%** of the referrals. **Low** priority referrals where tenants had low level arrears with no legal action being considered were **12%**.
- 5.10 The referrals were measured by tenants main vulnerability and need for support. A total of **181** from the 280 cases had been identified as vulnerable. The category with the highest percentage was mental health with a total of **39%** of tenants affected. The next highest was **14%** with **disabilities**, 9% for language barriers and elderly tenants, 7% with history of homelessness and 5% with learning difficulties. Examples of the remainder of referrals that fell below the 5% level included, Bereavement, Domestic Violence, Substance / Alcohol, first tenancy and prison cases.
- 5.11 RMA's supported tenants to claim welfare benefits and discretionary housing Payments (DHP). This also included supporting tenants with backdated payments and reconsideration of welfare benefits. In the last 6 months a total value of **£49k** was achieved by supporting a third of the referrals (**115 tenants**). Decisions on backdates, mandatory reconsiderations can take a few months to resolve and reconsiderations on disability related benefits can take even longer for resolutions. DHPs are completed by Income Management Officer's alongside the RMA's and the outcomes achieved by IMO's is not included within this report.
- 5.12 The cases are separated into two types of support 'Short-Term' usually up to two months and 'Long-Term' up to six months. Based on the cases closed so far under the pilot, a total number of **86%** of cases were deemed **short-term** support and **14%** of cases required more **longer-term** support. This analysis has been conducted on 125 of the closed cases from the 280 referrals received.
- 5.13 **Table 2** shows the type of support provided. The numbers indicate total applications made or debt /budgeting support provided. Some tenants may have received support under each category and this is included within the figures.

Support Type	Total
Welfare Benefits including HB and UC	94 Applications
Basic Debt / Budgeting Advice	31 Tenants Supported by RMAs
Community Support Grants / Charities / Food parcels	37 Applications and referrals made

- 5.14 RMAs referred tenants for more specialised support where required. A total number of **12** tenants were referred to CiTAL and **9** from the 12 engaged with the service and were moved on to more specialist advice agencies where appropriate. A further **28** tenants were referred for Digital Support. These numbers are deemed low in comparison to the number of referrals received and more needs to be done to encourage tenants to take up specialist support where this is required.
- 5.15 The team pursue legal action only as a last resort when all opportunities to sustain tenancies have been exhausted. From the 280 cases, **10 cases** are being pursued with legal actions due to non-engagement or persistent non-payment despite RMA

intervention. This demonstrates that **96%** of the cases are being helped with tenancy sustainment by RMAs as the support has successfully removed any threat of possession proceedings. On current and active cases, it demonstrates there is further scope to provide tenancy sustainment and support. For ongoing eviction cases RMAs provide frequent support and maintain efforts to engage with tenants until such time the eviction is cancelled or goes ahead.

- 5.16 The work was measured, and feedback obtained from customers and referrers. From **18** tenant feedback forms, **83%** felt informed about the support offered and were satisfied with the overall service provided by the RMAs. A total of **94%** said they were supported to find the best way possible to manage their rent payments and would use the RMA service again in the future. The remaining small percentage responded “maybe” to the same questions. As measured “Soft Outcomes” to help identify tenants confidence levels *after* their support had ended. It also helped to determine if the tenant felt empowered to be able to manage their claims for benefits without support in the future. An initial assessment gives scores between 1 and 5 based on tenant confidence. When the case is closed the assessment is then carried out again and re-scored to establish any improvement.

If the score is higher than when the support initially started, it demonstrates an improvement in tenant’s confidence. Based on the 125 closed cases, **62%** of tenants confirmed they had a **marked improvement** in their level of confidence. The remaining **38%** were tenants who felt their confidence levels **did not improve** or did not engage with the service.

Additional comments from customers

- Happy with the service provided
- 100% satisfied and found service very professional.
- Very good service
- He did an amazing job he understood my mental health and i felt i could ask him for help
- Came to my house and sorted out all my benefits and explained how much rent i have to pay.
- Excellent service resolved my UC arrears and untidy tenancy

Internal IMT staff completed feedback forms as majority of the referrals were made by them. From the **38 referrers**, **74%** fed back there had been a positive impact on the tenants rent account and **84%** felt there had been some positive impact with tenant engagement since RMAs were working on the case. A further **84%** felt there had been some positive outcomes to help sustain tenancies.

Additional comments from referrers

- I very much appreciate the RMA support
- Positive outcome achieved and good joint working
- Brilliant with this tenant and has improved engagement with the tenant.
- Happy with service RMA provided and kept informed and updated on regular basis.
- Not straight forward cases good teamwork involved between various agencies

6. Financial Implications

6.1 This report sets out the work of the different teams providing support to tenants. Finance should be consulted should any developments to the service be considered.

Stuart McAvoy – Principal Accountant

Appendix 1

STAR eligibility assessment for Council & HomeCome tenants

(Critical) C over 100 points

(High) H under 100 points

Have to meet one criteria from each section to meet the threshold for support

Housing Need
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. People moving from temporary accommodation and eviction cases2. People who have been identified and referred to STAR in last 2 years.3. Tenants at risk of losing their tenancy4. Hoarding (refer to clutter rating level 6 and above in Hoarding Procedure)
Vulnerability Identified
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. History of homelessness within 2 years2. Essential furniture/household items required3. Vulnerable adult at risk: self-neglect and/or risk of abuse and harm (including modern slavery)4. Substance Use5. Severe physical health problems: including restricted mobility/terminal illness6. High level mental health needs: diagnosed/receiving support from special mental health services (e.g. has a CPN, psychiatrist, outpatient from mental health unit)7. Learning difficulties8. Cognitive impairment (brain injury)9. Sensory disability10. Domestic abuse in last 2 years11. Care leavers (25 or under)12. Child Protection13. Person from abroad with benefit issues14. Loan shark15. Gambling16. Ex Armed Forces
Functional ability-Evidence required
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Self-neglect2. Significant problems with finances or budgeting3. Chaotic lifestyle4. Language or literacy difficulties
Support networks
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lives alone2. No Social care involvement3. No or inadequate/ineffective support network

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

History of homelessness within 2 years	20
Essential furniture required	20
Vulnerable at risk-self neglect and/or risk of abuse and harm (Modern Slavery)	20
Physical or Restricted Mobility/Terminal Illness	20
High level mental health -diagnosis/under specialist Mental Health Service	20
Learning Difficulties	20
Cognitive impairment – brain injury	20
Sensory Disability	20
Domestic Abuse in last 2 years	20
Care Leavers (25 or under)	20
Child Protection	20
Person from abroad with benefit issues	20
Loan Shark	20
Gambling	20
Ex Armed Forces	20
High Risk Service User – MAPPA/MARAC/MOSOVO	15
Suicide/Self Harm	15
Introductory Tenancy	15
Nil Income	15
Benefit Cap	15
Issues with supply of utilities	15
Rent Arrears	10
Universal Credit Issues managing claim	10
Housing Benefit Problems/Housing Element	10
Benefit Problems/ Sanctions	10
High Level Priority Debts totalling 5K or subject to enforcement	10
Non-Dependant Charge	10
Under Occupying/Bedroom Tax	10
Substance Use	10
Ex-offender – subject to licence/probation	10
Digitally Excluded	10
Age: 16 to 25 or 55 Plus	10
Mental Health – GP managed	5
Physical Health – GP managed	5
ASB/Harassment	5
Child Behavioural Issues	5
Children under 18 in household/Pregnant	5
Other household members disability	5
Carer for resident vulnerable adult	5
Poor Literacy	5
Language	5
No Bank Account	5
Name	Date
	Total



Housing Revenue Account Budget (including Capital Programme) 2022/23

Housing Scrutiny Commission: 10th January 2022
Full Council: 23rd February 2022

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr. Elly Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report authors: Chris Burgin, Director of Housing & Stuart McAvoy, Principal Accountant

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to describe the City Mayor's draft budget for 2022/23, for consideration by the Housing Scrutiny Commission, and by the Council on the 23rd February 2022.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The financial landscape of the four-year period from 2016 to 2020 was dominated by the government requirement that rents be reduced by 1% each year. Despite this pressure, the HRA delivered balanced budgets. For the 5 years from 2020 rents are permitted to increase by up to CPI+1%. Whilst this relaxation will help to sustain a financially viable HRA and support investment in the housing stock, the continuing impact of Right to Buy (RTB) sales on rental income persists.
- 2.2 Significant investment is being undertaken to replace properties lost through RTB. This is being done through investment in energy efficient new build housing and by acquiring properties on the open market. This helps to sustain the future finances of the HRA, and further investment is proposed within this report. In addition to the investment in replacing properties there is a comprehensive capital maintenance programme in place to ensure that homes are maintained, and this is supplemented with investment into the wider estate. The proposals in this report support the continuation of this approach.
- 2.3 This report recommends that the budget for 2022/23 is set as a balanced budget, with a core rent increase of 4.1%.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Full Council is recommended to:
- i) Note the financial pressures on the HRA and comment on the proposals for delivering a balanced budget;
 - ii) Note the comments from the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum at Appendix G, the Housing Scrutiny Commission at Appendix H, and the Overview Select Committee at Appendix I;
 - iii) Approve the Housing Revenue and Capital budgets for 2022/23;
 - iv) Approve rent and service charge changes for 2022/23 as follows:
 - 4.1% increase to core rent;
 - 4.1% increase to garage rent;
 - 2.5% increase to Hostel rent and service charges;
 - 7.29% increase in District Heating charges;
 - 2.0% increase to all other service charges;
 - v) Note the equality impact assessment of the proposed revenue and capital reductions required to present a balanced budget, at Appendix J;
 - vi) Note that the scheme of virement (included within the General Fund Revenue Budget report which is also on your agenda) applies also to the HRA budget with total expenditure and total income acting as budget ceilings for this purpose;
 - vii) Note that the capital strategy in that report applies also to the HRA;

- viii) Agree that the delegations and determinations applicable to the main capital programme (which is also on your agenda) shall also apply to the capital programme in this report.

4. Report

4.1 The overall aim of Leicester City Council's Housing Division is to provide a decent home within the reach of every citizen of Leicester. This underpins the priorities for the HRA budget.

4.2 The HRA operates in a self-financing environment. Spending priorities are made in the context of needing to achieve the right balance between investing in, maintaining and improving the housing stock, providing landlord services to tenants, building new homes and supporting and repaying housing debt of £238m. The HRA budget is set by modelling expected levels of income and expenditure.

4.3 Revenue Cost Pressures

4.3.1 The primary external pressure on the HRA continues to be reduced rental income arising from the loss of stock through RTB sales, as well as inflation on staffing costs and materials. Table 1, below, summarises the known pressures and budget growth requirements within the HRA:

Table 1: Revenue Cost Pressures	2022/23 £000
RTB Sales	1,189
Inflation (including staffing costs)	1,303
Interest and Debt	516
Energy Costs	551
Capital Expenditure Funded from Revenue	1,250
Void Costs	829
Business Systems	550
Total Cost Pressures	6,188

4.3.2 Right to Buy

Sales of properties through Right to Buy can give discounts to tenants of up to 70% of the property value. From 2012 the government 'reinvigorated' the scheme by increasing the maximum discount, such that for Leicester it is now £84,600 compared with £24,000 in 2012. Although sales reduced during the height of Covid restrictions, a resurgence in interest from tenants is now being seen. Over the last 5 years nearly 1,900 properties have been lost from the HRA, with a consequent loss of rental income. In addition, the economies of scale that come from managing a large portfolio are gradually being eroded. It is forecast that rental income will be nearly £1.2m lower in 2022/23 as a result of 350 Right to Buy sales.

4.3.3 Inflation

Employee costs are forecast to rise by just under £1m in 2022/23, largely as a result of an assumed 2.5% pay increase alongside known increases to pension contributions and the 1.25% increase in employers' National Insurance (pending the introduction of the Health & Social Care Levy). Some of the most significant inflationary pressures are

being experienced in building materials, and the HRA is likely to suffer from increased costs during 2022/23.

4.3.4 Interest & Debt

HRA finances are improved through the building and acquisition of properties for affordable rent, and this has expanded significantly in recent years. Borrowing is used to part-finance these properties, and a proportion of this debt is repaid each year. The growth in the number of affordable properties means that more debt is now being repaid each year. This is more than offset by the additional £2.2m of income from these properties, highlighted at section 4.5.2.

4.3.5 Energy Costs

Although the Council purchases energy in advance, and has been able to secure favourable prices, it is predicted that costs will rise by 20% for 2022/23, presenting a pressure of over £0.5m. In part, this is a reflection of advantageous prices that have been secured for 2021/22.

4.3.6 Capital Expenditure Funded from Revenue

The default source of funding for the maintenance aspects of the HRA capital programme (i.e. excluding affordable housing) is from revenue resources, which in 2021/22 amounted to £16.2m. In 2022/23 the figure increases by £1.25m to £17.46m, drawing on additional resources and representing a revenue pressure. These schemes are detailed in section 4.6, below.

4.3.7 Void Costs

There will always be periods of time during which properties are not occupied and rental income is lost. Historically, this has been dominated by the void period between the end of one tenancy and the start of the next. With the purchasing of properties from the open market it can take time to complete the required refurbishment works, especially for those properties that have been empty for some time or bought as part of a portfolio. This means we are liable to pay Council Tax whilst void. These combined lead to a £0.8m cost pressure.

4.3.8 Business Systems

In 2016 a new system was introduced for holding and managing Housing information and was paid from the capital budget. The system is now fully embedded and therefore the staff and continued development is a revenue cost going forward.

4.4 Rents & Service Charges

4.4.1 Following four years of rent reductions from 2016, which reduced rental income by £3.1m p.a., 2022/23 is the third of 5 years in which rents may be increased by up to CPI+1%. CPI as at the end of September 2021 was 3.1%, meaning that rental increases of up to 4.1% are permitted. The recommendation of this report is to apply a rental increase of 4.1%, based on the pressures detailed in this report, and the need to maintain a programme of capital maintenance.

4.4.2 Whilst garage rents are set separately to dwelling rents it is proposed to increase these in line with the core rental increase of 4.1% (September CPI +1%).

4.4.3 Service charges should be set with the intention of recovering the full cost of providing the service. Currently, tenants and leaseholders are benefitting from charges which

are set below the cost of delivery. Whilst addressing this disparity will be the subject of a future report, it is proposed that for 2022/23 an increase in service charges of 2% be applied.

4.4.4 Approximately 2,400 tenants and 800 leaseholders are supplied heating and hot water through the District Heating scheme. Costs for these tenants are charged based on the underlying cost of fuel, averaged on a 3-year basis. Through advanced purchasing of gas and electricity tenants on the scheme benefit from buying when the cost is low, and to an extent, are insulated from short-term fluctuations in prices. This advanced purchasing has meant that increases in costs for the scheme, whilst still significant, are somewhat lower than that being experienced in the market more generally. Wholesale gas prices from January to October 2021 rose by 250% nationally. It is proposed that the prices under the district heating scheme be increased by 7.29%.

4.4.5 Hostel rents and service charges were re-calculated for 2021/22 in order to ensure that expenditure is fully re-couped. Costs for the service are expected to increase by 2.5% in 2022/23 so an equivalent increase in rents and service charges is proposed.

4.5 Revenue Savings

4.5.1 The proposals within this report meet the identified budget pressure of £6.188m in 2022/23. The proposed changes to rent and service charges at section 4.4 would result in additional income of £2.9m. Table 2, below, summarises the additional income and proposed savings to deliver a balanced budget:

Table 2: Additional Income & Reductions in Expenditure	2022/23 £000
Dwelling Rent & Service Charges	(2,934)
Rent from Supply of New Housing	(2,161)
Running Costs (incl. Buildings)	(480)
Staffing	(400)
External Contractors	(213)
Total Savings	(6,188)

4.5.2 Rental income on New Build and Acquired Properties

The HRA has embarked on an extensive programme of acquiring properties on the open market to increase the number of homes available at an affordable rent. In addition, a programme of building new properties on Council-owned land is underway. Additional rental income will accrue of just under £2.2m in 2022/23 as a consequence of this.

4.5.3 Running Costs (incl. Buildings)

Partly as a consequence of new ways of working, savings have been identified on buildings which will not be required going forward. The profile of team running costs has also changed over time, enabling the release of budget savings. Further savings will be realised from a reduction in the need for vehicles.

4.5.4 Staffing

A reduction in staffing across the Repairs & Maintenance and Gas teams will be achieved as a result of there being fewer properties held within the HRA, saving £330k.

A further £70k will be achieved through rationalisation of the Transformation Team, which provides project support and coordination.

4.5.5 External Contractors

External contractors are used in a number of areas where work is demand-led, and underspends in 2021/22 indicate that budget of £213k can be released as savings. The largest aspect of this in relation to structural repairs (such as underpinning when foundations fail or the insertion of steel lintels above windows).

4.5.6 In summary, the proposals outlined in this report for 2022/23 will meet the amount required to balance the revenue budget without drawing upon reserves. Appendix A shows a high-level breakdown of the proposed HRA revenue budgets for the year.

4.6 **Capital Expenditure**

4.6.1 The 2021/22 capital programme (excluding budgets slipped from previous years) is £87.8m, with £70m of this relating to the Affordable Housing programme of building and buying properties.

4.6.2 Appendix E outlines the way in which capital works are identified as being required in council dwellings. Appendix F provides wider details of the priorities which direct HRA expenditure, including achievements throughout 2021/22.

4.6.3 Appendix B shows the proposed capital programme for 2022/23. Some schemes fall out of the programme, including one-off retro-fitting feasibility work and the Bridlespur Way refurbishment, and Fencing replacement. The following changes are proposed:

4.6.4 Kitchens & Bathrooms

During 2021/22 up to 600 kitchens and bathrooms will have been installed, despite contractor issues having been experienced. Contractor availability is expected to be restricted into 2022/23 with no more than £3m expected to be spent during the year, a reduction on the £3.6m current annual budget. This will enable 825 kitchens and bathrooms to be installed.

4.6.5 Boilers

Most of the non-standard boilers have now been replaced, meaning that boilers are lasting longer and being repaired more easily. This results in a reduction in the capital budget requirement from £3.4m to £2.8m. 650 boilers will have been replaced in 2021/22, and the proposed budget for 2022/23 will be sufficient for a further 900.

4.6.6 Windows & Doors

Whilst the programme of works for replacement of windows and doors is now complete, it has been identified that significant work will be required in future years beyond 2022/23. It is necessary to set aside resources now to ensure adequate provision.

4.6.7 Door Entry

The upgrading of door entry systems has been suspended pending a review of more efficient cloud-based solutions. A budget for this in 2022/23 will therefore not be required.

4.6.8 District Heating Maintenance

Maintenance work is progressing well, such that this budget can be reduced by £75k in 2022/23.

4.6.9 Communal & Environmental Works

The continuation of the £750k budget, distributed across the city, will enable works such as parking improvements, resurfacing courtyards, and improving the security of estates by the installation of gates.

4.6.10 Public Realm Works

A 3-year public realm improvement programme will continue into 2022/23, totalling £5m of investment in the St Matthews and St Peters areas of the city.

4.6.11 Adaptations for Incoming Tenants

Additional budget was added into the capital programme for 2021/22 to adapt properties and make them suitable for people on the Council housing waiting list. This work will now take place in 2022/23.

4.6.12 Fire Risk Works

Slippage has been reported against this budget throughout the year, linked to a national delay in the manufacturers of fire doors gaining accredited approval for their use from government. The slipped budget from 2021/22 will be sufficient for 2022/23, with no additional budget requirement. By the end of 2021/22, sprinkler systems will have been installed in 3 of the 5 high storey tower blocks, with the remaining 2 blocks scheduled in.

4.6.13 Property Conversions and Extensions

£500k was added to the 20/21 programme for use in 2020/21 and 2021/22 to help address overcrowding in properties. A further £250k will be required in 2022/23 to continue the work on extending/converting properties.

4.6.14 Affordable Housing – Acquisitions & New Build

In November 2019 Full Council approved the addition of £70m for the purchase of properties and the extension of the Council's new-build programme; the 2021/22 budget increased this to £100m. Subject to the availability of suitable property and the speed of the new build programme, the expectation is that this budget will be fully spent by the end of March 2022. By the end of the year this will have helped secure approximately 1,250 additional properties in the city.

