

Leicester  
City Council

## **MEETING OF THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION**

**DATE: MONDAY, 1 AUGUST 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, Crewe, Fonseca, Gee, and Pantling

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

For Monitoring Officer

#### **Officer contacts:**

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

*Jerry Connolly (Scrutiny Support Officer):*  
Tel: 0116 454 6343, e-mail: [Jerry.Connolly@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Jerry.Connolly@leicester.gov.uk)

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

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- ✓ to respect the right of others to view and hear debates without interruption;
- ✓ to ensure that the sound on any device is fully muted and intrusive lighting avoided;
- ✓ where filming, to only focus on those people actively participating in the meeting;
- ✓ where filming, to (via the Chair of the meeting) ensure that those present are aware that they may be filmed and respect any requests to not be filmed.

### Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact:

Jason Tyler – 0116 454 6359

Or email [Jason.tyler@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Jason.tyler@leicester.gov.uk)

For Press Enquiries - please phone the **Communications Unit on 0116 454 4151**.

# **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 Housing Scrutiny Commission held on 6 June 2022 are attached and Members are asked to confirm them as a correct record.

#### **4. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Members will be asked to note the Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Commissions as set out in the Council's Constitution. See Leicester City Council's Constitution here.

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/how-we-work/our-Constitution>

#### **5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION**

Members will be asked to note the membership of the Commission for 2022/23:

Councillor Westley (Chair)  
Councillor Chamund (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Ali  
Councillor Aqbany  
Councillor Fonseca  
Councillor Gee  
Councillor Pantling  
Councillor Crewe

## **6. DATES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS**

Members will be asked to note meeting dates of the Commission for 202/23 which are as follows:

Mon 6 June 2022  
Mon 1 August 2022  
Mon 19 September 2022  
Mon 7 November 2022  
Mon 9 January 2023  
Mon 27 February 2023

## **7. PETITIONS**

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

## **8. 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.

## **9. RENT ARREARS YEAR END REPORT**

**Appendix B**

The Director of Housing submits a report, which provides an update on the on the rent arrears progress over the full financial year, from April 2021 to March 2022.

## **10. HOUSING MANIFESTO DELIVERY - UPDATE**

**Appendix C**

The Director of Housing submits a report, which provides a progress update and sets out progress on delivery of the Labour manifesto commitments made in 2019.

## **11. UPDATE ON HOUSE BUILDING PROGRAMME**

**Appendix D**

The Director of Housing submits a report, which sets out progress towards meeting the manifesto commitment on units either completed or now in progress to be delivered.

**12. REPAIRS, GAS AND VOIDS PERFORMANCE** **Appendix E**

The Director of Hosing submits a report, which provides an update on the performance of the Division's Repairs and Maintenance service including the Voids and Gas functions, over the last financial year, 2021-22. The report also provides an update on the implementation of service improvements that will drive improved performance into the future.

**13. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT / HOUSING ADAPTATION** **Appendix F**

The Director of Housing will give a presentation regarding the Disabled Adaptations, HRA & Disabled Facility Grants.

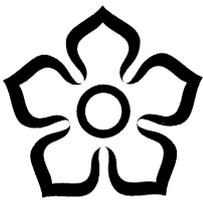
The presentation slides are also attached.

**14. WORK PROGRAMME** **Appendix G**

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

**15. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**





Leicester  
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: MONDAY, 6 JUNE 2022 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Westley (Chair)  
Councillor Chamund (Vice Chair)

Councillor Ali            Councillor Aqbany  
Councillor Fonseca    Councillor Pantling

In Attendance:

Councillor Cutkelvin – Assistant City Mayor (Housing and Education)

\* \* \* \* \*

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Crewe and Gee.

**2. 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.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

#### **AGREED:**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Commission held on 23 February 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **4. PETITIONS**

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

### **5. 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.

### **6. INTRODUCTION OF DISCRETIONARY LICENSING IN LEICESTER**

The Director of Housing submitted a report, which considered the business case for the introduction of Discretionary Licensing within Leicester. The report provided details of the work undertaken to consult on the introduction of a Discretionary Licensing scheme within the private rented sector in Leicester and recommended the introduction of a Selective Licensing scheme in specific areas of the city.

The Assistant City Mayor (Housing and Education) referred to the links to health and wellbeing and the vast difference of suitable accommodation in social housing, with a need for the private rental sector to be improved as many lets were unfit. The role of the Council to support landlords was recognised, and the need for a private rental sector strategy was emphasised.

The Chair commented on the report and advised that it was also due to be submitted to the next Overview Select Committee, where the comments of the Commission would be reported.

The need to ensure that the residents' opinions were captured and recorded was emphasised and it was noted that a significant number of complaints were received concerning anti-social behaviour, fly tipping and other issues.

It was clarified that there was a list of known landlords who would be encouraged to join the scheme, and any 'rogue' landlords would also be known to the Council.

Tenants would also be encouraged to report any problems to ensure that their accommodation was fit and suitable.

The Chair commented on several issues which combine around HMOs and poor housing in general and referred to the 2019 House Condition Survey which had provided very useful and important information about housing in the city. In response it was reported that for HMOs, the standards would improve under the scheme, as the scheme would set conditions on a licence that were enforceable with input from the tenants being known.

A presentation was then given, which reinforced that selective licensing would give the Council the power to introduce, in a given area licensing for all tenures in the Private Rented Sector except holiday lets, business premises, student premises, Housing Associations and Council Housing and premises where the tenant is a family member. Additional Licensing required Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) that had three or more unrelated tenants that shared facilities such as kitchens and bathrooms, to have a licence.

The Commission were advised of the options as follows:

#### Option A

- Selective Licensing within parts of the Wards of Westcotes, Fosse, Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields (West Cluster); Stoneygate (East Cluster); Saffron (South Cluster)
- The combined area covering the schemes covers less than 20% of Leicester's geographical area and less than 20% of privately rented homes in the local authority area and therefore if adopted would not need SoS permission.

#### Option B

- Additional Licensing that covers the entire City (citywide).

#### Option C

- Additional Licensing within parts of the Wards of Westcotes, Fosse, Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields and Stoneygate.

In terms of the Team structure, it was considered that the arrangements were adequate and shared working and best practice with neighbouring authorities had been undertaken.

#### AGREED:

1. That the Selective Licensing in the targeted areas (Option A) be supported and should be introduced as soon as practicable.
2. As the principle of Additional Licensing citywide (Option B) is also favourable, that this be revisited once Option A is embedded and there is further evidence of the success of licensing in raising standards in the sector, to allow time for any impact of the potential extension of the Article 4 directive to have been realised.
3. The proposed fees, discounts and penalties be supported.

## **7. HOUSING CRISIS**

On behalf of Councillor Gee, who had submitted apologies for absence, the Scrutiny Policy Officer provided a verbal update and read a statement following the first meeting of the task group looking at the housing crisis in Leicester.

It was noted that the membership of the task group was drawn from across the entire spectrum of scrutiny members, taking in different interests and different political groups.

The Director of Housing was acknowledged for setting out the main issues which had contributed to increasing problems with housing, including health, overcrowding and a lack of affordable social housing.

Members of the task group had been encouraged to discuss a range of issues, including the planning system. Following the first meeting, it was felt a session devoted to the planning system should be a top priority.

The report to the commission on a register system for private rented housing highlighted other important issues and the task group would look at this issue and the 2019 house condition survey.

AGREED:

That the update be noted.

## **8. WHO GETS SOCIAL HOUSING - UPDATE**

The Director of Housing submitted a report, which provided an update on the 'headline' Housing Register and Lettings data, relating to the Housing Register.

The report dealt with the period starting 1 April 2021 and ending 31 March 2022 and it was noted that the number of households on the Housing Register had decreased by 5% from 6366 to 6053 in that period.

It was reported that the decrease was not because of lowered demand but was the result of a cleansing exercise undertaken where inactive applications were cancelled.

Details of the banding proportions were also explained.

The difficulties in dealing with overcrowding, compared to the 3 and 4 bed properties being underused and bedroom tax being levied was discussed. It was suggested that property exchanges should be promoted. The difficulties in trying to intensive tenants to move was highlighted,

In response to a question concerning Brexit and the demand on housing, it was clarified and confirmed that appropriate and proper eligibility checks were undertaken.

The impact of social economic factors and average salaries was noted, including comparisons with other authorities. It was suggested that a report on those factors could be provided to the Commission in due course. The Director of Housing also clarified that some houses were excluded and the links to adult social care and adapted properties was explained and noted, specifically in relation to the right to buy policies.

AGREED:

That the report and update be noted.

## **9. HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY - UPDATE**

The Director of Housing submitted a report, which provided a further update on progress in implementing Leicester's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2023, since the last update in October 2021.

The report provided important background information for the period and showed the latest progress made since the last update across the key strategic aims.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on service provision was recognised, particularly in cases where court action was required. The effect on the homeless team was explained and acknowledged.

AGREED:

That the report and update be noted.

## **10. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION FINDINGS INTO THE PROPOSED HOUSING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR TEAM**

The Director of Housing submitted a report, which provided information on the Executive's response to the findings of the Commission's review of the proposal for a new Housing Anti- Social Behaviour Team.

It was noted that the review was a focused exercise to gain clarity and assurances over the new proposal for a central Housing ASB team that would work closely with CrASBU (Crime and Anti- Social Behaviour Unit), to find out how the new structure would work and how it would improve processes and outcomes and how the team would work alongside other agencies including CrASBU.

It was reported that the review resulted in several recommendations and requested feedback once the new structure was in place and impact of the team in dealing with cases of anti-Social Behaviour to be reported back to the scrutiny commission.

The Lead Member for Housing and the Director of Housing welcomed the findings of the review and agreed for the recommendations from the review to be incorporated into future service delivery to help enhance the service proposal.

The positive feedback from tenant representative partners was also welcomed.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

## **11. WORK PROGRAMME**

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

## **12. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

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# **Rent Arrears Report**

## **April 2021 to March 2022**

Assistant Mayor Briefing: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Housing Scrutiny Commission: 6<sup>th</sup> June 2022

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**Assistant Mayor for Housing:** Cllr Elly Cutkelvin  
**Lead Director:** Chris Burgin

## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: ALL
- Report author: Zenab Valli
- Author contact details: [Zenab.valli@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Zenab.valli@leicester.gov.uk) Tel: 0116 4543573
- Report version number: V.1.3

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Members of the Scrutiny Commission on the rent arrears progress over the full financial year, from April 2021 to March 2022.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The report is for information and Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

## 3. SUMMARY

- 3.1 At the end of the financial year (3<sup>rd</sup> April 2022) the cash amount outstanding was **£1.577m**, for current tenant rent arrears within the general housing stock. This is **12% lower** than at the same point in the previous financial year and the lowest for the last 4 years (see 4.2, Table 2).
- 3.2 The proportion of rent collected between April to March 2022 was **99.86%** which is above target.
- 3.3 The team supported tenants to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments. A total of **£554,582k** was paid in DHP for all qualifying Council tenants in the financial year 2021/22. This is a **6%** decrease in awards compared to the previous financial year. From this figure a total of £461,380k was awarded to tenants in receipt of Universal Credit.
- 3.4 The team worked in partnership with the Housing Options service to support households at risk of homelessness. A total of **96 households** were supported to clear or reduce their rent arrears with a combined total of **£163,549k** being paid out in Government funding (see 4.38).
- 3.5 The total value of the top 500 arrears cases **decreased 29%** by year-end.
- 3.6 A total of **3,902** tenants are paying housing or garage rent by direct debit, an **increase of 243** compared to previous financial year end.
- 3.7 By the end of the financial year 2021/22, a total number of **6,267** council tenants were claiming UC equating to **33%** of all current council tenants. A total of **53%** of UC tenants were in rent arrears which is a **4% reduction** from the same point last year (see 4.16, Table 8).

- 3.8 The Rent Management Advisors have been supporting tenants with welfare benefit claims. By the end of the year, the Rent Management Advisors supported **605** tenants. A total of **67%** of the tenants required short-term support and the remaining **33%** were being provided with longer-term support.
- 3.9 Less than **1%** of tenants (total 52) entered a breathing space and since implementation the position has been stable and manageable. The current balance for those tenants that are no longer in a breathing space is **£7,442**, which is a **36% reduction** from the point they entered a breathing space.
- 3.10 A total of **7** evictions were carried out over the past year since the eviction ban was lifted in June 2021. This is the lowest number of evictions since the inception of the specialist rent team.

## 4. REPORT

### Current Tenant Rent Arrears

- 4.1 Current Rent Arrears at the end of each quarter for the financial year 2021/22:

**Table 1.** Quarterly Arrears

Period	Arrears at Quarter End
Quarter 1	£2,063,342
Quarter 2	£2,348,073
Quarter 3	£1,501,795
<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>£1,576,981</b>

- 4.2 Comparison of year-end figures over the last four years:

**Table 2.** Financial Year End Figures

Period	Arrears at Financial Year End
2018/19	£1,627,034
2019/20	£2,036,496
2020/21	£1,799,863
<b>2021/22</b>	<b>£1,576,981</b>

- 4.3 Table 1 shows the cash amount owing at the end of each quarter in the last financial year. During the first half of the year the arrears continued to increase and fluctuate as the country continued its recovery from the impact and challenges arising from the pandemic. This figure does not represent non-dwelling properties
- 4.4 Table 2 shows the cash amount owing at week ending 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2022 was **£1.577m**, **this is 12% lower** than at the same point in the previous financial year, and the lowest for the last 4 years. Despite the challenges faced by the team over the past 12 months they have worked incredibly hard and achieved a remarkable year end performance. There are many positive reasons which have attributed to the decrease in arrears. Some examples of good working practices and reasons the team have performed outstandingly are shown below.

- Tenants were supported with Income maximisation, Discretionary Housing Funds (DHP), Household Support Funds and food parcels. Referrals were made to specialist agencies for tenants that were facing financial, or debt worries.
- Offering tenants, a more support-led approach compared to enforcement which is helping towards compliance of rent obligations.
- Supporting tenants at risk of homelessness with government funding (see 4.38)
- The Income & Rent Support Pilot and subsequent approval for Rent Management Advisors (RMAs) to deliver all financial and welfare benefit support for Council tenants in-house (see 4.23).
- The review and implementation of the Rent Arrears Policy and Procedure which is now available for tenants and staff compliance.
- The introduction of Multi-Agency Meetings chaired by members of the team. This enabled tenants, internal and external agencies to explore all available options and find solutions on tenant issues, to support tenancy sustainment and prevent homelessness.
- A renewed focus on non-engagers and focussing on creative ways to enable tenant engagement. A non-engagement strategy is pending but early conversations amongst the team have started.
- Frequent complex case review meetings with Manager and Team Leaders to explore serious arrears in excess of £1,500. The meetings helped produce a plan of action and kept the team challenged as the cases were overseen by management.
- An ongoing emphasis on performance management to ensure output and productivity is not affected whilst the service continues operating from home.
- Regular training, briefings, and meetings with the team to support changes to ongoing working practices.

