



Leicester
City Council

MEETING OF THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

DATE: MONDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2016

TIME: 6:15 pm

PLACE: Meeting Room G.02, Ground Floor, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

Members of the Scrutiny Commission

Councillor Newcombe (Chair)
Councillor Alfonso (Vice Chair)

Councillors Aqbany, Byrne, Cank, Dawood and Joshi
1 Un-allocated Non-Group Place

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:

Angie Smith (Democratic Support Officer):

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

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Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact Angie Smith, **Democratic Support on (0116) 454 6354** or email Angie.Smith@leicester.gov.uk or call in at City Hall, 115 Charles Street.

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PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

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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 22 August 2016 are attached, and Members are asked to confirm them as a correct record.

4. PETITIONS

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

5. 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.

6. INTRODUCTION OF HOUSING DIVISION STRUCTURES

Appendix B

The Director of Housing submits a report to the Housing Scrutiny Commission for noting. The report provides an overview of the changes that have taken place within the Housing Division as part of the Housing Transformation Programme, both to the organisational structure and the changes to service delivery.

7. HOUSING SOLUTION REPLACEMENT - NORTHGATE NEXT PHASE PROJECT [Appendix C](#)

The Director of Housing submits a report to the Housing Scrutiny Commission for noting. The report provides an overview and update of the next phase of the Housing Solution Replacement (HSR) Programme.

8. RENT ARREARS PROGRESS REPORT - APRIL 2016 TO JUNE 2016 [Appendix D](#)

The Director of Housing submits a quarterly rent arrears progress report to the Housing Scrutiny Commission for the period April 2016 to June 2016, as requested. Members are asked to note the report.

9. REVIEW OF THE HOUSING REGISTER / HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY [Appendix E](#)

The Director of Housing and the Assistant Mayor for Housing submit a report which seeks the comments of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the proposals to carry out a review of the Housing Register and the Allocations Policy.

10. STAR SERVICES - UPDATE [Appendix F](#)

The Director of Housing submits a report to the Housing Scrutiny Commission which provides an update and overview of the STAR service (Supporting Tenants and Residents) that is currently provided to tenants within Leicester. Members are asked to note the content of the report.

11. WORK PROGRAMME [Appendix G](#)

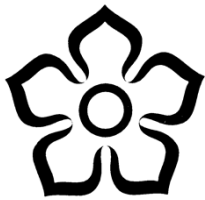
The work programme is attached. The Commission is asked to comment and/or amend as it considers necessary.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members are asked to note the following dates of meetings:

15th November 2016, 6.15pm – Re-scheduled meeting
28th November 2016, 6.15pm – Meeting Cancelled
19th December 2016, 5.30pm – Special Meeting

13. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: MONDAY, 22 AUGUST 2016 at 6:15 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Newcombe (Chair)
Councillor Alfonso (Vice Chair)

Councillor Aqbany
Councillor Byrne

Councillor Cank
Councillor Dawood

Councillor Joshi

In Attendance:

Councillor Connelly – Assistant City Mayor, Housing

* * * * *

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from Chris Burgin, Director of Housing.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they might have in the business to be discussed.

Councillor Byrne declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the general business of the meeting in that family members were council tenants, and that she also was a council tenant.

Councillor Cank declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the general business of the meeting in that family members were council tenants.

Councillor Newcombe declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the general business of the meeting in that he was listed on the Council's Housing Register, and family members were council tenants.

Councillor Aqbany declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the general business of the meeting in that family members were council tenants.

Councillor Joshi declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the general business of the meeting in that family members were council tenants.

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the interests were not considered so significant that they were likely to prejudice the Councillors' judgement of the public interest. Councillors were not therefore required to withdraw from the meeting during consideration and discussion of the agenda items.

21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minute Item 12, Empty Homes 2016, Page 6 Para. 4 – An amendment to read '...each of which had only *one* occupant.'

AGREED:

that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Commission held 4 July 2016, subject to the amendment noted above, be confirmed as a correct record.

The Chair asked the meeting to note four areas in the minutes, where information which had been asked to be brought back to the meeting was still awaited:

Minute Item 12, Empty Homes, Page 6, Para. 1 – The Chair questioned how other Local Authorities dealt with empty homes and whether there was any benchmarking information to compare Leicester with other areas. The Head of Service to provide the information to the Commission.

Minute Item 12, Page 6 Para. 4 – The Chair had asked previously for officers to send to Members of the Commission figures for under-occupied properties for each area of the city, though not necessarily in a report.

Minute Item 13, Homelessness, Street Begging and Rough Sleeping, Page 7, Para. 3 – The Chair questioned the number of times that all emergency beds had been in use. The Head of Service to supply information for the past six months.

Minute Item 13, Page 8, Action Note – Details were still awaited on the costs of repatriation of the homeless.

22. PETITIONS

In accordance with the Council procedures, it was reported that no petitions had been received by the Monitoring Officer.

23. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS OR STATEMENTS OF CASE

In accordance with the Council procedures, it was reported that no questions, representations or statements of case had been received by the Monitoring Officer.

24. MONITORING THE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The Director of Housing submitted a report to the Housing Scrutiny Commission for comment on the first 24 months since the Homelessness Strategy was fully implemented. Caroline Carpendale, Head of Service, summarised the report on a service which dealt with complex problems and was seeing an increase in demand.

Members heard there was an emphasis of moving from crisis management. Successful prevention work and support had increased in line with demand. The Commission noted that one reason for homelessness was the loss of assured shorthold tenancies and more evictions in the private sector, coupled with less private accommodation and a reduced number of council properties available for let due to Right to Buy sales. It was also noted that the numbers of people on the housing register continued to increase, with most applicants having little or no prospect of receiving accommodation as the housing list was based on housing need and was not a waiting list.

It was noted that Housing First continued to focus on helping people into permanent housing accommodation who would otherwise have been moved into crisis temporary accommodation. The objectives of the homeless strategy included the 'No Second Night Out' initiative for rough sleepers.

Members heard that Government legislation and welfare reform would present a range of challenges. There continued to be a need for hostel bed spaces, and the focus would be on meeting the needs of those who required accommodation support, and to move those that did not need this type of support into housing accommodation.

The service would continue to monitor and review the strategy, including eligibility criteria for those wanting to access temporary accommodation. It was also recommended to review the Housing Register by considering a modification to bandings, and eligibility of those on the register. Stakeholders would be consulted on the proposed restructuring of the housing register.

The Assistant Mayor for Housing said homelessness was an emotive and sensitive issue but that the Homelessness Strategy was successful and it was the right time to review it, the results of which would shape and influence final decisions by the authority.

A Member made reference to a constituent, and questioned why, if a single person in a three-bedroom house was unsuccessful at bidding, they would be suspended and prevented from bidding for any more properties for 12 months, thus preventing another family from moving into the property. The Head of Service said each case was looked at on an individual basis. Each candidate was given three choices (offers), and if they were not taken, these were considered to be refusals. The Chair requested the Head of Service look at ways in which more offers could be made without disqualification from making new applications for another year.

Members referred to the local housing allowance rates that had been frozen since 2014, and identified the increase in private sector rents as an area of

concern. They also referred to private sector landlords refusing to house those in receipt of housing benefit, which reduced the stock of available housing. The Head of Service said the allowances were set nationally. She added that the service was awaiting clarification on whether supported accommodation would be subject to the Local Housing Allowance Cap which would be applied in April 2017. If supported housing rents were affected, the service would have to look at whether continuation of temporary accommodation schemes was viable. The Chair suggested the Housing Scrutiny Commission write jointly with the Assistant Mayor for Housing to the government to press for speedy request for clarification.

In response to a question, the Head of Service confirmed there would be a review of the Housing Register, as the housing environment had changed over the past 10 years, and managing customer expectations was a priority. It was an administrative burden managing 11,000 applications with very limited resources. It was also known that people on the lower bands were unlikely to receive any offers of housing, and would need to seek alternative housing. In May 2014 the service stopped accepting applications from individuals who were adequately housed, but existing applicants were not removed from the list. The Chair requested that any recommendations following the review of the Housing Register be brought before the Commission at a future meeting.

Members said they had assisted applicants with the bidding process, but it had been unclear which level of priority (banding) had applied to them. The Head of Service said the new system (Northgate) should be showing banding information, and she would investigate why it wasn't. The Head of Service would also provide information on the different levels of priority.

It was noted that between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016, 7,298 of calls relating to homelessness and urgent advice enquiries had been transferred to the Emergency On-Call Team in Housing Options. The Head of Service informed the Commission that it was not intended to channel shift the service, and the emergency duty team would remain accessible and in place, as some callers required urgent, specialist advice on the day. The service would, however, channel shift some routine services, for example, changes to applications, and there was a vulnerable inclusion strategy for people who couldn't self-serve.