An addition of £100m will enable the momentum to be maintained, providing funding for, amongst others, the phase 2 sites at Saffron Lane and Lanesborough Road, and Stocking Farm. The amount being added assumes a level of future RTB sales, and receipts flowing from them. Should fewer units be lost to RTB sales then the scope of the programme will need to be managed accordingly, to ensure that RTB receipts continue to finance 40% of the costs.

The Housing building programme has delivered new homes that have improved energy efficiency and this year work commenced on our most highly energy efficient council homes. These homes will have EPC energy rating of A, will be much better for the climate and more efficient for those living in them.

4.6.15 Dawn Centre Reconfiguration

The Dawn Centre provides accommodation-based support for single homeless households. It currently has 44 self-contained rooms, which could be increased by 8 through £450k of work, which includes a reconfigured and improved reception.

Increasing the capacity of the centre will have a positive impact in reducing expenditure on bed and breakfast accommodation.

4.6.16 Climate Change and Decarbonisation

The current capital programme includes an investment of £1.8m in Green Homes, supporting external wall insulation in hundreds of council properties across the city. Underspends on the capital programme during 2021/22 have also enabled the Council to bid into government grants, leading a consortium bid to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. In particular, this facilitates additional insulation works and air source heat pumps which, as well as helping to address the climate emergency, also saves tenants money on their energy bills. £900k of HRA resource was identified for this purpose. Moving forward, capital underspends cannot be relied upon to finance such bids, and there is a need to ensure funds are set aside in advance. £900k is included within the proposed 2022/23 capital budget for this purpose.

4.6.17 St Matthews Concrete Works

Survey work is currently being undertaken on the concrete across the St Matthews Estate, including balconies and walkways. Until the survey work is complete it isn't possible to identify the scale or cost of the work required, but provision has been made to commence the works in 2022/23.

4.6.18 The financing of the proposed capital programme is shown in the table below. This results in an increase in funding from revenue of £1.25m in 2022/23, reflecting the figure at paragraph 4.3.6.

Table 3: Financing of HRA Capital Programme	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000
Funded from Revenue	16,210	17,460
Funded from Reserves	1,600	0
Funded from Right to Buy Receipts (incl. Allowable Debt)	29,000	50,000
Funded from Borrowing	41,000	50,000
	87,810	117,460

4.6.19 Authority for amendments to the HRA capital programme is in line with that for the corporate programme as set out in the Capital Programme Report to Council on 23rd February 2022.

4.7 **HRA Reserves**

4.7.1 Drawing down on reserves in an attempt to avoid the need to make savings is only viable as a short-term approach to meeting any budget shortfall. Reserves are better utilised in meeting one-off costs, to support the delivery of long-term efficiencies and providing cover for major repairs. In keeping with this approach, no reserves are proposed to be used to balance the budget for 2022/23.

4.7.2 Projections of the HRA reserve position at the end of 2022/23 indicate that there will be only limited unallocated reserves, in the region of £4.6m. Given the long-term financial risks facing the HRA, it is considered prudent not to make use of these funds at the current time.

Forecast Opening Reserves Balance as at 1 st April 2022	£33.1m
Amount held to cover minimum working balances	£5.0m
Amount held to finance prior years' capital approvals (including policy provisions)	£10.4m

Earmarked for future anticipated calls on reserves	£13.1m
Forecast Unallocated Reserves Balance as at 31st March 2023	£4.6m

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

5.1.1 This report is exclusively concerned with financial issues.

Colin Sharpe, Deputy Director of Finance (37 4081)

5.2 Legal implications

5.2.1 The Council is obliged to set a budget for an accounting year that will not show a deficit (S76 Local Government and Housing Act 1989).

5.2.2 The Council is also required to ring-fence the HRA to ensure that only monies received and spent for obligations and powers under the Housing Act 1985 can be paid into and out of the HRA (S75 and Schedule 4 Local Government and Housing Act 1989).

Jeremy Rainbow - Principal Lawyer (Litigation) – 37 1435

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

5.3.1 Housing is responsible for 34% of Leicester's overall carbon emissions. Following the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in February 2019 and launch of the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy & Action Plan, addressing these emissions is vital to meeting our ambition to make Leicester a carbon neutral city, particularly through the Council's own housing, where it has the highest level of influence and control.

5.3.2 Opportunities to reduce the energy use and carbon emissions of properties should be identified and implemented wherever possible. In the case of newly built or purchased dwellings this means meeting a high standard of energy efficiency, as provided in climate change implications for relevant reports. Additionally, the programme of maintenance for existing housing properties should provide opportunities to improve their energy efficiency, which should be investigated where practical. Improving energy efficiency should also help to ensure that housing reaches a high standard, reduce energy bills for tenants and helps to limit maintenance costs.

5.3.3 This is reflected within the report, including in section '4.6.16 Decarbonisation', which provides details of investment in energy efficiency measures and bids into government grants including the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund to deliver further works. As noted in the report the Council is also delivering new EPC A-rated low-carbon housing through its building programme. Appendix F provides further details as part of 'Priority three – Making Leicester a low carbon city', including a programme of staff Carbon Literacy training.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

6. Background information and other papers:

None

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix A: Proposed HRA Revenue Budget 2022/23

Appendix B: Proposed HRA Capital Programme 2022/23

Appendix C: Other Service Charges and Payments 2022/23

Appendix D: Leicester Average Rents Comparison

Appendix E: Planning Capital Works in Council Dwellings

Appendix F: How Priorities Are Assessed for HRA Expenditure

Appendix G: Feedback from Consultation with Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum

Appendix H: Minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Commission

Appendix I: Minutes of the Overview Select Committee

Appendix J: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a "key decision"?

No

**Proposed HRA Revenue Budget
2022/23**

	- 2022/23 -			
	2021/22 Current Budget £000	2022/23 Budget Pressures £000	2022/23 Savings & Reductions £000	Proposed 2022/23 Budget £000
Income				
Dwelling & Non-Dwelling Rent	(74,851)	1,662	(5,027)	(78,216)
Service Charges	(5,798)	0	(168)	(5,966)
Total Income	(80,649)	1,662	(5,195)	(84,182)
Expenditure				
Management & Landlord Services	20,311	1,714	(187)	21,838
Repairs & Maintenance	25,253	1,005	(806)	25,452
Interest on Borrowing	8,870	516	0	9,386
Charges for Support Services	4,221	40	0	4,261
Contribution to GF Services	5,784	1	0	5,785
	64,439	3,276	(993)	66,722
Capital Funded From Revenue	16,210	1,250	0	17,460
(Surplus) / Deficit Before Reserves	0	6,188	(6,188)	0
Funding From Reserves	0	0	0	0
Contributions To Reserves	0	0	0	0
(Surplus) / Deficit	0			0

HRA Capital Programme 2022/23

The table below shows the 2021/22 capital programme as at October 2021 (excluding budgets slipped from previous years' programmes), and the proposed programme for 2022/23. All of the schemes listed for 2022/23 are immediate starts.

	2021/22 Capital Programme £000	2022/23 Capital Programme Additions £000
Kitchens & Bathrooms (para 4.6.4)	3,600	3,000
Boilers (para 4.6.5)	3,425	2,800
Re-wiring	1,760	1,760
Re-roofing	900	900
Soffits & Facia	350	350
Windows and Doors (para 4.6.6)	150	1,000
Door Entry (para 4.6.7)	150	0
District Heating Maintenance (para 4.6.8)	725	650
Communal Improvements & Environmental Works (para 4.6.9)	750	750
Public Realm Works (para 4.6.10)	1,900	1,900
Disabled Adaptations	900	900
Adaptations for Incoming Tenants (para 4.6.11)	300	0
Fire Risk Works (para 4.6.12)	850	0
Safety Works including Targeted Alarms	300	300
Loft Insulation	100	100
Waylighting	150	150
Sheltered Housing Improvements (ASC)	100	100
Concrete Paths Renewal	100	100
Property Conversions & Extensions (para 4.6.13)	0	250
Affordable Housing - Acquisitions & New Build (para 4.6.14)	70,000	100,000
Business Systems	550	0
Fencing Replacement	200	0
Bridlespur Way Refurbishment	300	0
Dawn Centre Reconfiguration (para 4.6.15)	0	450
Climate Change and Decarbonisation (para 4.6.16)	250	900
St Matthews Concrete Estate Work (para 4.6.17)	0	1,100
Total Capital Programme	87,810	117,460

Other Service Charges and Payments

It is proposed that the payments and charges shown in the table be as follows:

Service Charge	Details of Charges
Replacement Rent Swipe Cards	The charge for a replacement swipe card is £5.00.
Pre-sale questionnaires from solicitors and mortgage providers	Housing Services receive a large number of requests from mortgage providers and solicitors for information in connection with property type / condition and tenancy history. A charge is levied to recover the cost to the council of providing this information. The charge for this is £125 (Note that requests in connection with tenants' statutory rights under Right to Buy legislation are excluded from this charge).
Security Fob Replacements	Where tenants and leaseholders require a replacement security fob these are charged at £10 each.

Payments	Details of Payments																																
Disturbance Allowance	<p>Disturbance allowances are paid when a full property electrical rewire is carried out to an occupied LCC-owned property. A disturbance allowance can also be paid where it is necessary to undertake major works in an occupied property. The disturbance allowances are as follows:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Bedsit</td> <td>£130</td> <td>4-Bed</td> <td>£230</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1-Bed</td> <td>£155</td> <td>5-Bed</td> <td>£255</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2-Bed</td> <td>£180</td> <td>6-Bed</td> <td>£280</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3-Bed</td> <td>£205</td> <td>7-Bed</td> <td>£305</td> </tr> </table>	Bedsit	£130	4-Bed	£230	1-Bed	£155	5-Bed	£255	2-Bed	£180	6-Bed	£280	3-Bed	£205	7-Bed	£305																
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2-Bed	£180	6-Bed	£280																														
3-Bed	£205	7-Bed	£305																														
Decorating Allowances	<p>Decorating allowances are paid to new tenants based on the condition of the property on a per room basis. The allowances are paid through a voucher scheme with a major DIY chain. Current allowances are set out below:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>Bathroom</td> <td>£45.00</td> <td>Halls (flats/bungalows)</td> <td>£45.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kitchen</td> <td>£56.25</td> <td>Hall/Stairs/Landing</td> <td>£78.75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lounge</td> <td>£67.50</td> <td>Large Bedroom</td> <td>£67.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dining Room</td> <td>£67.50</td> <td>Middle Bedroom</td> <td>£56.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WC (where separate)</td> <td>£22.50</td> <td>Small Bedroom</td> <td>£36.00</td> </tr> </table> <p>The amount payable is capped as follows:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px;"> <tr> <td>3+ bed house / maisonette</td> <td>£300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3+ bed bungalow / flat</td> <td>£250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 bed house / maisonette</td> <td>£250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 bed flat / bungalow</td> <td>£200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 bed flat / bungalow</td> <td>£150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bedsit</td> <td>£100</td> </tr> </table>	Bathroom	£45.00	Halls (flats/bungalows)	£45.00	Kitchen	£56.25	Hall/Stairs/Landing	£78.75	Lounge	£67.50	Large Bedroom	£67.50	Dining Room	£67.50	Middle Bedroom	£56.25	WC (where separate)	£22.50	Small Bedroom	£36.00	3+ bed house / maisonette	£300	3+ bed bungalow / flat	£250	2 bed house / maisonette	£250	2 bed flat / bungalow	£200	1 bed flat / bungalow	£150	Bedsit	£100
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Bedsit	£100																																

Average Rents Comparison

The table below compares the rent levels for different types of property in the HRA with rents for similar sized properties across the city.

Property Type	HRA 2021/22	Formula Rent 2021/22	Housing Assoc. 2019/20	Private Sector (LHA rate) 2021/22	Private Sector (City Wide) 2019/20
Room only	-	-	-	£78.00	£91.38
Bedsit (studio)	£57.64	£65.41	£58.06	-	£96.69
1 bed	£64.83	£69.83	£68.79	£103.56	£121.15
2 bed	£76.46	£80.47	£81.15	£130.03	£150.46
3 bed	£85.22	£89.40	£88.59	£155.34	£167.08
4 bed	£97.51	£101.10	£105.29	£205.97	£246.69
5 bed	£104.21	£109.21	£109.78		
6 bed	£118.17	£115.44	£122.95		

Planning Capital Works in Council Dwellings

Each defined element within a council property is upgraded or renewed in line with good practice, legislative requirements and the changing needs and expectations of our tenants. The table below identifies some of the main criteria for planning major works in council dwellings:

Component for replacement	Leicester's replacement condition criteria	Decent Homes Standard minimum age
Bathroom	All properties to have a bathroom for life by 2036	30 - 40 years
Central heating boiler	Based on assessed condition from annual service	15 years (future life expectancy of boilers is expected to be on average 12 years)
Chimney	Based on assessed condition from the Stock Condition Survey / Housing Health and Safety Rating System	50 years
Windows and Doors	Based on assessed condition from the Stock Condition Survey / Housing Health and Safety Rating System	40 years
Electrics	Every 30 years	30 years
Kitchen	All properties to have an upgraded kitchen by 2036	20 – 30 years
Roof	Based on assessed condition for the Stock Condition Survey / Housing Health and Safety Rating System	50 years (20 years for flat roofs)
Wall finish (external)	Based on assessed condition from the Stock Condition Survey / Housing Health and Safety Rating System	80 years
Wall structure	Based on assessed condition from the Stock Condition Survey / Housing Health and Safety Rating System	60 years

Asset data for all HRA stock is held on the Northgate IT system. This includes the age, construction type, number of bedrooms, type and age of boiler, the last time the lighting and heating circuits were rewired etc. Condition survey data is also held for certain external elements such as roofs and chimneys, external paths, windows and doors etc.

The proposed capital budget for 2022/23 is not purely based on life cycle and condition survey data; major elements are pre-inspected before they are added to the programme and the repairs history for the property is checked. For example, all roofs are pre-inspected before the order is sent to the contractor. Likewise, all electrical

installations are tested at 30 years and a decision is made whether to carry out a full rewire or part upgrade of the circuits. Properties are not added to the kitchen programme if they have had major repair work carried out in the previous 5 years.

Requests for additions to the capital programme are also received from the Repairs Team if an element requires replacement rather than repair. For example, a roof repair may result in the property being added to the programme.

Some works are reactive such as Disabled Adaptations. There is a joint working protocol between Housing and Adult Social Care, which allocates priority points to each case.

DRAFT

How Priorities are Assessed for HRA Expenditure

The overall aim of Leicester City Council's Housing Division is to provide a decent home within the reach of every citizen of Leicester. Under this aim the priorities for the HRA budget are:

- Providing Decent Homes
- Making our communities and neighbourhoods places where people want to live and keeping in touch with our tenants
- Making Leicester a low carbon city by improving the energy efficiency of homes
- Providing appropriate housing to match people's changing needs
- Making Leicester a place to do business by creating jobs and supporting the local economy

This appendix sets out how we are meeting these priorities and plans for investment in our 19,984 council homes and their neighbourhoods.

Priority one – Providing Decent Homes

Just under 1 in 7 homes in Leicester is a council house, flat, maisonette or bungalow. 13.6% of all homes in the city are council homes. It is crucially important that we look after these assets, not just for current tenants, but for those who will live in them for many years to come. When we plan the Housing Capital Programme, we must consider what investment will be needed over at least the next 40 years, not just the next three or four years. We must ensure we do not let the programmes for essential items with long life spans fall behind, for example roofs, boilers, re-wiring, kitchens and bathrooms.

The Government's Decent Homes target was met in 2011/12. However, to meet the standard on an on-going basis further investment for major works is required.

Major works are planned for all council housing following an assessment of condition, age, tenant priorities and other criteria set as part of the Decent Homes Standard. We have a bespoke software package that enables us to analyse stock condition and plan major work accordingly, when it is required.

The Government's current definition of a Decent Home was set in 2006. A Decent Home must meet the following four criteria:

- It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing;
- It is in reasonable repair;
- It has reasonably modern facilities and services; and
- It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

As well as achieving the Decent Homes Standard, we also address tenants' priorities. The majority of tenants see improvements made within their home as a priority and the priority elements for improvements are kitchens and bathrooms. Our current commitment is to refurbish all kitchens and bathrooms by 2036.

The table below shows the key Capital Programme work being carried out during 2021/22 and our proposals for 2022/23.

Programmed element	Achievements and proposals
Kitchens and bathroom	We expect to have installed 600 kitchens / bathrooms in 2021 / 22. During 2022 / 2023 we are expecting to install a further 825. As at the 1 st April 2021 78% of all council properties have had either a Leicester Standard kitchen or bathroom.
Rewiring	We expect to have rewired 575 homes in 2021/ 22 and a further 550 during 2022 / 23.
Central heating boilers	Boilers are replaced every 15 years based on condition data from the annual gas service. We expect to have replaced 650 boilers in 2021/22 and a further 900 in 2022/23.
Roofing and chimneys	We expect to have installed 136 new roofs in 2021 / 22 and a further 140 in 2022 / 23.
Central heating systems	We have 124 properties without any form of central heating. In these cases, tenants have refused to have central heating installed. Provision is made in the programme to install central heating on tenant request or when these properties become vacant.
Windows and doors	Excluding properties in Conservation Areas where there are often restrictions on the use of UPVC, we have 45 properties that do not have UPVC double glazed windows. In these cases, tenants have refused our previous offers of installing double glazing. Provision is made in the programme to install windows / doors on tenant request or when these properties become vacant. Future investment will be targeted at installing secondary glazing to properties in Conservation Areas.
Structural works	Investment is required to address any structural works identified each year. As well as dealing with structural problems such as subsidence, issues such as woodwork treatment and failed damp proof courses are also dealt with when identified

Soffits, fascias and guttering	By replacing these items with UPVC, it will help to reduce long term maintenance costs. During 2021 / 22, we anticipate installing UPVC soffits, fascias, gutters and cladding to 224 properties and a further 200 properties in 2022 / 23.
Condensation works	Investment is required to target those properties that have been identified as being more susceptible to condensation related problems because of their construction type or location. In 2021 / 22, we expect to complete work on 658 properties and a further 650 in 2022 / 23. Advice to tenants is also important as their actions can alleviate condensation problems, for example opening windows when cooking.
Safety and fire risk work	Investment is required to implement the planned programme of fire safety measures, as agreed with the Fire Service

The Government's Housing White Paper "The Charter for Social Housing Tenants" was published in November 2020. This document states the Government intends to review the Decent Homes Standard, for which we are waiting further information. It is anticipated that changes to the Decent Homes Standard will result from this review, particularly new standards in relation to communal areas around homes and meeting zero carbon targets.

From time to time we carry out major refurbishment projects. Our current projects include the replacement of the lift at St Leonards Court and the installation of second one, carrying out a full refurbishment of a block of flats called The Leys and work has also commenced on the demolition of Goscote House this year. Fire safety is of paramount importance to us as a landlord. We have agreed to fit sprinkler systems at our 5 high story blocks. Work installing sprinklers at Maxwell House has been completed and work on the 4 other blocks has been programmed in. We are also investigating options to improve our IT asset management and fire safety systems.

It is crucial we continue to repair and maintain homes. During 2019/20, 88,072 repairs were completed, however, the number of completed repairs for 2020/21 was significantly reduced to 37,800, as a result of the operational restrictions placed upon us by the Covid 19 pandemic. For a large part of that year we were providing an emergency service only. As we now return to business as usual, work has started on the backlog of non-urgent repairs that have built up over the previous year.

Work is taking place to reduce the length of time homes are vacant to ensure that new tenants are rehoused into suitable accommodation as quickly as possible and loss of income is minimised. During 2019 / 20 the average time to re-let a routine void property was 64.1 days. Due to Covid 19 repair work on vacant properties was restricted for a

period of time, which meant the average re-let time increased to 114.7 days. However, we expect this average to fall by the end of 2021 / 22.

Priority two – Making our communities and neighbourhoods places where people want to live and keeping in touch with our tenants

Key to the delivery of all our services in our neighbourhoods is our income collection. Despite the significant challenges of 2020 / 21 the Income Management Team have worked hard to support tenants in paying their rent, ensuring arrears reduced from £2,036m in 2019 / 20 to £1,799m in 2020 / 21, enabling the division to continue to deliver high quality services.