4.5 The rent collection figures for Leicester remains good in comparison with other authorities with only **35%** of our current tenants in rent arrears. Following a benchmarking exercise at quarter 2, Bristol City Council had 70% of their tenants in rent arrears with almost 8,500 extra properties to manage than Leicester. Rotherham City Council who owns a very similar stock to Leicester had 46% of tenants in arrears which was comparable to Leicester at the time. Derby Homes have 12,500 properties and had 39% of their tenants in rent arrears.

### **Proportion of Rent Collected**

4.6 The team had a key performance target to ensure the proportion of rent collected at the end of the financial year is 99%. The proportion of rent collected between April and March 2022 was **99.86%**. The figure reflects a rolling 52-week performance and demonstrates the hard work and tremendous efforts made by the team in maximising rent collection.

### **Number of Cases**

4.7 The number of current tenants with rent arrears owing 7 weeks or more net rent is shown in tables 3 & 4 below:

**Table 3.** Breakdown of Arrears Cases by Quarter end 2021-22

Period	Owing 7 Weeks or more Net
Quarter 1	1,255
Quarter 2	1,380
Quarter 3	1,038
<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>956</b>

Where no net rent is payable (i.e. on full benefit), full rent used as a default value to calculate number of weeks owing)

**Table 4.** Breakdown of Arrears Cases by Year End

Period	Owing 7 Weeks or more Net
2018/19	1,451
2019/20	2,319
2020/21	1,431
<b>2021/22</b>	<b>956</b>

4.8 The number of cases in arrears owing 7 weeks or more net rent, **decreased by 33%** over the previous year end figure. The 7-week arrears include lower amounts of net rent, so this is not a true reflection of the serious debt cases.

#### Arrears Per Debtor

4.9 The total arrears divided by the total number of tenants in rent arrears at the specified intervals are shown in tables 5 & 6 below:

**Table 5.** Average Arrears per Debtor by Quarter End 2021/22

Period	Average Arrears
Quarter 1	£240.23
Quarter 2	£252.70
Quarter 3	£275.96
<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>£233.14</b>

**Table 6.** Average Arrears per Debtor by Financial Year End

Period	Average Arrears
2018/19	£233.91
2019/20	£266.45
2020/21	£264.10
<b>2021/22</b>	<b>£233.14</b>

4.10 Table 5 shows the average arrears increased steadily up to Quarter 3 however by year end, they decreased compared to the figures at Quarter 1. At Quarter 3 the averages are higher due to the non-rent payment weeks in December which reduces the numbers of tenants in arrears.

Table 6 shows that the debt **decreased** in comparison to the previous year by less than **11%**. This figure is variable depending on the number of tenants in arrears at any given time.

## Top 500 Arrears Cases (by value)

4.11 Table 7 (below) shows the top 500 accounts with the highest arrears and total value of arrears at the end of each quarter regardless of tenants payment methods.

**Table 7.** Top 500 Arrears Cases

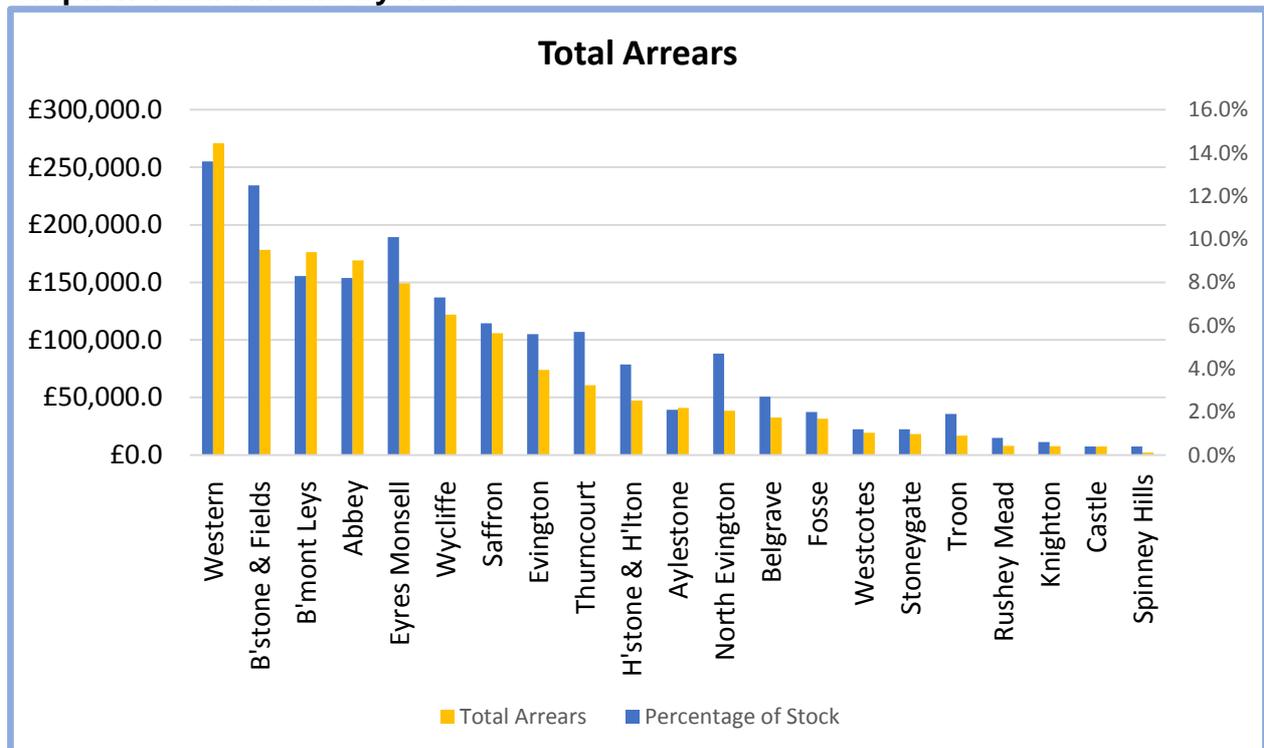
Quarter End 2020/21	Highest Case	Lowest Case	Average	Total Value
Quarter 1	£6,057	£734	£1,330	£665,062
Quarter 2	£6,038	£781	£1,367	£683,502
Quarter 3	£5,779	£652	£1,133	£566,648
<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>£3,569</b>	<b>£607</b>	<b>£940</b>	<b>£470,151</b>

4.12 Table 7 shows that the total value of top arrears cases **decreased** by **29%** at year-end when compared to quarter 1. This is in line with the decreases seen in figures presented at the earlier tables. Higher debt cases are generally more complex to manage and require intensive support from the team. The team work collaboratively and in partnership with other advice agencies and internal departments to help achieve positive outcomes and resolutions for tenants. At times these serious cases are influenced by courts preventing the team from taking possession actions until such time the court orders.

## Arrears by Ward

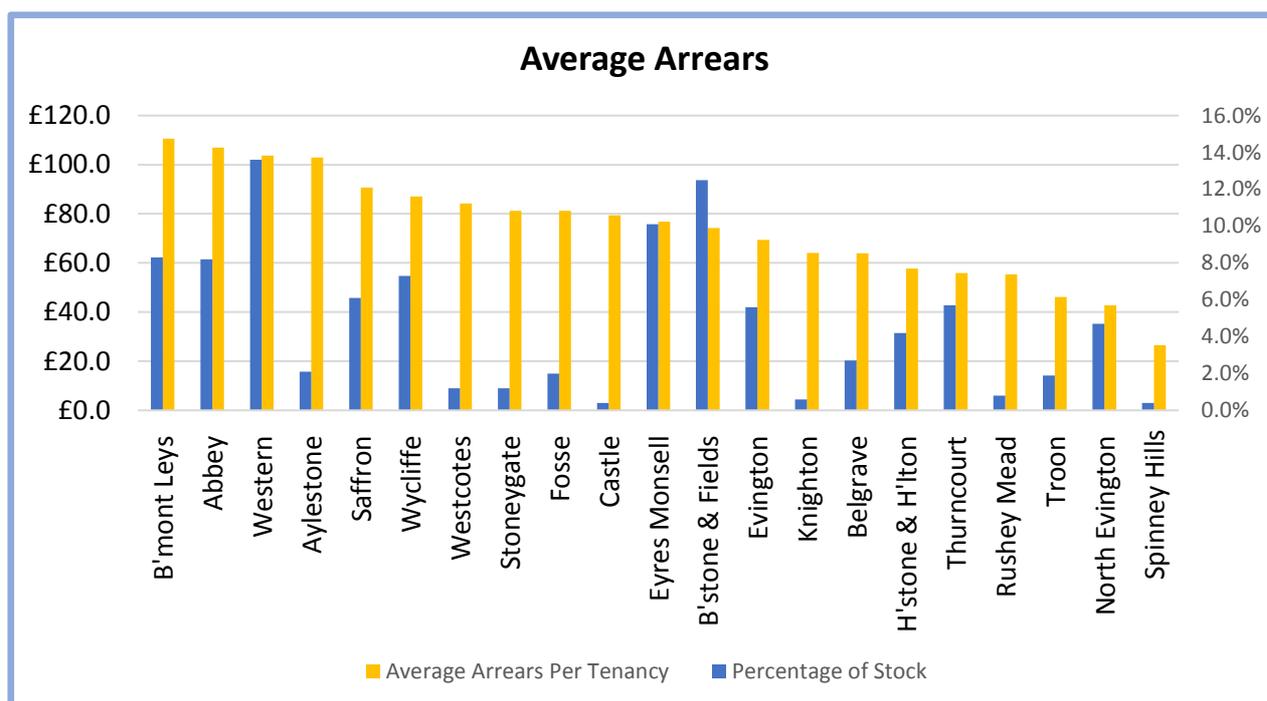
4.13 The graphs presented below show the total arrears and average arrears by ward at end of financial year 2021/22.

**Graph 1. Total Arrears by Ward**



4.14 The total arrears chart shows that the ward areas with the most stock have the highest arrears values and the arrears are proportionate against the percentage of stock. In comparison to last year Beaumont Leys and Abbey have switched places with Abbey seeing a reduction in arrears of 11% and Beaumont Leys seeing only a 3% reduction in arrears. Eyres Monsell and Wycliffe have also switched places with Eyres Monsell seeing a 3% increase in arrears and Wycliffe seeing a 20% reduction in arrears. There could be various reasons for arrears to fluctuate for example, an increased number of monthly payers that failed to pay their rent by year-end or, opting to pay using pay point causing delays to payments reaching accounts in time for year-end. These factors may have contributed to the slight increase in arrears for Eyres Monsell.

**Graph 2. Total Average Arrears by Ward**



4.15 The average arrears chart presents the total average arrears per tenancy. Areas like Castle, Westcotes, Stoneygate and Rushey Mead as lower in stock but with high average arrears value. Despite low stocks sizes even the smallest number of cases with very high arrears can cause the average arrears to spike up.

Furthermore, these area's contain flats and bedsits which predominantly occupied by single people. We know from research that single people are known to have more changes in circumstances on multiple occasions within a year compared to families or tenants of pension age. Changes in circumstances when applying for welfare benefits can cause increase in rent arrears until such time benefit claims are resolved and in payment. Changes in employment status or zero-hour employment contracts can cause a spike in arrears whilst the tenant adapts to changes in their personal circumstances.

Comparing this with an area like Thurncourt where there are a higher number of houses and bungalows, the average in this ward is lower despite the higher

percentage of stock. This shows the stability of Income expected from tenants in this type of accommodation such as, older tenants in receipt of Pensions with less changes in circumstances results in a more manageable arrears position within those areas.

### Universal Credit & Rent Management Advisor Support

4.16 It's almost 4 years since the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) in Leicester. Table 8 (below) provides information about Council tenants claiming this DWP benefit.

**Table 8.** Universal Credit Key Performance Indicators

Quarter End 2020/21	Number of UC Cases	% UC Cases in Arrears before UC Started	% UC Cases in Arrears at Quarter End	Total Value of Arrears	Average Arrears per Debtor	No. of APA's*
Quarter 1	5,699	63%	66%	£1,096,282	£291	1,422
Quarter 2	5,885	62%	71%	£1,278,576	£305	1,455
Quarter 3	6,089	57%	45%	£803,670	£294	1,987
<b>Quarter 4</b>	<b>6,267</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>£840,317</b>	<b>£255</b>	<b>2,154</b>

\*APA = Alternative Payment Arrangements are when the DWP pay the housing Costs directly to the Council from the tenants Universal Credit Housing costs entitlement

4.17 By the end of the financial year 2021/22, a total number of **6,267** council tenants were claiming UC equating to **33%** of all current council tenants. This compares to **38%** of council tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit. By the end of the year a total of **53%** of tenants claiming UC were in rent arrears which is a **4% reduction** than at the same point last year.

4.18 Table 8 shows when tenants moved onto Universal Credit an average of **60%** of tenants had pre-existing rent arrears on their rent account. This is a common theme when existing benefit claimants transition from one benefit to another, resulting in periods of non-payment of rent whilst the benefit payments are being processed. A tenants non-compliance with the process can add to rent arrears increasing and backdating of UC can only be granted under very exceptional circumstances.

4.19 By year end a total of **2,154** tenants had successful APA's in place. The remaining tenants on UC are either waiting for UC award, paying the council directly using other payment methods, waiting for APA approval or for the first payment to reach their rent account.

4.20 The team continue working collaboratively with the Department of Works & Pensions and Work Coaches from the local Job Centre Plus to minimise any impact of Universal Credit on rent arrears. Any issues with complex cases or with the joint working arrangements are escalated to the DWP Partnership Manager's for resolution. The team continue to provide an appointment service form the Job Centre Plus where appropriate and if tenants require urgent appointments to support benefit claims.