The Head of Service informed the meeting that STAR provided essential support to vulnerable tenants, for example, providing emotional support for those going to court. On a quarterly basis, information provided by STAR on all outcomes of prevention work was reported to government.

In response to a question, the meeting was informed the service was looking to reduce the cycle of homelessness, for example, repeat stays in hostels, and were looking at providing a support plan to break the cycle, by looking at other solutions, including independent living and supported living schemes. There were also robust procedures in place to manage homeless young people of 16-17yrs, with joint assessments between Housing and Children's Services to deal with safeguarding concerns. A plan would be developed for care leavers prior

to them reaching 18 years. Some care leavers would move on to supported living, and some on to independent living. The YMCA was also used as a specialist young person accommodation provider, with wrap around services to support young people.

Members referred to the proposed reduction of 60 units of internal provision of supported housing for single people, and cost of independent accommodation and floating support services. The Head of Service stated it was a proposal which would mitigate some of the risks of the potential capping of rents. Information was currently being worked upon as part of the proposal, and would be provided to the Commission when available.

Attention was drawn to Appendix 9 of the report. As part of the Housing Spending Review Phase 3, (proposals for a review of the eligibility criteria and a reduction in accommodation based support), two options to achieve savings had been outlined in the report. The Assistant Mayor for Housing informed the Commission the Executive had taken the advice of officers and were not considering Option 1, and Option 2 would go out to consultation. He added the work proposed would be brought back to the Housing Scrutiny Commission prior to any decision on the final proposal being considered by the Executive.

A Member questioned how the service could reduce the total spend on Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation. The Head of Service responded that for the financial year 2016/17 only £4,000 had been spent as B&B accommodation was used as a last resort, and its use could only be prevented if people contacted the service early.

The Chair asked for ongoing updates on the strategy.

AGREED:

that:

1. The report be noted;
2. The Housing Scrutiny Commission write jointly with the Assistant Mayor for Housing to the government to press for speedy request for clarification;
3. The Head of Service to bring any recommendations following the review of the Housing Register before the Commission at a future meeting.
4. The Head of Service to investigate the new system Northgate and the provision of banding information to ensure it was visible to applicants;
5. The Head of Service to provide information on the different levels of priority (banding).
6. The Head of Service to look at ways in which more offers could be made without disqualification from making new applications for another year.
7. The Head of Service to provide information to the Commission when available on the costs of independent accommodation and floating support services to individuals as part of the reduction of 60 units of supported housing.

8. The Head of Service to provide an update to the Scrutiny Commission at a future meeting, following consultation on proposals for a review of the eligibility criteria and a reduction in accommodation based support.

25. TOWER BLOCK REFURBISHMENT UPDATE

The Director of Housing submitted a report which updated Members on the St Peters tower block refurbishments. Simon Nicholls, Head of Service, informed Members the scheme was envisaged to be completed in 2017/18. Operational lessons had been learned when working around tenants in Framland House. Further block refurbishments would see the removal of all tenants before work started.

The Commission was asked to note that work on Gordon House had been approached differently and an external lift had been provided for contractors. This had enabled external work to commence prior to moving out the tenants. Work had also started on Maxfield House, with the replacement of the lift and fire doors. Refurbishment would be completed when Gordon House was finished. Due dates for completion were January 2017 for Gordon House, with Maxfield House expected December 2017.

Members were informed that refurbishment of the tower blocks would be completed within budget, and the Council would not incur penalties for slippage of the programme of works, although the cost of council tax for vacant properties was incurred, only the first calendar month is free. Void figures would be reported separately for St Peters blocks, and information would be brought to the next meeting of the Commission. Members noted that Goscote House, which had 132 flats of differing size, had not been included in the scheme of redevelopment as it was constructed differently to the other blocks. A consultant's report had raised issues that required further investigation, and some testing work was underway. The consultants had been given a brief, which included valuation of Goscote House, and whether it could be reconfigured to reduce the number of bedsits and increase two-bedroom accommodation. A separate report would be prepared for the Assistant Mayor for Housing. In response to a request from the Chair, the report would also be brought to the Housing Scrutiny Commission for consideration. Members would also visit Gordon House once refurbishment was complete.

Concern was expressed regarding the lift at Framland House which had recently been out of use for a few days. The Head of Service reported a maintenance contract of the lifts in the towers had been agreed with the lift company LES, a local engineering firm who had agreed a 20 minutes response time.

A Member questioned why the scheme had taken so long. Members heard it had been underestimated how long it would take to move people out of the Framland House, as the tenants had varying needs, for example, disability requirements and had been moved into more suitable accommodation. It was also noted that through natural wastage there would be vacancies of

approximately 65 high-demand properties on St Peters.

AGREED:

that

1. The report be noted;
2. Information on voids for St Peters blocks be brought the next meeting of the Commission;
3. Following consultant investigations of Goscote House, the separate report prepared for the Assistant Mayor be brought to the Housing Scrutiny Commission for information.
4. Once refurbishment was complete, the Head of Service to arrange a site visit to Gordon House for Commission Members.

26. VOIDS TASK GROUP

The Scrutiny Policy Officer delivered to the Commission a verbal update on the work of the Voids Task Group.

Members were informed two meetings had been held as follows:

- 7th July 2016 – the task group were briefed on the minimum standard, now rebranded as the letting standard, and related to what tenants could expect in accommodation. It in turn required an understanding of the standards by the various people involved for example, contractors, tenants, estate management officers. Each group of people had different ideas on what work had to be done.

The new lettings standard proposals (150 items) for example, decoration, plumbing, tiling, groundwork, had been brought together under a new code and would go out to consultation with the Tenants Forum and staff, prior to launching.

Members were informed the Housing Transformation Review and Voids Improvement Project (VID) would run at the same time. Work as part of the VID would be a slower feed in as the new staff structure was embedded. The Northgate IT system and increased use of mobile technology would provide accessible information on the letting standard.

- 14th July 2016 – the task group looked in detail at work undertaken on four specific void properties. The department analysed what was done, when and how long work had taken to complete. The voids were between 28 and 35 days. Some reporting issues were found that highlighted other general issues, for example, the ordering of components, lack of preparation in a couple of cases, significant delay in the offer and subsequent refusal of a tenancy. It was noted that lettings stated from Monday, therefore, a property would be empty for a week if work was completed on a Tuesday. The case studies didn't fully give a full understanding of the issues raised, and the Head of Service would study the cases in more detail.

The Head of Service informed the Commission the four cases had been picked at random, and the process had been analysed at each stage, for example, asbestos sampling, how properties were advertised, and so on. It was noted there were various stages of the process that could delay the rental of a property. He added that more complicated and challenging properties that require capital investment had been chosen to see how long it would take to turn a property round.

Chair stated notification of another task group meeting would be sent out, and recommendations would be drawn from that meeting and brought to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.

AGREED:

that:

1. The update be noted;
2. Recommendations from the task group be brought to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.

27. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair drew attention to the Housing Scrutiny Commission Work Programme for noting, but informed Members that it might change as issues arose.

AGREED:

that the Housing Scrutiny Commission Work Programme be noted.

28. ANY URGENT BUSINESS

No other items had been brought to the attention of the Chair.

29. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.53pm

Housing Scrutiny Committee

10th October 2016

Introduction of Housing Division Structures

Lead Officer: Charlotte McGraw

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Charlotte McGraw
- Author contact details: 0116 454 5167
- Report version number: 0.1

1. Purpose of report

This report provides an overview of the changes that have taken place within the Housing Division as part of the Housing Transformation Programme, both to the organisational structure and the changes to service delivery.

2. Briefing

2.1 Background

In September 2014 the Executive were briefed on outline plans for the Housing Division to achieve £10m in savings to contribute towards the 1% rent reduction across the division. A number of improvement projects were already in place Responsive Repairs and Voids and further projects in Tenancy Management, Gas and Planned Repairs followed. To ensure efficiency and best use of resource the projects were bought together under the umbrella of the Housing Transformation Programme (HTP.)

2.2 Drivers for change

In addition to the Government's 1% rent reduction policy, the other main driver for change was the need for improvement within certain areas of housing. The Housing Scrutiny Commission have received specific reports on the improvement projects previously. In summary, the Housing Transformation Programme had identified the following issues in performance;

- Repairs- Significant concerns had been raised by councillors and tenants in respect of service delivery, this included poor communication, lengthy processes, too many visits to complete a repair, repairs took too long and poor customer services. In 2012 there was a backlog of 9000 repairs.
- Gas- In Gas the review identified staff with gas qualifications not using their skills or for staff working outside of the Gas Service going long periods of time without using their skills
- Tenancy Management- Concerns had been raised by councillors, tenants and staff that staff were unable to focus on the delivery of the tenancy management service due to a disproportionate amount of time being focused on dealing with repairs.
- Voids and Property Lettings- a review of the service indicated lengthy void periods. A lack of accountability for the end to end process and the service did not always focus on the needs of the customer.