Providing decent homes is not just about 'bricks and mortar', it can also lead to improvements in educational achievement and health, help tackle poverty and reduce crime. Creating sustainable communities is also more than housing, it means cleaner, safer, greener neighbourhoods in which people have confidence and pride.

The environmental works and communal areas fund helps deliver significant environmental improvements on estates, such as landscaping, new security measures, community facilities, pocket parks, fencing and communal area improvements. Tenants and ward councillors help decide where this money should be spent, based on their local needs and priorities. These schemes have made significant contributions to improving the overall image, appearance and general quality of life within our estates.

In 2021 / 22 environmental and communal works budget was shared across the city in all neighbourhood housing areas. Works included parking improvements, resurfacing courtyards, improving the security of estates by the installation of gates and removal of bushes. Specific examples include:

- Improvements to parking areas on Tudor Road, such as installing, fencing, gates and improved security
- Installation of security gates and intercom systems in Dupont Gardens
- Painting internal communal areas of flats in the Abbey ward and Morton estate
- Improvement to bin storage areas on Bridlespur Ways and Bluegates Road
- Creation of additional parking spaces on Scalpay Close, Thornholme Close, Forbes Close, Stornaway Road
- Removal of fly tipping in the Beaumont Leys ward and Thurncourt Road
- Joint flood prevention work with Highways on Donaldson Road
- Ground maintenance improves to Ambassador Road, St Marks, Belgrave, Rushey Mead and Kerrial Gardens
- Painting yellow lines and improved road signage to alleviate parking issues in St Andrews
- Fencing improvements to Narborough Road
- Gating off internal drying areas on Blackmore Drive to improve fire safety

A total of £5m is being invested in a 5-year Public Realm Improvement Programme, primarily in the St Matthews and St Peters areas of the city.

The Leicester to Work scheme carries out painting, clearing of alleyways, removal of graffiti and other works to improve the look of the local environment.

The Housing Division works closely with the Probation Service through the Community Payback scheme, undertaking tasks such as litter picking, painting and tidying up the green areas in our estates.

District Managers attend ward community meetings and other local forums where concerns about anti-social behaviour are often raised. We work closely with the police and are involved in the local Joint Action Groups.

We respond vigorously to reports of anti-social behaviour and have CCTV on many parts of our estates. We also offer security packages to tenants who are victims of anti-social behaviour, such as secure letter boxes and alarms, to help them feel safe in their homes whilst reports are investigated. In 2020 / 21 we received 1,244 reports of anti-social behaviour that were investigated and, where necessary, action was taken against perpetrators. This was 243 less reports than the previous year.

We continue to provide our housing management service with local teams so that our staff know the neighbourhoods and communities in which they work. Housing Officers are out and about on their 'patches' and our craft repairs workforce is fully mobile. This year, due to the Covid 19 restrictions, we have had to radically change the way we work to keep our workforce and our tenants safe. We have continued to carry out essential visits to our estates, such as fire safety visits to our blocks of flats and maisonettes and responding to emergency situations in people's homes, but a vast majority of our work has been carried out remotely using technology. Tenancy management teams made over 6,500 calls to vulnerable tenants, to identify specific support needs, as part our initial pandemic response. As the Covid 19 restrictions are lifted officers are now out and about on estates more frequently.

Housing office services are now re-opening in shared buildings within local communities. The Customer Services Centre runs a telephone advice line during working hours where tenants can report repairs and tenancy issues. Out of hours emergency calls are taken by an external provider. Last year the Customer Service Centre received 169,172 calls during the working day on the tenant's advice line. 91,292 of these calls were about repairs. A further 14,382 calls were made out of hours.

We have introduced online functionality, called Housing Online that allows eligible applicants to apply to the Housing Register and once accepted to bid on available properties, known as Leicester Home Choice. Once they become a tenant, they are able to view and download rent statements. Tenants are able to view recent repairs

to their property, as well as report new, non-emergency repairs. There is the facility for tenants to select a convenient appointment slot when these repairs are requested.

It is important that we listen to tenants and leaseholders to understand their views on the Housing services they receive and how these can be improved. Particularly when improvements to neighbourhoods are being considered. We work closely with the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum which has representatives from across the city. We consult with the Forum for their views when key decisions are being considered.

The Government's Housing White Paper places a greater emphasis on all social housing landlords to listen and act upon the views of tenants. In response to this we are embarking on a review of our approach to tenant involvement and to develop an Involvement Strategy, to build upon and improve the arrangements we currently have in place.

To address the needs of leaseholders we have a Leaseholders Liaison Team who are responsible for responding to Council leaseholder queries and improving services to meet their needs. Regular Leaseholder Forums take place to allow leaseholders to discuss particular issues affecting this tenure type and to put forward suggestions for improvement.

Priority three – Making Leicester a low carbon city by improving the energy efficiency of homes

The Council and its partners have committed to cut carbon emissions by 50%, relative to 1990 levels by 2025. Part of this target was to reduce all residential CO2 emissions from 651,000 tonnes in 2006 to 530,000 tonnes by 2012, a reduction of 121,000 tonnes. Through the Housing Capital Programme initiatives CO2 emissions from council houses reduced by 58,523 tonnes between 2005 and March 2017. This means that we have already exceeded the specific target set in relation to the reduction of Council home emissions.

This has been achieved by window replacements, new central heating installations, new energy efficient boilers and controls, internal and external wall and roof insulation and solar panels.

During 2021/22 we will continue our programme of installing more efficient boilers, as boilers need replacing, increasing loft insulation to 250mm and putting in double glazed windows and doors as demand arises. This work will continue in 2022/22.

Approximately 3,350 properties are now on our district heating scheme.

The Housing Division has been successful in bidding for additional external funding in its Climate Emergency work for Green Homes grant. This year it has successfully drawn in £0.9m of external funding to undertake external wall insulation of hundreds of council properties in Leicester.

The Housing Division and Council is also leading on a consortium bid to the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund with seven Registered providers to improve the energy efficiency of properties within the City. The total bid is £6.9m to include funding for External Wall insulation, Loft insulation, Air Source heat pumps, triple glazing and loft insulation.

A programme of Climate literacy staff training has begun this year to support staff in the work that is required to deliver on the Councils climate commitments.

Our House building programme so far has delivered new homes that have improved energy efficiency. This year the homes we are starting to build will be our most highly energy efficient council homes. These homes will have EPC energy rating of A, which will be much better for the climate and more efficient for those living in them.

Our existing Council housing investment programmes continue to deliver loft insulation, A rated Boilers, LED lighting in communal areas, upgrading storage heaters to positively impact the efficiency of Council homes.

Priority four – Providing appropriate housing to match people’s changing needs

The most recent Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment in 2017 identified that Leicester’s net affordable housing need is 786 additional affordable housing homes per year to meet current and future demand from households who cannot afford to enter the private housing market. The city’s average annual new supply of affordable homes has been less than a third of this need over the past 10 years, despite last year’s 340 completions being the highest achieved in the past 5 years.

In October 2021 there were 5,850 households on the Housing Register. Demand for Housing is very high in Leicester, but it is also a city with a relatively low average household income. For many, renting from the council or a housing association is the only hope of a decent and settled home.

Right to Buy sales reduce the number of council homes available at an affordable rent. In 2020/21 204 homes were sold under the Right to Buy scheme, which has been lower than in previous years. At the end of 2021/22 we expect to revert back to the normal sales of around 400 homes per annum.

Issues affecting our ability to provide new affordable housing include:

- The limited land available in the city for residential development (including for Affordable Housing.) The council has been reviewing its landholdings and, as part of its new Local Plans process, inviting others to put forward sites in any ownership which might be suitable for development.

- The Government's requirement that funds available to invest in the new supply of Affordable Housing from either Homes England's programme or from Right to Buy receipts means they can only meet a portion of the total costs of new supply. Homes England funds and Right to Buy receipts cannot be used together towards the funding of any dwelling. The balance of the costs must be funded by other means. Recent government changes to rules now mean that up to 40% of eligible capital costs of new supply of affordable housing can be met from Right To Buy Receipts; this change is expected to help make schemes proposed on challenging / constrained sites more financially viable and therefore more likely to proceed to completion.

In order to meet Housing need there is now an active programme of housing development through the Housing Revenue Account. The Executive has approved over £100m to deliver new social housing. A pipeline of delivery of 1500 units on multiple sites has been identified and agreed by the Executive for the 4-year term. By the end of 2021/22 the Council will have been directly involved in the delivery of 1,242 units of new affordable housing in the city, through the Council housebuilding programme, acquisitions and through the Section 106 process.

During the first phase of council housebuilding 29 properties were built on Ambassador Road, Selby Avenue, Maplin Road, Brocklesby Way, Felstead Road and Rosehill Crescent at a cost of £4.6m. Phase 2 of house building is also being planned, with potential sites at The Velodrome and Lanesborough Road. Phase 2b and Phase 3 sites have been identified. In addition to this, 2 Adult Social Care extra care schemes are in development which will provide an additional 155 units.

When a property, previously sold under Right to Buy, is placed back onto the market, the Council has the first opportunity to buy this property back. We are increasingly taking up this option to increase our supply of affordable housing. In 2020/21 the council bought back 109 homes that had previously been sold through the Right to Buy scheme. Between April and October, a further 49 have been purchased, with offers made and accepted on a further 60 that are progressing through to completion.

Vacant Council properties are advertised through Leicester HomeChoice. Last year 196 Council tenants transferred within the stock to homes better suited to their need and 638 households became new Council tenants. In the first 6 months of 2021/22, 97 tenants had transferred properties and 400 new tenancies commenced.

We subscribe to the national Home Swapper Scheme that enables tenants to identify mutual exchanges. This is particularly important for those tenants who want to move but have a low priority on the Housing Register.

Work has started on a scheme to undertake extension work at properties where households are experiencing overcrowding, rather than them having to move through the Housing Register to resolve the issue.

Each year the Capital Programme funds the adaptations of tenants existing homes where Adult Social Care and Children's Services identify the current tenant or family members needs those adaptations. During 2020/21, 108 minor adaptations took place in tenants' homes, such as ramps and door widening. There were also 109 major adaptations, such as level access showers, stair lifts and through floor lifts. This work will continue in 2022 / 23 in response to assessments by Adult Social Care and Children's Services.

As well as providing homes for people it is also important that we provide support to people to maintain their tenancy. The Supporting Tenants and Residents (STAR) service provides one-to-one support for council tenants who might otherwise lose their homes. Priority is given to support those in rent arrears, those who have been previously homeless and those who have other problems which means they are not coping or complying with tenancy conditions. The service also works closely with Children's Services to help looked after children, foster families, children leaving care and other vulnerable families.

Housing Officers undertake a programme of Welfare Visits to tenants who may be vulnerable. This contact is an opportunity for us to check whether the tenant is coping in their home and, where appropriate, we signpost or refer people to support services. This is a preventative measure to help sustain tenancies, ensure people are safe, well and enables us to act before a crisis point is reached.

In 2020/21 96.7% of Council tenancies were sustained. This means that 96.7% of people who became new tenants in 2019/20 remained in their tenancy 12 months later. During 2020/21 the STAR service provided longer term support to 953 tenants and provided short term support to 1,407 tenants.

Priority five – Making Leicester a place to do business, by creating jobs and supporting the local economy

The Housing Division makes a significant contribution to the local economy, having a range of contracts in place with local businesses to provide specialist repairs in our Council homes, where these are beyond the remit of our craft operatives. All contracts have local labour and social value clauses.

The Housing Division also employs a workforce of just over 1,000, funded through the Housing Revenue Account. Additional employment is created with local firms through the procured contracts that the Housing Division has to undertake certain types of work for the Division.

The Housing Division continues to provide craft apprenticeship opportunities each year and has the largest programme in the Council. A number of existing posts this year have been converted into apprenticeship opportunities within Housing, creating even more opportunities in the City.

Housing's Neighbourhood Improvement Scheme continues to help the long-term unemployed by giving pre-employment training and a period of 6 or 12 months' work experience

Work experience is also offered to school students, graduates and ex-offenders. During 2021/22 we have also taken up the opportunity to recruit to posts under the Governments Kickstart programme.

The Housing Division has this year commenced two schemes with partners. St Mungo's and BEAM are now working with Housing to deliver improved work outcomes and job opportunities for those facing homelessness and also for tenants.

DRAFT

Feedback from Consultation with Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum

A meeting was held with the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum on the 14th December 2021. Officers gave a presentation on the wider financial difficulties facing the Council and then specifically the pressures impacting upon the Housing Revenue Account. Officers presented the proposals for the Housing Revenue Account budget and Capital Programme for 2022/23. Information was provided outlining the rationale for each proposal being made.

At the Forum meeting members were asked 4 specific questions:

- 1. Taking into account the financial pressures faced, the fact we still have the lowest average rents when compared with a lot of other housing providers and the services we have in place to support tenants in financial difficulty, what are your views on the proposed 4.1% core rent increase.**

Feedback

Members initially felt the 4.1% increase was too steep, taking into account the financial difficulties some tenants already found themselves facing. They felt tenants who did not receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit would be particularly impacted upon. A discussion took place about the impact of a lower rent increase, for example, if a 3.1% increase was proposed instead then savings of £675k would need to be found to balance the budget. The Forum members were asked where they thought savings could be made from the budget proposals for 2022/23. The view was they did not really want to make any cuts to the budget. One member stated they felt cuts in budgets would impact upon services that could lead to a rise in crime rates on our estates. One member suggested consideration could be given to look at whether back office functions could be reduced rather than front line services. The Forum members stated they did not want to see reductions in the number of Housing Officers or Repair Operatives.

The Forum members asked for more time to consider the proposal and come up with suggestions if they felt these could be made within the current budget proposals. In response to this individual follow up telephone calls were made to Forum Members on Tuesday 21st December to see if they had any further comments they wanted to make on the proposals. 3 members were unavailable to give their feedback when officers called. All members stated they would like to have further time to consider the proposals and provide additional feedback early in the New Year.

- Member 1 stated the proposed rent increase was a bit high, but they understood the position the council is in and the restrictions placed on the council by the government. To facilitate a lower rent increase the Forum member stated savings could be made from the kitchens and bathroom replacement programme. It was stated these could be repaired rather than replaced, replacements were not seen as essential.
- Member 2 stated the increase is too high considering people's current circumstances and the other increases they are having to deal with. Having said

that, there's no services that they would like removed or reduced, they've already been reduced in recent years. Vacant properties could be brought back into use to bring that rent increase down. Even if the rent increase could come down to 4%, it could make a difference to people, but I will back 4.1% if no services are reduced.

- Member 3 stated they would like the rent increase to be lower and they would like this to be offset by higher increases in the garage rents as far as is possible.
- Member 4 was unable to attend the Tenants Forum meeting held on the 14th December 2021 but stated during their telephone call that they did not agree with the rent increase. The people that are working are paying for those who are not working. Money needs to be targeted in the right areas, then savings can be made and the most benefit got from the money that's available. The member stated if rents rise by 4.1% rent arrears will go up.

2. What are your views on the proposed charges for garage rents, service charges and hostel rents and service charges?

Feedback

Generally, the Forum members thought the proposals were acceptable. The main topic of discussion was around the proposed increase in garage rents. Some members felt there was scope to increase these charges further to an average rental charge of around £12 - £15 a week. One member felt the current proposal was reasonable, stating more tenants were renting garages to store mobility scooters and a further increase could impact upon these tenants.

Additional feedback from the follow up telephone calls was:

- Member 1 thought the proposals were fair and in fact a garage was a luxury, not a necessity.
- Member 2 thought the proposals were acceptable.
- Member 3 stated the garages rents should go up because a lot of people use them as a business, and they cost more elsewhere.
- Member 4 stated Council garages are no longer fit for modern cars. People are being charged for something that isn't fit for purpose.

3. Taking into account the national rise in energy costs and the fact households generally are facing 20% increases in their prices, what are your views on the proposed 7.29% increase in district heating charges?

Members appreciated that all households were facing an increase in their energy costs. One member raised concerns about the cumulative impact of the rising costs of living, for which this proposed increase will add to. Members were advised the average weekly increase resulting from the proposal would be around £1 per week for people on the district heating scheme. Members asked for a further breakdown of the costs per property type to enable them to comment further on the proposal.

Additional feedback from the follow up telephone calls was:

- Member 1 stated they thought the proposal was fair. It seems hard in the context of other increases in housing, but fair in the context of the national energy

increases. The Council shouldn't be expected to take the burden of that. The price has to go up, it's the nature of prices and inflation.

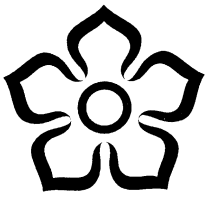
- Member 2 stated they thought the proposed increase was high. It was stated these tenants have electricity to pay as well for both, the increase is well above inflation. The problem is that many tenants also have a gas cooker, so they are paying this national increase as well. They are also using electricity in the home, so they face these national increases as well. It's a triple whammy for them.
- Member 3 stated the proposal was too high, considering the other increases that were taking place.
- Member 4 disagreed with the 20% increase being experienced for wider energy costs. It was stated this hasn't happened and can't be used to justify the 7.29% increase, which is too high.

4. What are your views on the proposed changes to the Capital Programme?

Two comments were made about the Capital Programme. The first was around the additional £900k for climate change work. One member stated they thought this seemed high. Information was provided on the potential work required to meet 2030 climate change targets, including the retrofitting of our properties, which could run into millions in future years. One member stated the money put aside for concrete works in St Matthews may not be enough and would depend on the findings of the survey work that is currently taking place. It was accepted that this might be the case and money may need to be allocated in future budgets for a programme of works.

Additional feedback from the follow up telephone calls was:

- Member 1 stated the changes proposed for the Capital Programme were essential and there was no problem with these.
- Member 2 had no further comments in relation to the proposals.
- Member 3 said the budget report stated the windows and doors programme had been completed but there were still a lot of old draughty doors in the area they lived. The member also stated there needed to be a review of how homes are allocated to the kitchen and bathroom replacement programme, taking into account that some kitchens can be repaired, where they still have operational life left in them.
- Member 4 queried where extension work had taken place to address overcrowding as they were not aware of this work taking place. A question was also asked where the kitchen and bathroom replacement programme money, that wasn't spent during lock down, went. Kitchens and bathrooms shouldn't be replaced in void properties when tenants already living in properties haven't had one.



Leicester
City Council

Appendix H

MINUTE EXTRACT

Minutes of the Meeting of the
HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

To be added following the meeting on 10th January

DRAFT

Minutes of the Overview Select Committee

To be inserted following the meeting

DRAFT

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Tool:

Title of proposal	Housing Revenue Account Budget (including Capital Programme) 2022/23
Name of division/service	Housing
Name of lead officer completing this assessment	Helen McGarry
Date EIA assessment completed	
Decision maker	Full Council
Date decision taken	23 rd February 2022

EIA sign off on completion:	Signature	Date
Lead officer		
Equalities officer		
Divisional director		

Please ensure the following:

- a) That the document is **understandable to a reader who has not read any other documents** and explains (on its own) how the Public Sector Equality Duty is met. This does not need to be lengthy but must be complete and based in evidence.
- b) That available support information and data is identified and where it can be found. Also be clear about highlighting gaps in existing data or evidence that you hold, and how you have sought to address these knowledge gaps.
- c) That the equality impacts are capable of aggregation with those of other EIAs to identify the cumulative impact of all service changes made by the council on different groups of people.
- d) That the equality impact assessment is started at an early stage in the decision-making process, so that it can be used to inform the consultation, engagement and the decision. It should not be a tick-box exercise. Equality impact assessment is an iterative process that should be revisited throughout the decision-making process. It can be used to assess several different options.
- e) Decision makers must be aware of their duty to pay 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty (see below) and 'due regard' must be paid before and at the time a decision is taken. Please see the Brown Principles on the equality intranet pages, for information on how to undertake a lawful decision-making process, from an equalities perspective. Please append the draft EIA and the final EIA to papers for decision makers (including leadership team meetings, lead member briefings, scrutiny meetings and executive meetings) and draw out the key points for their consideration. The Equalities Team provide equalities comments on reports.

1. Setting the context

Describe the proposal, the reasons it is being made, and the intended change or outcome. Will the needs of those who are currently using the service continue to be met?