- 4.21 The DWP granted the council 'Trusted Partner' status which gives access to their Landlord Portal IT system. This has meant the Income Management Team can verify housing costs quickly to prevent delays in UC claims being assessed. The Trusted Partner status also allows the council to apply for Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA's) for vulnerable people who may struggle to pay their rent and any arrears themselves.
- 4.22 The teams 7 198 vulnerable tenants, or those with complex needs with claiming and maintaining Universal Credit claims. They have been helping tenants set up e-mail accounts, supporting people to make and manage their UC claims, promoting and helping to set up Clockwise Rent Payment Accounts which ensures rent is paid on time and encouraging people to consider digital learning courses. Additionally, they are regularly conducting research and sharing information within the team so we can respond to tenants needs and provide the most appropriate advice.
- 4.23 Between April 2021 and October 2021 the RMA's undertook a pilot to expand their remit by providing Welfare Benefit and financial support to both new and existing tenants in addition to the Universal Credit support. 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. This pilot was a success, and this work has now become a permanent feature of the team.
- 4.24 By year-end 2021/22, the Rent Management Advisors supported **605 tenants** which is double the figure supported in the previous financial year. The cases are separated into two types of support 'Short-Term' usually up to two months and 'Long-Term' up to six months A total of **67%** of the tenants required **short-term support** in making benefit claims or basic budgeting advice and the remaining **33%** required **longer-term support** to help manage their claims and also, to apply for any additional elements within their claim for example, Limited Capability for Work Related Activity which can take several months to resolve.
- 4.25 The average wait time for the referrals to be allocated was 2 working days and the same applied to the time it took RMAs to make the first contact with the tenant after receiving the referral. However, during the latter part of the year the average wait time for both categories was **1 working day** only. This demonstrates a waiting list process did not need to be used, as the team effectively managed the workloads and tenants were offered support without any unnecessary delays. The current active caseload is **141 cases**.
- 4.26 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 **17%** from the 605 referrals received. **Medium** priority referrals where tenants who were at risk of court possession proceedings equated to **69%** of the referrals. **Low** priority referrals where tenants had low level arrears with no legal action being considered were **14%**.
- 4.27 The team pursue legal action only as a last resort when all opportunities to sustain tenancies have been exhausted. From the 605 cases, **22 cases were** pursued with legal actions due to non-engagement or persistent non-payment despite RMA

intervention. This demonstrates that **96%** of the cases were helped with tenancy sustainment by RMAs, 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.

- 4.28 RMA's supported tenants to claim welfare benefits, discretionary housing payments (DHP), backdated payments, reconsiderations, and underpayments. In the past year a total value of **£198,895k** was achieved by supporting **307 tenants**. This amount includes any potential entitlements for the next 12 months for disability related benefits which are awarded for a minimum of 12 months before reviewed. Decisions on mandatory reconsiderations and backdates can take a few months to resolve and reconsiderations on disability related benefits can take even longer for resolutions.
- 4.29 RMAs 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 tenants confidence. Based on the 497 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

## **BEAM**

- 4.30 Since last Autumn, IMT have been supporting tenants at risk of homelessness to seek employment to help improve their prospects through starting stable work. Beam is a social enterprise supporting people into the path of getting employment and crowdfunding helps achieve funds for training, laptops, childcare, travel costs, smartphones, clothes for work and more! Beam can also help with CVs, application forms, interview skills and access to an online 'Job Hub' with lots of local, flexible part and full-time job roles.
- 4.31 In total, the team have referred **95** tenants but only **14** have engaged with the process of launching a crowdfunding campaign and searching for employment. A total of **3** tenants have successfully started work. More work will be completed to follow the journey through on a sample caseload where tenants successfully engaged with BEAM. This will measure tenant engagement and compliance with Housing and the impact on rent arrears with the intention this is included in future rent reports.
- 4.32 An example of this work in practice is a recent referral by the team which resulted in the tenant finding work as a carer. Beam supported the tenant to complete carer's training, crowdfunding raised **£2,134** towards a smartphone, safeguarding training, travel to work and attire, childcare, and a DBS check. The feedback from the tenant said;

*"Flexibility is exactly what I need. My dream is to be a psychologist. For now, I love*

*to pay debts, show my children the world and buy my house off the council. I've always felt alone, and I've been told that I aim too high, that I can't have it all, I'm either a mother or I work. I came to accept my fate and expect the worst. Now I'm fighting back, I want to be a working mother, to provide a better life for my children. The fact that people are supporting me in this is amazing".*

## **Court & Evictions**

4.33 The Coronavirus Act 2020, provided protection to tenants by delaying when landlords could evict tenants. Provisions in the act increased the notice periods landlords were required to provide tenants when seeking possession of properties. However, from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, all notice periods returned to pre-pandemic positions and for many of our tenants this meant 4-weeks. The stay on possession proceedings, which was a separate measure imposed to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, expired on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and the Council was able to progress possession claims through courts from this date. Legislation also protected tenants from evictions until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021.

4.34 The team have continued careful consideration before instigating possession proceedings and ensured all avenues of supporting tenants had been explored in advance of any legal action. Any potential court case was reviewed by management before submissions to courts. Since April 2021, a total of **51 cases** were submitted to court for rental possessions which equates to an average of **4 cases per month**. In previous years, the average has been around **80 cases per month**. This is a dramatic reduction in the number of cases being listed for possessions and demonstrates, the effective prevention and management of rent arrears by the team, the tenancy sustainment support provided to tenants, all of which subsequently removed any threat of possession proceedings.

There continues to be significant challenges faced by the team when dealing with County Court as they continue to clear backlogs and their ongoing resourcing issues due to the impact of the pandemic. The assumption is that this will continue until such time the courts return back to some type of normality and catch up with the backlog.

4.35 Evictions were being considered from June 2021 and warrant requests were being pursued only where it was absolutely necessary, with a view that ongoing efforts to sustain tenancies continue to be provided until such time an eviction takes place. Tenants were encouraged and provided with ample opportunities to reach reasonable payment solutions to avoid possession orders and evictions.

Management scrutinises all potential eviction cases to ensure that all avenues of maximising tenant income and sustaining tenancy have been explored. This includes ensuring that any vulnerability has been identified and the necessary referrals to supporting agencies are considered well in advance of any eviction process being followed. The eviction route is pursued as an ultimate last resort and after all efforts to sustain tenancy has been demonstrated and exhausted.

4.36 In the last financial year, **7 evictions** were carried out for non-payment of rent, and this is the lowest number of evictions since inception of the specialist rent team. This figure compares to 37 in 2019/20. Evictions remain at a relatively low level compared to earlier years despite the economic difficulties experienced over this

period, the ongoing welfare reform challenges, and the continued impact of the pandemic. From the 7 evictions, 6 were single people and 1 was a family case. In all cases, the tenants had abandoned their homes with almost half of the tenants known to have moved abroad.

### **DHP's (Discretionary Housing Payment)**

4.37 Between April 2021 and March 2022 the team supported tenants to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs). A total **£554,582k** was paid in awards for all qualifying Council tenants. This is a 6% decrease in awards compared to the previous financial year. From this figure a total of £461,380 was awarded to tenants in receipt of Universal Credit.

### **Levelling Up Fund**

4.38 The homelessness section received Government funding to support those at risk of homelessness. Income Management Team identified tenants that met the criteria set out by the Government and worked in partnership with the Housing Options service to support households with this funding. During quarter 4 the team supported a total of **96 households** with a combined total of **£163,549k**. The funding was paid into tenants rent accounts to clear or reduce outstanding rent arrears. These households had exceptional circumstances and were at risk of eviction, pending legal actions or significant affordability issues for example, single parent families or those affected by bedroom tax, benefit cap or Covid related / redundancies. All tenants identified were supported with this funding under strict conditions such as engagement with the process and ongoing compliance with rent payments.

### **Direct Debits**

4.39 Direct Debits have always been the most preferred method of payment for the council. There is now more flexibility and option for tenants to encourage the direct debit scheme there are 4 different dates tenants can choose to pay their rent – 1st / 7th / 15th and 22nd of each month. Currently a total of **3,902** tenants pay housing or garage rent by direct debit an increase of 243 compared to previous financial year end.

### **Debt Respite Scheme**

4.40 On 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 the Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space) legislation came into force which gave debtors the right to legal protections from creditor action. There are 2 types of breathing space: a standard breathing space and a mental health crisis breathing space. A standard breathing space gives legal protections from creditor action for up to 60 days. The protections included pausing most enforcement action and contact from creditors for example, legal proceedings, evictions serving legal notices and applying for deductions from welfare benefits.

4.41 By the end of the financial year a total of **52 tenants** had entered a Breathing Space and the total value of debt at the time was **£20,692k**. Currently, **31** of the 52 tenants are no longer part of the Breathing Space and at point of entering the total value of arrears stood at **£11,746**, at the point of leaving they were **£11,760** which demonstrates tenants continued paying towards their ongoing rent liability as

required by this new legislation . The current balance for the same group of tenants stands at **£7,442** which is a **36% reduction** in rent arrears. From the 31 only **1** tenant entered a Debt Relief Order and had £437 worth of rent arrears written off. Overall, this represents less than 1% of tenants entering a breathing space and since implementation the position has been stable and manageable.

## **5.0 Key Challenges 2022/23**

- 5.1 The last 2 years have been incredibly difficult and tough, the team will continue to face significant challenges and pressures in the coming year due to the ongoing rising inflation, unprecedented rising costs of fuel and energy, and the ongoing impact of Covid and economic challenges. The arrears performance may become unstable as further uncertainty lies ahead. The team are concerned about the number of Covid infections including the unfolding of variants which pose difficult challenges each time, this may potentially cause setback on the road to recovery.

Despite all this, the team remain resilient and have responded to challenges extremely well so far. The team endeavour to stay focussed and positive, aiming to continue delivering high performance and maintaining good standards. Tenant support will remain the primary focus during what's going to be another extremely challenging and difficult year. The team will continue working consistently to support tenants with their financial burdens, helping them to ease this by maximising incomes wherever possible.

## **6. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications**

### 6.1 Financial implications

This report sets out the position in relation to net rent arrears for current tenants at the end of March 2022. Not documented in this report are the arrears associated with non-dwelling properties (such as garages and parking spaces), hostel bedspaces and former tenants. The overall debt outstanding for all Council tenancies remained largely unchanged from March 2021 to March 2022. A provision for bad debt is made to recognise that a proportion of debt will go uncollected.

Stuart McAvoy – Acting Head of Finance

### 6.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Jeremy Rainbow – Principal Lawyer (Litigation) - 371435

### 6.3 Equalities implications

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this includes the need to: (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.

Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard.

The report provides an update to inform Members of the Scrutiny Commission on the rent arrears progress over the full financial year, from April 2022 to March 2023. There are no direct equality implications arising from this report, however it would be useful in relation to tenants in serious debt to have these monitored by protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act (sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, age) in order to address any adverse impact and put in place mitigating actions.

To qualify for the mental health crisis breathing space, a mental health professional must confirm a person is receiving crisis treatment. It is important that officers continue to offer early appropriate professional support and guidance to tenants to reduce rent arrears.

The work carried out by the Rent Management Advisors in relation to supporting vulnerable people some of whom will have complex needs helps to impact positively on people from across all protected characteristics. Initiatives such as BEAM have the potential to help foster good relations.

The report mentions that that amid the cost-of-living crisis, life will be made even harder for tenants in financial difficulty, and could risk sending more people into arrears.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

#### 6.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are no significant climate emergency implications associated with this report.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

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## **Update on Key Housing Strategic Priorities**

Housing Scrutiny Commission  
Date of Meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022

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Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Cutkelvin  
Lead director/officer: Chris Burgin

## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Chris Burgin
- Author contact details: [chris.burgin@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:chris.burgin@leicester.gov.uk)
- Report version number: v1

### 1. Summary

1.1 This report provides a progress update to the Housing Scrutiny commission setting out progress on delivery of the Labour manifesto commitments made in 2019, and is an update on progress since 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 & the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 when the last report was provided on the matter to the Housing Scrutiny commission.

1.2 Overall, good progress has been made with the delivery of the manifesto commitments. A large proportion of the manifesto commitments have been delivered in full and so this report focussed upon those that remain live and in progress.

### 2. Recommended actions/decision

2.1 To note the progress made with the Key Housing Strategic Priorities and provide any comments and feedback

### 3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

3.1 Report is solely for Housing Scrutiny commission consideration

### 4. Detailed report

4.1 Labour's Manifesto commitments 'For the Many not the few' has eight specific sections covered within the document and the Housing Division will continue to contribute towards many of the broader themes and elements within them.

4.2 The document contains 12 main Manifesto commitments that the Housing Division has primary responsibility for delivering. Most of these commitments sit under the Manifesto section 'Homes for All'. A full table of the 12 commitments are included in Appendix A. Five of the twelve commitments have been fully delivered and completed. Below are highlights and extracts on those items that remain in progress.

#### **4.3 Ensure No one has to sleep rough on our street / Reduce the number of families in B&B**

Most of the existing actions that form part of the current Homelessness strategy have been delivered and work has commenced on the review and evidence base for the future Homelessness strategy for 2023 to 2028.

Wider work to develop the singles offer at the Dawn Centre is progressing with £450k of HRA budget approved and a further successful bid for Rough Sleepers Initiative funding for 22-25 for a phase 2 of this work to develop a Multi Service hub at the Dawn Centre.

The Employment hub at the Dawn Centre has recently been launch by St Mungos to facilitate work placement and work opportunities has now taken place and work on creating employment opportunities with BEAM is progressing well.

LCC has been successful in delivering £3.5m additional revenue across 9 external funding pots to enhance Homelessness services. Further funding has been secured through the Health Inequalities fund for 2x additional Social Workers to work with those going through Homelessness whom do not meet the ASC Statutory threshold.

The Changing Futures bid for £3.4m has been successful working with partners and also a further bid to the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol treatment funding for £1.2m to provide extra support to help people recover from drugs and alcohol misuse has also been successful. Extended bid funding has been secured to provide additional Offenders Accommodation as has funding to develop Respite Rooms for those fleeing DV and becoming Homeless.

Most recently £2.5m has been secured after a bid to the Rough Sleepers initiative funding to continue with the strengthened pathways to ensure no one has to sleep rough on Leicester street. An Ending Rough Sleepers Strategy has been developed and implemented in conjunction with this.

#### **4.4 Tackle Housing Shortage / Provide 1500 more council, social & extra care**

The Manifesto (2019/20 -2022/23) includes an ambitious target to achieve 1,500 more council, social and extra care homes, a delivery target that's at least double the completions achieved in any prior administration since current records began (in 2008/09).

The Council have now approved over £200m to the delivery of the manifesto commitment to increase the supply of affordable housing with £100m available in this years HRA budget A pipeline of delivery of 1500 units on multiple sites had been identified and agreed between 2019 and 2023.