2.2 Main proposals

The key service proposals within the Housing Transformation Programme were;

- To separate out the repairs function from the tenancy management function to enable staff to focus on their specialisms;
- To group repairs by functions rather than trades;
- To enable tenancy management staff to focus on delivering the 35 key local tenancy management functions;
- To provide a Local Tenancy Management Service to customers within 3 distinct housing areas;
- To reduce re-let time on voids properties;
- To restructure the management of Voids and Property Lettings in order to provide dedicated team leaders for the voids, lettings and technical teams.

2.3 Organisational review

The changes set out to service delivery, set out in 2.2, necessitated the need for an organisational review which included 421 members of staff, approximately half of the housing division. The review commenced in December 2015 and included a detailed consultation period with staff and Unions which ended in April 2016. As part of planning for the implementation of new ways of working from 31st October the recruitment for the new structure commenced in May 2015 and has recently concluded.

As part of the development of a new structure, Heads of Service portfolios have been reviewed and a revised structure chart showing responsibilities is attached in Appendix 1 for your information. Area details for District Managers are included in Appendix 2 for your information.

2.3.1 Changes to Tenancy Management Services

The main changes to the delivery of the tenancy management service will relate to the removal of the repairs function to enable tenancy management staff to focus on the delivery of the 35 tenancy management functions (as reported to Scrutiny on 17th December 2015, contained in Appendix 3.) This responds to the concerns that councillors initially raised that tenancy management staff spent a disproportionate amount of time dealing with repairs. The reduction in the number of staff relates to the removal of repairs and does not represent any reduction in the offer to our tenants.

The main organisational structure change relates to;

- a reduction in the number of managers moving from 6 Area Managers to 3 District Managers. These Managers will manage 3 x Neighbourhood Housing Areas (East, West and South.) Two of these posts have been filled and the first is subject to ongoing recruitment;

- a reduction in the number of Team Leaders from 18 to 10. All 10 of these posts have been filled;
- a reduction in the number of Estate Management Officers (Neighbourhood Housing Officers) from 50 to 38.6. All posts have been filled;
- an increase in the number of Assistant Estate Management Officer (Assistant Neighbourhood Housing officers) from 8.5 to 12. 5.5 posts have been filled and 6.5 will be filled through a recruitment exercise.

The removal of the repairs function from Tenancy Management (and establishment of a separate repairs service) will enable tenancy management staff to focus on the core areas of service delivery. In addition, there will be a specific focus on the following areas;

- Vulnerability- Officers are currently working to establish mechanisms to identify the most vulnerable tenants in each area. District Managers will then be responsible for ensuring that each tenant identified receives a visit from their Neighbourhood Housing Officer within the first 3 months of being identified. The NHO will complete a Welfare Support Access Checklist ensuring appropriate support, be it signposting or referrals, takes place. There will then be a further review 3 months later. Managers will ensure their staff are effectively performance managed to ensure this work takes place;
- Communal Cleaning- based on the Housing Scrutiny Commission recommendations, officers are currently developing a revised procedure and checklist to ensure this is undertaken effectively making best use of resources. Again performance will be managed in this area to ensure compliance;
- Fire inspections- Officers will receive a briefing on the revised process map and a revised procedure will be put in place for go-live. Neighbourhood Housing Officers will also be taking responsibility for the fire safety in sheltered accommodation.

2.3.2 Changes to the Repairs Service

The main change to repairs has been the relocation of the delivery of the repairs service from the Districts to a separate Repairs Service and the grouping of repairs by functions rather than trades. This will mean that services to tenants will be aligned to specific types of work including window and door repairs, kitchen and bathroom repairs, external works etc. Repairs teams will be located around the city although they will provide a citywide service.

The expected key benefits to tenants of the ongoing changes of the RPR improvement programme are:

- Improved service delivery to tenants. Improvements are being made by ensuring repairs are undertaken by teams with the right materials and skills meaning more jobs can be completed at the first visit. We also have amended our working hours which mean we will have more staff working when most tenants

request their repairs to be completed so we can respond quicker to demand. The emergency repairs service is available at all other times.

- Maximising our multi-skilled staff. For example we have changed the way we operate to ensure one service area is responsible for gas, heating and hot water so tenants don't have to have multiple visits. Before if a tenant reported no hot water, if this was a fault on the boiler a gas engineer would be required, and if this was a fault with a radiator a plumber would be required. Now we will have one role that will be able to fix both faults.
- Better trained staff. There are much fewer staff who will be gas qualified. This will ensure all the staff who are gas qualified are regularly undertaking a range of gas work and maintain their capability in this critical area.

This has resulted in the following changes to the organisational structure;

- Creation of 3 Repairs Managers
- Creation of a Gas and Heating Service Manager replacing Gas Services Manager

Since the commencement of the Repairs Improvement Project in 2012 significant progress has been made on reducing the number of outstanding repairs, reducing complaints and increasing the number of repairs completed on the first visit.

2.3.3 Changes to the Voids and Property Lettings

The main change to Voids and Property Lettings has been to create a more joined up service focusing on managing performance to reduce re-let times through dedicated teams focusing on Voids and Property Letting.

The Housing Scrutiny Commission receives regular updates on progress in respect of Voids and Property Lettings.

The key benefits to tenants are;

- Development of a new voids and property lettings process that will directly reduce re-let times and therefore meet housing need as early as possible. It will enable us to accurately inform tenants with regard to their sign up and moving in date. The new Letting Standard will ensure a consistent standard across all our properties and will ensure that all properties meet an appropriate standard prior to letting across all property types. Prospective tenants will be aware of the standard to expect and it will increase tenant satisfaction.
- Kitchen refurbishment in voids is now been carried out where possible by our operatives rather than by contractors. This has brought about a saving in labour costs. This will mean that our capital programme funding will go further and more kitchen refurbishments carried out in our properties.

The key staffing changes relate to;

- Creation of 2 Voids and Property Lettings Manager posts replacing 1 Voids Manager and 1 Property Lettings Manager
- Creation of 1 Property Lettings Team Leader.

Next steps

The new organisational structure will go live from 31st October. Officers have been working to ensure that tenants should not be significantly disrupted by the changes to the housing structure. Implementation Plans are in place to ensure that staff are being appropriately supported and training is in place.

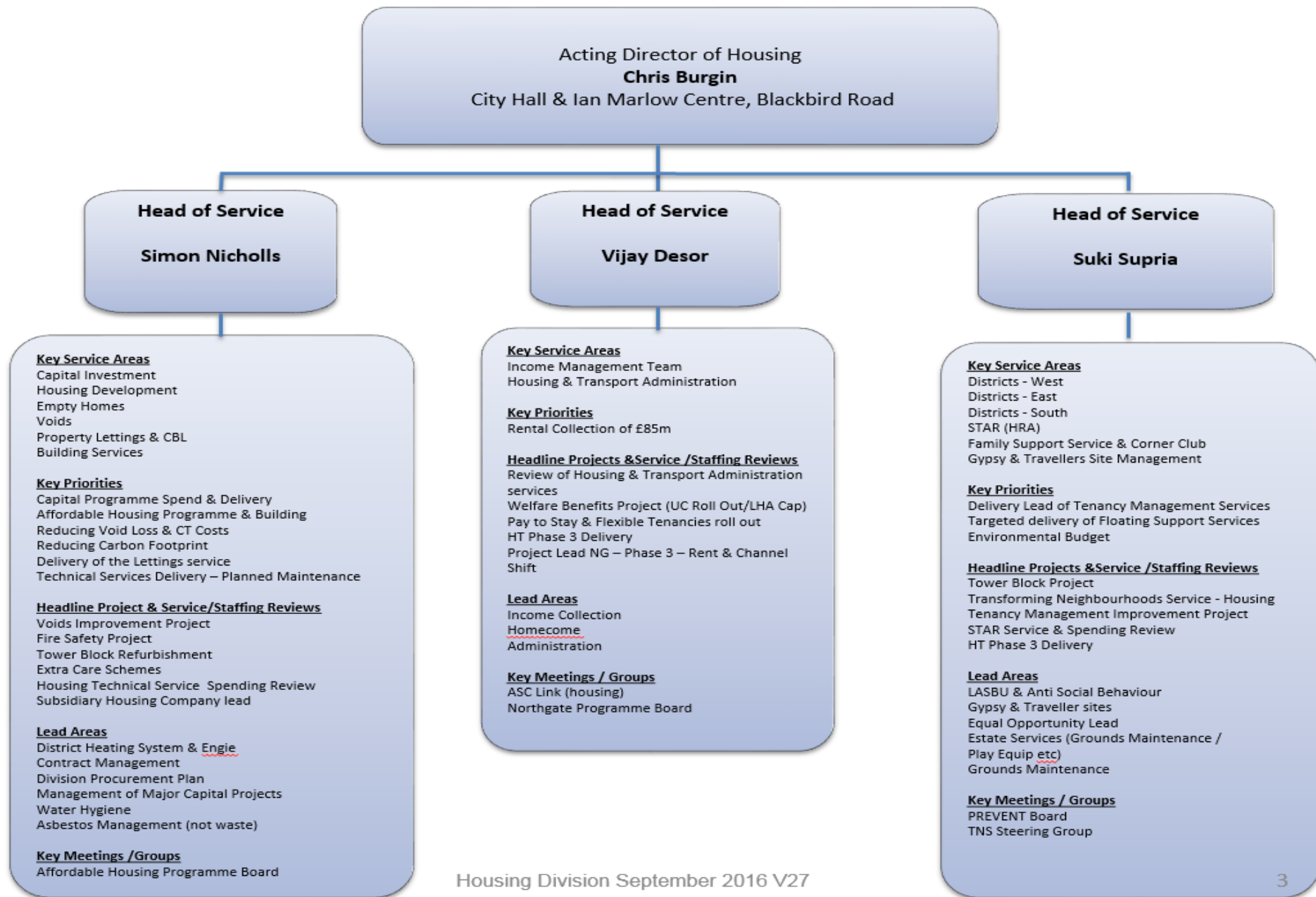
3. Financial implications

The new structure will achieve savings of £1.5m, as previously reported in the business case. Allowing for expected redundancy costs the £1.5m will be achieved from April 2017.