The financial landscape of the four-year period from 2016 to 2020 was dominated by the government requirement that social housing rents be reduced by 1% each year, which reduced income to the Housing Revenue Account by £3.1m per annum. For the 5 years from 2020 rents can be increased by up to CPI+1%. Whilst this relaxation is welcome, a number of other external pressures on the Housing Revenue Account Budget persist. These include the impact of increasing Right to Buy sales, where it is predicted further £1.2m rental income will be lost during 2022/23; inflation and staff cost pressures which amount to an increase of nearly £1m for

2022/23; a predicted 20% (£0.5m) increase in energy costs and increased £0.8m Council Tax liability for properties we have purchased on the open market, whilst they are being prepared for re-letting. To address the deficit that this creates it is proposed additional income / savings can be delivered in several areas including, increasing rent and service charges (£2.9m) and additional rental include from new build and acquired properties (£2.1m.) The Housing Revenue Account budget report recommends that the budget for 2022/23 is set as a balanced budget, with no drawing on reserves to achieve this.

The Housing Revenue Account Budget report is proposing a 4.1% increase to the core rents of Council homes. As well as this rent increase for 2022/23 the report is recommending:

- Increasing service charges by 2%
- Increasing garage rents by 4.1%
- Increasing Hostel rent and service charges by 2.5%
- Increasing District Heating charges by 7.29%

The cost of the Capital Programme for 2022/23 is predicted to be £117.46m. The following projects are those where it is proposed that changes will be made to the allocation of funding through this Programme:

- Contractor availability is expected to be restricted into 2022/23 with no more than £3m expected to be spent on new kitchens and bathrooms, a reduction on the £3.6m current annual budget. This will enable 825 kitchens and bathrooms to be installed.
- Most of the non-standard boilers have now been replaced, meaning that boilers are lasting longer and being repaired more easily. This results in a reduction in the capital budget requirement from £3.4m to £2.8m in 2022/23, sufficient for a further 900 new boilers.
- The upgrading of door entry systems has been suspended pending a review of more efficient cloud-based solutions. A budget for this in 2022/23 will therefore not be required.
- District Heating Maintenance work is progressing well, such that this budget can be reduced by £75k in 2022/23.
- Additional budget was added into the capital programme for 2021/22 to adapt properties and make them suitable for people on the Council housing waiting list. This work will now take place in 2202/23.
- The slipped budget for fire safety work from 2021/22 will be sufficient for 2022/23, with no additional budget requirement.
- A further £250k will be required in 2022/23 to continue the work on extending/converting properties to address overcrowding.

- An additional £100m will be added to the Affordable Housing – Acquisitions & New Build programme.
- £450k has been allocated to re-furbish the Dawn Centre.
- £900k is included in the budget to support the decarbonisation agenda.
- Provision in the budget has been made for concrete work in St Matthews to start in 2022/23. The cost of this will be established when survey work, currently taking place, has been completed.

The main service need of tenants is that they have a suitably sized, Decent Home, maintained through an effective repairs service with quality tenancy and estate management services. Current service user needs will continue to be met with the recommendations being made

2. Equality implications/obligations

Which aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) are likely be relevant to the proposal? In this question, consider both the current service and the proposed changes.

a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- How does the proposal/service ensure that there is no barrier or disproportionate impact for anyone with a particular protected characteristic?
- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?

From this equality impact assessment no significant impacts have been identified.

b. Advance equality of opportunity between different groups

- How does the proposal/service ensure that its intended outcomes promote equality of opportunity for people?
- Identify inequalities faced by those with specific protected characteristic(s).
- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?

The proposals continue to commit to the provision of decent homes to council tenants and equality of opportunity for people to have decent homes to live in. The standard of accommodation in council owned properties is higher than in some areas of the private sector.

c. Foster good relations between different groups

- Does the service contribute to good relations or to broader community cohesion objectives?
- How does it achieve this aim?
- Is this a relevant consideration? What issues could arise?

Maintaining properties and making improvements on estates creates an environment where people are satisfied with their homes and the area they live in, reducing the likelihood of anti-social behaviour and community tensions.

3. Who is affected?

Outline who could be affected, and how they could be affected by the proposal/service change. Include people who currently use the service and those who could benefit from, but do not currently access the service.

The proposal to increase rents will affect all Leicester City Council tenants across the city. As at November 2021 approximately 50% of our tenants were in receipt of full Housing Benefit or had their full housing costs paid through Universal Credit. These tenants will have their housing costs covered by any uplift in benefit entitlement associated with the rent rise. The negative impact of having to pay more rent could affect approximately 20% of tenants who are in receipt of partial Housing Benefit or have their housing costs partially covered by Universal Credit. A negative impact will also affect approximately 30% of our tenants who pay full rent. However, the impact of the rent increase will be dependent on the tenants' financial situation rather than any protected characteristic.

Service charges are added to rent when additional services are provided, for example, cleaning to communal areas. All tenants who pay these charges will need to pay 2% more each week for these. The charge will depend on what service is being provided. Services provided are linked to the property and are therefore not based on a persons' protected characteristic. Tenants in receipt of full housing benefit and full Universal Credit will continue to have the majority of service charges payable covered by their benefit entitlement. The negative impact of having to pay more for service charges will affect approximately 30% of tenants who do not receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and the 20% of tenants who are in receipt of partial benefits. The impact of the service charge increase will, in general, be dependent on tenants' financial situation rather than any protected characteristic. The exception is the service charge for district heating, which is not covered by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. All tenants will have to pay this charge and the 7.29% proposed increase. There are currently 3,351 households in the city on the district heating scheme, 2,514 tenants and 838 leaseholders. A high number of properties that are provided with district heating are located within

the Centre area of the city. We know a higher proportion of BME households live in this area. However, the impact of the district heating charge will still be dependent on a person's financial situation rather than their protected characteristic. Whilst the proposed 7.29% increase for District Heating charges is significant, the increase is somewhat lower than that being experienced in the market more generally.

The impact of the proposed 2.5% increase in Hostel Rents and service charges will impact upon single people and couples staying at the Dawn Centre and families staying at Bridlespur Way, and those people who will use these facilities in the future. Our records show the majority of people accommodated in temporary accommodation receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and therefore these additional charges will be covered by these benefits. The impact of having to pay more will be for those people who do not receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. However, we know there are low numbers of people in this situation using the service. As with the proposed increase in Council core rents the impact will be determined as a result of a person's financial situation and not as a result of a particular protected characteristic.

Council owned garages are rented out to members of the public generally, not just council tenants. The charge is not covered by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. We currently have approximately 600 garages rented out, so the proposed 4.1% increase in rent could impact upon these people, also other people who start to rent garages in the future. Our protected characteristic profiling information in relation to people renting garages is currently limited, so it is not known whether there will be a bigger impact on a particular group. However, the impact is more likely to be as a result of a person's financial situation and ability to pay the extra rent rather than as a result of having a particular protected characteristic.

The Housing Capital Programme generally benefits all tenants in the city. Projects to improve individual properties are decided on their condition to meet health and safety regulations, rather than a protected characteristic of a tenant. Decisions on the Capital Programme are based on the age of properties, the predicted lifespan of when items will need to be replaced and health and safety regulations. The impact for tenants will generally be positive as properties and areas are improved.

- Although contractor availability is expected to be restricted into 2022/23 £3m is expected to be spent on new kitchens and bathrooms. All tenants effected will benefit from this work, not just those with a protected characteristic.
- The reduction in the budget for boilers will still enable 900 new boilers to be fitted, where these are required. All tenants affected will benefit from this work, not just those with a protected characteristic.

- Although the upgrading of door entry systems has been suspended whilst more modern systems are investigated, repairs to current systems will continue, where this is required. This work is dependant on the buildings which have a door entry system and not as a result of tenants protected characteristics.
- A budget of £75k is proposed to continue with District Heating Maintenance work. This will benefit tenants and leaseholders who have this source of energy and not as a result of a protected characteristic. A high number of properties that are provided with district heating are located within the Centre area of the city. We know a higher proportion of BME households live in this area, so the ongoing maintenance will particularly benefit this group.
- The budget to adapt properties and make them suitable for people on the Council housing waiting list is will have a positive impact on people with a disability protected characteristic, as the length of time they have to wait to be offered a suitable property to meet their needs could be reduced.
- The HRA budget report states the slipped budget for fire safety work from 2021/22 will be sufficient for 2022/23, with no additional budget requirement. The work required is identified through risk assessments and inspections of our properties and communal areas, not as a result a person's protected characteristic. Work undertaken will address safety concerns of all living in an area where the work takes place.
- The additional £250k to continue the work on extending/converting properties to address overcrowding will address the individual overcrowding situation of tenants, irrespective of their protected characteristic. The properties where this work is to take place will largely be determined by the suitability of properties to be converted.
- The additional £100m to be added to the Affordable Housing – Acquisitions & New Build programme will benefit all households on the Housing Register, with an additional supply of affordable Housing, irrespective of their protected characteristic. The positive impact is the time it takes for them to be re-housed could be reduced.
- The £450k allocated for the refurbishment of the Dawn Centre will benefit single people and couples who need temporary accommodation. Additional bed space at this accommodation will support the reduction of rough sleeping for these groups.
- The £900k being made available to support the decarbonisation agenda and the work associated with this will depend on the condition of our properties and will not be related to the protected characteristics of the households that live in these.
- The budget provision for concrete work in St Matthews will be based on a property conditions survey and not the protected characteristic of tenants and leaseholders. However, we know there are a high percentage of BME groups living in this area of the city, who will benefit from this improvement work.

4. Information used to inform the equality impact assessment

- What **data, research, or trend analysis** have you used?
- Describe how you have got your information and what it tells you
- Are there any gaps or limitations in the information you currently hold, and how you have sought to address this? E.g. proxy data, national trends, equality monitoring etc.

Tenant profiling information has been collected and analysed from the Northgate IT system (Appendix 1). This includes information on ages, ethnic origin, disability, gender, sexuality and religion. There are gaps in data in relation to gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and sexual orientation. There is also limited information collected specifically about disabilities.

5. Consultation

What **consultation** have you undertaken about the proposal with people who use the service or people affected, people who may potentially use the service and other stakeholders? What did they say about:

- What is important to them regarding the current service?
- How does (or could) the service meet their needs? How will they be affected by the proposal? What potential impacts did they identify because of their protected characteristic(s)?
- Did they identify any potential barriers they may face in accessing services/other opportunities that meet their needs?

See Appendix G to the main report

6. Potential Equality Impact

Based on your understanding of the service area, any specific evidence you may have on people who use the service and those who could potentially use the service and the findings of any consultation you have undertaken, use the table below to explain which individuals or community groups are likely to be affected by the proposal because of their protected characteristic(s). Describe what the impact is likely to be, how significant that impact is for individual or group well-being, and what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove negative impacts. This could include indirect impacts, as well as direct impacts.

Looking at potential impacts from a different perspective, this section also asks you to consider whether any other particular groups, especially vulnerable groups, are likely to be affected by the proposal. List the relevant groups that may be affected, along with the likely impact, potential risks and mitigating actions that would reduce or remove any negative impacts. These groups do not have to be defined by their protected characteristic(s).

Protected characteristics

Impact of proposal:

Describe the likely impact of the proposal on people because of their protected characteristic and how they may be affected. Why is this protected characteristic relevant to the proposal? How does the protected characteristic determine/shape the potential impact of the proposal? This may also include **positive impacts** which support the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Risk of disproportionate negative impact:

How likely is it that people with this protected characteristic will be disproportionately negatively affected? How great will that impact be on their well-being? What will determine who will be negatively affected?

Mitigating actions:

For disproportionate negative impacts on protected characteristic/s, what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove the impact? You may also wish to include actions which support the positive aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. All actions identified here should also be included in the action plan at the end of this EIA.

a. Age

Indicate which age group/s is/ are most affected, either specify general age group - children, young people working age people or older people or specific age bands

What is the impact of the proposal on age?

No potential impact

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on age?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

b. Disability

If specific impairments are affected by the proposal, specify which these are. Our standard categories are on our equality monitoring form – physical impairment, sensory impairment, mental health condition, learning disability, long standing illness or health condition.

What is the impact of the proposal on disability?

People with a disability who are waiting for re-housing on the Housing Register may be offered accommodation to meet their needs sooner

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on disability?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

c. Gender reassignment

Indicate whether the proposal has potential impact on trans men or trans women, and if so, which group is affected.

What is the impact of the proposal on gender reassignment?

No potential impact

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on gender reassignment?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by the proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

d. Marriage and civil partnership

What is the impact of the proposal on marriage and civil partnership?

No potential impact

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on marriage and civil partnership?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

e. Pregnancy and maternity

What is the impact of the proposal on pregnancy and maternity?

No potential impact

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on pregnancy and maternity?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

f. Race

Given the city’s racial diversity it is useful that we collect information on which racial groups are affected by the proposal. Our equalities monitoring form follows ONS general census categories and uses broad categories in the first instance with the opportunity to identify more specific racial groups such as Gypsies/Travellers. Use the most relevant classification for the proposal.

What is the impact of the proposal on race?

Tenants from a BME background in the Centre area of the City may be more impacted upon by the increased service charges for District Heating. However, these increases are not as severe as elsewhere in the open market.

Tenants from a BME background in the Centre area of the City will benefit from concrete improvement work in the area

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on race?

No groups will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

The Income Management Team to continue to monitor rent arrears and provide support for those people struggling to pay as a result of the increased charges.

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g. Religion or belief

If specific religious or faith groups are affected by the proposal, our equalities monitoring form sets out categories reflective of the city's population. Given the diversity of the city there is always scope to include any group that is not listed.

What is the impact of the proposal on religion or belief?

No potential impact

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on religion or belief?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

h. Sex

Indicate whether this has potential impact on either males or females

What is the impact of the proposal on sex?

No potential impact

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on sex?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

i. Sexual orientation

What is the impact of the proposal on sexual orientation?

No potential impact

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on sexual orientation?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

7. Summary of protected characteristics

a. Summarise why the protected characteristics you have commented on, are relevant to the proposal?

All protected characteristics have been commented on because work to improve the condition of properties and the environment of estates impact on all tenants.

b. Summarise why the protected characteristics you have not commented on, are not relevant to the proposal?

Not applicable

8. Other groups

Other groups

Impact of proposal:

Describe the likely impact of the proposal on children in poverty or any other people who we may consider to be vulnerable, for example people who misuse substances, ex armed forces, people living in poverty, care experienced young people, carers. List any vulnerable groups likely to be affected. Will their needs continue to be met? What issues will affect their take up of services/other opportunities that meet their needs/address inequalities they face?

Risk of disproportionate negative impact:

How likely is it that this group of people will be negatively affected? How great will that impact be on their well-being? What will determine who will be negatively affected?

Mitigating actions:

For negative impacts, what mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove this impact for this vulnerable group of people? These should be included in the action plan at the end of this EIA. You may also wish to use this section to identify opportunities for positive impacts.

a. Children in poverty

What is the impact of the proposal on children in poverty?

Children living in over-crowded conditions may benefit from the proposals to convert properties to address this issue. Also, adaptations to properties to enable the re-housing of households from the housing register may benefit children with disabilities.

What is the risk of negative impact on children in poverty?

No group will be disproportionately impacted upon by this proposal

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

b. Other vulnerable groups

What is the impact of the proposal on other vulnerable groups?

No potential impacts

What is the risk of negative impact on other vulnerable groups?

Not applicable

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

c. Other (describe)

What is the impact of the proposal on any other groups?

No potential impact

What is the risk of negative impact on any other groups?

Not applicable

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable

9. Other sources of potential negative impacts

Are there any other potential negative impacts external to the service that could further disadvantage service users over the next three years that should be considered? For example, these could include:

- Other proposed changes to council services that would affect the same group of service users;
- Government policies or proposed changes to current provision by public agencies (such as new benefit arrangements) that would negatively affect residents;
- External economic impacts such as an economic downturn.

No known impacts at present

Human rights implications

Are there any human rights implications which need to be considered and addressed (please see the list at the end of the template), if so please outline the implications and how they will be addressed below:

No known impacts at present

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10. Monitoring impact

You will need to ensure that monitoring systems are established to check for impact on the protected characteristics and human rights after the decision has been implemented. Describe the systems which are set up to:

- monitor impact (positive and negative, intended and unintended) for different groups
- monitor barriers for different groups
- enable open feedback and suggestions from different communities
- ensure that the EIA action plan (below) is delivered.

If you want to undertake equality monitoring, please refer to our [equality monitoring guidance and templates](#).

- Monitoring and analysing complaints received
- Feedback received from Tenants and Residents Associations and the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum
- Progress on actions resulting from the equality impact assessment will be monitored and reviewed by the Senior Management Team within Housing.

11. EIA action plan

Please list all the equality objectives, actions and targets that result from this assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These now need to be included in the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equality Outcome	Action	Officer Responsible	Completion date
Actions are progressed to mitigate the potential negative impacts that are associated with the budget proposals	The Income Management Team to continue to monitor rent arrears and provide support for people struggling to pay rent / service charges as a result of any increase.	Income Collection Manager	Ongoing

Human rights articles:

Part 1: The convention rights and freedoms

- Article 2: Right to Life
- Article 3: Right not to be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way
- Article 4: Right not to be subjected to slavery/forced labour
- Article 5: Right to liberty and security
- Article 6: Right to a fair trial
- Article 7: No punishment without law
- Article 8: Right to respect for private and family life
- Article 9: Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Article 10: Right to freedom of expression
- Article 11: Right to freedom of assembly and association
- Article 12: Right to marry
- Article 14: Right not to be discriminated against

Part 2: First protocol

- Article 1: Protection of property/peaceful enjoyment
- Article 2: Right to education
- Article 3: Right to free elections

Tenant Profiling Information

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	No. of Tenants
Any Other Ethnic Group	374
Any other Heritage Background	110
Asian/Asian Brit of Other Asian Background	562
Asian/Asian British of Bangladeshi Origin	191
Asian/Asian British of Indian Origin	1,365
Asian/Asian British of Pakistani Origin	220
Black/Black British of African Origin	1,361
Black/Black British of Caribbean Origin	348
Black/Black British of Other Black Background	190
Black/Black British of Somali Orig	351
Chinese of Chinese Origin	20
Chinese of other Chinese Background	8
Dual/MH Asian & White	60
Dual/MH Black African & White	53
Dual/MH Black Caribbean & White	222
Ethnicity Unknown	3,182
Other Eth Group Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller	25
Prefer Not to Say	526
White British	9,248
White of European Origin	386
White of Irish Origin	131
White of Other White Background	440

Age

Age	No. of tenants
Not known	510
Ages 16-64	14,494
Ages 65-74	2,734
Ages 75+	2,079

Gender

Gender	No. of tenants
Female	11,027
Male	8,337
Not known	4533

Religion

Religion	No. of tenants
Atheist	274
Buddhist	17
Christian	2,232
Hindu	352
Jain	2
Jewish	4
Muslim	1,818
No religion	2,350
Not known	11,495
Other	308
Prefer not to say	881
Sikh	84

Leicester City Council

Scrutiny Review

**Examining the proposal to establish a
central housing Anti-Social Behaviour
Team**

**A Review Report of the Housing
Scrutiny Commission**

10 January 2021

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Housing Scrutiny Commission

Participating Commission Members

Councillor Paul Westley (Chair)
Councillor Padmini Chamund (Vice Chair)
Councillor Ruma Ali
Councillor Hanif Aqbany
Councillor Stephan Gee
Councillor Sharmen Rahman

Other Contributing Members:

Councillor Karen Pickering
Councillor Aminur Thalukdar – as Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission

Evidence to the Commission was provided by:

Assistant City Mayor Councillor Elly Cutkelvin
Chris Burgin: Director of Housing, Leicester City Council
Gurjit Minhas, Head of Service, Housing, Leicester City Council
John Leach, Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services, Leicester City Council
Daxa Pancholi, Head of Community Safety and Protection, Leicester City Council
Caroline Green, Team Manager, Crime and ASB, Leicester City Council
PCSO Joanne Barton, Leicestershire Constabulary
Joe Carroll, Tenant Representative.