This ambitious target has focused efforts across the council and encouraged new and innovative means of securing the new supply of affordable housing, including a very significant in-house acquisition programme along side our House building programme.

The manifesto target has resulted in long-term concerted efforts across the council to seek to deliver more affordable housing and, by 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 853 new affordable housing homes had been completed, and a further 298 are currently in the pipeline.

The Council has pursued all opportunities available to it in order to ensure that this manifesto commitment has been met and continue to do this throughout the remaining year of the manifesto. This has included exploring Councillor suggested opportunities for new housing development.

A number of elements have fed in to the challenges experienced in the delivery of this commitment and these include;

1. **The very real lack of available sites for residential development.** Historically, Registered Providers (RPs) have been the major providers of new affordable housing in the city, bringing access to privately-owned sites and significant investment from Homes England (HE - and its predecessors) and their own funds. For at least the past 3 or 4 years, RPs have consistently advised of difficulties in accessing sites in Leicester city. This resulted in 2020/21 being the first year on record where none of our completions were via RPs and none of our completions had been funded via HE. It has proved difficult to identify sites to bring forward for our own newbuild council housing programme and this is evidenced by the relatively small and constrained sites within our recent new council build programme.
2. **Dramatic decrease in securing planning gain affordable housing:** Historically, a proportion of our new supply of affordable housing has been delivered via planning gain (Section 106 contributions). For a period now, the proportion and number of applicable planning consents which include planning gain affordable housing has been negligible.
3. **The delays to the new Local Plan process:** In order to seek to address the site shortage issue, officers had projected which council-owned 'Local Plan sites' might be developed on by March 2023 and which ones were worth exploring in terms of bringing forward in advance of adoption of the new Local Plan. In September 2019, the adoption of the new Local Plan was expected to take place in late 2021. By September 2021, its adoption was projected for late 2022: too late to then submit planning applications for any supply to complete by March 2023.
4. **The Covid-19 pandemic, lockdowns and resulting restrictions and practices** have resulted in periods of complete shut down on sites, delays/extensions to project timetables because of Covid safety measures (eg restrictions to number of trades/people on site at any one time), material shortages (because of no production/movement of materials during lockdown), etc.
5. **Delay of proposed delivery of 155 new Extra Care dwellings:** The completion of the two new proposed schemes at the Hamelin Road site and Tilling Road site had been comfortably projected to fall within the manifesto target but the lead RP unexpectedly pulled out at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, collapsing the proposed disposal and delivery deal. (A new drive is now underway to inform how best to secure the successful delivery of these two schemes but such delivery can now not be completed by March 2023).
6. **Changes to Right To Buy Receipts (RTBR) spending rules, in terms of capping the proportion of acquisitions funded** will limit the number of RTBR-funded acquisitions that can be purchased in the final year of the manifesto period to just 20 above the number of RTBR-funded newbuild start-on-sites. Given the constraints on sites for new build, this is significant blow, especially given that the only completions projected for 2022/23 are acquisitions.
7. **Significant increases in actual and projected costs and inflation** in relation to construction contracts have led to increased and lengthy due diligence at Senior Management level of business cases, contract awards, etc. The pandemic, Brexit, etc have resulted in a shortage of construction labour and skills, shortage of materials, increased costs and uncertainties, etc. This, in turn, has led to increased due diligence at Senior Management level and this has resulted in delays to project timetables.
8. **The missed opportunity of the proposed purchase of 383 dwellings from Jamie Lewis**, which was expected to complete within this financial year – ahead of

the cap on number of RTBR-funded acquisitions – has significantly impacted on our ability to meet the manifesto target.

9. **The unsuccessful bid for Clarion portfolio of 330 units**, Clarion were seeking a housing provider to buy their affordable housing stock in Leicester and Nottingham, we bid for the Leicester lot but our bid was unsuccessful.
10. **The missed opportunity of the Northgate Street acquisition of 67 new build units**, the councils offer of £9.2m was rejected by the Vendor.

#### **4.5 Establish a residential facility for people experiencing multiple and complex needs, many of whom are rough sleeping**

This action has in essence been completed with the creation of Flora lodge, the only item that remained outstanding was to secure longer term funding for the unit and this has now been completed as a result of funding secured through the RSI bid for the coming 3 years.

#### **4.6 Support further work to meet complex needs experienced by women and BAME communities who may not be sleeping on our streets but are homeless.**

Wider engagement with key stakeholders and organisations has taken place to meet the wider manifesto commitment. An action plan has been developed which identifies barriers and actions, more global aspects have been included within the Leicester Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy work led by Community Safety and the localise action plan is in delivery.

A Domestic Abuse oversight Board is in place for the delivery of the Strategy including key internal partners including Housing and also external partners and stakeholders. This has driven the delivery of Specialist ‘by and for’ BME domestic abuse safe accommodation, some with shared facilities and some self-contained and an additional second stage accommodation (6 units) for a respite rooms pilot . This project has helped over 40 individuals flee DA and find safe accommodation. It has also provided further evidence from the pilot on the needs of BAME communities linked to DA that will now feed in to the DA Strategy and also the Homelessness strategy.

#### **4.7 Make Leicester a place of refuge for those fleeing conflict across the world, with a comprehensive offer of housing, support and learning / Support communities to welcome refugees and asylum-seekers**

The original commitment has now been achieved through the Vulnerable Person resettlement scheme with 45 families moving to Leicester with the support of the STAR AMAL team set up to support and coordinate the delivery. This team has been referenced as good practice by MHCLG for its innovative and strong delivery. The Vulnerable Person resettlement scheme has formally completed meeting its national target with the last people coming through the scheme in February 2021.

A new commitment has been made for the Afgan resettlement scheme to take 60 people in approximately 10 families and provide them with accommodation and settle them in Leicester. This commitment is almost completed with the final families moving into accommodation in the coming month. Ongoing support and wrap around work is going well in the accommodation. The STAR AMAL team are working with those people in the Bridging hotel set up by the Department of Levelling up in the City to ensure they receive good quality support.

A team has been set up led by Jo Russell to oversee the work in Leicester to welcome Ukrainians coming to the City through the National government schemes for families and sponsors, including the DBS checks for people, safety checks on the properties and issue of finance and a full wrap around support service for those Leicester residents sponsoring Ukrainians arriving in the City.

**5. Background information and other papers:**

**6. Summary of appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Table of Manifesto commitments

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

No

**10. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?**

No

## Appendix 1 – Manifesto Commitments Delivery Table

Theme	Commitment	Key Actions Required	Key Metrics	Progress update
27 A Fair City Fighting back against austerity	Use our housing company to tackle housing shortages	1. Provide Social Housing through LCC HRA to achieve affordability and accessibility (especially for those with barriers to Housing for such reasons as on Benefits 2. Deliver new Affordable Housing for the same reason as above 3. Target hard to use/small/less profitable spaces that the open market would not develop 4. Provide housing types not delivered by the market including bungalows / adapted properties	Delivery of new build, extra care and acquired properties. Percentage of adapted properties and bungalows.	The Executive have now approved a total of £100m to the delivery of this manifesto commitment. A further £100m has been added to the HRA budget for 22/23 to extend and expand delivery. Delivery of Housing Leicester Phase 1 of new Council Housing has delivered 29 units across 6 small sites including bungalows which are wheelchair accessible. Full planning has been secured on Saffron Velodrome for 38 properties and procurement has been completed and a builder secured and delivery is now ongoing. Additional Phase 2B sites are also being worked on to deliver a further 18 new units during 22/23. Planning permission was submitted for Lanesborough Road on 4th May 2021 to build an additional 37 units. Planning permission is pending. Work is now starting on Phase 3 & 4 of the new build programme across a further 10 sites with potential delivery of 200 homes. Phase 3 has been agreed to proceed by CMB and this has started which should deliver 52 new homes. Phase 4 is to be held pending Local Plan approval. A pipeline of delivery of 1500 units on multiple sites had been identified and agreed by the Executive for the 4 year term however the collapse of a significant portfolio purchase in January 2022 of 371 units impacts the delivery of this manifesto commitment. Wider opportunities have been explored to mitigate this impact.
Homes for All	Provide 1,500 more council, social and extra care homes	Delivery of new residential acquisitions, new house building and Extra care schemes	As in AFC8. A clear four year delivery plan covering acquisitions & LCC new property build is agreed with LM in August 2019 and delivered as per the agreed projection - reported annually.	See AFC8. A clear pathway of delivery has been agreed with Executive to deliver the 1500 units. In year 1 340 homes have been delivered, in year 2 a further 137 homes have been delivered and in year 3 361 homes will have been delivered by financial year end including the UHL deal. Another large purchase due to complete and deliver 371 units has collapsed. Work going on to deliver as many as practically possible before the end of the manifesto period
Homes for All	Undertake an ongoing £80m council home improvement programme	Capital investment to maintain and improve the standard of Council housing continues in line with approved HRA Budget	A council housing improvement programme in 19/20 £31m, 20/21 £17m, 21/22 £17m and 22/23 £16m totalling £81m is delivered.	The council housing improvement programme in 19/20 totalled £31m. A programme of investment for 20/21 including installing Kitchens & bathrooms, Boilers, Rewiring properties, Re roofing, Windows & Doors & Door Entries has invested a further £17m. The approved HRA budget for 21/22 includes ongoing investment in these areas totalling £24m again. Proposals in the 22/23 budget for capital investment to meet this manifesto commitment total £17.4m, totalling investment to over £89m exceeding this manifesto commitment.

Theme	Commitment	Key Actions Required	Key Metrics	Progress update
Homes for All	Establish a home extension fund for council tenants to reduce overcrowding in council properties	A fund is set up in the HRA to process and deliver house extensions for those housing register applicants that are Council tenants and are severely/statutorily overcrowded where it is possible to extend their existing property to meet their need.	A fund of £500k for 2019/20 has been approved for a home extension fund in the HRA Budget report in February 2019 and a defined process of use is being determined and metric will be measure of spend and number of tenants assisted	This commitment has been met and a home extension fund for Leicester City Council tenants has been set up and funding of £500k has been set with the HRA budget for 2020/21. The focus of the scheme is those in overcrowded homes that can be extended. Work is ongoing to identify and facilitate to extend suitable homes
Homes for All	Continue our environmental investment programme on council land and estates	1. Joint annual programme of parking layby and hardstanding areas has been developed. Programme is part HRA funded and part Highways LEW funded. Programme to be taken to NPT Board for review. Executive decision required to release Highways LEW policy provision to support this work. 2. To continue to provide an Environmental budget for investment and improve Council Housing estates. 3. Continue to fund a Neighbourhood Improvement service that's primary focus is estate based improvement work 4. Estate Warden service provided on Council Housing estates is maintained 5. Continue to fund capital investment to enhance LCC Council owned stock to enhance its look 6. Strategic selection of new build sites on estates to address environmental issues		It is expected that for the mayoral whole period these are expected to equate to a total of £8.5m of capital investment will be made by Housing in to Housing Estates. Housing continue to invest in our estates by way of paying for an Estate Warden Service which costs £800k pa and this provides services on Council Housing estates over and above service levels to help maintain the quality of estates (eg/rubbish clearance on communal areas) and also pay for a Neighbourhood Improvement service £450k pa that also undertakes work on the estate to improve and develop local communal areas (while also providing 20 work placements for 12 months each year). These have been ongoing throughout the mayoral period so far and are planned to continue so would equate to a further revenue investment over the whole mayoral term of £4.8m for the 4 years.  Combining the capital and revenue investment in our estates over the 4 years equates to £13.3m. 2021/22 Programme being developed in partnership with housing.
Homes for All	Maintain our existing adaptation services for all homeowners and undertake a programme of council housing adaptations to allow people with disabilities to remain or move into our properties	Ongoing development and challenge to ensure effective delivery for service users in a timely way	Engaging staff in a review of business processes to maximise joint work and the effective use of DFG resources Continue to deliver a timely service to those requiring adaptations and achieve full use of the funding. Ongoing development and challenge to ensure effective delivery for service users in a timely way Review and individual plan for all those on the Housing register requiring adaptations	During the manifesto period it is expected to invest over £9m on the provision of adaptations cutting across Disabled Facilities grant and Council House adaptations to facilitate the Adaptations service and help people that need adaptations to continue to be able to live in their current home. Over 2,000 adaptation/DFGs have been completed to date providing help to over 1000 people to stay in their own homes.

Theme	Commitment	Key Actions Required	Key Metrics	Progress update
Homes for All	Provide free wifi on council estates	Delivery of new wifi networks on Council Housing estates and increased choice of ISPs and services for the home	Delivery of key actions.	<p>Concessionary home WiFi available from internet operators on housing estates (including VirginMedia and Hyperoptic). The Council has signed two wayleave agreements, one with CityFibre and the other with Hyperoptic, to access housing estates. Hyperoptic has agreed to offer some additional free gigabit connections that could be used for public WiFi on estates where they provide a service. We are having similar conversations with Gigabit Networks, which uses the CityFibre infrastructure. Hyperoptic will also provide several free home connections for up to six months to nominated council tenants. Also, internet service providers (ISPs) offer 'low cost' social tariffs for home WiFi to qualifying Council tenants</p> <p>The Council provides free public WiFi in public buildings, including libraries and children and family centres, that are accessible to council tenants. There is an outdoor city centre WiFi service, provided by BT. This concession agreement expires in 2023. Consequently, new arrangements should be explored this year to replace this contract. Therefore, the Smart City team is investigating how to widen the scope of a potential new service agreement to include housing estates.</p> <p>The digital connectivity board agreed to set up a wireless sub-group to review its existing public wifi (other than in council buildings) with a view to extend these to housing estates on expiry of current commercial agreements (for example, with BT).. Initial proposals for 5G and WiFi should be circulated by the end of the year.</p> <p>Delivery of wifi in Council owned public buildings has been undertaken and completed.</p> <p>Agreements with new suppliers has also been completed and work is ongoing to deliver the social value from this of the free wifi on Housing estates</p>