Pete Coles
Principal Accountant, Housing

4. Legal implications

There are no implications arising directly from the recommendations.



Acting Director of Housing
Chris Burgin
City Hall & Ian Marlow Centre, Blackbird Road

Head of Service
Caroline Carpendale

Head of Service
Ian Craig

Key Service Areas

Homelessness Prevention & Outreach
Housing Options
Hostels & Supported Housing
STAR (GF)

Key Priorities

Eliminate Rough Sleeping
Delivery of Effective Homelessness Services
Phase 2 Housing GF Spending Review

Headline Projects & Service / Staffing Reviews

Housing GF Homeless Services Spending Review
HB Cap – Supported Housing Model
Project Lead NG – Phase 3
Homeless Strategy Refresh & contracts retender
Housing Register review
Hostel Operational Service review

Lead Areas

Housing Allocations Policy & Management of Councils
Housing Register
Statutory Homelessness
Private Sector Landlord & Tenant Functions
Rough Sleeping
Homelessness Strategy 2013-18
Voluntary Section / Faith Groups

Key Meetings / Groups

Homeless Reference Group
MAPPA 2 & 3
Corporate Parenting
Homelessness Partnership
NSNO Board
Northgate Programme Board
Domestic Violence Delivery Group

Key Service Areas

Housing Repairs & Maintenance
Home Maintenance
Home Improvement Team

Key Priorities

Delivery lead of highly effective Repairs Service
Technical Services Programme– Repairs

Headline Projects & Service / Staffing Reviews

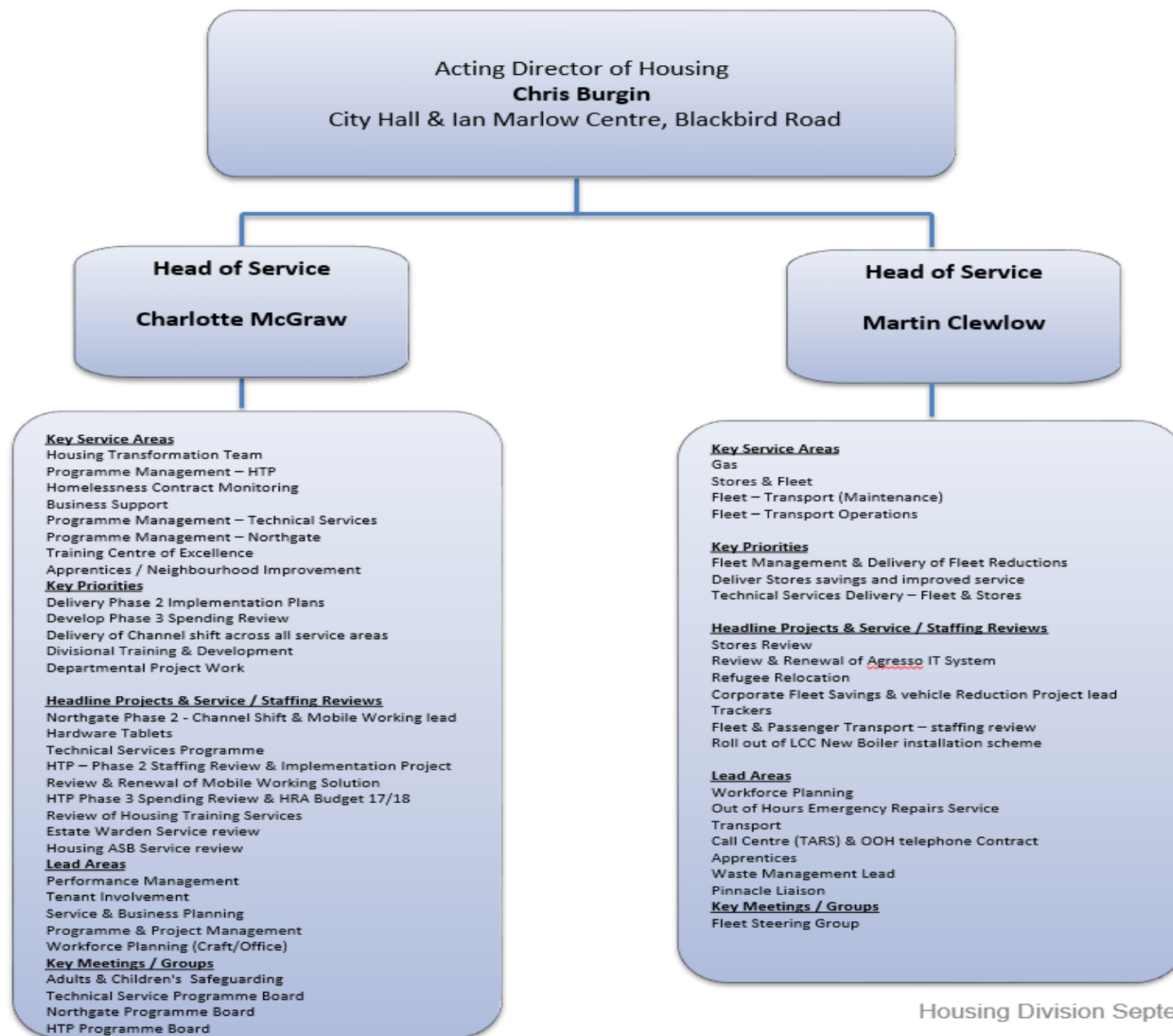
Responsive & Planned Repairs Improvement project
H&S – (inc Hand Arm Vibration Project)
HTP Phase 3 Delivery
Project Lead NG – Phase 3 – Repairs & Channel Shift
& Mobile working replacement (business lead)
CCTV Replacement

Lead Areas

Divisional & Craft Health & Safety
Leaseholders
IMC Site Management
Severe Weather & Emergency Planning
Disabled Facilities Grants

Key Meetings / Groups

Trade Union Link



Appendix 2

Neighbourhood Housing Area	District Manager	Office	Neighbourhood Housing Team Leaders
Neighbourhood Housing Area West	Marie Murray 0116 4545237 marie.murray@leicester.gov.uk	New Parks	Mandy Smith
		Beaumont Leys	Ramila Dhobi
		Mowmacre	Vanshree Raja
Neighbourhood Housing Area East	Suki Supria (pending appointment of Manager) 0116 4545125 Suki.supria@leicester.gov.uk	St Marks	Paresh Chandarana
		St Matthews Neighbourhood Hub	Paresh Chandarana
		Highfields/St Peters	Jay Rughani
		Humberstone	Marlene Blake
		Rowlatts Hill	Andy East

Neighbourhood Housing Area South	Ellen Watts 0116 4546644 ellen.watts@leicester.gov.uk	Braunstone	Sally Morris
		Saffron	Kevin Byron
		Eyres Monsell Community Centre	Kamina Rughani

NB Please note a senior manager will be available to cover out of hours emergencies

Appendix 3

Local Tenancy Management Service – Summary of Proposed Future Functions and Tasks

No	Function/ Tasks
1.	Abandoned Properties/Unlawful Occupiers/ NTQs
2.	Access to Files Requests – vetting all files as suitable to supply
3.	Anti-Social Behaviour - includes working with partners such as LASBU/ case conferences
4.	Building Responsible Officer Duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Alarms -Test, log repair, ensure on service contact • Fire Inspections/progressing work from risk assessments • Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Hygiene Checks
5.	Communal Cleaning – regular checks on standard of cleaning
6.	Complaints (non- repairs)
7.	Councillor/MP enquiries
8.	Damp Enquiries – advice, assistance on condensation issues and referrals
9.	Decants – re-housing of tenants in an emergency/crisis management and structured
10.	Domestic Violence Cases
11.	Estate Management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abandoned vehicles
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alley ways clear
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal gardens, maintenance, improvement and removals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estate warden referrals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estate warden requests
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly Tipping
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gardens in HMOs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gates (security issues)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graffiti
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grass, shrubs, trees LCC and grass shrubs, trees not LCC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground maintenance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspections - Logging jobs (only priority repairs)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illegally parked cars
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pest control - liaise with Environmental Health to carry out block treatments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair of no-man's land