FOREWORD

I'm delighted to present the final report of the findings of the Housing Scrutiny Commission's work in examining the proposal to establish a team within the Housing division to deal with cases of anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Anti-social behaviour is sadly something that affects a great many people; both across the country and here in Leicester. It can dominate the lives of victims and affect people in a variety of significant ways. As a local authority, we must do all within our capabilities to support victims and tenants affected by ASB. The role of each agency in addressing ASB and processing cases is vital. There are a number of approaches in doing this and here in Leicester, we have adopted different approaches over time.

I was very keen for the Housing Scrutiny Commission to investigate this matter further. Our work was in no way a wholesale review of the entire ASB service in Leicester, but was more of a focused exercise to gain clarity and assurances over a new proposal for a central housing ASB team that would work closely with CrASBU (Crime and Anti-Social behaviour Unit). We wanted to find out more about how the new structure would work and how it would improve processes and outcomes. Crucially, I wanted to ascertain how the team would work alongside other agencies including CrASBU and to understand the benefits that this could bring.

The work of the task group was relatively short and focussed. I'm very thankful for the input of officers, from within the City Council's Housing division and also from CrASBU in providing evidence to the task group and engaging with members throughout the process. I'm also very thankful for the input of my commission colleagues and other members with a strong degree of knowledge in this area. In addition, given the extent to which tenants can be affected by the issues presented by ASB, it was fundamental to gain insight from tenants was part of this work and I'm grateful for the input of those involved.

I was delighted that from a closer inspection of the proposal and from examining a range of evidence, that colleagues and I were able to form a number of recommendations that I hope will enable and enhance future service delivery. I feel that the proposal can be successful in supporting those affected by ASB, but it is vital that the commission continues to engage with the service and provides feedback and support once the new structure is in place. Continuing to examine the impact of the new team will be central in ensuring that the local authority is most appropriately dealing with cases of anti-social behaviour.



Councillor Paul Westley
Chair of Housing Scrutiny Commission

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Background to the Review

- 1.1.1 For a number of years, the Housing Scrutiny Commission have maintained a strong interest in examining the arrangements for dealing with cases of ASB. The commission received a report in July 2020 which recommended a transfer of the responsibility for the handling of council tenancy related ASB from Housing Services to the Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (CrASBU). This proposal was met with a number of questions and concerns by the scrutiny commission, and also by the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum.
- 1.1.2 Assistant City Mayor, Councillor Elly Cutkelvin, along with officers, took into consideration the position adopted by scrutiny and by the forum, and as a result, drafted a new proposal that was presented to the scrutiny commission in June 2021, having sought comments from the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel. The new proposal recommended creating a central housing ASB team that would work closely with CrASBU. This would enable council tenants to report ASB cases to their Neighbourhood Housing Officers (NHOs), with all investigations then being carried out by a central housing ASB team rather than NHOs.
- 1.1.3 Whilst broadly welcoming the direction of travel, commission members sought greater detail in terms of a number of areas of the proposal and required a significant amount of further information to gain assurances that the proposal was suitable. To enable the level of examination deemed necessary, the commission resolved to establish a task and finish group to gather the evidence required to clearly determine its position on the proposal.
- 1.1.4 From the outset, the intention of the task and finish group was to inspect the detail of this particular proposal and its implications on council tenants and relevant groups of staff. It was not in any way intended to examine the entire topic of anti-social behaviour. Nonetheless, the overlapping interests with the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission were apparent and as such, the Chair and Vice-Chair of Neighbourhood Services were invited to participate in the task and finish work.
- 1.1.5 The task and finish group held two meetings to gather evidence; hearing from officers, partners, councillors and tenants. These meetings provided the opportunity to probe, question and to ultimately form several recommendations for the future delivery of the service.
- 1.1.6 This review serves as an example of short, focused piece of work. It was apparent that the commission required further evidence in order to reach a view on the proposal and the level of engagement that took place in two informal sessions enabled conclusions to be reached. Sections 2.3 and 2.4 set out more detail of the evidence gathered and summarises how conclusions were reached.

1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

1.2.1 At the task group meeting on 3 November 2021, members endorsed the following set of proposed recommendations:

- a) That mechanisms be established to ensure that the new Housing ASB team has access to the data and information held by other agencies required to progress cases, including adequate access to relevant police records and data.
- b) That a comprehensive communication strategy be compiled which sets out the changes and benefits for tenants, the respective roles of each agency in dealing with ASB and clearly explains the new process in incremental stages
- c) To use fliers/letters to tenants and residents to communicate the changes and the benefits of the these, and to consider additional methods of contact in areas with a higher prevalence of ASB cases.
- d) That further communication on the new proposal be provided to the Tenants and Residents Forum and that the forum receives an a regular summary of progress.
- e) That, where appropriate, representatives from the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum be invited to participate in inter-agency liaison, particularly through regular beat meetings arranged by the Police.
- f) That a robust programme of training be put in place for the new team, including mediation training and training in relation to mental health when supporting victims and those that report ASB.
- g) That a training programme regarding the new process be embedded into the work of all corporate customer services staff.
- h) That a more robust and regular system of contact between the new team and victims of ASB be established, particularly in respect of those cases that take many months to resolve.
- i) That future consideration be given in respect of the size and structure of the newly established team based on its initial period of work, with considering given to flexibly transferring resources to support areas of the city with the highest need.

- j) That further work be undertaken to continue to benchmark the service provision against neighbouring and comparable local authorities, given that several other authorities are in the process of establishing a similar model to that proposed.
- k) That in addition to the preparation of an Executive response report, further reports be brought to the Housing Scrutiny Commission every six months once the new team has been established. Such reports would cover to what extent the anticipated benefits had been achieved, including benefits to the work of NHOs.

2. REPORT

2.1 Review Rationale/Further Background

2.1.1 As detailed above, this work was initiated as a result of the Housing Scrutiny Commission receiving the revised proposal for how the city council delivers ASB services.

Current Arrangements

2.1.2 In terms of the current structure, Neighbourhood Housing Officers (NHOs) deal with the lower level cases of ASB associated with council tenancies and provide an incremental approach to council tenants. CrASBU deal with cases across all tenures including the higher-level cases in relation to council tenants. With the increasing mixture of tenants on estates, the two investigatory functions sitting separately is not seen as being in alignment with the nature of ASB service requests being reported.

2.1.3 The current arrangements require NHOs to investigate ASB cases in their own geographical area, which has led to an uneven and often excessive workload for some officers. The existing pool of 37.6 NHOs currently spend approximately 20% of their time dealing with cases of ASB.

Initial Alternative Proposal

2.1.4 At the commission meeting on 7 July 2020, a report was presented that proposed a transfer of the function for dealing with all cases of ASB (regardless of tenure) from the Housing Division to the CrASBU Team.

2.1.5 The Housing Scrutiny Commission did not favour the proposals, and they were also met with concern by representatives of the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel. Such concerns included:

- *fewer resources for housing services with the retention of the £100k efficiency saving*
- *a loss of housing officer's specialist knowledge*

- *a view from tenants that they wanted to report incidents to housing officers*
 - *views that CrASBU would not be sufficiently resourced to deal with the work*
 - *concerns that the new arrangement would need to be monitored to check its effectiveness*
 - *questions around the support for people poor mental health.*
- 2.1.6 The commission requested that a further report be provided that included the views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum.

Revised Proposal

- 2.1.7 At the Housing Scrutiny Commission meeting on 15 June, a revised proposal was presented that took into consideration the points raised previously by the commission and by the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum. This proposal would see the establishment of a central housing ASB team that would work closely with CrASBU. Under the proposal, tenants would still be able to report ASB to their housing officers, though all case investigations would be performed by the specialist team.
- 2.1.8 Amongst the benefits of the proposal that were explained to the commission were the provision of a consistent specialist ASB service to all complainants, regardless of tenure, and the proposal would also equip Neighbourhood Housing Officers to focus on supporting tenants given the significant proportion of their time that had been spent dealing with ASB cases.
- 2.1.9 Whilst the commission broadly supported the proposals, there was large elements of the proposal that were deemed unclear, and it was concluded that a deeper level of investigation was necessary in order for the commission to reach a view on whether or not they supported the proposal and to understand the level of any additional benefit it would have. Furthermore, a task and finish exercise would allow the commission to be in a clearer position to make recommendations on how the proposal should be taken forward.
- 2.1.10 The commission were clear on what they wished to ascertain from conducting the task and finish exercise. This included:
- *A general provision of further information to help better determine the proposal's overall level of service impact, and whether it will produce improved outcomes.*
 - *Detail to provide an overall enhanced understanding of the working relationship between the proposed ASB team based in Housing, CrASBU and the police, and an understanding of the role of each service based on case categorisation.*

An understanding of a structure for the new team, including detail of the impact on the current work of Neighbourhood Housing Officers and CrASBU.

An opportunity to review a full Equality Impact Assessment, including a focus on how the new service can address language barriers.

To obtain case studies of a range of different cases that cover differing levels of intervention and clearly set out the respective roles of Housing and CrASBU in dealing with such cases - and to what extent these roles will differ under the new service proposal.

An understanding of the approaches taken by other comparable local authorities

2.1.11 The full scoping document for the review is attached at Appendix A.

2.2 Review Approach

2.2.1 The Chair of the Commission made it clear from the outset of the work that the intention was to find out further information about the proposal for a central ASB team based in Housing in order for the commission to reach a clear view in respect of it.

2.2.2 It is relatively commonplace for scrutiny commissions to request further detail in relation to proposed policy and this often results in additional information being provided to subsequent commission meetings. However, in this particular case, the report presented on 15 June 2021 was in response to previous scrutiny, and given the extent of the change proposed and the level of further detail sought, the preferred approach was to exercise the ability to engage with relevant officers and partners away from a formal meeting setting and to gain sufficient evidence in order for a clearer view from the commission to be brought back to a future meeting.

2.2.3 The work itself differed a little from that usually undertaken as part of scrutiny reviews. Such reviews ordinarily examine the operation of an entire service or a broader topic area and aim to understand wider service implications. This particular piece of work more closely resembled a task and finish exercise, whereby commission members sought to gain clarity on a number of points in response to a policy paper that was presented to them and aimed to issue a set of recommendations to shape future service delivery.

2.2.4 As such, the review was relatively short in comparison to many of the more detailed reviews performed by scrutiny commissions. The Commission held two separate informal meetings that provided a platform for the following evidence to be presented:

- A detailed presentation by Housing Services in respect of the new proposal, with particular reference to those points of interest outlined by the commission at its meeting on 15 January.

- A detailed presentation by CrASBU on their existing operation and their anticipated role as part of the proposed new arrangements.
- Input from representatives from the Tenants and Leaseholders Panel, and from other identified witnesses.

2.2.5 The first session allowed the commission to receive the level of further detail required in order to understand the proposal more fully. A comprehensive overview of the proposal was provided by service officers and the Assistant City Mayor. It also provided clarity on the respective roles of Housing and CrrASBU and offered members the opportunity to question officers from both service areas.

2.2.6 A number of further areas of clarity were identified during the first session and officers were tasked to provide additional information in response to these as part of the second session. This primarily concerned a focus on ASB case numbers and also allowed a contribution of evidence from PCSO Joanne Burton.

2.2.7 PCSO Burton was one of several witnesses invited to present evidence and engage during the sessions. The Chair also invited a number of councillors with an advanced level of experience in dealing with cases of ASB, as well as knowledge of the structures and processes that have been in place for dealing with cases. Finally, representatives from the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum were invited to participate in the evidence gathering element of the work, with one representative in particular (Mr Joe Carroll) attending and engaging with both meetings.

2.2.8 In compiling evidence for the task group, service-based officers were required to carry out further investigatory work, including gathering data and evidence from internal sources and by also undertaking desktop research and engaging with other relevant parties, such as by contacting other local authorities in terms of benchmarking levels of service provision.

2.2.9 As stated, the two informal sessions allowed members to engage informally with officers and to seek clarity and ask questions on as many matters that they wished to. This level of investigation allowed sufficient evidence to be gathered to enable a set of recommendations to be established (as outlined in paragraph 1.2).

2.3 Presentation of Evidence/Review Findings

2.3.1 In providing further evidence to the task group, the following was made clear to the commission in relation to the proposed new arrangements:

Further information on the proposal from Housing Services

2.3.2 Clarity was provided in respect of the present arrangements for dealing with cases of ASB, as outlined in 2.1.2

2.3.3 It was made clear that under the new proposal (which was anticipated to be introduced later in 2022), tenants can still report cases of ASB to NHOs, and that NHOs would continue to deal with low-level nuisance, but that in the

majority of cases, the NHO would appropriately signpost the referral, which in many cases would be to the new specialist housing team. The team would investigate all cases that relate to council tenancies.

2.3.4 It was clarified that a major anticipated benefit of the proposal was that it would free up a significant amount of time for NHOs to undertake other tasks, including supporting those requiring council housing who have more complex needs. The NHOs dealt with approximately 1,220 cases per year.

2.3.5 Other benefits of the proposal that were reported included:

- Less duplication of work between different services.
- Increased consistency of approach and personnel involved. Cases would be more easily tailored to individual needs. This was particularly welcomed by task group members, who felt that a dedicated case officer throughout an entire case period would be more reassuring for victims.
- A smooth and clear process of case transition between Housing Services and CrASBU (where appropriate)
- Greater consideration of protected characteristics when dealing with cases, and more robust support mechanisms in place for issues concerning mental health. It was seen imperative that a robust training mechanism was in place for staff to support both victims and those that report ASB, given that both were reported to often suffer from poor mental health.
- Greater access to police information/records

2.3.6 Further clarity on overall case numbers were sought and provided at the second of the task group meetings, and the following points in relation to this were made:

- A total of 1,244 cases of ASB were reported during 2020/21, and that between April and September 2021, a further 674 cases had been reported
- 55% of cases reported related to neighbour disputes.
- A higher proportion of cases were predominantly located in the west of the city, with the highest reported level within the New Parks area.
- Respective monthly figures for the West, East and South areas of the City were provided to the Task Group.

2.3.7 In relation to the new team structure, it was reported that this would consist of four dedicated and specialist Housing ASB officers, who would report to a Neighbourhood Housing Team Leader, but would also be managed in partnership by CrASBU. Officers would be based at local neighbourhood hubs and would also have access to an office at Mansfield House, which would enable intelligence to be more easily shared between the Housing team, CrASBU and the Police.

- 2.3.8 It was anticipated that each ASB officer would command approximately 18 intensive cases each month, and that this represented a more manageable case approach and would offer a greater level of dedicated support to victims and those affected by cases. Caseloads were anticipated to be evenly spread amongst staff, with officers being deployed to areas with a higher case prevalence if deemed necessary.
- 2.3.9 A prime concern of the commission regarding the current arrangements related to the impacts on NHOs, and assurances were sought that the new proposal would ease the case load of NHOs, and in turn, benefit tenants and residents by allowing them to concentrate on more complex tasks. It was reiterated that the establishment of a dedicated team would free-up a sizeable proportion of the current workload of NHOs, though NHOs would continue to report cases of ASB, and engage with lower-level cases that did not meet the legal definition of ASB. By being co-located with officers from the specialist housing ASB team, NHOs would be able to lodge referrals quickly and provide local intelligence to the ASB team as cases progress. Similarly, this new arrangement would allow ASB officers to share progress with the NHOs as cases progress. Therefore, the communication processes between internal agencies were seen as being much improved.

Relationship with CrASBU

- 2.3.10 A significant element of the evidence-gathering work related to how CrASBU would operate as part of the new arrangements. Under the initial proposal, it was recommended that the responsibility for dealing with all cases of ASB would be transferred to CrASBU.
- 2.3.11 Under the revised proposal, the new team would lead on all cases primarily involving council housing, whilst CrASBU would lead on those primarily involving private housing and would also work cross-tenure to include council housing when required (the proposed referral process is depicted in *figure a* below). It was explained that the new co-managerial and co-location arrangements would support the cross-working arrangements between CrASBU and Housing. The arrangement would also enable improved joint working with the police through the use of the SENITEL shared intelligence system, which is currently used by CRASBU officers to manage cases.
- 2.3.12 The commission were interested in the level of training provided to those who would form part of the new team. As part of a robust training regime that would be put in place, both the Police and CrASBU would provide access to training to ensure that all parties have a full understanding of the arrangements across each agency.
- 2.3.13 In finding out more about the operation of CrASBU, along with finding out about the benefits that working alongside CrASBU would have for the new specialist team, the following points were made:
- CrASBU specialise in dealing with high risk and complex cases that often result in legal sanctions. Under the new proposal, cases that have been solely investigated by the specialist Housing team may then

be directly passed to CrASBU for legal action to be progressed, without any further case investigation by CrASBU.

- The CrASBU team holds specialist knowledge in terms of dealing with cases of ASB. They receive referrals from many agencies in addition to Housing, such as the Police, Adult and Children's Services and the Fire Service
- CrASBU responds to an average of 143 cases per month.
- CrASBU can initiate community triggers, which are covered by statutory legislation and provide victims with a right to ask for their case to be reviewed. All such reviews across the city are performed by CrASBU.
- CrASBU can also initiate Complex Individual Management Meetings (CIMM) and Corporate Decision-making Meetings (CDMM).
- A CIMM establishes an appropriate multiagency plan for a complex individual or family who have continued to cause ASB when several interventions have not been successful in bringing about change. It often serves as a pre-cursor to a CDMM.
- A CDMM is used to consider individual circumstances of individuals and agencies involved and in situations where a decision on case progression is required. These are convened when certain risk factors are known such as vulnerability and mental health issues. In taking decisions, strong consideration is given in respect of the impact on victims and the wider community,

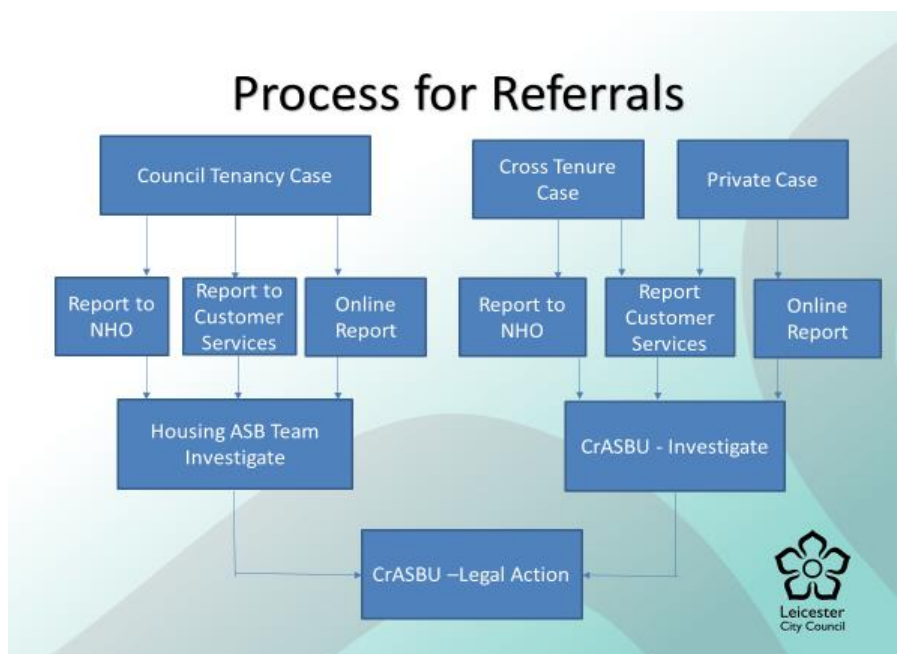


Figure 1 – proposed referral process

The role of the Police

- 2.3.14 As part of the second task group meeting, the Chair invited PCSO Joanne Burton to participate. Although the role of the police did not form a key part of the rationale for this work, PCSO Burton described some of the detail behind the police's processes for dealing with anti-social behaviour.
- 2.3.15 In terms of the communication regarding ASB cases between Housing and the Police, Joanne confirmed that quarterly meetings took place between relevant beat teams and Housing officers. In respect of more complex cases, dedicated meetings are held that often include representatives from other relevant agencies. It was generally felt that the level of information sharing at these meetings was extremely helpful in progressing ASB cases, and as part of the new arrangements, the task group were keen for all to be done to ensure that information between the police, CrASBU and Housing be appropriately shared. In particular, members welcomed the input of tenant representatives as part of regular and case-specific meetings where appropriate.