Theme	Commitment	Key Actions Required	Key Metrics	Progress update
Homes for All	Ensure that no-one has to sleep rough on our streets	<p>1. Delivery of the Homelessness strategy actions</p> <p>2. Development and embedding of the Homelessness Charter (including delivery of diverted giving scheme, enhanced communications for the public, service users and stakeholders and alternative forms of housing provision not currently available to meet the needs of those with NRPF</p> <p>3. Continue to bid for additional pots of funding to invest in to Homelessness services across Leicester</p>	Number of rough sleepers on the annual and quarterly count	<p>See HFA 12 - Ongoing delivery of the homeless strategy actions including procurement of Temporary accommodation for those leaving prison completed securing 30 units increased from 20 and a Leicestershire wide new Pathway has been developed and signed off by all District and City partners in conjunction with Prison and Probation &amp; Temporary accommodation for singles - exercise complete and other elements extended. Wider work to develop the singles offer at the Dawn Centre is progressing with £450k of HRA budget approved and a further bid in progress to RSI 22-25 for a phase 2 of this work. Alongside the development of increased numbers and types of stepped accommodation for singles. The service offer and internal configuration of this service area to deliver this has also started. A joint procurement exercise to procure young person temporary accommodation has just successfully concluded and implemented</p> <p>Launch of the St Mungos Hub to facilitate work placement and work opportunities has now taken place. LCC have started a pilot on employment opportunities with BEAM for 1 year to test this opportunity. The Family offer of Homes not hostels is in progress with the development of a network of independent homes across the City available as the Family temporary accommodation offer moving away from an institutional hostel with the staffing elements almost complete and the procurement due to conclude soon.</p> <p>The Homelessness Charter has been launched and has to date delivered a Full City Wide offer for Diverted Giving achieving over £30k in its first year. It has also expanded information through the use of an online Directory. It has also enhanced relationships between LCC and key stakeholders in the Homeless sector and brought on board business to work together. A successful bid to the Lottery enables the Charter to bring on board staff to push its objectives forward and a full project plan has now been developed and is being delivered.</p> <p>LCC has been successful in delivering £3.5m additional revenue across 9 external funding pots to enhance Homelessness services. An Ending Rough Sleepers Strategy has been developed and implemented. Further funding has been secured through the Health Inequalities fund for 2x additional Social Workers to work with those going through Homelessness whom do not meet the ASC Statutory threshold. The Changing Futures bid for £3.4m has been successful working with partners and also a further bid to the Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol treatment funding for £1.2m to provide extra support to help people recover from drugs and alcohol misuse has also been successful. Extended bid funding has been secured to provide additional Offenders Accommodation as has funding to develop Respite Rooms for those fleeing DV and becoming Homeless. Most recently £2.5m has been secured after a bid to teh</p>

Theme	Commitment	Key Actions Required	Key Metrics	Progress update
Homes for All	Establish a residential facility for people experiencing multiple and complex needs, many of whom are rough sleeping	Business case setting out viability and pathway to delivery of the purchase of unit(s) for this purpose alongside the delivery of wrap around health and support services specific to these units	Approval of Business case, Purchase of units Design of service and delivery/launch of service	In conjunction with Action Homeless we have recently mobilised a further 12 units of accommodation linked to the successful bid to the Protect pathway for those extremely complex Rough Sleeping cases. In conjunction with this there are enhanced, physical, mental health and substance recovery support packages provided through our partners at Turning Point and Leicestershire Homeless Mental Health Team & Inclusion Healthcare. The funding bid has been successful to the RSI which includes 3 years of funding for this unit. Discussions have commenced with CCG and Health over enhancing a joined up approach and funding to future accommodation options for this client group.
Homes for All	Support further work to meet complex needs experienced by women and BAME communities who may not be sleeping on our streets but are homeless.	A broad Service review is undertaken to establish existing provision in Leicester and to identify any weaknesses or gaps that can then be developed for ongoing consideration	Service review is completed and recommendations considered by Assistant Mayor	Wider engagement with key stakeholders and organisations has taken place to meet the wider manifesto commitment. An action plan has been developed which identifies barriers and actions, more global aspects have been included within the Leicester Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy work led by Community Safety and the localise action plan is in delivery. A Domestic Violent oversight Board is in place for the delivery of the Strategy including key internal partners including Housing and also external partners and stakeholders. This has driven the delivery of Specialist 'by and for' BME domestic abuse safe accommodation, some with shared facilities and some self-contained. Additional second stage accommodation (6 units) for respite rooms pilot . OISC qualified immigration advice worker and counsellor to work across DA safe accommodation by Panahghar through the Needs Burdens funding. This projet has helped over 40 individuals flee DA and the evidence base from the pilot will now feed in to the needs of BAME communities linked to DA in the DA Strategy and also the Homelessness strategy. In extension to this a piece of work is being commissioned to achieve an Enhance understanding of barriers and communication opportunities for populations with barriers and at risk of being hidden – starting with Asian British Indian Women and Male Victims – including productions of materials. Luke Martin Consultancy and Zinthiya Trust secured to do this work

Theme	Commitment	Key Actions Required	Key Metrics	Progress update
Homes for All	Reduce the number of families and individuals placed in temporary accommodation.	1. Delivery of new Social and Affordable Housing 2. Maximise the existing Homelessness service provision to achieve the best prevention rates 3. Deliver an increased offer of stepped accommodation 4. Continue to bid for additional funding that can be utilised to strengthen the Homeless service	Number of people prevented from becoming homeless. No of people having to be placed in temporary accommodation	<p>Social Housing delivery as per 1500 units commitment plan - see AFC8 and HFA1</p> <p>Leicester has sustained the Everyone in Homelessness offer since March 2019 (unlike other Authorities) and continued to provide this throughout the winter before moving back to helping people to avoid having to come in to temporary accommodation by focussing work on preventing people becoming homeless The new Homeless service offer is far stronger from the £5m investment in to extra accommodation and services and ongoing extra revenue investment of nearly three quarters of a million pounds a year to enhance already strong pre-pandemic homelessness offer. To date since March we have helped over 1000 people and secured over 180 additional self contained accommodation units. . The overall approach has meant a big reduction of people on the street with our Annual rough sleeper count reducing by almost 50% year on year and nearly in to single figures with only those continuing to refuse accommodation left on the streets. Monthly snapshot counts continue to only identify single figures on the streets.</p> <p>The City Council continue to perform strongly in relation to prevention of people becoming homeless with much higher performance rates than comparator LA's.</p> <p>From a families perspective, increased demand in this area has led to an uplift in numbers in B&amp;B's however the Council continues to remain 100% compliant in its statutory responsibility over families remaining in B&amp;B for a short period of time. Homelessness services are now intervening much earlier in order to prevent people from becoming homeless and an extended offer is currently being developed (as per our PRS strategy) for a 'Call before you serve' service to landlords will be launched in August 2022 alongside a new Specialised Homelessness team.</p>
A safe and inclusive city Community Support	Make Leicester a place of refuge for those fleeing conflict across the world, with a comprehensive offer of housing, support and learning	Ongoing delivery of the Vulnerable Person Resettlement scheme as per the original commitment and share lessons learned from this across services. Consideration of Govt's recent announcement re: extended Resettlement Scheme and agreement of a suitable response/target for Leicester going forward. Engagement directly with both the Govt and the Regional Migration Board to lobby for improvements to asylum seeker and refugee support and transition arrangements. Where possible (recognising the limitations placed on us by legislation) seek to avoid and relieve hardship for asylum seekers and refugees through our policies and provision for example access to foodbanks. Consider how we can improve internal co-ordination and improve information sharing e.g.	Resettlement of 45 families through the existing resettlement scheme and delivery against KPIs set within that for families accessing support e.g. registering with a GP and dentist, developing English language skills and taking up employment. For 20/12 Delivery of the new commitment for 28 people through the Vulnerable person resettlement scheme	COMPLETED - The original commitment has now been achieved with 45 families moving in to Leicester with the support of the STAR AMAL team set up to support and coordinate the delivery. This team has been referenced as good practice by MHCLG for its delivery. The Vulnerable Person resettlement scheme has formally completed meeting its national target with the last people coming through the scheme in February 2021. A new commitment has been made for the ARAP scheme to take 60 people in approximately 10 families and provide them with accommodation and settle them in Leicester. This commitment is almost completed and will be shortly. ongoing work is going well to set up the accommodation and this scheme which is being run by the STAR Amal team. The STAR AMAL team are also now working with those people in the Bridging hotel in the City to ensure they receive good quality support. A team has been set up led by Jo Russell to oversee the work in Leicester to welcome Ukrainians coming to the City through the National government schemes for families and sponsors, including the DBS checks for people, safety checks on the properties and issue of finance and a full wrap around support service.

Theme	Commitment	Key Actions Required	Key Metrics	Progress update
A safe and inclusive city Community Support	Support communities to welcome refugees and asylum-seekers	As above		<p>See ASIC3</p> <p>Advice services are accessible at the Customer Service Centre (1 787 appointments provided) and across 9 outreach locations with 259 advice sessions held (1 192 appointments provided), 12,891 calls answered and 80 home visits undertaken. In addition, 614 appointments have been facilitated in Children's Centres for families and pregnant women.</p> <p>Housing have further developed a pathway for Asylum seekers that enter and exit NASS accommodation within the City for positive decisions. in 2019/20 197 asylum seekers (increased from 18/19 - 127) receiving decisions have been assisted with Housing including 144 that received more intensive support through the Homelessness route to secure homes. A dedicated Head of Service has been appointed to drive forward work in migration and asylum for the City and work has started to embed the work in BAU with a Strategic group operating with Assistant mayor Leads and Senior Officers attending and overseeing Asylum and Migration in the City. A number of operational meetings have also been set up with key stakeholders and VCS and partners to manage the ongoing situation re NASS accommodation, overflow accommodation and also the Afgan &amp; Ukrainian situation in the City.</p>



# Housing Scrutiny Commission

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## House Building Delivery

Report to be considered by:

Housing Scrutiny Commission: 1<sup>st</sup>. August 2022

City Mayor for Housing: Cllr Cutkelvin

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Lead director: Chris Burgin

### Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Simon Nicholls, Head of Service
- Author contact details: 395273
- Report version number: V6

### 1. Summary



**City Mayor**

The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) 2017 concluded that Leicester's estimated level of Affordable Housing Need per annum for the period 2011-31 is 786. The average number of Affordable Housing completions achieved per year during the period 2011/12 – 2018/19 was 156; less than 20% of this evidenced need.

The Manifesto (2019/20 -2022/23) includes an ambitious target to achieve 1,500 more council, social and extra care homes, a delivery target that's at least double the completions achieved in any prior administration since current records began (in 2008/09).

This ambitious target has focused efforts across the council and encouraged new and innovative means of securing the new supply of affordable housing, including a very significant in-house acquisition programme.

This report sets out progress towards meeting this manifesto commitment with over 1,100 units either completed or now in progress to be delivered. Work is ongoing to deliver those in progress and secure and deliver all possible opportunities.

The new ways of working will continue to be harnessed beyond March 2023, to enable more evidenced needs to be met.

#### **1. Recommendation**

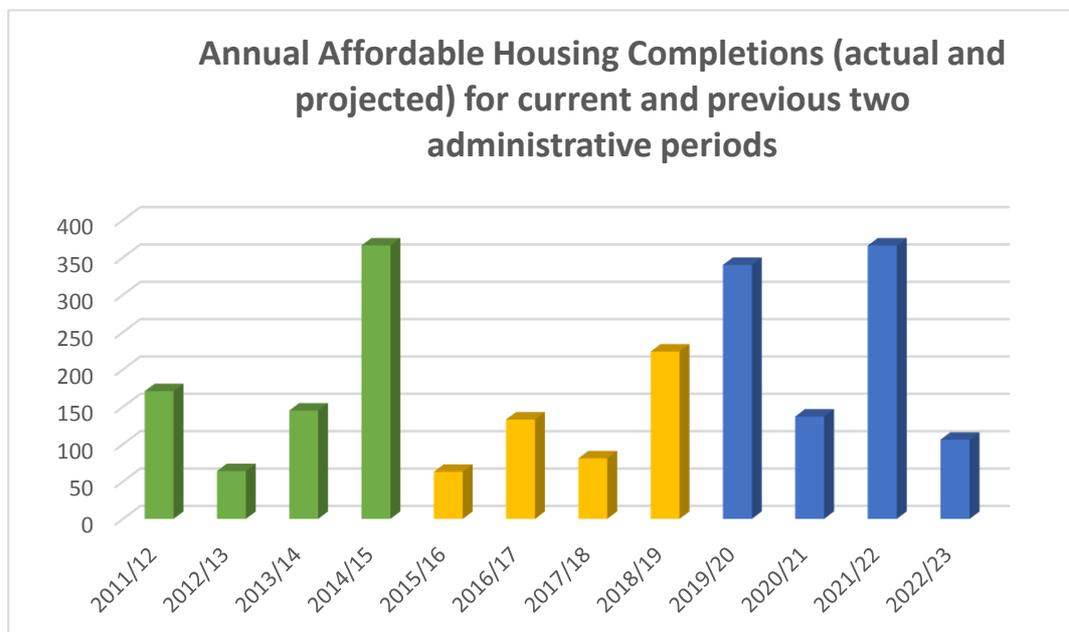
That the Housing Scrutiny Commission note this progress report on Housing delivery

### 3. Supporting information including options considered:

The 2019 manifesto includes a target to provide 1,500 more council, social and extra care homes. This has always been a very ambitious target, especially given:

- i) The previously documented shortage of sites available for residential development in the city;
- ii) That the pipeline of new supply of affordable housing as at 31.3.19 projected a total of 226 completions between the 4 year period 1.4.19 – 31.3.23;
- iii) The overall total of new affordable housing completed in the 4 year period 1.4.15 – 31.3.19 was 501 and, in the previous 4 year period of 1.4.11 – 31.3.15, was 746: ie a third and a half of the current ambitious manifesto target.