No	Function/ Tasks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs (reporting if damaged)
12.	Evictions and arranging storage
13.	Environment Projects (identifying areas for improvement) planning specifications and consultation with tenants and ward councillors
14.	Exchange of Contracts - Sign ups (still under discussion)
15.	First Visits
16.	Gas Gain Entry for gas/repairs and recharges
17.	General Enquires (incorrectly referred customers/ tenants just contacting the service)
18.	Home Come Inspections
19.	Harassment Cases
20.	Insulation Requests
21.	Insurance Claims and Risk Management enquiries
22.	Key Control - safe key control on door entries
23.	Management Case Transfers
24.	Mutual Exchanges
25.	Capital Programmed works enquiries and investigation
26.	Project based work – steering groups
27.	Property Management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alteration to property
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Standing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footway Cross
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitex
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Rent Items
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unauthorised alterations
28.	Rechargeable Work
29.	Petitions
30.	Repairs Related Tasks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report jobs where required. Liaise on behalf of tenant. Encourage tenants to report repairs on line and via telephone.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and address support needs of tenants in emergency situations e.g. supply fan heaters, bellings, water, groceries
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with and co-ordinate water, gas and electric in emergency situations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide assistance and accompany operatives in cases when tenant is difficult, potentially violent or angry
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve unlawful extensions especially over services often where owner occupiers or lease holders are involved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handover of new build dealing with snagging issues - liaise with COW, Development Team, contractor or subcontractors, alarms, water, gas and electric suppliers etc
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain best solutions for tenants in cases where Occ Health, Environmental Health and other agencies involved and have identified repairs required. (More than repair issue also to do with well-being of tenant)
31.	Right to Buy/Leaseholders management
32.	Tenancy Changes

No	Function/ Tasks
33.	Tenancy Conditions (Enforcement)
34.	Tenant and Resident Involvement
35.	Vulnerable Tenants (Dealing with issues such as hoarding/referrals to support services such as STAR, Social Services, OT)

Housing Scrutiny Commission

10th October 2016

Housing Solution Replacement - Northgate next Phase Project

Lead Officer: Paul Hussain

Lead Director: Chris Burgin

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Paul Hussain
- Author contact details: 0116 454 3572 paul.hussain@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 3.0

1. Purpose of report

This report provides an overview and update of the next Phase of the Housing Solution Replacement (HSR) Programme. This is the Housing Division's IT replacement scheme, replacing Open Housing. .

2. Briefing

Northgate were the successful bidder in the tender procurement process for the replacement of Open Housing. Northgate is now being used across the housing division to manage housing related requirements of its customers. The decision to replace Open Housing was taken for a number of reasons;

- Open Housing solution was costly to support
- The solution was unreliable
- The product was old and was unsuitable for meeting current and future business requirements

The initial phase of Northgate put in place the systems to collect rents, manage repairs and manage tenant accounts. This went live on 11th January 2016 and continues to provide a reliable and stable system enabling housing staff to become more productive and provide a more efficient service to customers.

The next phase is split into a number of stages;

- **Stage 1** will improve efficiency and control of customer's requirements and manage their data more effectively
- **Stage 2** will implement a number of customer "Self-Serve" Modules (Rents & Repairs) that will enable customers to transact on-line rather than through the authorities Customer Service Centre
- **Stage 3** will replace the current Repairs Mobility Solution to provide more stable, reliable and efficient management of repairs jobs and operative diaries.

2.1 Stage 1

The new system has brought a variety of benefits such as;

- Increased productivity gains and efficiencies
- Increased reliability and stability which has reduced downtime and lost working hours making the implementation a success.

There are currently a small number of outstanding issues which Officers are working with Northgate to address as a priority;

- Customers position on the Housing Register when bidding for a property
- AutoBid function completion (no external impact on customers)

Operationally on a day to day basis we have seen call volumes relating to Northgate incidents reduce dramatically and service requests stabilize. This indicates that the core system is working reliably and as the Council requires. Staff can therefore be more productive, meaning they can spend more time with customers and provide a high level of service.

2.2 Channel Shift Overview

For Housing, Channel Shift revolves around the drive to make Council services more available through the internet and the need to reduce costs which are being incurred through the provision of services that a customer could potentially do themselves given on-line access. This enables more appropriate use of Council resources.

The highest cost to the Customer Service Centre (CSC) relates to the number of Housing calls managed, around 2200 per week on average. On-line transactions are far cheaper than telephone or face to face transactions so to reduce costs the intention for the authority and many other organisations is to “Channel shift” (move) services on-line so a customer can carry out these functions themselves. Hence, reducing the number of Housing related calls is key to driving down the CSC total costs and therefore the charge to the Housing Revenue Account.

This is done through the use of technology by implementing software that will enable a customer to log onto a secure web portal 24x7 providing them with the benefit of accessing services at their convenience. Once logged into their account the customer will have access to carry out tasks such as report a repair and select an appointment, view their Rent Account, make a payment, access Rent Statement history, etc. The system is secure with access provided to only those who complete the registration process. A similar example is the use of On-line banking which is now very common.

It is widely accepted that “Self-Serve” is not a “one size fits all” solution and shouldn’t be used as such. Not all customers will use a self-serve solution so the authority will still need to keep a range of service channels open for certain profiles of customer this could include elderly and vulnerable customers.

Channel Shift Summary

- Move customer transactions on-line which is more cost effective
- Secure On-line customer portal required to do this
- 24x7x365 availability using technology
- Not a “one size fits all” solution, will still need to offer support to vulnerable & elderly
- Service improvements can be made

2.3 Stage 2 Rents & Repairs Self-Serve

Stage 2 will focus on the delivery of the Self-Serve Modules for Rents and Repairs to support the authorities Channel Shift agenda.

Northgate have a set of “Self-Serve” modules, the authority already uses the Choice Based Lettings and Housing Applications modules which our tenants already successfully use, removing the duplication of work and allowing customers access to these services 24x7 at their convenience.

Stage 2 is based around the implementation of two further Self-Serve modules, Rents and Repairs which will extend the on-line access for customers and provide the opportunity for call volumes to be reduced.

2.3.1 Rents Self-Serve Module

The Rents Self-Serve module will provide access to the following services for tenants;

- Make an on-line payment
- Setup a DD or regular payment arrangement
- View Account/Debt/Arrears history
- View or Print a Rent Statement
- Access Letters sent by the authority

Common calls from customers are to make a payment, check their account balance or request a Rent Statement so by providing these services on-line the customer should be able to meet these requirements immediately or when convenient to them.

Currently it is planned that Rents Self-Serve services will be available for customers to use in February 2017.

2.3.2 Repairs Self-Serve Module

Currently Repairs calls amount to the highest element of transactional and cost at the CSC so there is a real drive to reduce the number of calls and subsequently costs.

While it is a complex piece of work there is the opportunity to implement the Repairs Self-Serve process in two stages. The initial stage would deliver the benefits listed below with the main end-to-end solution being delivered at a later date.

The initial stage of Repairs Self-Serve would include the following services;

- Access to the secure Repairs on-line portal
- Ability to report a repair
- Ability to diagnose the issue using a Graphical Repair finder tool
- View the appointment (once made)
- View Historic Repair History

This would allow a Repairs call to be generated by the customer via the portal and a works order created which would be an improvement and result in some early savings.

However, the schedule of the job would still be a manual process and result in a call or appointment card being sent to the customer.

It is planned to have this stage of the solution available in February 2017 alongside the Rents Self-Serve module.

2.4 Stage 3 Repairs end-to-end Self-Serve & Mobile solution

- The second stage for the Repairs Self-Serve is ability to assign the correct operative and materials to the job along with allowing the customer to select their own appointment from a list that is presented to them.

Stage 3 will deliver the following services, in addition to the services in stage 1, to the customer via the on-line Repairs Self-Serve portal;

- Allow the customer to select a convenient appointment date & time
- Automatically log the job in Northgate Repairs
- Schedule the operative with the relevant skills and expertise
- Deliver the job information to the relevant operatives tablet device
- Manage the resources schedule / diaries for all operatives
- Confirm the appointment with the customer
- Allow details to be sent back to Northgate Repairs by the operative
- Allow jobs to be completed or re-scheduled by the operative

The expectation is that Housing will require 12 months to fully implement the full end to end solution described above. This would follow on from the stage 1 implementation where Repairs Self-Serve is available but in a cut down form.