Equality Issues

- 2.3.16 When the Scrutiny Commission first considered the revised proposal, one area that required further detail related to the carrying out of an equality impact assessment, and detail of how the new service would improve equality and accessibility outcomes
- 2.3.17 Since the Scrutiny Commission meeting of 15 June, comprehensive equality profiling and an impact assessment had been undertaken and a number of actions had been put in place in preparation for the new team. These included:
- Ensuring that a multi-lingual work force was in place, with staff using their own language skills to meet interpretation needs.
 - To forge closer links with the Community Languages team in supporting any translation requests that can't be dealt with by the ASB team.
 - Translating written materials into other languages where appropriate
 - To ensure that robust and regular training was in place to allow team members to support staff dealing with those experiencing mental health issues.
 - To ensure that regular equality and diversity-related training was undertaken by all team members given that staff were to provide an appropriate service to people with a range of protected characteristics.

Benchmarking

- 2.3.18 As set out in the scoping document, further detail was sought in relation to approaches taken in dealing with ASB across other authorities, particularly those seen as comparable to Leicester. The task group were keen to find out the extent to which the proposed approach had been replicated elsewhere.

- 2.3.19 It was reported to the task group that in general terms, there were mixed approaches, but that there was an emerging trend in relation to the establishment of specialised teams. In particular, officers had engaged with colleagues from Sandwell Borough Council who had reported their successes in adopting a specialised team, particularly in relation to an improvement in the process for transferring cases and in following a uniform approach in respect of the policy and procedures that were in place.
- 2.3.20 Of other authorities that were contacted by officers, some, including Manchester City Council, were also in the process of setting up a specialised team. The task group were keen for the arrangements in other authorities, including Manchester to be monitored with a view to adopting any examples of particularly good practice.
- 2.3.21 It was also reported that some local authorities only provided ASB related services to council tenants.

Case Studies

- 2.3.22 As part of the task group work, members were also keen to receive case studies from both Housing and CrASBU in order to illustrate the respective roles that both agencies performed.
- 2.3.23 The use of case studies by both teams was welcomed and seen by the task group as helpful in not only setting out the respective roles of both agencies, but also in helping to understand how cases will be progressed under the new proposal and where the role of each agency begins and ends. They also helped to evidence the problems of the existing approach, particularly in relation to the level of current input by NHOs and the lack of clarity around case handling. The case studies are reflected in both appendix D and E.

2.4 Summary of Task Group Conclusions

- 2.3.24 As a result of the additional evidence received in response to the concerns raised previously, and the ability for members to probe and engage with officers and stakeholders as part of this work, the task group concluded that they were in broad agreement with the proposals, though issued a number of recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2.
- 2.3.25 In hearing the evidence in respect of caseloads and by examining case data more rigorously, members saw the need for a dedicated team to be established and the need for the present workload of NHOs to be better balanced. Members hoped that the new structure would allow cases to be dealt with more quickly and that this would provide a clearer and more consistent approach to support victims. It was also hoped that a flexible team structure would allow the spread of cases across the city to be more evenly managed.

- 2.3.26 A key area of uncertainty prior to the task group work related to how the new team would work in partnership with CrASBU. The attendance by CrASBU at these meetings and the detail that officers provided was well received, and as a result, members were satisfied that in principle, the new model would support better inter-working relationships between the two agencies, which in turn, would benefit tenants and residents.
- 2.3.27 A fundamental theme raised by task group members concerned communication. In order for the new arrangements to provide the anticipated benefits, members felt that it was vital that the appropriate communication mechanisms be put in place to inform tenants and residents of how the new arrangements would work in practice and the benefits that these would bring. The task group felt that it was vital that as part of communicative materials, a clear incremental approach was evidenced, advising what support would be provided and by whom in respect of each stage of a case process.
- 2.3.28 A further area of priority in relation to communication concerned the need for ensuring that inter-agency communication is robust and consistent throughout cases. At some point in the future, the task group were keen to receive examples of the benefits of this approach to particular cases and how they had been dealt with more efficiently. The task group also recommended increased communication with the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum, both in respect of the proposed new arrangements, but to also allow them to monitor the arrangements once they were in place and to participate in inter-agency liaison where appropriate.
- 2.3.29 Throughout the work, a series of points were raised in respect of ensuring that adequate training was in place, not only for those forming part of the new team, but also across the City Council, particularly for those front-line staff such as customer services officers who would often initially liaise with tenants and residents, and would need to know more about the new arrangements to appropriately signpost customers. A range of training needs for the new team were also identified, which included robust training to support mental health needs and to undertake mediation training.
- 2.3.30 In order to gain assurances that the new arrangements were providing the anticipated benefits, the task group recommended that six-monthly updates be brought to the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

3. Financial, Legal and Other Implications

3.1 Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report which cannot be accommodated within existing budgets.

Stuart McAvoy – Acting Head of Finance

3.2 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Jeremy Rainbow – Principal Lawyer (Litigation) – 371435.

3.3 Equality Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

If the recommendations are agreed and as part of the ongoing work to reshape the service, it is recommended that the Equalities Impact Assessment is updated to reflect any changes as it is an iterative document. Any strategies/policies developed as part of this proposal need to ensure they outline how they meet the Equality Duty as prescribed by the Equality Act.

An organisational review EIA will need to be completed once the staffing establishment has been fully determined looking at any positive and negative impacts on staff in scope of the review.

Advice and guidance can be sought from the Corporate Equalities Team.

Kalvaran Sandhu – Equalities Manager, 454 6344

3.4 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Implications

There are no significant climate emergency implications arising from this report.

Duncan Bell – Climate Change Manager

4 Summary of Appendices

Appendix A – Review scoping document

Appendix B – Report to Housing Scrutiny Commission – 7 July 2020

Appendix C – Report to Housing Scrutiny Commission – 15 June 2021

Appendix D – Presentation by Housing Services provided to task group meeting on 7 October

Appendix E - Presentation by CrASBU provided to task group meeting on 7 October

Appendix F – Additional information presented to task group meeting on 3 November

5 Officers to Contact

Francis Connolly

Scrutiny Support Manager

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Leicester City Council
Scrutiny Review

Examining the role and effectiveness of the proposal to establish a central housing Anti-Social Behaviour Team

A review of the Housing Scrutiny Commission

July 2021

Background to scrutiny reviews

Determining the right topics for scrutiny reviews is the first step in making sure scrutiny provides benefits to the Council and the community.

This scoping template will assist in planning the review by defining the purpose, methodology and resources needed. It should be completed by the Member proposing the review, in liaison with the lead Director and the Scrutiny Manager. Scrutiny Officers can provide support and assistance with this.

In order to be effective, every scrutiny review must be properly project managed to ensure it achieves its aims and delivers measurable outcomes. To achieve this, it is essential that the scope of the review is well defined at the outset. This way the review is less likely to get side-tracked or become overambitious in what it hopes to tackle. The Commission's objectives should, therefore, be as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Time-bound) as possible.

The scoping document is also a good tool for communicating what the review is about, who is involved and how it will be undertaken to all partners and interested stakeholders.

The form also includes a section on public and media interest in the review which should be completed in conjunction with the Council's Communications Team. This will allow the Commission to be properly prepared for any media interest and to plan the release of any press statements.

Scrutiny reviews will be supported by a Scrutiny Officer.

Evaluation

Reviewing changes that have been made as a result of a scrutiny review is the most common way of assessing the effectiveness. Any scrutiny review should consider whether an on-going monitoring role for the Commission is appropriate in relation to the topic under review.

For further information please contact the Scrutiny Team on 0116 4546340

To be completed by the Member proposing the review		
1.	Title of the proposed scrutiny review	Examining the proposal to establish a central housing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Team
2.	Proposed by	Councillor Westley, Chair of Housing.
3.	Rationale Why do you want to undertake this review?	<p>In July 2020, the Housing Scrutiny Commission received a report that sought to transfer the ASB team from the Housing Service division to CrASBU. This proposal was met with a number of concerns by scrutiny and the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fewer resources for housing services with the retention of the £100k efficiency saving • a loss of housing officer's specialist knowledge • a view from tenants that they wanted to report incidents to housing officers • views that CrASBU would not be sufficiently resourced to deal with the work • concerns that the new arrangement would need to be monitored to check its effectiveness • questions around the support for people poor mental health. <p>A revised proposal was presented for the delivery of ASB services was presented to Housing Scrutiny in May 2021, having sought comment from the tenants and Leaseholders Panel. Taking into account the comments raised previously, this proposal broadly recommended the establishment of a centrally based housing ASB investigation team that would work in close partnership with CrASBU.</p> <p>Although there was some support for the new proposal from the tenants and leaseholders panel, several questions were raised and further questions and concerns in terms of the role and function of the delivery of the service were raised by the Housing Scrutiny Commission.</p> <p>These are set out in more detail in section 4, and as a result, it was agreed to initiate a review in conjunction with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Commission to scrutinise the proposal in more detail and upon the receipt of further evidence, to form recommendations in respect of the future delivery of ASB services.</p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>Purpose and aims of the review What question(s) do you want to answer and what do you want to achieve? (Outcomes?)</p>	<p>This review will generally seek to provide assurance in respect of the proposal by serving to examine it in greater detail and to determine the level of impact that it will have. The review will call upon a wider range of witnesses and will learn more about the relationship between the Housing ASB team and CrASBU. The review may form a number of recommendations regarding the future delivery of ASB services prior to the taking of an Executive decision.</p> <p>Fundamentally, the review aims to establish further detail to help establish any clear recommendations regarding future service delivery. Such detail includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The provision of further information to help better determine the proposal's overall level of service impact, and whether it will produce improved outcomes. - Detail to provide an overall enhanced understanding of the working relationship between the proposed ASB team based in Housing, CrASBU and the police, and an understanding of the role of each service based on case categorisation. - Presentation of a structure for the new team, including detail of the impact on the current work of Neighbourhood Housing Officers and CrASBU. - The presentation and opportunity to review a full Equality Impact Assessment, including a focus on how the new service can address language barriers.
<p>5.</p>	<p>Links with corporate aims / priorities How does the review link to corporate aims and priorities?</p>	<p>The City Council works with partner agencies, residents, landlords and businesses to tackle neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour in Leicester, and has adopted an approach that covers all aspects from prevention to rehabilitation, and sets out to protect and support victims and witnesses.</p> <p>The City Council forms part of the Safer Leicester Partnership. Its current plan can be found here.</p> <p>This review aims to seek assurances that the new service proposal can most appropriately serve the aims and intentions of the City Council and partners who form the Safer Leicester Partnership.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Scope Set out what is included in the scope of the review and what is not. For example which services it does and does not cover.</p>	<p>This review intends to thoroughly examine the impact of the proposal on service users by understanding in greater detail of how the newly established team in Housing will deal with ASB cases alongside CrASBU.</p> <p>This review does not intend to examine in detail the role of the police in dealing with ASB. The police's role will be detailed as part of further overall presentation of evidence.</p>

7.	<p>Methodology Describe the methods you will use to undertake the review.</p> <p>How will you undertake the review, what evidence will need to be gathered from members, officers and key stakeholders, including partners and external organisations and experts?</p>	<p>To include:</p> <p>Staging one or more focus group/forum sessions to obtain further detail from officers proposing the service change.</p> <p>To obtain case studies of a range of different cases that cover differing levels of intervention and clearly set out the respective roles of Housing and CrASBU in dealing with such cases - and to what extent these roles will differ under the new service proposal.</p> <p>To obtain and examine detail of the operation of a similar service structure within local authorities and to potentially question representatives from other authorities in terms of their experiences of service operation.</p> <p>To enable further scrutiny, questioning and the proposing of recommendations by members, with input from tenant representations and any other witnesses seen central to further evidence gathering.</p>
	<p>Witnesses Set out who you want to gather evidence from and how you will plan to do this.</p>	<p>Officers from Housing Services responsible for overseeing the proposed ASB team with the Housing division.</p> <p>Officers from Neighbourhood & Environmental Services responsible for CrASBU.</p> <p>Relevant Executive members – Councillors Clair, Cutkelvin and Master.</p> <p>The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission.</p> <p>Other councillors with a level of knowledge and interest sufficient to contribute and support the task group.</p> <p>To invite questioning and general input from the Chair of the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum, and potentially other members of the forum.</p> <p>Service users – via the form of case studies presented to the commission.</p> <p>Other local authorities – in terms of gathering evidence around the functionality of structures elsewhere.</p>
8.	<p>Timescales How long is the review expected to take to complete?</p>	<p>It is envisaged that the review will be completed within three months</p>
	<p>Proposed start date</p>	<p>Following 15 July - Overview Select Committee meeting.</p>
	<p>Proposed completion date</p>	<p>October 2021</p>

9.	<p>Resources / staffing requirements</p> <p>Scrutiny reviews are facilitated by Scrutiny Officers and it is important to estimate the amount of their time, in weeks, that will be required in order to manage the review Project Plan effectively.</p>	<p>Scrutiny officer time within existing workload – from the Scrutiny Support Officer supporting both the Housing Scrutiny Commission.</p> <p>The officer time from services within Housing, Community Safety & Protection and any other service departments contributing to the review.</p>
	<p>Do you anticipate any further resources will be required e.g. site visits or independent technical advice? If so, please provide details.</p>	<p>Not at this initial stage.</p>
10.	<p>Review recommendations and findings</p> <p>To whom will the recommendations be addressed? E.g. Executive / External Partner?</p>	<p>The review recommendations will be forwarded to the Executive Member for Education and Housing prior to the taking of an Executive decision in respect of the future delivery of the ASB service.</p>
11.	<p>Likely publicity arising from the review - Is this topic likely to be of high interest to the media? Please explain.</p>	<p>Likely to attract medium attention from the media</p>
12.	<p>Publicising the review and its findings and recommendations</p> <p>How will these be published / advertised?</p>	<p>The findings of the review will be agreed by the Task Group and will be presented to the Overview Select Committee, and will be published in advance of doing so.</p>
13.	<p>How will this review add value to policy development or service improvement?</p>	<p>The review will ensure that the context and wider implications of the proposals are fully presented to enable scrutiny to potentially influence policy development or service improvement.</p>

To be completed by the Executive Lead		
14.	Executive Lead's Comments The Executive Lead is responsible for the portfolio so it is important to seek and understand their views and ensure they are engaged in the process so that Scrutiny's recommendations can be taken on board where appropriate.	
Comments from the relevant Director		
15.	Observations and comments on the proposed review	I welcome the focus and desire of the Commissions to scrutinise the proposals to improve Anti Social Behaviour services in the Council to the tenants and residents of Leicester.
	Name	Chris Burgin
	Role	Director of Housing
	Date	9/7/2021
To be completed by the Scrutiny Support Manager		
16.	Will the proposed scrutiny review / timescales negatively impact on other work within the Scrutiny Team?	It is anticipated that there will be no adverse impact on the Scrutiny Team's work to support this review. Although it is expected that this review will be completed relatively quickly, there may need to be some prioritising of work done during its undertaking.
	Do you have available staffing resources to facilitate this scrutiny review? If not, please provide details.	The review can be adequately support by the Scrutiny Team as per my comments above.
	Name	Francis Connolly, Scrutiny Support Manager.
	Date	9 July 2021



Housing Scrutiny Commission

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Service

Proposal

Lead members:

**Cllr Cutkelvin Assistant Mayor for Housing &
Education**

**Cllr Singh-Clair Assistant Mayor for
Neighbourhoods**

Lead directors: Chris Burgin, Director of Housing John Leach, Director of
Neighbourhood & Environmental Services

Report Authors:

Gurjit Minhas/Daxa Pancholi – Head of Service Housing/Community Safety and Protection.

1. Summary

1.1 This report sets out a proposal for the reconfiguration of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Services within the Council.

1.2 Existing services are provided within two Divisions, Neighbourhood and Environmental Services and Housing split by tenure type and also severity of Anti-Social Behaviour.

Private sector cases and all serious cases are managed by the Crime and Anti- Social Behaviour Unit (CRASBU). Lower level ASB cases are managed by Housing relating to Council properties.

1.3 This report advises members of the proposal to transfer the ASB function from the Housing Division to the CrASBU Team. This will lead to one central team within the Council having responsibility for dealing with all ASB cases across the City from the first report to conclusion regardless of tenure.

2. Background

2.1 Currently ASB services are delivered by two areas from within the Council, the Tenancy Management Service within the Housing Division and the Crime and ASB (CrASBU) Team based in the Neighbourhood and Environmental Division.

2.2 The Housing Division have a responsibility to ensure that Leicester City Council tenants adhere to responsibilities and obligations outlined within the Conditions of Tenancy. Housing Services deal with low to medium reported ASB incidents which will primarily involve Leicester City Council housing stock (however this can also involve dealing with owner occupiers or leaseholders if they are implicated or are affected by the ASB). As the case progresses and if it may lead to litigation or becomes complex, /serious or high-risk then a referral is made to the CrASBU.

2.3 CrASBU deal with ASB across all tenures, they deal with referrals from the Housing Division, partner agencies, residents, landlords and businesses to deal with all levels of ASB from low to complex/ high-risk cases. CrASBU deal with all reports of ASB from residents and tenants in private sector housing from initial report to high level investigations and legal action. Due to the nature of this work CrASBU have accumulated specialist knowledge of dealing with ASB.

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek feedback from the Housing Scrutiny Commission and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Members on the transfer of the ASB function from the Housing Division to the CrASBU Team. This will lead to one central team within the Council having responsibility for dealing with all ASB cases across the City from the first report to conclusion regardless of tenure.

3.2 With the function transferring, funding from the HRA would transfer to support the entire service to council tenants being delivered by the CrASBU team.

3.3 This proposal will lead to a more streamlined, seamless and efficient service for all reported ASB incidents regardless of tenure to meet both public and partner expectation in terms of dealing with crime and ASB encountered by the citizens of Leicester.

3.4 While it is anticipated this proposal will generate operational efficiency by creating a more effective specialist service that will reduce any duplication of functions, the primary reason for the change is to improve the services.

3.5 For all stakeholders, service users, ward councillors and partner agencies there will be one single point of contact for referrals and support.

4. Scope and Impact of Proposed Change

4.1 A Business Case for Organisational Change in accordance with the Organisational

Review Policy is proposed to be prepared by the Head of Service for Community Safety and Protection with support from the Head of Housing Services. This would need to be consulted on as this potential change will impact on the job roles of Neighbourhood Housing Officers within the Tenancy Management Service and job roles within the CrASBU team.

4.2 This will also impact on Council Tenants, as currently tenants most often report ASB to housing staff and contact housing officers for updates on individual cases. The future model will mean that housing staff will signpost to appropriate services, however, they will not deal with or manage cases, therefore tenants will also need to be consulted and made aware of this change.

5. Current Working Model

5.1 There are 37.6 Neighbourhood Housing Officers who spend 20% of their time working directly on ASB, dealing with approximately 1220 cases per year. Within CrASBU there are currently 6 Crime and ASB officers who work directly on ASB.

5.2 A memorandum of understanding currently exists between the Housing Division and CrASBU, which requires the Housing Division to undertake significant work to manage the ASB case before a referral is made to CrASBU.

5.3 If housing intervention has not reduced ASB then the case is referred to CrASBU who will then manage the case to its conclusion, which can include litigation to repossess the dwelling. Often duplication of work occurs as the two services can be working on a case and overlap of work and responsibilities does occur.