Our data on completions and projections as at June 2022 conclude that we are on now on target to deliver a total of at least 1100 completions. That's 77% of the Manifesto target and represents a massive 37% increase on any previous administrative period's affordable housing completions. Please see figure below for actual and projected completions for the 12 year period 2011/12 – 2022/23:



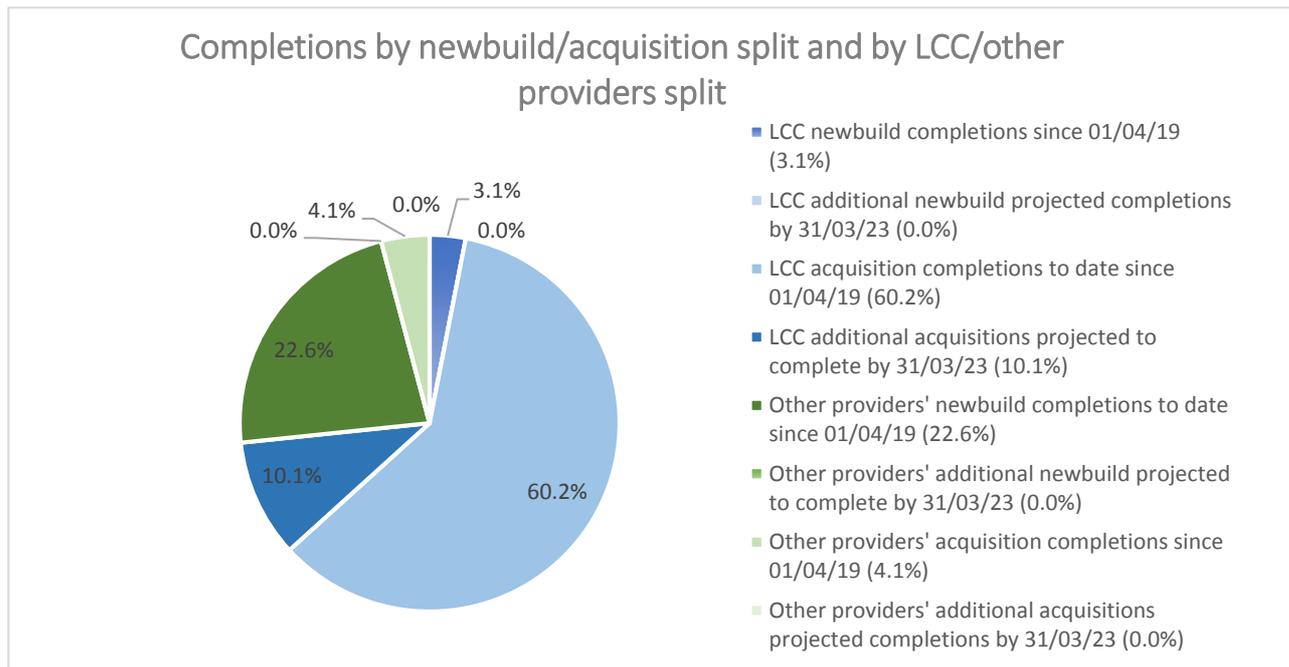
The manifesto target has resulted in long-term concerted efforts across the council to seek to deliver more affordable housing and, by 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 853 new affordable housing homes had been completed, and a further 298 are in the pipeline and projected to complete.

Whilst the target has always been ambitious, any and all potential means of achieving new supply have been explored, including:

- A very successful programme of acquiring former council homes;
- The re-start of the newbuild council housing programme;
- The acquisition of a large number of former nurses' accommodation;
- acquiring portfolios of privately-owned accommodation.

The following pie-chart shows the proportion of actual/projected completions for the Manifesto period resulting from the council's newbuild programme, other providers'

(including Registered Providers) newbuild programmes (including S106/Planning Gain completions), the council’s acquisition programme and other providers’ acquisition programmes:



Any new supply of affordable housing is achieved either via the newbuild of dwellings or through the acquisition of private/non-affordable homes available to buy (plus any new homes achieved via conversion of non-residential space). The above pie chart clearly demonstrates how important acquisitions are and have been to achieve this high completions performance: 74% of the total projected completions within the manifesto period are via acquisitions and nearly all of these acquisitions have been part-funded by Right To Buy Receipts funds. The huge majority of these acquisitions (94%; 664 dwellings) have been bought by LCC itself; the remaining 42 being purchased by an RP and other providers.

This reliance on acquisitions has been brought about by the lack of available sites for newbuild residential development (see below for more details). This is because of the lead-in period required for newbuild projects, including the planning process, procurement and the build period itself. The lead-in period for acquisitions can vary significantly depending on the nature of the acquisition (eg single property or sizeable portfolio of many properties), the due diligence required, the circumstances of other parties involved in the purchase ‘chain’, etc. The ‘fastest’ acquisition completions we’ve experienced for individual properties, from the point of having our offer accepted to the point of purchase completion is about 2½ months but the more usual timespan for this is approximately 4 – 6 months.

The financial year 22/23 is the first year that the Government will cap the number of RTBR-funded acquisitions to match the number of RTBR-funded newbuild starts on sites plus a buffer of 20. There is a total of 76 RTBR-funded newbuild starts on sites projected for 2022/23 and so the maximum number of RTBR-funded acquisitions we can achieve next year is 106 (because of the addition of the buffer plus an element of ‘buy-backs’).

We have already, in principle, agreed to fund RWHC’s proposed 5 new acquisitions subject to their completion by September 2022 and so that leaves a maximum of 101-

106 RTBR-funded acquisitions for LCC to aim for by March 2023 (10 of which have already been delivered).

Moving forward our approach to the delivery of new affordable housing will focus on new build council housing. We already have sites at Stocking Farm, Southfields Newry, Phase 3, FLEC and future phases dedicated to the delivery of new build homes. Delivery will continue to include acquisitions, but the overall percentage of acquisitions will reduce.

Officers have asked Home England (HE) to consider making an exception to its current funding programme priority for new build. Should HE confirm within the next few months that it will fund a number of acquisitions in Leicester, then there is a good chance that this will result in additional completions by March to the projection within this report.

Over the Manifesto period, there have been many issues which have restricted potential supply and there are many risks to our projected pipeline supply.

The **issues** which have already curtailed potential supply include:

1. **The very real lack of available sites for residential development.** Historically, Registered Providers (RPs) have been the major providers of new affordable housing in the city, bringing access to privately-owned sites and significant investment from Homes England (HE - and its predecessors) and their own funds. For at least the past 3 or 4 years, RPs have consistently advised of difficulties in accessing sites in Leicester city. It has proved difficult to identify sites to bring forward for our own newbuild council housing programme and this is evidenced by the relatively small and constrained sites within our recent new council build programme.
2. **Decrease in securing planning gain affordable housing:** Historically, a proportion of our new supply of affordable housing has been delivered via planning gain (Section 106 contributions). For a period now, the proportion and number of applicable planning consents which include planning gain affordable housing has reduced.
3. **The delays to the new Local Plan process:** In order to seek to address the site shortage issue, officers had projected which council-owned 'Local Plan sites' might be developed on by March 2023 and which ones were worth exploring in terms of bringing forward in advance of adoption of the new Local Plan. In September 2019, the adoption of the new Local Plan was expected to take place in late 2021. By September 2021, its adoption was projected for late 2022: too late to then submit planning applications for any supply to complete by March 2023. Proposals to bring sites forward ahead of the Local Plan were dropped to ensure that the council could be seen to be treated the same as any other applicant and not seeking to pre-judge due process (including consultation) within the Local Plan process.
4. **The Covid-19 pandemic, lockdowns and resulting restrictions and practices** have resulted in periods of complete shut down on sites, delays/extensions to project timetables because of Covid safety measures (eg restrictions to number of trades/people on site at any one time), material shortages (because of no production/movement of materials during lockdown), etc.
5. **Delays to the proposed delivery of 155 new Extra Care dwellings:** The completion of the two new proposed schemes at the Hamelin Road site and Tilling Road site had been comfortably projected to fall within the manifesto target but

the lead RP unexpectedly pulled out and securing another RP to deliver the schemes has caused inevitable delays.

6. **Changes to Right To Buy Receipts (RTBR) spending rules, in terms of capping the proportion of acquisitions funded** will limit the number of RTBR-funded acquisitions that can be purchased in the final year of the manifesto period to just 20 above the number of RTBR-funded newbuild start-on-sites. Given the constraints on sites for new build, this is significant blow, especially given that the only completions projected for 2022/23 are acquisitions.
7. **Significant increases in actual and projected costs and inflation** The pandemic, Brexit, etc have resulted in a shortage of construction labour and skills, shortage of materials, increased costs and uncertainties, etc. This has led to delays to project timetables eg 'award of contracts' for the Phase 2 and Phase 2B sites have been delayed by at least 3 months.
8. **The proposed purchase of 383 dwellings from Jamie Lewis**, which was expected to complete within this financial year – ahead of the cap on number of RTBR-funded acquisitions – has significantly impacted on our ability to meet the manifesto target.
9. **The unsuccessful bid for the Clarion portfolio 330 units**, Clarion were seeking a housing provider to buy their affordable housing stock in Leicester and Nottingham, we bid for the Leicester lot but our bid was unsuccessful.
10. **Northgate Street acquisition 67 units**, the councils offer was rejected by the Vendor.

The issues and assumptions which have affected (and **risks** which may affect) supply of completions during the remaining manifesto period include:

1. **Ongoing labour and materials shortages and uncertainties**
2. **Constraints to the availability of suitable privately-owned dwellings for acquisitions.**
3. **That we achieve a start on site at all phase 2 and 2b schemes:** The previous and ongoing issues faced by these schemes. This impacts on the number of acquisitions we can buy in 22/23.
4. **That HE confirms their willingness to fund acquisitions in Leicester.**

#### Current Council House Building Activity:

#### Summary of sites and the current delivery timetable:

Scheme	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28
Phase 2- Saffron	38				
Phase 2 - Lanesborough		37			
Phase 2b	18				
Phase 3		53			
Southfields/Newry		30	25		
Stocking Farm		20	30		
FLEC		33			
Phase 4 – nonstrategic local plan sites			100*	100*	154*
Totals	56	173	155	100	100

\*estimated

Phase 2.

75 homes across 2 sites  
Saffron Velodrome, 38 homes

<b>Project Status</b>	Robert Woodhead Limited (RWL) are the appointed contractor. Site boundary across the athletics carpark to be marked out and agreed with Sports Leisure/EBS. Erection of site hoarding to commence week of 6 <sup>th</sup> June. Press release prepared and to be published week commencing 30 <sup>th</sup> May informing the public of the proposed development.	
<b>Delivery Timescales</b>	Site Possession: April 2022	Completion: March 2024
<b>Total Project Budget inclusive of professional fees and contributions</b>	£15,048,555	

Lanesborough Road, 37 homes

<b>Project Status</b>	All outstanding information requested by planning to be submitted by 21 <sup>st</sup> June including additional vehicle tracking survey and details for the SUDs. Monitoring of the badgers to commence early June.	
<b>Delivery Timescales</b>	Site Possession: November 2022	Completion August 2024
<b>Total Project Budget inclusive of professional fees and contributions</b>	Circa £16,000,000 including an inflation allowance.	

Phase 2b.

18 new homes across 4 sites  
Hydra Walk (2 homes), Rockingham Close (3 homes), Austin Rise (8 homes) Whitteney Drive (5 homes)

<b>Project Status</b>	Contract values have been negotiated with RWL based on the pricing structure agreed for Phase 1 which was deemed competitive and acceptable in terms of Value for Money. Waiver confirming this approach signed for Hydra Walk and legal preparing contract documents with the intention of entering into a contract with RWL. Remaining 3 sites are subject to a further review of costs and a Value for Money exercise.	
<b>Delivery Timescales</b>	Site Possession: August 2022	Completion: August 2023
<b>Total Project Budget inclusive of</b>	£7,800,000	

<b>professional fees and contributions</b>	
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Phase 3.  
 Estimated 53 homes across  
 Cranstone Crescent (3 homes), Tatlow Road (2 homes), Somers Road (3 homes). Tilling Road (18 homes), Sunbury Green (9 homes), Glazebrook Square (10 homes), Dysart Way (8 homes).

<b>Project Status</b>	Appointment of design team in progress, through Perfect Circle Framework
<b>Delivery Timescales</b>	Planning Determinations: Mid 2023
<b>Total Project Budget inclusive of professional fees and contributions</b>	tbc.

FLEC, estimated 33 homes

<b>Project Status</b>	One Public Estate Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) granted (£443,400). EBS instructed to undertake demolition and site preparation work to enable housing development. Appointment of design team for new build housing in progress through Perfect Circle Framework.
<b>Delivery Timescales</b>	Site Release: Before Mar 2024 (to meet OPE BLRF funding deadline)
<b>Total Project Budget inclusive of professional fees and contributions</b>	tbc.

Stocking Farm.  
 The objective at Stocking Farm is to create a new residential community at the heart of the Stocking Farm area which will provide [50] new council homes and facilities to serve the local community and will reflect the principles of exemplar development including public engagement, design quality, public realm, energy efficiency, access, legibility, community safety and cohesion, and environmental and economic sustainability

<b>Project Status</b>	Community shop opened on the 6 <sup>th</sup> . April Pre app submitted 31/01/22. Full planning application to be submitted by July 2022 Procurement of contractor summer 2022 Start on sites March 2023
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<b>Delivery Timescales</b>	Completion 2025
<b>Total Project Budget inclusive of professional fees and contributions</b>	tbc.

**Southfields and Newry site**

The redevelopment of the former Southfield and Newry school site to provide new council houses.

<b>Project Status</b>	Full planning application to be submitted by July 2022 Procurement of contractor summer 2022 Start on sites March 2023
<b>Delivery Timescales</b>	Completion 2025
<b>Total Project Budget inclusive of professional fees and contributions</b>	tbc.

**Phase 4.**

None strategic local plan sites: Number of sites and units to be confirmed.

The availability of sites has been one of the key constraints for the delivery of new build council houses. All sites currently being developed are predominantly challenging brownfield sites which has resulted in a slower and more costly delivery. However, the council does own a number of sites that are currently part of the local plan process and once completed, and the sites have a housing designation, will be able to be developed for new affordable housing.

Once the new local plan has been adopted phase 4 of the new build programme will start and the list of sites will be confirmed.

**Large scale acquisitions update:**

**Hospital Close**



- Internal and external clearance complete and ongoing, grounds maintenance in place
- Site security in place
- Site surveys complete, including asbestos, topographical, building, drainage, bat, arboricultural and structural
- Work on site stripping out phase 1 properties, looking at ways to advance the refurbishment programme. Phase 2/3 to follow

**Master Plan:**



## Programme:

- June 22 Strip out of phase 1 properties to start, phase 2/3 to follow
- March 23 Main refurbishment works to start on phase 1
- June 23 Main refurbishment works to start on phase 2/3
- Sept 23 Sectional completion.
- April 24 Final handover.

## The Leys



far left: view from south west (main entrance)  
left: view from east  
bottom left: view from west  
bottom: view from north east



- Surveys completed
- Strip out complete
- Site secure and security in place
- Tender process for refurbishment complete, direct award/negotiated.
- Tender award imminent
- Start on site to be confirmed

Generally:

There appears to be a strong case for us to build on what has been achieved as a direct result of this Manifesto target: the completions achieved are ground-breaking and, in spite of the many issues and risks (see above), the new ways of working, innovative approaches, etc have demonstrated that the bar can be raised on what can be achieved when there is a prioritised and corporate push for an outcome. Housing Officers therefore propose to prepare a further report for the Housing Board, setting out a proposed direction of travel for our future supply of affordable housing beyond March 2023.