It is planned to have the fully operational end to end Repairs Self-Serve available to customers by the end of 2017.

3. Financial implications

The next phase of the Northgate Housing Solution will require further significant capital investment. Budget for 2016/17 is £1.446m with further funding required to meet the revised size of the solution which is currently being quantified and will need reflecting in the 2017/18 HRA capital programme.

The programme is expected to drive further ongoing efficiencies and savings, including from channel shift initiatives and a more automated approach to delivering repairs.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081

4. Legal implications
None
5. Equalities implications
None

Housing Scrutiny Commission

10th October 2016

Rent Arrears Progress Report

April 2016 to June 2016

Assistant Mayor for Housing : Cllr Andy Connelly

Lead Director : Chris Burgin

Useful information

Ward(s) affected: ALL

Report author: Vijay Desor, Mike Watson

Author contact details: Vijay.desor@leicester.gov.uk Ext 37 5177

Report version number: 2.0

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Housing Scrutiny Commission of the progress in the above area of work on a quarterly basis, as requested.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report covers the period from the 4th April 2016 to the 27th June 2016.
- 2.2 The cash amount owing as at 27th June was £1.79m, this is 14.1% higher than the same quarter last year – see 3.1, table 1.
- 2.3 The number of tenants in arrears is 4,921, which is 6.4% more than the same quarter last year – see 3.5, Table 2.
- 2.4 The number of tenants in more serious debt, (owing more than 7 weeks rent) is 1,550, just 0.3% higher than this quarter last year.
- 2.5 For the financial year from April '16 to March '17, c. £1.207m extra (based on latest estimates) rent will be collectable as a result of the “bedroom tax.” See 3.12 below.
- 2.6 £55,276 was paid by Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's) for all Council tenants, of which £44,627 was for those affected by the Bedroom Tax, from April to June 2016.
- 2.7 The arrears amongst those affected by the Bedroom Tax have increased by about £9k (5.4%) in the first quarter.

3. REPORT

Rent Arrears

- 3.1 Rent arrears at the end of the first quarter (27th June) of 2016 and previous financial years were:

Table 1. Quarterly Arrears

Financial year	Arrears at end of Quarter 1
2012 / 13 Q.1 (April to June)	£ 1,459,851
2013 / 14 Q.1 (April to June)	£ 1,625,503
2014 / 15 Q.1 (April to June)	£ 1,843,279
2015 / 16 Q.1 (April to June)	£ 1,571,769
2016 / 17 Q.1 (April to June)	£ 1,793,931

(N.B. Depending on calendar variations, week 26 or 27 figures have been used to provide consistent comparisons)

- 3.2 There is a clear seasonal trend for rent arrears to increase in the first part of the year, falling rapidly towards the latter part of the financial year. The rent collection figures for Leicester remain good in comparison with other authorities.
- 3.3 Rents decreased by 1.0% on average in April 2016, as required by the Government. The increase in the arrears between June 2015 and June 2016 was 14.13%, compared to a decrease of 0.32% from March 2015 and March 2016.
- 3.4 There were no underlying issues internally as to why the arrears have increased over the previous year. The economic climate, with continuing Welfare Reforms and uncertain, low wage jobs, is continuing to put tenants under a lot of financial pressure, making it harder to collect the rent.
- 3.5 A breakdown of cases in rent arrears by Housing Benefit status is shown in the table below:

HB Status	All Cases	Cases In Arrears (2 Wks+ owed)	% of All Cases
Full	7897	2555	32.4%
Nil	6698	185	2.8%
Partial	6391	2181	34.1%
Grand Total	20986	4921	23.4%

- 3.6 It can be seen that only about 3% of those who have no Housing Benefit in payment owe 2 weeks or more rent, whereas roughly one third of those in receipt of some Housing Benefit had arrears of two weeks or more rent.

Number of Cases

- 3.7 After removing monthly payers (i.e. Direct Debits, Wage Stops, Arrears Direct (DWP), Bank Standing Orders) the number of tenants with rent arrears is shown in table 2. below:

Table 2. Breakdown of Arrears Cases

Date	Owing 2 Weeks or more Net	Owing 7 Weeks or more Net **
Quarter 1 (Apr to June) (2012/13)	5,050	2,252
Quarter 1 (Apr to June) (2013/14)	4,771	1,810
Quarter 1 (Apr to June) (2014/15)	5,788	2,472
Quarter 1 (Apr to June) (2015/16)	4,627	1,546
Quarter 1 (Apr to June) (2016/17)	4,921	1,550

N.B. Where no net rent is payable (i.e. on full benefit), full rent has been used as a default value to

** Those owing 7 weeks or more rent are included within the figure for owing 2 weeks or more.

- 3.8 The number of cases in arrears increased by 6.35% over the previous year's figure for quarter 1. The number of more serious cases was more stable, with an increase of just 0.26%. There is a lot of variability in these figures.

Arrears per Tenancy

- 3.9 The total arrears divided by the total number of tenancies are shown in table 3. below:

Table 3. Average debt

Date	Average Debt
Quarter 1 (2012/13) (Apr to June)	£67.01
Quarter 1 (2013/14) (Apr to June)	£75.67
Quarter 1 (2014/15) (Apr to June)	£86.62
Quarter 1 (2015/16) (Apr to June)	£74.74
Quarter 1 (2016/17) (Apr to June)	£85.50

- 3.10 This figure reflects the increase in the actual rent arrears given in 3.1. Performance is closer to that of 2014/15.

Highest 10% of Debt (by value)

- 3.11 Table 4. Below shows the highest 10% of arrears cases:

Date	No.Cases	Highest Case	Lowest Case	Average	Total Value
Quarter 1 (2012/13)	1046	£2,735	£ 358	£ 572	£599,281
Quarter 1 (2013/14)	1096	£2,993	£ 370	£ 607	£665,301
Quarter 1 (2014/15)	1116	£3,281	£432	£717	£800,788
Quarter 1 (2015/16)	942	£3,441	£412	£681	£641,599
Quarter 1 (2016/17)	927	£2,840	£447	£719	£666,353

- 3.12 This shows that the highest arrears cases have increased in total value by 3.9% since last year, in line with the rise in actual arrears. The average arrears in this band has risen by 5.6%, as has the value of the lowest case, by 8.5%. The value of the highest case has fallen, as has the total number of cases, down by 1.6%.

Rent Arrears Comparison with 2015/16

- 3.13 Rent arrears have increased across the year to date. They are £222,162 more than at the same point last year.
- 3.14 Appendix 1 shows the detailed comparison of rent arrears this year with the last financial year.

Impact of the Bedroom Tax

- 3.15 On the 27th June, 1,722, or 8.2% (20,987) of our tenants were affected by the bedroom tax. The estimated extra rent collectable for 2016/17 is £1.207m for the full financial year.
- 3.16 From the 1,750 cases that were identified at the start of this financial year, by 27th June 2016 the number of active cases had reduced to 1,722. This is because the numbers affected are constantly changing as people come out of the bedroom tax, and new cases arise, due to changes in household composition or financial circumstances.

3.17 **Further facts:**

- 28 tenancies affected by Bedroom Tax had terminated from 4th April to 27th June 2016. Of these, one had completed a mutual exchange and four were transfers through the housing register. All moves through the register resulted in downsizing. There were 12 Right to Buy terminations, four tenants deceased, two evictions, two moved to Housing Associations, one moved in with partner, one unable to afford the property and one gave no reason.
- By the end of June '16, for those affected by the bedroom tax, the number in arrears had fallen to 52.4% (903 out of 1722) since the start of the year. In week 1 this was 53.0%, so the number of affected tenants in arrears has decreased by 0.6% in the first quarter.
- From April 2016 to June 2016, a total of £44,627 of Discretionary Housing Payments had been received on behalf of Council tenants affected by the Bedroom Tax.
- The arrears among those affected by the Bedroom Tax have increased by £9,872 (5.4%) since the start of April 2016.

Impact of Benefit Income Cap (BIC)

- 3.18 An estimated 54 LCC tenants were affected by the BIC as at 27th June 2016. The average loss of Housing Benefits for this group is £47 per week. The changes have been phased in as cases are identified by DWP.
- 3.19 Projecting from this quarter up until the year end, this would equate to an extra collectable rent of about **£127k** over the whole year.

Evictions

- 3.20 There were 25 evictions carried out for non-payment of rent from the 4th April 2016 to the 30st June 2016. At the same point in the previous year this figure was 7.
- 3.21 Of the 25 evictions, 9 were family cases and 16 were single people.
- 3.22 There were 2 evictions affected to some degree by Bedroom Tax issues, both of which were single people.
- 3.23 Single people were roughly twice as likely to be evicted as families.
- 3.24 Only two in twenty five of the evictions were affected in some way by the impact of Welfare Reforms. Bedroom Tax and BIC cases account for about 10% of all tenants, but roughly 8% of eviction cases. The majority of evictions, along with the majority of the rent debt, occurred among the 90% of tenants NOT directly affected by Welfare Reforms.
- 3.25 Of those evicted between April and June 2016, eight households (three families and five singles), sought help with rehousing from the Housing Options & Homeless services.
- 3.26 The Council's approach to the use of evictions has not changed over the period. They are carried out only as a last resort, when all other avenues have failed. It is almost always the case that there has been a persistent lack of engagement from the tenant prior to an eviction taking place.
- 3.27 An outline of the eviction process is shown at Appendix 2.