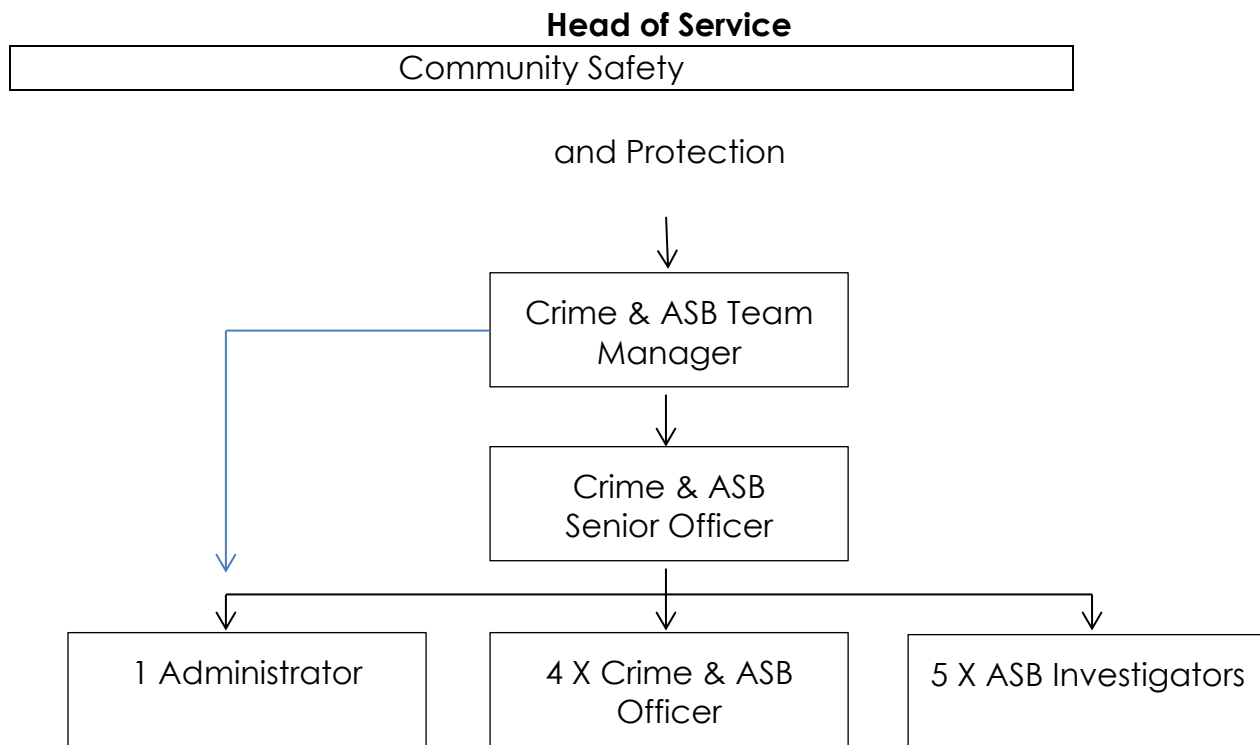
6. Proposed Future Working Model

6.1 ASB cases from all tenures will be dealt with by CrASBU from the point of reporting to closure. The CrASBU team will need to be re-configured to reflect the increase in work and referrals.

6.2 For council tenants, Neighbourhood Housing Officers would provide advice via the standard letters and information that is readily available and would advise reports of ASB to be made directly to CrASBU.

6.3 We are working to try to deliver the service change utilising current vacant posts within the Neighbourhood Housing Officer establishment and there are not anticipated to be any compulsory or voluntary redundancies. Sufficient staffing resources will be retained within housing to enable signposting and to provide initial information.

Proposed New Structure for the Community Safety Team



6.4 The new roles proposed for the Community Safety Team include the Investigator

Officer who will carry out initial investigations and interventions. The Crime & ASB

Officer who will carry out more complex case management and legal work. The Senior Officer will support the Team Manager and manage the ASB team. The Team Manager who will lead on partnership management issues, budgets and policy and strategy development.

6.5 The Housing Division currently deals with approximately 1220 reports of ASB, in future with earlier intervention work, the expectation is that many cases will be resolved before becoming more serious in nature. The resources proposed will meet the demand for this service currently and further benefits will be realised with the introduction of channel shift measures to enable complainants to self-help.

7. Benefits of Future Working Model

7.1 There will be one single point of contact for all stakeholders, avoiding any uncertainty about who is dealing with a case irrespective of tenure.

7.2 The new service will eliminate any duplication of work.

7.3 The current role of a Neighbourhood Housing Officer covering several landlord functions does not lend itself to providing a dedicated service to deal with ASB.

7.4 Removing the ASB function from the Neighbourhood Housing Officer role will enable officers to focus on supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies and their building responsibility duties.

7.5 All complainants regardless of tenure will receive a consistent and specialist ASB service.

7.6 A further benefit would be that CrASBU would be the sole liaison with the Police for the Council, which will improve the process of communicating intelligence and improve the specialist knowledge of officers working within the team.

7.7 This model will benefit from the Channel Shift programme, with an expectation that complainants reporting ASB are able to access help and support by way of information that can assist them in “self-help”.

8. Financial, legal and other implications

8.1 Financial implications

8.1.1 The total current cost of managing ASB across Council services is £727k (£432k within the CrASBU service and approximately £295k in the HRA, based on 7 FTE Neighbourhood Housing Officers). The proposed model set out in this report has an annual cost of £627k; the reduction of £100k reflecting efficiencies

which arise through a centralised approach to managing ASB. Should the proposed model be implemented, the HRA would make an increased contribution towards funding the CrASBU service from £179k to £374k. A review will be built in after no more than 12 months to see if any additional HRA funding is required to deal any increased/unmet demand.

Stuart McAvoy – Principal Accountant

8.2. Legal implications

8.2.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report

Jeremy Rainbow – Principal Lawyer

8.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Implications

8.3.1. There are no significant climate change implications associated with this report. **Aidan Davis - Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284**

8.4 Equalities Implications

8.4.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

8.4.2 Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

If the recommendations are agreed and as part of the ongoing work to reshape the service, it is recommended that an Equalities Impact Assessment is undertaken.

However, the Equality Impact Assessment is an iterative document which should be revisited throughout the decision-making process and should, ultimately, also take into account any consultation findings including housing tenants. Consultation needs to be meaningful and accessible and this needs to be reflected in the Communications Strategy. Any strategies/policies developed as part of this proposal need to ensure they outline how they meet the Equality Duty as prescribed by the Equality Act, such as the development of an Anti-Social Behaviour Policy for the new central team.

An organisational review EIA will need to be completed once the staffing establishment has been fully determined looking at any positive and negative impacts on staff in scope of the review. A service change EIA is attached.

Advice and guidance can be sought from the Corporate Equalities Team. **Sukhi Biring -Equalities Officer, 454 4175**

9.0 Summary of Appendices

n/a

10.0 Is this a private report?

No

11.0 Is this a key decision?

Yes



***Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Service
Revised Proposal***

For consideration by: Housing Scrutiny Commission Date: 15 June 2021 Lead
director: Chris Burgin

Report Author:

Gurjit Minhas– Head of Service Housing

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out a revised proposal to change how we deliver Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Services. Currently services are delivered by Neighbourhood Housing Officers within the Housing Division and the Crime and ASB (CrASBU) Team based in the Neighbourhood and Environmental Division.
- 1.2 The revised proposal is to create a central housing Anti-Social Behaviour Team that will work closely with CrASBU. Council tenants will still be able to report ASB to their housing officers as they do now, however all investigations will be carried out by a central housing ASB team.
- 1.3 The key benefits of this proposal will be to provide a consistent specialist ASB service to all complainants regardless of tenure and enable Neighbourhood Housing Officers to focus on supporting tenants.
- 1.4 The proposal to change the ASB service has been consulted on previously with the Housing Scrutiny Commission and with the Tenant's and Leaseholders Forum in 2020 and has been amended in line with the consultation feedback received.
- 1.5 The original proposal was for all ASB to be dealt with by CrASBU, however you the Scrutiny Commission and the Forum told us that you had the following concerns about the original proposal:
 - less resources for housing services, retain the £100k efficiency saving
 - housing officer's knowledge would be lost
 - tenants wanted to report incidents to housing officers
 - that CRASBU would not be sufficiently resourced to deal with the work

- that the new arrangement would need to be monitored to check its effectiveness
 - support for people poor mental health
- 1.6 Creating a housing ASB team to carry out investigations and retaining the £100k efficiency saving to provide the face to face customer service role within housing, addresses the above concerns. A central housing team with specialist knowledge is also required as we are dealing with more complex cases in various parts of the City.
- 1.7 This revised proposal has now been consulted on with the Tenant's Forum in January and February 2021. Their feedback on the new proposal is wide-ranging and is attached, please see **Appendix 1**. A commitment has been made to the Forum that they will receive regular feedback on the performance of the ASB service for council tenants going forward. Publicity will also be provided on how services can be accessed. Forum members requested for a definition of ASB to be included in this report, which is as follows:
- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) was defined in the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) as acting 'in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the perpetrator**
- 1.8 This report also highlights on how the service will be accessed in future and the work of other local authorities and how performance will be monitored in the new service model.

2. Background

- 2.1 Historically housing services have dealt with ASB associated with council tenancies separately as council estates used to be made up of mostly council owned properties. Low to medium level ASB could be managed through the legal responsibilities of the council as a landlord. This is outlined within 'The Conditions of Tenancy' document which all council tenants sign up to. Mainly due to Right to Buy we are seeing an increase in the mixture of tenures on estates, we have approximately 30 new applications each month. Some of these sold properties are owner occupied, leasehold and some are rented out to private tenants.
- 2.2 CrASBU historically has dealt with all reports of ASB from residents and tenants in private sector housing from initial report to high level investigations and legal action. CrASBU also deals with council tenancy cases as they progress and become more complex, serious or high-risk.

- 2.3 With the increasing mixture of tenures on estates, the two investigation functions sitting separately is not in alignment with the nature of ASB service requests being reported. Reports often involve disputes with households from different tenures. The proposal for the teams to be based centrally will help them to more effectively deal with ASB across all tenures and prevent duplication of work.
- 2.4 The needs of council tenants are also changing as more people are presenting with complex issues, related to substance use, mental health and poverty. Therefore, there is a necessity now to enhance the support role of Neighbourhood Housing Officers to support people in their tenancies. The enforcement function of tackling ASB no longer aligns with the support role Neighbourhood Housing Officers are increasingly having to carry out.
- 2.5 The current arrangement is that each Neighbourhood Housing Officer takes reports and investigates council housing associated cases in their area. This means an uneven and excessive workload for some officers especially in the West of the City. Having a central housing team will mean that caseloads can be more evenly distributed, and work can be resourced more effectively. Since April 2020 the Housing Service has received 931 reports of ASB.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is for members to consider the proposal of setting up a housing ASB investigation team that will work in close partnership with CrASBU and be based centrally.
- 3.2 This proposal will lead to a more effective specialist services that will reduce any duplication of functions. All officers dealing with ASB will be trained to provide support and signpost people who have poor mental health.
- Increasingly more service users are presenting with mental health issues and this can be a contributing factor in ASB cases.
- 3.3 In line with the feedback received from the Scrutiny Commission and Forum on the initial proposal for the new model would have realised efficiencies of 100k. This will now be retained within the Housing

Service to ensure Neighbourhood Housing Officers carry out the key link and customer contact role.

4. Scope and Impact of Proposed Change

4.1 A Business Case for Organisational Change in accordance with the Organisational

Review Policy is proposed to be prepared by the Head of Service for Community Safety and Protection with support from the Head of Housing Services. This would need to be consulted on as this potential change will impact on the job roles of Neighbourhood Housing Officers within the Tenancy Management Service and the creation of job roles within the new central housing ASB Team and the CrASBU team.

4.2 The proposed change will also impact on Council Tenants, as Neighbourhood Housing Officers will no longer investigate low level ASB cases. In line with feedback from the Scrutiny Commission and the Tenants Forum, in the future model, tenants will still be able to contact housing officers to report ASB and housing staff will provide advice and assistance and refer to the central teams where appropriate. Tenants will also be able to report cases directly to the ASB teams and will be able to contact the officer dealing with the case directly throughout the investigation.

5. Proposed Future Working Model

5.1 For council tenants, Neighbourhood Housing Officers (NHOs) would continue to be a key contact person and provide advice and low-level assistance via the standard letters and information that is readily available.

5.2 NHO's will deal with issues that are not deemed as formal ASB. Cases that need formal investigation will be referred to the central teams, however NHO's will continue to be a point of local intelligence and local information for the central teams.

5.3 The central housing ASB team will be made up of housing ASB officers who will be managed in partnership by both Housing and CrASBU.

- 5.4 Housing staff will lead on cases primarily involving council housing but as with CrASBU will deal with cross tenure cases. CrASBU will lead on those primarily involving private housing and will work cross tenure to include council housing.
- 5.5 The central housing ASB Team will be managed in partnership by Housing Services and CrASBU and be based in Mansfield House while also utilising local bases. This will enable the housing team to have a close working relationship with CrASBU and utilise central resources and knowledge to deal with ASB more effectively. This will also enable improved joint working with the police, through the use of a shared intelligence system called SENTINEL, which is currently used by CrASBU officers to manage cases
- 5.6 As part of on-going commitment to ensure that this model provides continuous improvement and yields the type of outcomes required, the following key performance information will be captured and shared;
- i) Service/ Information Request (ensuring that data is captured where council tenants are involved as victims and/ or perpetrator)
 - ii) Action Taken
 - iii) Review/ Evaluation
- 5.7 As part of the consultation with members and the tenant's forum, there was interest in relation to how other local authorities delivered services in relation to ASB. With this in mind, officers contacted the 10 local authorities to understand their approach to dealing with ASB.
- 5.8 Of those 7 cities with housing stock and ASB services for residents of the city; 5 cities have a single route for reporting ASB regardless of tenure. One of the city's shared with us that they feel that there is a more uniform approach across their area with this approach and that the staff work more consistently using the same policies and procedures.

6. Benefits of Future Working Model

- 6.1 The point of contact for all stakeholders will be clear, avoiding any uncertainty about who is dealing with a case irrespective of tenure. Contact details of the case worker will be provided.
- 6.2 The new service will eliminate any duplication of work and improve partnership working.
- 6.3 The current role of a Neighbourhood Housing Officer covering several landlord functions does not lend itself to providing a dedicated service to deal with ASB.
- 6.4 Removing the ASB function from the Neighbourhood Housing Officer role will enable officers to focus on supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies and their building responsibility duties.
- 6.5 All complainants regardless of tenure will receive a consistent and specialist ASB service with support for mental health.
- 6.6 Improved joint working with the police through a shared intelligence system, SENTINEL which CrASBU utilise; ensuring that issues are communicated and resolved much more swiftly.
- 6.7 This model will benefit from the Channel Shift programme, with an expectation that complainants reporting ASB are able to access help and support by way of information that can assist them in “self-help”.

7. Financial, legal and other implications

7.1 Financial implications

- 7.1.1 The total current cost of managing ASB across Council services is £727k (£432k within the CrASBU service and approximately £295k in the HRA). The proposed model will have no impact on overall costs. Centralising HRA ASB support into a single team will free up time to an estimated value of £100k for Housing Officers to spend on other tasks.

Stuart McAvoy – Principal Accountant

7.2. Legal implications

7.2.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report *Jeremy Rainbow – Principal Lawyer*

7.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Implications

7.3.1. There are no significant climate change implications associated with this report. *Aidan Davis - Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284*

7.4 Equalities Implications

7.4.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

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positive and negative impacts on staff in scope of the review. A service change EIA is attached.

Advice and guidance can be sought from the Corporate Equalities Team.

Sukhi Biring -Equalities Officer, 454 4175

Appendix 1

Forum Members feedback on ASB proposals

In early January the revised Anti-Social Behaviour proposals report was sent to all Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum members. This was followed up with telephone calls to obtain individual member feedback on the revised proposals.

A Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum meeting was held on the 4th February 2021. At this meeting the individual feedback was shared. The Forum members were then given the opportunity to add any further comments they would like to make. The feedback received is as follows:

May Jones

Generally happy with the proposals and in favour.

- Thought the idea of setting up a central Housing ASB team was a good idea
- Agreed with the close working arrangements with CRASBU
- Pleased anti-social behaviour can still be reported to housing officers
- Pleased the previous saving of £100k will continue to be used to fund services

Ann Green

Generally, in favour of the proposals, but would like to know:

- What exactly what will the 100k be used for?

- There's already a shortage of housing officers. Will there be new Housing Officers recruited or will they use existing ones?

Wendy Biddles

- Would like dealing with ASB to stay as it is, Housing Officers and for them to be responsible for their tenants.
- In the report didn't understand why right to buy was being mentioned and what this had to do with things.
 - Asked what the £100k savings is to be used for? For Tenants who have needs, the money should be spent on their homes.

Jill Rhys

Generally, in favour of the proposals

- Concerned about the burden it would place on housing officers having to deal with more complex cases and thought more partnership working with mental health service to reduce this burden
- Providing a range of ways people reporting ASB was good but these could be kept simple and streamlined so people don't have to repeat themselves.
- Would like to see the project reviewed after a set period to see how it has worked. Views should be sought from tenants and staff for this to get feedback on the ground, not just reporting on numbers.
- Service should be published better on existing literature that goes out.

Joe Carroll

Not in favour of the proposals

- In relation to keeping Housing officer involved - what is proposed was not what was asked for
- LCC are reducing the number of housing Officers and funding CRASBU through the HRA, making Housing Officers do more.
- Where is the savings - if CRASBU are only to deal with serious cases - giving CRASBU more officers to do less work as LCC want to use HO to do the low level cases
- Joe was concerned about vulnerable tenants and the amount of work HO have helping these people
- The extra contact with CRASBU seems unrealistic.
- Joe wanted a separate in house ASB team and felt CRASBU had a poor record in tackling anti social behaviour, also their

lack of interest in the community. They only seem to assist the person that causes the ASB. He would like more information from CRASBU of existing cases

- Fears Housing office will have no impact or control over CRASBU
- Joe would like to increase the number of housing officers to be able to effectively deal with ASB themselves.
- Questions raised:
 - Where do STAR fit into this? ○ Why is Right to Buy in the paper
 - What will the £100k be used for? Can't we use it to improve services for council tenants?
 - – the paper talks about housing officers helping people with mental health difficulties, can this link into STAR's work? ○ How many tenants have CRASBU evicted
 - Will these proposals mean fewer housing officers to do regular housing officer work?

Jean Williams

Generally, in favour and happy with the ASB papers

- One thing she would like to know more about and see is an emphasis relationship between council tenants and leaseholders is addressed.
 - There seems to be a lot of issues between leaseholders and tenants she and would like to know more about and see more emphasis on how these issues are managed.

Peter Hookway

Not in favour of the proposals

- Why is there no mention of the night service for ASB? What are the plans for this?
- Doesn't see why we should go in with the private sector. The private sector seems to have a higher profile and get more consideration than council tenants – it feels like this is about improving the service for the private sector, not council tenants. I'm concerned that the needs of council tenants will be overlooked.
- Also, this proposal seems to be putting a lot of work on housing officers when they already have a full workload. Will this mean fewer housing officers having to do regular housing officer work?
- No mention of how STAR is going to be involved.

Phillip Allen

- Why doesn't this paper mention leaseholders?
- How is the proposal going to impact on the visibility of Housing Officers, can we expect to see a more visible housing officer presence in the future?
- Dealing with ASB should be pro-active. Will the new proposals result in a more proactive approach rather than reactive?
- Supporting homeless vulnerable people and those with mental health issues is admirable, however, the resulting issues completely prevent the vast majority of people being unable to live a peaceful life what support is offered to them?
- If implemented when will an evaluation of how it works take place?

Housing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Service Proposal

October 2021



Current Arrangements

- Neighbourhood Housing Officers (NHOs) deal with low level ASB, take an incremental approach for council tenants
- CrASBU deal with all tenures, higher level cases for council tenants, all other ASB for private sector. Deal with all legal action



What is the new ASB service proposal?