#### **4. Details of Scrutiny**

#### **5. Financial, legal and other implications**

##### 5.1 Financial implications

##### 5.2 Legal implications

##### 5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Housing is the biggest single source of carbon emissions in the city, generating about a third of the total coming directly from within the city or at power stations from our use of electricity from the grid.

The Carbon Neutral Roadmap study recently undertaken for the council identified that installing energy efficiency measures and replacing gas boilers with heat pumps across the housing stock could save up to 24% of Leicester's emissions – more than any other measures. However, a major challenge in realising these savings is the limits to the council's control and influence over the city's housing stock as a whole.

The programme described in this report to increase the stock of social, Extra Care and supported living homes will increase our ability to reduce carbon from housing by bringing more of the stock under our control or influence.

In relation to the new-build council homes referred to in the report, the phase 2 sites onwards are already planned to be very low carbon. The council should look at other opportunities within the programme to reduce carbon, such as through any refurbishment of properties acquired, in the standards set for the construction of new Extra Care homes and through any influence we may have over Registered Providers.

Duncan Bell, Climate Change Manager, Sustainability Team. Ext. 37 2249

#### 5.4 Equalities 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, 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, sexual orientation.

The report provides a progress update on achieving the Manifesto target to achieve 1,500 more council, social and extra care homes.

Achieving these would impact positively on people from across all protected characteristics by helping to help meet evidenced housing needs in the city.

Housing need manifests itself in a variety of ways, such as increased levels of overcrowding, acute affordability issues, more young people living with their parents for longer periods, impaired labour mobility resulting in businesses finding it difficult to recruit and retain staff, and increased levels of homelessness.

The impact of the lack of decent, affordable and secure housing goes far beyond reducing the amount of money households have to live on; this also has a wider social impact. The cost of housing is directly related to housing quality and standards. For many, being unable to afford decent housing means having to live in poor quality homes unfit for habitation or overcrowded conditions to reduce costs, to the detriment of physical and mental health. There is increasingly strong evidence to show housing problems being linked to broader social issues such as family breakdown, low productivity, chronic ill-health, disrupted child development, poor educational outcomes, and problem debt.

It is important that new housing is well designed and can contribute to a good quality of life and meet the diverse needs of residents. Accessible and inclusive design will support the general aims of the PSED.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh Ext 37 4148

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

**6. Background information and other papers:**

**7. Summary of appendices:**

**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)?**

Yes/No

**9. Is this a “key decision”?**

Yes/No

**10. If a key decision please explain reason**





**City Mayor**

# Report to Housing Scrutiny Commission

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## **Repairs and Maintenance Service (including Gas and Voids functions) 2021-22 year-end performance update report**

Housing Scrutiny Commission: August 2022

Lead Member: Councillor Cutkelvin

Lead director: Chris Burgin

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### **Useful information**

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Kevin Doyle, Head of Service
- Author contact details: Ext 37 5415
- Report version number: - V2 - Final

## 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the performance of the Division's Repairs and Maintenance service, which includes the Voids and Gas functions, over the last financial year, 2021-22.
- 1.2 The report will also provide the Commission with an update about the implementation of service improvements that will drive improved performance into the future.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The repairs, gas and void functions operate across the City, providing services to 19,719 Leicester City Council owned homes and 1,597 Leasehold properties.
- 2.2 The current primary channel of access to the repairs and gas services remains the Customer Service Centre (CSC) Tenants Advice and Repairs Line (TARS) 0116 4541007 (option 1), Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. We also provide an emergency repairs service outside of normal working hours, from 4pm Monday to Thursday, and 3.30pm Friday and all weekend, via the Emergency Repairs Line 0116 2549439.
- 2.3 During 2021-22, the CSC received a total of 107,708 calls on the TARS line. This compares with 91,292 calls for the previous year. The Emergency Repairs Line received 15,960 calls, which compares to 14,382 for the previous year. Increases in both call volumes during 2021-22 are in line with a return to business-as-usual demand levels demonstrated further in this report.
- 2.4 Tenants can also register for an on-line account enabling them to book repairs and request progress updates on outstanding jobs via the Housing On-Line (HOL) portal 24 hours a day.
- 2.5 As at the end of March 2022, there were 5,343 tenants registered with HOL and a total of 5,063 repairs reported by tenants using the on-line portal. These figures continue to rise, and we currently have 5,864 tenants registered and the number of repairs reported via the on-line portal has increased to 6,288. More information relating to the work we are doing to increase our on-line offer is included later in this report.
- 2.6 During 2021-22, we received 9,206 tenant satisfaction forms returned, with 92% reporting satisfaction with the service.
- 2.7 As we continued to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw workloads returning to the pre-pandemic levels of **2019-20**.
  - 88,265 total repairs **reported** during 2021-22, compared to 88,961 in 2019-20.
  - 85,703 total repairs **completed** during 2021-22, compared to 88,094 in 2019-20.
  - 842 Void properties **re-let** during 2021-22, compared to 984 in 2019-20.
- 2.8 The average cost of a repair increased during 2021-22 to £101.32.
- 2.9 The backlog of outstanding day to day repair work, excluding gas repairs, **currently** sits at 8,144 jobs. This compares to 6,285 jobs that were outstanding in March 2020 (prior to the

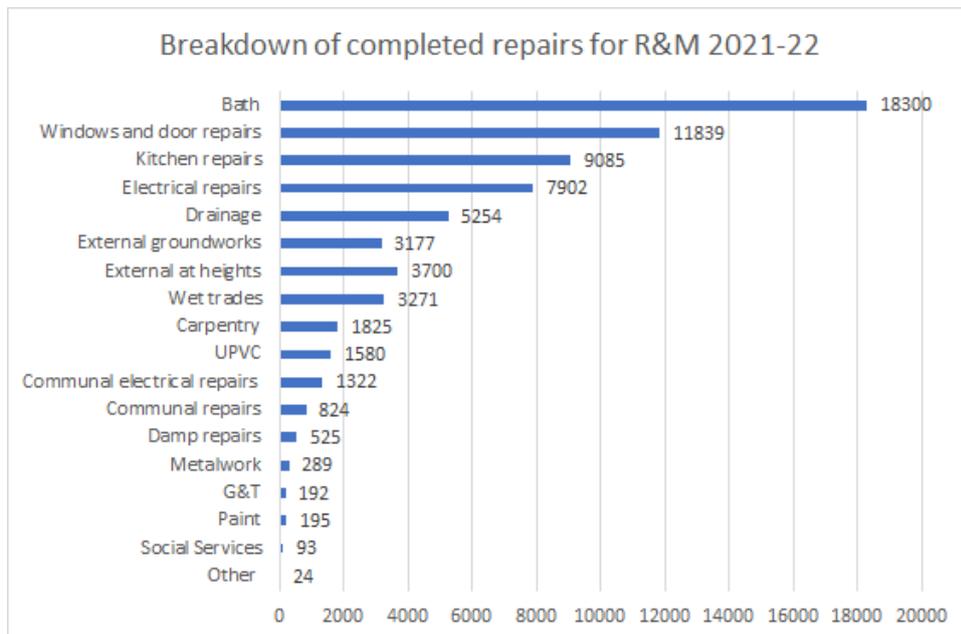
pandemic). The difference of 1,859 jobs represents just over 1 week of average repair demand, with an average of 1,400 new repairs being raised each week.

- 2.10 During 2021-22 we experienced significant resourcing issues, and these have continued into 2022-23 due to the high demand for craft skills in the external labour market, driven by the post-pandemic recovery. This has led to difficulties in attracting and retaining craft staff.
- 2.11 As at the year-end 2021-22, we had 39.2 FTE craft vacancies, representing over 13% of our full craft establishment.
- 2.12 According to the Office for National Statistics, the average vacancy rate in the UK at the end of 2021 was 3.9%, which is the highest on record with all industries increasing on the quarter.
- 2.13 With our vacancy rate currently running at over three times the UK average rate, efforts to reduce the backlog of repairs and Void properties continues to be a real challenge.

### 3. Repairs and Maintenance (R&M)

3.1 During 2021-22 we completed 69,397 repairs. This represents a 37% increase when compared to 2020-21, when, for much of the year, we were only providing an emergency repairs service. This years figure is broadly in line with the pre-pandemic year of 2019-20, when we completed 69,735 repairs.

3.2 A breakdown of the type of repairs completed is provided below.



### 3.3 Key performance indicators for R&M

Indicator	Direction of travel (DOT)	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Percentage of repairs completed at first visit (excludes external works)	Higher is better. Target is 90%.	77.0%	82.6%	78%
Number of repairs which are out of category (excludes Gas and Voids)	Lower is better. Target is 300.	*721	*912	*2159
Percentage of repairs completed within target time	Higher is better. Target is 92%	82.6%	96.0%	87%
Percentage of repairs reported where a complaint has been received	Lower is better. Target is <0.5%	0.1%	0.01%	0.10%

\*Snapshot at year-end.

## 4. Gas & Heating Services

- 4.1 During 2021-22 we completed 16,858 gas and communal heating repairs. This compares to 15,628 for 2020-21, when for much of the year, we were providing an emergency service only. However, when compared to the pre-pandemic year of 2019-20, this years figure shows a 7.4% reduction in completed repairs.
- 4.2 During 2021-22 we completed 20,175 Annual Service Visits (ASV's).
- 4.3 Key performance indicators for Gas & Heating Services

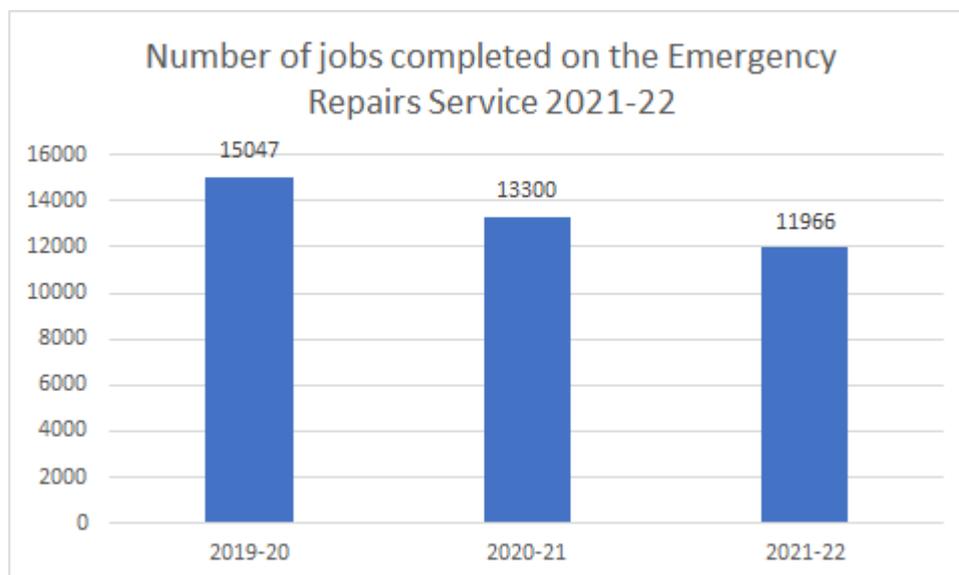
Indicator	DoT	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Annual Service Visit compliance percentage	Higher is better. Target is 100%	99.99%	99.17%	99.94%
Percentage of gas repairs completed at first visit	Higher is better. Target is 90%.	74.8%	79.8%	70%
Number of gas repairs which are out of category (snap	Lower is better. Target is 0.	*843	*0	*590
Percentage of repairs completed within target time	Higher is better. Target is 92%	91.5%	98.6%	91%

\*Snapshot at year-end.

## 5. Emergency Repairs Service (ERS)

During 2021-22 we completed 11,966 emergency repairs in our tenants homes.

The number of emergency repairs we carry out continues to fall as we improve the efficiency of the service. The total number of jobs completed in 2021-22 represented a 10% reduction when compared to 2020-21, and a 20% reduction when compared to 2019-20.



**5.1** Improvements to the service include better utilisation of ‘in-day’ staff working flexibly beyond normal working hours to clear up outstanding ‘in-day’ workloads, diverting the emergency repairs line to our out-sourced call handling service from 4.00pm, and applying more robust criteria to emergency repair requests to ensure that tenants in real need of an emergency response get the priority attention they deserve.

## 6. Voids

6.1 During 2021-22, we completed and re-let 842 Voids properties. This compares with 760 for 2020-21.

6.2 The number of Voids held at the end of 2021-22 was 481. We are currently holding 410 Voids which represents a 15% decrease since that time.

6.3 Key performance indicators for Voids

Indicator	DoT	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Average re-let times in days (all Voids)	Lower is better.	123.3	137.8	138.1
Rent loss	Lower is better.	£835,799.27	£1,115,966.74	£1,676,969.00
Voids completed and let	Higher is better.	959	760	842

## 7. Improvement actions underway in 2022-23 to drive improved performance

7.1 During the year we established a ‘RATS taskforce’ to focus resources in the St Mathews area of the City to deal with the high numbers of infestations being reported in tenant’s homes.

7.2 The taskforce brings together cross-service resources to work together in a more collaborative way to reduce the incidents of reported infestations.

7.3 During the year, repairs staff attended newly established Housing Surgeries, which enabled residents to meet with Repairs and other Housing Division staff to discuss and report a range of Housing related issues with Managers and Team Leaders across the Service.

#### 7.4 Repairs On-Line

We are currently implementing a 'hard-stop' for routine repairs reporting over the phone, with appropriate support being put in place for those that are digitally excluded. Our next area for development will be to allow leaseholders to raise repairs on Housing Online, followed by the implementation of the reporting of communal repairs, both of which we hope to have completed by April 2023. Both leaseholders and communal repairs can currently be reported via an online 'E' Form, but we are aiming to bring this into the single Housing Online platform to improve the customer experience.

#### 7.5 Introduction of National Federation Schedule of Rates (SOR's)

We have recently purchased the National Federation of Rates, better known as a schedule of rates (SOR's), which are widely used by other local authorities and housing associations and allow the accurate standardised measurement of labour time associated with the various tasks within jobs. This will enable managers to plan work more effectively, maximising staff resources and availability, and providing accurate performance management data for individual staff. This data can then be used to drive productivity and improve overall efficiency.

Work is being planned in to integrate SOR's into our planning system, Total Mobile, after which we will use a phased approach to implementation, starting with the Gas and Heating Service section, then moving to our R&M and Voids functions. We aim to have this embedded by the end of the year.