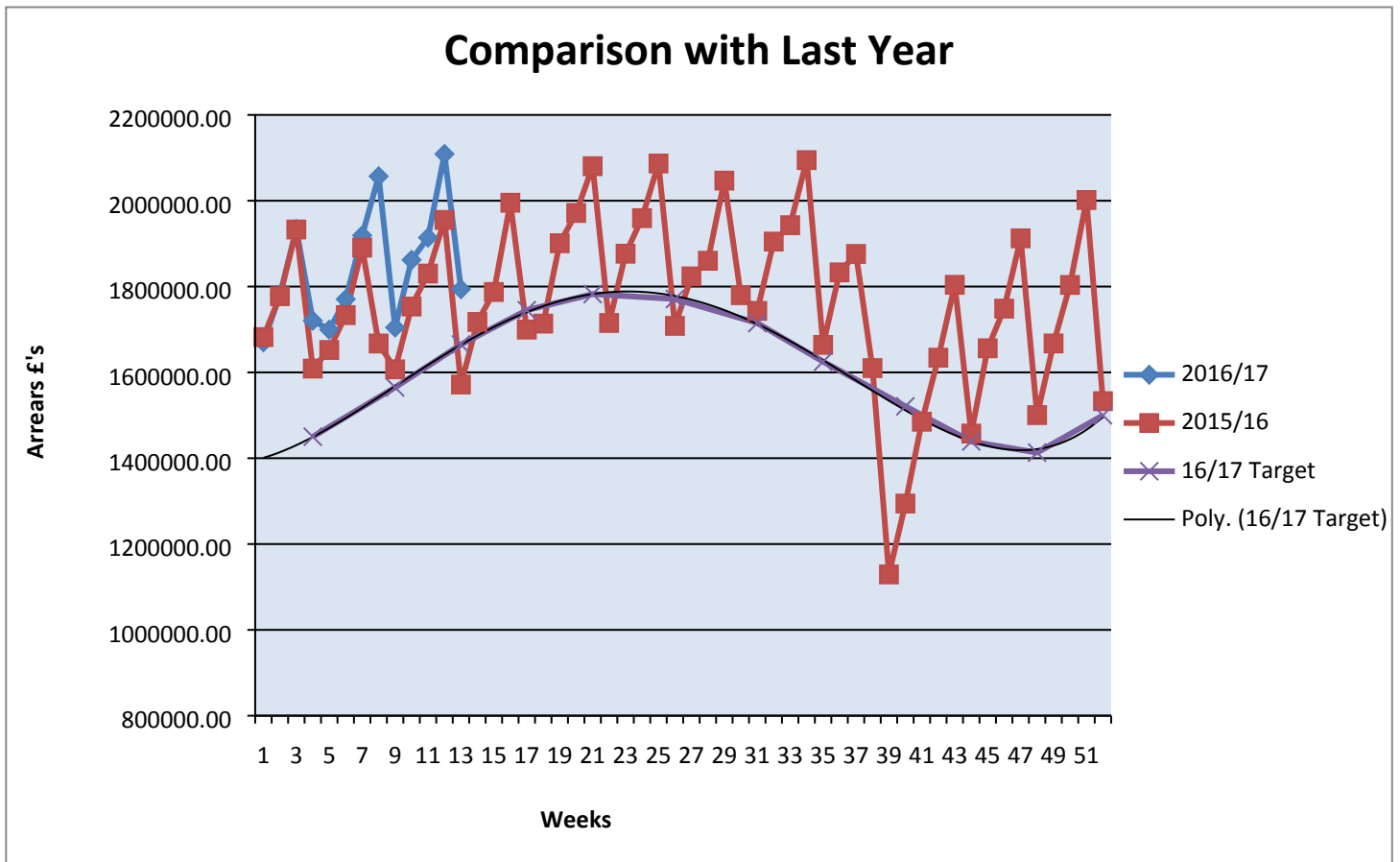
4. Benchmarking

- 4.1 The Rent Income Excellence Network (RIEN) has published the % rent collected figures for the last financial year, from April 2015 to March 2016. The overall average for all participating local authorities was 97.68%, with the average for unitary authorities a little better at 98.46%.
- 4.2 For the first quarter of 2016/17, the figure in Leicester was 97.88%. This figure is usually lowest at the start of the year, improving significantly after the two non-payment weeks at Christmas.
- 4.3 Leicester is therefore well placed to end the year with above average performance compared to other Authorities.

5. REPORT AUTHORS

- 5.1 Vijay Desor, Head of Service, tel.37 5177
Mike Watson, Income Collection Manager, tel.39 5550

Appendix 1 Rent Arrears Comparison With Last Year



GLOSSARY

Gross annual rent. This is the total amount due on a property over the course of a year. E.g. if the average rent is £78, times 22,000 properties, times 50 payable weeks = approximately £86m.

Collectable rent – the gross annual rent, plus the carried forward arrears, less Housing Benefit payments, less void loss or any other miscellaneous income. E.g. £86m (gross rent), plus £1.3m arrears, minus £50m Housing Benefit, minus £2m void loss, less £250k miscellaneous income, EQUALS £35.05m actual cash to be collected from tenants.

The percentage of rent collected shown is based on the proportion of gross rent, less void loss and miscellaneous income that has been received. HB received is included in this calculation, as is the arrears carried forward. This figure is used for comparative purposes only.

Poly. (Polynomial) – a statistical function used to generate a curved target line that reflects the established annual trend.

Appendix 2. The Rent Arrears Formal Process (Secure Tenants)

- First Warning – letter sent when 3 or more weeks payable rent is owed
- Second Warning - letter sent when 4 or more weeks payable rent is owed
- Appointment - an appointment letter is sent when 5 or more weeks rent is owed, or at the discretion of the officer.
- Notice - At 6 weeks or more payable rent. The type of Notice depends on the tenancy – Introductory or Secure. Each gives a minimum of 28 days to clear the account before legal action can commence.
- Court Letter - Final warning sent shortly before the Notice expires, or later as required.
- Court Summons - When Court proceedings are begun
- Court Hearing - Usually seek a Suspended Possession Order on terms that the rent plus an amount off the arrears is paid regularly
- Outcome of Court - Confirmation of hearing, usually Suspended Possession
- Broken Court - Letter sent when terms of suspension are breached
- Eviction Threat - Letter if no response to Broken Court
- Warrant Letter - When an Eviction Warrant application is made to Court
- Eviction Appointment – Letter when Bailiff supplies date & time for an eviction.
- Eviction

At all stages during the process, officers will telephone, arrange office interviews and visit tenants to try and establish the cause of the arrears and make affordable arrangements in line with the Fair Debt policy. Benefit health checks are carried out, referrals to internal and external agencies (e.g. charitable trusts) are made as appropriate. Only when all other options have been exhausted will an eviction warrant application to the County Court be approved.

Housing Scrutiny Commission

10th October 2016

Review of the Housing Register /
Housing Allocations Policy

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Andy Connelly
Lead Director: Chris Burgin



City Mayor

Useful information

■ Ward(s) affected: All

■ Report authors:

Kanwaljit Basra – Housing Register & Allocations Team Leader, Housing Options Service, ext. 37-1745

Caroline Carpendale – Head of Service, ext. 37-1701

Chris Burgin – Director of Housing, ext. 37-5143

1. Summary

- 1.1 Executive seeks the comments of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the proposals to carry out a review of the Housing Register and the Allocations Policy.
- 1.2 This report considers:-
 - 1.2.1 Communities and Local Government issue guidance to housing authorities requiring them to give consideration to reviewing their existing housing allocation policies. The Government has made it clear they expect social homes to go to people who genuinely need and deserve them.
 - 1.2.2 Furthermore the introduction of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 also needs to be considered as it will impact on the Council's Housing Allocations Policy in regards to the mandatory use of fixed term tenancies and 'pay to stay' for higher income local authority tenants.
 - 1.2.3 The Council's Housing Register is a list of qualifying people who have applied for council housing and nominations from the housing associations. A person's priority position on the Housing Register is determined by their housing need.
 - 1.2.4 The Housing Act 1996 section 166A(3) requires that an allocations policy must be framed to give reasonable preference to certain categories of people.
 - 1.2.5 The rules and the procedures that sets out who can apply to join the Housing Register along with their relative priority are governed by the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. The Housing Allocations Policy is subject to change either through the issuing of statutory guidance or by a change in local priorities agreed by elected members. Any changes to the Housing Allocations Policy may mean a person's position on the list can also be affected.
 - 1.2.6 The proposed changes will give greater preference to people with the most housing need who do not have the resources to explore other housing options.
 - 1.2.7 The Housing Options Service have a duty to provide advice and assistance to all citizens of Leicester in relation to the housing options available to them, including advice about the private rented sector.