- Create a central housing ASB team
- Tenants can still report to Neighbourhood Housing Officer (NHO)s
- NHOs will still deal with tenant behaviour/low level nuisance
- All council cases to be investigated by housing ASB team



Benefits

- **Less duplication**
- **One specialised service**
- **Increased consistency**
- **One person leading on case**
- **Case work tailored to individual needs**
- **Cases handed over in timely manner to CrASBU**
- **Protected characteristics considered**
- **Support for mental health**
- **New service will have access to Police information**
- **NHOs point of contact and can focus on support role**



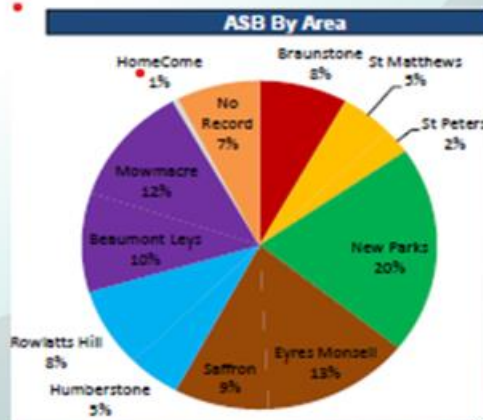
Impact on NHOs

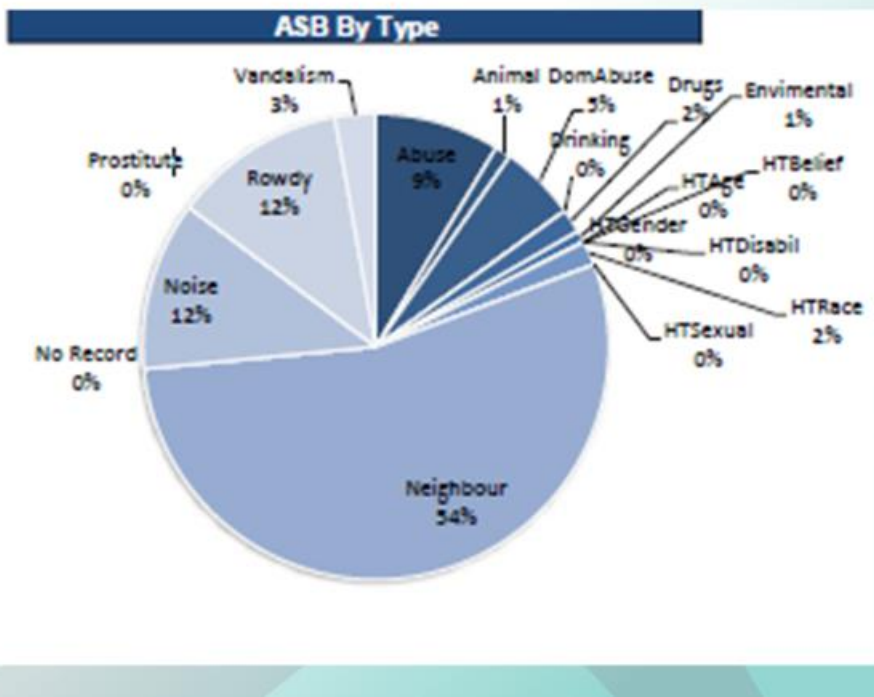
- Free up to deal with range of other NHO tasks
- Provide support to people getting council housing who have more complex needs
- Focus on support role not enforcement which can cause confusion



Housing Cases by Area

- Current work is allocated on area
- Officers in New Parks higher case load





NHO Tasks

Key functions and areas of Responsibility

- Abandoned Properties
- Building Officer Responsible work – Fire Safety
- Communal Cleaning checks
- Complaints
- Councillor/MP enquires
- Advice on damp and condensation issues
- Decant
- Domestic violence
- Estate management tasks – patch walks and referrals to relevant services, illegally parked cars, fly tipping, gardens
- Evictions
- Environmental project
- First visits
- Gas Gain Entry
- Home Come Inspections
- Right to Buy Inspections
- Harassment cases
- Insulation requests
- Insurance claims
- Key control/requests
- Management cases
- Mutual exchanges
- Capital programme
- Property management
- Rechargeable work
- Petitions
- Repairs customer role
- Right to buy/leaseholder requests
- Tenancy changes
- Tenancy enforcement
- Welfare cases - increasing with more tenants with complex needs, support role growing



Leicester
City Council

Time currently spent on ASB

- 37.6 Neighbourhood Housing Officers spend 20% of their time on ASB
- Approximately 1220 cases per annum
- Incremental approach, initial investigation, warnings, Anti Social Behavioural contracts
- Currently we deal with a wide range of types of incidents reported from lower level nuisance to more serious ASB
- New team will deal with those that meet ASB definition



New team structure



- 4 Housing ASB Officers
- Managed in partnership
- Based at local hubs and Mansfield House
- Work alongside CrASBU



Management and Role



- Deal with ASB cases that meet the higher threshold of corporate and national definition
- Definition - acting in a manner that caused, or was likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any persons
- Enhance online offer



Leicester
City Council

Case loads

- Currently 25% approximately noise/rowdy, NHOs will still address low level behavioural issues, will signpost as appropriate to Environmental Health and Police or online advice
- 18 intensive cases per ASB officer per month
- Some long term and some very short term
- More manageable and even distribution of cases and work load



Leicester
City Council

Housing Services Input

- NHO's take reports, low level non-case work
- ASB Officers co –located with NHOs in hubs
- NHOs share local intelligence and information
- ASB officers share progress on cases with NHOs
- Case outcomes communicated back to NHOs



Police/CrASBU Input

- Co- location at Mansfield House with CrASBU
- Access to Police system “Sentinel”
- Access to police and CrASBU intelligence
- Support from CrASBU to become specialised team
- Access to training from Police and CrASBU
- Use best practice CrASBU procedures – decision making meetings etc



Process for Referrals



Case Studies

- Case 1 where man required welfare support and ASB enforcement action. This case caused confusion and conflict for NHO in their role
- Case 2 where council tenants complaining about private sector tenants, NHOs were liaising with private landlord. NHO was getting involved in private sector issues that are not part of their role
- How would these examples work in new structure. Case 1 NHO focus on support. Case 2 NHO only deal with council cases, this case would go to CrASBU



Equality Impact Assessment

- Revised proposal
- Due regard to public sector duty
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations



Data to Inform EIA

- Equality Profile of tenants
- Census Data
- Feedback from consultation with Tenants and Leaseholders Forum
- Feedback from service users, case studies



Equality Profile

- 65.2% of tenants identify as White British compared to the City population which is 50.5%
- Asian households are concentrated in the East District of the City
- 15.% of tenants identify as Asian compared to the City population of 37.4%
- 14.3% of tenants identify as Black African compared to the City population of 6.2%
- 14.1% of tenants are 75+ compared to the City population of 7%
- 7% of tenants have indicated they have a disability although there is a lot of under-recording in this area



Equality Outcomes

- Staff to provide an appropriate service to people with a range of protected characteristics.
- People with poor mental health supported by the service
- Equitable access to the service for people from all backgrounds including translation facilities



Equality Actions

- Multi-lingual work force, staff to use their language skills to interpret
- Community Languages Line
- Translation of materials where appropriate
- Target hotspots in the City, ensure this is done in a culturally appropriate way
- Mental health training for team
- Equalities training
- Monitor take up and outcomes



Benchmarking

- Bristol – service for council tenants, ASB dealt with by housing officers initially then passed to city team
- Birmingham – service only for council tenants
- Cardiff - service only for council tenants
- Sandwell – One team for all tenures
- Manchester – Setting up specialised team



Conclusions

- Some authorities provide services to Council Tenants only!!
- Way forward seems to be specialised teams – Sandwell reported this led to a uniform approach, working to same policy and procedures, cases handed over appropriately
- Overall mixed approaches



Questions



Housing Scrutiny Task Group

**Dealing with Complex and
High Risk Anti-Social
Behaviour**



**Daxa Pancholi (Head of Community
Safety & Protection)**

**Caroline Green (Team Manager –
Crime & ASB Unit)**



Overview

- **Definition of Anti-Social Behaviour**
- **Service Provision**
- **The City Council's Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit**
 - Case Management
 - Duty Desk
 - Community Trigger
 - Corporate Decision Making Meeting
 - Complex Individual Management Meeting
 - Case Studies
- **Any Questions**



Anti-Social Behaviour



Anti-social behaviour is defined by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 as 'acting in a manner that caused, or was likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any persons.'



Service Provision Across Leicester



CrASBU – high risk
and complex with
legal sanctions

Housing Management –
low to medium level
ASB without legal
sanction



The City Council's Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (CrASBU)

- High risk and complex cases across all tenure and ASB cases in Private Sector Housing
- Legal sanctions
- Community Trigger (ASB case review)
- Specialist knowledge
- Flexible resources
- Link up with partners across the Safer Leicester Partnership



Tenancy Management (Housing)

- Low to medium level crime and ASB in neighbourhoods
- Non-legal sanctions to deal with crime and ASB associated with tenancies
- Housing officers ensure compliance with tenancy conditions
- Support to vulnerable tenants



CrASBU Case Management



CrASBU Duty Desk

- Specialist knowledge
- Enquiries via email, telephone and customer services
- Main point of contact for members of the public to report crime and ASB
- Referrals from Housing, Police, Adult and Children's Services, Fire service etc.
- Advice provided to Housing, Police, Probation, drug and alcohol services, domestic abuse and other support services
- Public offered help, support and advice
- Enquires from, City Mayor, MP and Elected Members
- Respond to an average of 143 cases a month



Community Trigger

- Community Trigger (AKA ASB case review)
- Statutory legislation to provide victims with right to ask for their case to be reviewed
- CrASBU have responsibility for all reviews across Leicester City
- Report to Chair of Safer Leicester Partnership
- Recommendations for better ways of working
- 19 requests to date in 2021, 7 of which met threshold for full case review



Complex Individual Management Meeting (CIMM)

- The purpose of the CIMM is to create a considered, appropriate and proportionate multi-agency action plan for a complex individual or family who have continued to cause ASB when several interventions have not been successful in bringing about change
- Considers mental health, vulnerability, self neglect, rent arrears, physical health, capacity to make decisions, domestic abuse, risky behaviours, insight into behaviours etc
- Platform for multi agency information sharing and problem solving
- Considers risk, the voice of the victim, community impact and identifies key agencies and any gaps in services
- Often a pre cursor to a CDMM



Corporate Decision Making Meeting (CDMM)

- CrASBU use a CDMM model to consider individual circumstances of individuals and agencies involved and where a decision on case progression is required
- CDMM is convened when particular risk factors are known such as vulnerability, mental health, organisational and reputational risk
- Considers risk factors, merits of the case, impact on victims and community as well as equality duty
- Decision made by Heads of Service across Housing and Community Safety and Protection
- Transparent and fair process



CrASBU Case Example A

- Targeted harassment of neighbour by alcoholic son of elderly tenant – incremental approach by housing and criminal conviction not preventing ASB
- CrASBU referred to multiple support agencies for victim and multiple referrals for perpetrator
- Sustained engagement with victim, perpetrator and agencies including Police and Turning Point – regular risk assessment and multi agency meetings
- CIMM model used
- CrASBU led Civil Injunction application at court to injunct perpetrator away from home as last resort to offer respite to victim and elderly tenant



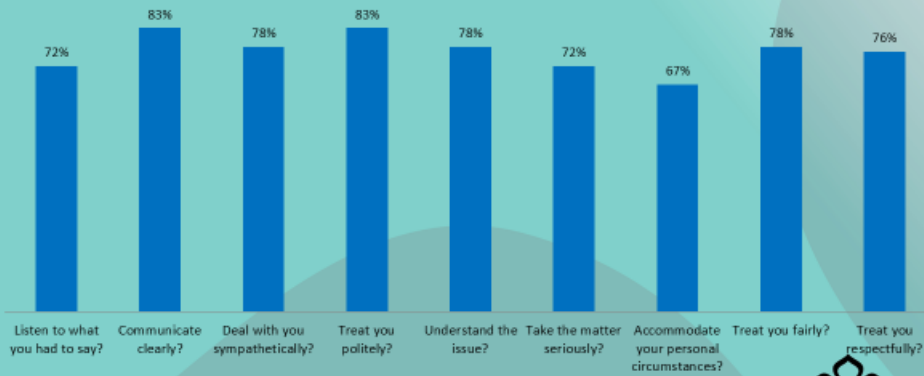
CrASBU Case Example B

- Drug dealing, drug use, prostitution and sexual activity in communal areas, threats to residents and significant disruption from visitors in tower block at the start of the first national lockdown in March 2020
- CDMM model used
- Despite lockdown CrASBU successfully applied to the courts for a (partial) Closure Order allowing the perpetrator to remain in their property alone to lessen impact on homeless services at this time
- Unique opportunity to obtain and file evidence to court remotely, first of it's kind
- Prompt, effective and proportionate response in difficult circumstances



CrASBU Customer Satisfaction 20/21

Anti-social Behaviour Staff



Feedback

"I am able to sleep soundly without having to worry for the first time in 2 years"

"They acted promptly and compassionate with my case, resolving the issues and giving me peace of mind"

"I like where I live again now, now my neighbour's have been evicted we can relax again"

"Now I don't have to worry about my Mum being on her own, it makes such a difference"

"Thank you for giving me my life back"



Housing Scrutiny Task Group Role of Proposed ASB Housing Team – Additional Information

Wednesday 3rd November 2021



Total ASB Cases Reported

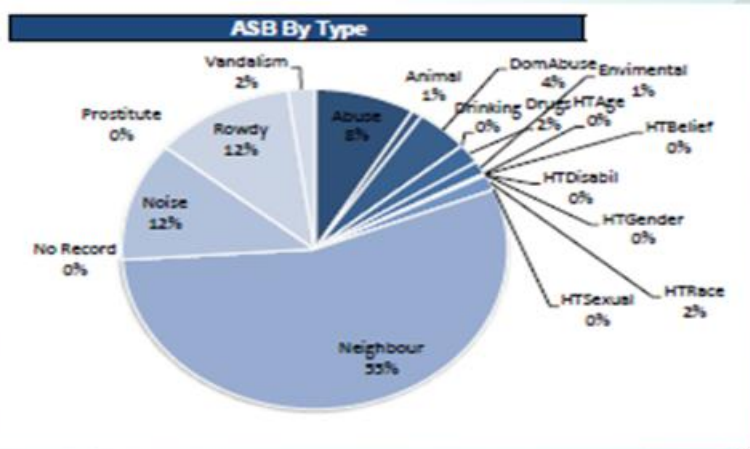
Total ASB Cases Reported													
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	YTD
2020-21	52	85	184	146	118	125	80	79	58	90	103	120	1244
2021-22	136	88	112	117	108	117							674

Cases That Escalated To Perpetrator Path													
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	YTD
2020-21	37	53	88	72	49	56	40	42	35	53	30	79	632
2021-22	47	40	53	54	51	53							298

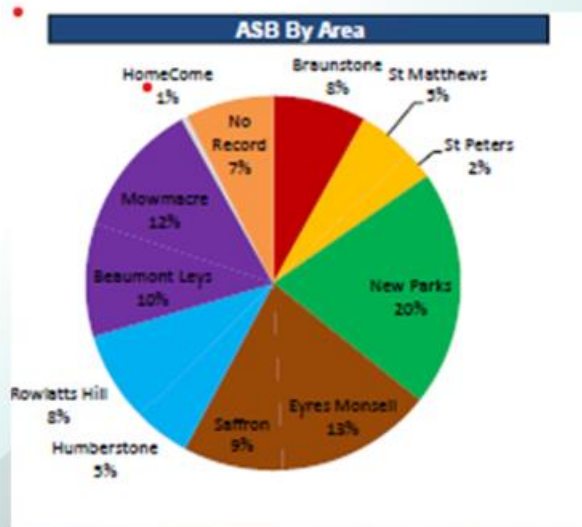
Cases Referred to CRASBU													
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	YTD
2020-21	2		4	1		1	1	2	1	3		1	16
2021-22	1	1											2



ASB by Type



ASB by Area



West Area

Total ASB Cases Reported														
By Housing Office														
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	YTD	
Beaumont Leys														
2020-21	10	4	20	14	13	12	10	11	4	12	6	9	125	
2021-22	12	9	10	10	13	14							66	
Mowmace														
2020-21	6	4	12	13	11	10	7	7	5	8	12	9	104	
2021-22	13	4	8	15	12	9							61	
New Parks														
2020-21	13	18	32	30	20	27	19	21	9	14	15	18	239	
2021-22	23	20	26	19	20	25							132	
													West Total 2021-22	261



East Area

Total ASB Cases Reported														
By Housing Office														
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	YTD	
Humberstone														
2020-21	2	3	17	4	3	6	2	4		3	7	8	59	
2021-22	6	5	6	8	9	4							38	
Rowlatts Hill														
2020-21	8	12	24	25	19	16	10	6	9	13	14	18	174	
2021-22	15	8	10	13	9	14							69	
St Matthews														
2020-21		6	11	10	7	8	9	3	2	5	15	18	94	
2021-22	5	5	3	4	5	12							34	
St Peters														
2020-21	2	9	4	7	4	1	4	1	3	6	7	8	56	
2021-22	5	2	8	4	3	8							30	
													East Total 2021-22	171



South Area

Total ASB Cases Reported													
By Housing Office													
	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	YTD
Brunstone													
2020-21	5	9	21	12	10	9	5	5	2	4	4	10	86
2021-22	18	8	9	7	10	4							56
Eyes Mansell													
2020-21	3	4	10	8	13	16	9	8	9	10	7	11	108
2021-22	17	7	12	18	14	12							78
Saffron													
2020-21	2	9	10	14	8	10	13	7	10	9	8	9	109
2021-22	16	13	9	5	7	8							58
												South Total 2021-22	190



**HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION
WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22**

MEETING DATE	MEETING ITEMS	LEAD OFFICER	ACTION AGREED
<p>149</p> <p>15th June 2021</p>	COVID-19 Update – Impact on Housing services	Chris Burgin	Chris to provide verbal update
	Goscote House & Sprinklers redevelopment	Simon Nicholls	
	Environment Budget & Public Realm Project update	Gurjit Kaur Minhas	
	Repairs performance and update report	Kevin Doyle	
	Retrofitting & Climate Emergency	Simon Nicholls	
	ASB report	Gurjit Kaur Minhas	
	<i>Informal training sessions to be set-up on the following topics for after this meeting:</i>	<i>Caroline Carpendale</i>	
	<i>Homelessness, Rough Sleepers, Property Lettings (CBL) and the voids process</i>	<i>Kevin Doyle, Robert Webster, Simon Nicholls</i>	<i>Chris and Scrutiny Support Team to arrange a programme in conjunction with Chair/Vice-Chair</i>
<i>Repairs, Gas and Technical Services</i>	<i>Gurjit Minhas, Charlotte McGraw</i>		
<i>Income Management, Tenancy Management & STAR</i>			

6 th September	<p>COVID-19 Housing Service Update</p> <p>Who gets Social Housing & Overcrowding Reduction Strategy</p> <p>Annual Rent Performance</p> <p>Rent Arrears Policy</p> <p>Council Housing Building & Acquisitions Programme update</p>	<p>Chris Burgin</p> <p>Caroline Carpendale</p> <p>Charlotte McGraw</p> <p>Charlotte McGraw</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p>	<p>Further update to be brought to 29/11</p>
4 th October	<p>Homelessness Strategy update</p> <p>Tenant Involvement</p> <p>Disabled Facilities Grant / Housing Adaptation</p> <p>Housing Estate Shops Presentation</p> <p>Resettlement of Afghan Refugees</p>	<p>Caroline Carpendale</p> <p>Charlotte McGraw</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p> <p>Matt Wallace</p> <p>Chris Burgin</p>	<p>To be taken to OSC on 10/11</p> <p>Final strategy to be brought back at a later date</p> <p>Written paper to be brought to next meeting.</p>
29 th November	<p>Manifesto Delivery update</p> <p>Afghan Refugee Resettlement Programme update</p> <p>Repairs, Voids & Gas Performance report</p> <p>Empty Homes update</p> <p>Hospital Close/Investment in Social Housing</p>	<p>Chris Burgin</p> <p>Chris Burgin</p> <p>Kevin Doyle</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p>	

<p>10th January 2022</p>	<p>Tenants and Leaseholder's Forum Action and Decision Log</p> <p>Tenancy and Rent Support</p> <p>HRA budget</p> <p>Final Scrutiny Task Group Report – Role of the ASB Team</p>	<p>Charlotte McGraw</p> <p>Charlotte McGraw</p> <p>Chris Burgin/Stuart McEvoy</p> <p>Councillor Westley</p>	
<p>15th February</p>	<p>Environmental Budget – Update</p> <p>Safety Compliance (including Fire Safety)</p> <p>Retrofit & Climate Reduction update</p> <p>Goscote House & Tower Block Sprinkler installation update</p> <p>Channel Shift – Housing Online Repairs</p>	<p>Gurjit Minhas</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p> <p>Charlotte McGraw</p>	

Additional Items – dates tbc:

Downsizing – briefing note
Rent Arrears performance report (including update on Rent Support Pilot) – May/June 2022
Acquisition of Property Portfolio – referred from OSC on 16/12
Succession Rights Policy – <i>separate briefing session to be arranged in early 2022</i>
Scrutiny of the Local Plan
Who Gets Social Housing Update– moved from 29 November
Tenant Involvement Strategy – Post-Consultation
Update on district heating
ORS Housing Corporate Offer

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