#### 7.6 Voids Service Analysis

Due to the on-going performance issues within the Voids and Property Lettings function, we initiated a service analysis in June 2021. This service analysis has now been concluded and its findings and recommendations are now being considered and being developed into a Voids Improvement Plan to deliver improved performance over the coming years.

#### 7.7 Stores Managed Service

We are currently undertaking a procurement exercise for the provision of the managed stores service and are hoping to award the contract in the Autumn of 2022. A mobilisation period will follow with the aim of commencing the service fully in the early summer of 2023.

Consultation with staff transferred to the new service provider will commence during the contract mobilisation period when we know who the new provider of the service will be.

#### 7.8 Emergency Repairs Service (ERS)

Further improvements are being looked at currently to improve the performance of the ERS, including offering more flexible working hours for newly recruited staff, utilising 'remote assistance' technology where appropriate to triage and prioritise repairs more effectively, and developing new roles within our Division that can deliver these improved services.

7.9 We have recently created a new role of Housing Digital Assistance Officer, and we are currently recruiting into this role.

7.10 Recruitment of craft staff

The employment market, particularly in the building trade, continues to be a very challenging environment. During 2021-22, our craft apprenticeship programme saw 2 apprentices join our craft workforce on permanent contracts. This year, a further 10 apprentices are completing their training, with 4 having already secured a permanent position with us and a further 6 yet to complete. We hope they will also decide to continue their careers with us.

However, whilst these apprentices are a welcome addition to our team, we continue to struggle to recruit sufficient numbers of qualified craft staff from the external employment market and the high levels of craft vacancies continue to impact significantly on our ability to deliver quality services. Managers have overseen a continuous programme of recruitment throughout the year, with disappointing results due to the competitive nature of the current labour market and our inability to offer the same levels of salary that are being offered by the private sector who are competing for the same labour. This is being compounded by existing employees being attracted away from our business to more attractive posts elsewhere. We are working closely with our colleagues in HR to address these issues in several ways. These include the development of a business case for a market supplement for some craft posts to make our vacancies more attractive to potential candidates, attending recruitment fairs to promote our posts at a local level, and working with Job Centre Plus to promote our opportunities more effectively. We are also developing a fast-track recruitment process to reduce the time it takes to get new staff 'on-board' once they have been successful in securing a position with us.

7.11 Enhanced Letting Standard

In response to Members requests for more support to vulnerable tenants when securing a tenancy in one of our properties, we have developed an 'enhanced letting standard' for implementation as a trial throughout 2022-23. Eligible new tenants coming through the 'leaving care' and 'homeless' pathways into our properties will benefit from the enhanced letting standard, which provides a fully decorated (painted) property and will help to support those people on their journey towards independent living. It is also hoped that this will encourage new tenants to take a personal pride in their new home, and, as a result, take better care of it.

Images of recently acquired Void allocated to a person leaving care before refurbishment.



Image of the same property after an 'enhanced letting standard' refurbishment.



Note – New kitchen not part of 'enhanced letting standard'. Fitted as part of the capital investment programme.

**Kevin Doyle – Head of Service**

**Sam Taylor – Head of Service**

**Repairs & Maintenance Service**

**Leicester City Council**

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# **Disabled Adaptations, HRA & Disabled Facility Grants. Housing Scrutiny Commission August 2022**

# Disabled Adaptations – council tenants

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All adaptations are recommended by Adult Social Care.

All adaptations up to £1,000 in value are classed as **g**minors and completed straight away.

Major adaptations follow the agreed joint working protocol with ASC and are allocated priority points and completed in order of need.

All are directly funded and are not means tested

Type of adaptation	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Rails/handrails	437	358	90	340
Ramps	42	24	12	29
General layout alterations	0	7	6	0
Level showers	43	74	31	75
Wash/dry toilets	7	7	5	4
Stairlifts	39	38	56	48
Step lifts	0	7	3	3
Through floor lift	15	16	11	14
Extensions	1	4	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>516</b>

# What do we spend each year

	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Budget	£1.2m	£900k	£1.2m(inc £300k for adapt to let scheme	£1.2m(inc £300k for adapt to let scheme)
Actual spend	£901k	£811k	£1.1m	£tbc

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# What is Adapt to Let

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- Identifying void properties that can be adapted.
- Fully adapting partially adapted properties.
- Matching applicants with potentially suitable properties and adapting them for the new tenants.
- Historically the numbers have circa 5 per year but so far in 22/23 we have already completed 5.





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# Disabled Facility Grants (DFG's)

- The process is similar to that followed as HRA adaptations, but the applicants are homeowners or private tenants.
- Minor adaptations are carried out straight away by ASC
- Major adaptations follow the same joint working protocol and are actioned in order of need, however there are some differences due to the addition of the means test.



# Why do we have to do it?

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- A Disability Facilities Grant (DFG) is a mandatory requirement and forms part of the better care fund, this is a pooled fund which includes housing services and health and social care.
- 67 • The DFG grant is administered by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996
- The DFG grant is means tested, the means test identifies if the service user has to pay a contribution towards the adaptation if they are not on passported benefits i.e. Council tax support/reduction

# What do we have to do ?

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- Provide access to the front and rear of homes by providing:
  - Ramps front and rear
  - step lifts front and rear
  - Access to rear gardens
- Carry out adaptations to provide access into and around a service users home which meets their assessed needs by providing:
  - Level access showers
  - Stair lifts
  - Through floor lifts
  - Door widening



# Funding for DFG's

Year	Government grant	Council contribution	Total budget
20/21	1,539	461	2,000
21/22	1,538	1,461	3,000
22/23	2,080	20	2,100

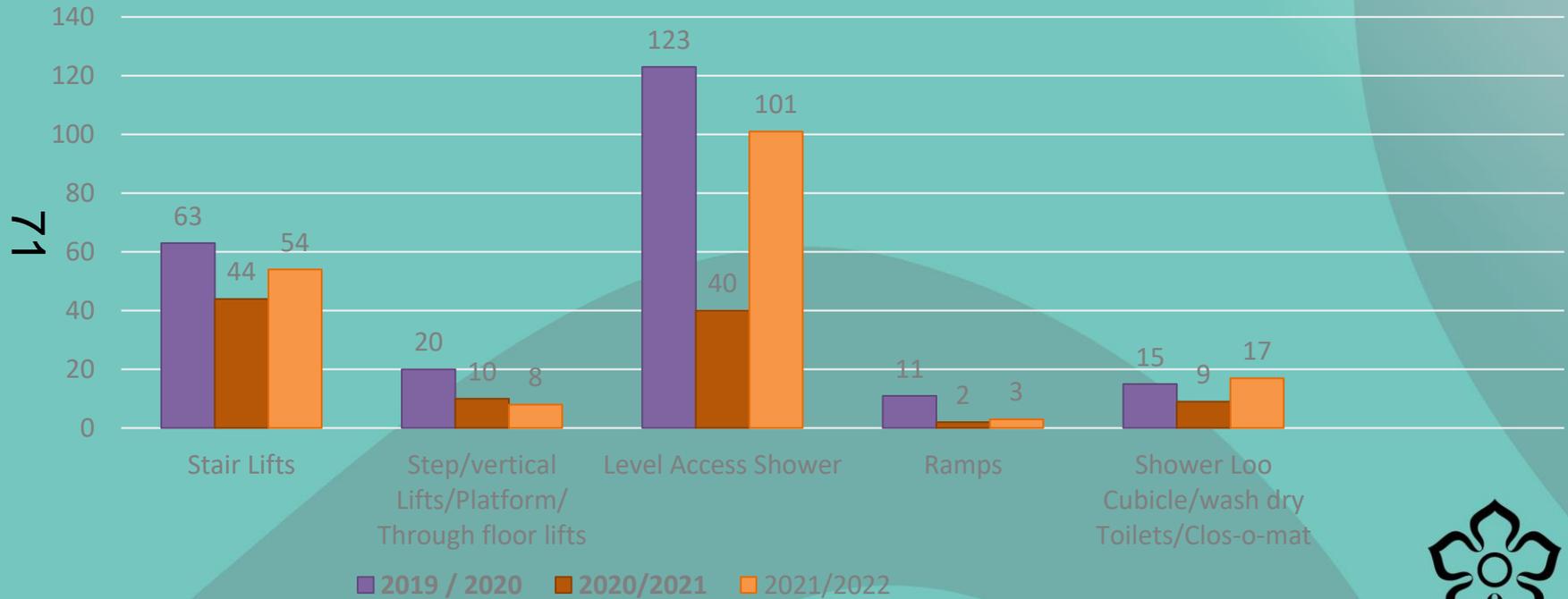
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# DFG Housing Performance

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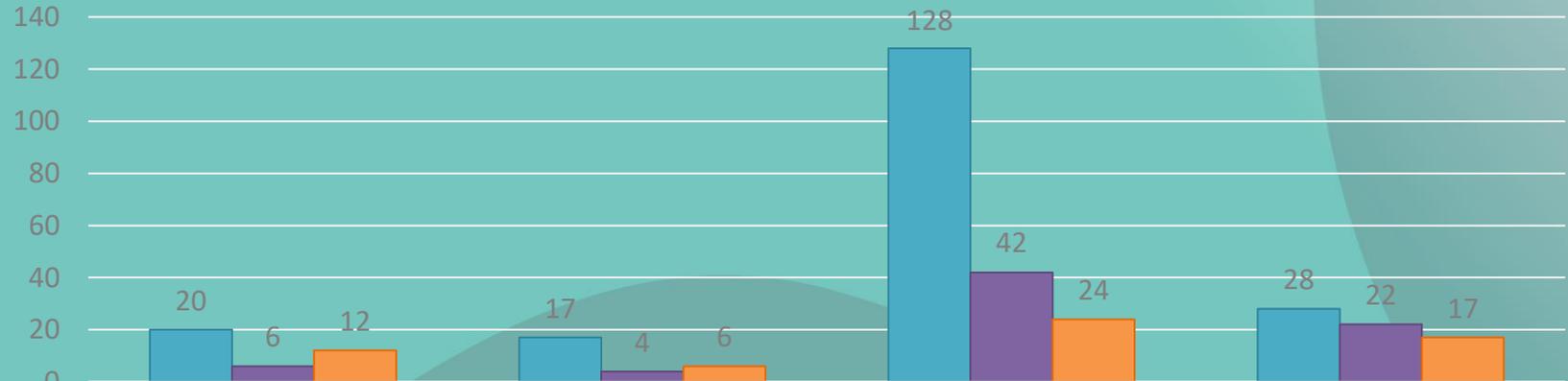
DFG	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Applications	532	339	294
Approved	248 - 46%	139- 41%	235- 80%
Completed	190	86	149
Average cost	£11,321	£7,716	£8,964
Overall Spend	2.151m	1.066m	1.922m
In Progress	63	105	142

# DFG Housing - Types of Adaptations (Approved works) 2019/2020, 2020/2021 & 2021/22



# Cancellation categories for DFG's

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	No response from service user	Contribution exceeds costs following Means Test	Applicant refused Scheme	Applicant Deceased
2019 - 20	20	17	128	28
2020 - 21	6	4	42	22
2021-22	12	6	24	17

# Case Management

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- End of Life` (EOL) Cases and Children cases prioritised.
- Equipment only Cases (Lifts etc. to access services) issued straightaway.
- External works – Ramps etc. issued straightaway.
- All other cases completed in priority order, based on points awarded by the OT.
- Extensions take longer because we have to get planning permission etc.

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City Council

# Case study



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# A joint approach to Adaptations

- A single point for lift breakdowns and installations – all tenures
- A single point for lift invoices and payment processing – all tenures
- A standard specification for all adaptations & all tenures
- Co location with O/T's makes faster response to issues.
- Opportunities for streamlining process.
- We are developing and adaptation strategy which will go live in early 2023.



HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23			
MEETING DATE	MEETING ITEMS	LEAD OFFICER	ACTION AGREED
6 <sup>th</sup> June 2022	Housing Crisis (working group update)	Cllr Westley / Chris Burgin	Rescheduled
	Rent arrears report – Year-end report	Charlotte McGraw	
	Who gets Social Housing	Caroline Carpendale / Justin Haywood	
	Homelessness Strategy Update	Caroline Carpendale / Justin Haywood	
	Executive Response to the scrutiny review into “Examining the role and effectiveness of the proposal to establish a central housing Anti-Social Behaviour Team”.	Cllr Cutkelvin/Chris Burgin	
	Discretionary licensing of private sector rented housing (new)	Cllr Cutkelvin /Tony Cawthorne	
1 August 2022	Rent arrears report – Year-end report	Charlotte McGraw	
	Housing manifesto Delivery update	Chris Burgin	
	Update on House Building	Simon Nicholls	
	Repairs, Gas & Voids performance Report	Kevin Doyle	
	Disabled Facilities Grant / Housing Adaptation	Simon Nicholls	

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<p><b>19 September</b></p>	<p>Progress report for Goscote House &amp; Sprinklers update</p> <p>Retrofitting &amp; Climate Emergency update</p> <p>Who gets Social Housing</p> <p>Empty Homes update</p> <p>PRS Strategy update</p> <p>'Housing Crisis in Leicester' review draft final report?</p>	<p>Simon Nicholls</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p> <p>Caroline Carpendale/Justin Haywood</p> <p>Joanne Russell</p> <p>Justin Haywood / Daxa Pancholi</p> <p>Jerry Connolly</p>	
<p><b>7 November</b></p>	<p>Channel Shift update</p> <p>Income Collection Performance update</p> <p>Housing Capital Programme &amp; Housing Delivery update</p> <p>Homelessness Strategy Update</p> <p>District Service Priorities &amp; performance including ASB,</p>	<p>Charlotte McGraw</p> <p>Charlotte McGraw</p> <p>Simon Nicholls</p> <p>Caroline Carpendale/Justin Haywood</p> <p>Gurjit Minhas</p>	
<p><b>9 January</b></p>	<p>Tenancy Support</p> <p>HRA Budget</p>	<p>Gurjit Minhas</p> <p>Chris Burgin</p>	

<p><b>27 February</b></p>	<p>Environmental Budget &amp; Public Realm Project update</p> <p>Repairs, Gas and Voids performance and update report</p> <p>Who gets Social Housing</p> <p>Overcrowding Strategy update</p>	<p>Gurjit Minhas</p> <p>Kevin Doyle</p> <p>Caroline Carpendale / Justin Haywood</p> <p>Caroline Carpendale / Justin Haywood</p>	
<p><b>To be allocated</b></p>	<p>- <b>Refugee Resettlement Programme - Update</b></p>	<p><b>Chris Burgin</b></p>	

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