Recommendations:

1. To consult with stakeholders and seek the views of the Housing Scrutiny Commission on the following proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Policy:
2. To look to reduce the numbers on the Housing Register and reconfigure the priority order to ensure that the Register is fit for purpose and primarily addresses those in the most housing need.
3. To reduce the administrative burden of managing a Housing Register of 11149 applicants (as at 01/04/2016) of whom circa 1479 have a realistic chance of achieving an offer of accommodation. This is based on the number of lettings for 2015-2016.
4. We need to ensure we manage customer expectations realistically at the earliest opportunity of them applying for assistance to fully inform them of their housing options.

It is proposed:

- To remove existing households from the Housing Register who have no or little housing need.
 - To remove existing households who own their homes except where there are over-riding circumstances of need.
 - To remove those households who following assessment have the financial resources to secure alternative accommodation.
 - To limit the qualifying income threshold for higher income households.
 - To reconfigure the overcrowding rules.
 - To reconfigure the under-occupation rules.
 - To give priority to people living in insanitary & unsatisfactory housing
 - To reconfigure the bedroom rules to the government bedroom standard.
 - To enable applicants the choice to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom than their normal eligibility.
 - To enable families with 1 child aged 2 years and under the choice to apply for 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation.
5. To report on the results of the consultation to the Executive for a decision on the proposed changes.

2. Current Policy

- 2.1 All households who wish to be offered Council or Housing Association homes are listed on the Housing Register except where legislation or policy prohibit

(e.g. certain persons from abroad and in cases where there is unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant of the authority).

- 2.2 The Policy is used to both allocate the Council's own dwellings and to make nominations to housing associations.
- 2.3 Leicester City Council's current housing allocations scheme is a banding scheme where households are assessed and placed in 1 of 4 bands depending on their current housing circumstances and need (see Appendix 3).
- 2.4 Band 1 is for those households who have been assessed as having the highest priority for an allocation of accommodation, and then on a sliding scale of priority to Band 4 who are, those households who are considered to be in low housing need.
- 2.5 We now have strong links with the private rented sector and many people coming to the Council for advice are helped through the LeicesterLet and Rent deposit schemes.

3. Statistics from the Housing Register

- 3.1 As at 1st April 2016 the number of households on the Housing Register were:

BANDS	Total
BAND 1	722 (7%)
BAND 2	2821 (25%)
BAND 3	2818 (25%)
BAND 4	2191 (20%)
BAND 5*	2597 (23%)
Applications	
Total	11149

*With effect from 1st May 2014 no new applicants are accepted into Band 5

- 3.2 Lettings from the Housing Register 2015 – 2016 (LCC/Housing Association/HomeCome)

BANDS	Total
BAND 1	342 (23%)
BAND 2	874 (59%)
BAND 3	171 (12%)
BAND 4	86 (6%)
BAND 5	6 (<1%)
Total	1479

Appendix 2 sets out the total lettings for the last 10 years and highlights the decrease in the number of lettings which places pressure upon the Housing Register and managing the expectations.

Whilst there was an increase in lettings in 2014-2015, this is regarded as a one off due to the large number of new build accommodation that became available that year.

It is projected that going forward up to 800 properties p.a. may be lost to the to Right to Buy which places further pressure upon the Housing Register and the need to ensure as far as possible that available properties are allocated to those most in need.

4. Proposed Changes to the Housing Allocations Policy

4.1 Appendix 1 lists the proposals along with the rationale for the changes.

5. Options

There are two options available:

5.1 Option 1

To maintain the status quo and make no changes to the published Housing Allocations Policy.

- Guidance states social housing should go to those households in the most need and the Council's Housing Allocations Policy should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that this is achieved. The last full review was in 2010 when the Housing Allocations Policy changed from a points based scheme to a banding scheme.
- Currently the Housing Allocations Policy is considered to be complex and not easy to understand. This is reflected by the high number of enquiries that are received from both elected members and the general public.
- The introduction of significant changes to the policy in May 2014 and August 2015 were not applied retrospectively. This has added to the complexity and different rules for applicants based upon their date of application. This makes the policy harder to understand e.g. existing homeowners are allowed to remain on the Register whereas new applicants who are homeowners are not allowed to join.

or

5.2 Option 2

To consult on some or all of the proposals outlined in the report and subject to the response to consultation, adopt the relevant changes to the published Housing Allocations Policy.

- The review will ensure that the policy addresses those most in need as well as helping the policy be more transparent, simplified and easier to understand by all.

- It will better manage customer expectations.
- It will achieve efficiency savings in the management of the Housing Register.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 As the proposals to change the Housing Allocations Policy are considered to be major changes there is a statutory requirement that we seek the views of Registered Social Housing Providers which have nomination agreements with the authority but it is also good practice that all those who may be affected by, or have an interest in, the way social housing is allocated are also consulted. Therefore we propose to consult with all parties who may be affected by, or have an interest in the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

7. Financial, legal and other implications

7.1 Financial implications – Pete Coles Principal Accountant (Housing)

Indicative savings are likely due to proposed efficiencies in the reduction of the number of applicants on the register, but further work will be needed to quantify how much and this will be done if any proposals are implemented.

7.2 Legal Implications – Jeremy Rainbow, Principal Lawyer (Litigation)

Section 166A(13) of the Housing Act 1996 obliges a local housing authority to consult with every private registered provider of social housing and registered social landlord with which it has nomination arrangements before making an alteration to its allocation scheme that reflects a major change of policy.

In framing its housing allocation policy the Council must secure that reasonable preference is given to:

- People who are homeless;
- People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under homelessness legislation;
- People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing, or living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds;
- People who need to move to a particular locality within the district, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or others; and
- Certain former members of the armed services.

7.3 Equality Impact Assessment – Iren Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead

Our Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to consider the impacts of any proposed changes to our policies or practice to those affected by these changes, the protected characteristics of those affected, and for any adverse impacts, mitigating actions that reduce or remove those impacts.

The proposed changes for the most part maintain the current housing allocation policy's top 3 band prioritisation of housing need, adding a new Band 2 criteria for insanitary or unsatisfactory accommodation and increasing prioritisation of the need for sheltered accommodation (people over the age of 50) from band 4 to band 3.

The proposal suggests deletion of the following criteria regarding housing circumstances:

Band 3 criteria of 'single no fixed abode' - this was a category that was never used as intended as there is also an existing Band 3 'Overcrowding' category for people lacking a bedroom. Singles who are NFA will be allocated this Band 3 category.

Band 4 criteria of sharing facilities but having own bedroom – this group of people (i.e. living with family or friends) are suitably housed in regards to the number of bedrooms they have use of but have to share facilities such as the kitchen or bathroom. If their circumstances change for example they are asked to leave, then an assessment is undertaken to verify their change of circumstances. This may result in them being awarded a higher Band 2 priority as they would be regarded as living in insecure accommodation.

Band 4 criteria of needing to be in a particular area of Leicester for emotional support from family, friends or others – there is already within the policy, a Band 3 category for people who need to move on care and support grounds where hardship would be caused if they did not move. This category has been extended to include those that need to move due to medical or welfare grounds with a slighter higher verification of proof required than that was previously required in Band 4.

Band 5 for those whose housing circumstances are not in any of the bands and are therefore not in need for housing in keeping with the intention of the housing allocations policy.

The proposed deletion of bands 4 and 5 are likely to affect all protected characteristics. Band 4 applicants are considered to have very low housing need and who would not realistically achieve an offer of accommodation. Band 5 applicants have no identified housing needs or are considered to be adequately housed. On this basis, no mitigating actions for band 5 are required.

7.4 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications – Mark Jeffcote, Senior Environmental Consultant

There are no climate change implications associated with this report.

8. Background information and other papers:

- Leicester City Council Housing Allocations Policy
- Allocation of accommodation: Guidance for local housing authorities in England, June 2012

- Providing social housing for local people: Statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England, December 2013
- The Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Benchmarking with other local authorities

9. Summary of appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Proposed changes to the Housing Allocations Policy
- Appendix 2 – Lettings from the Housing Register 2006 – 2016
- Appendix 3 – Current banding scheme
- Appendix 4 – Proposed banding scheme
- Appendix 5 – Benchmarking with neighbouring local authorities

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

No

11. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes. This is because these proposals affect all wards of the City

Proposed Changes to the Housing Allocations Policy

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
45	1. Removal of existing Band 5 applicants from the Housing Register	<p>Since 1st May 2014, no new applications are accepted from those with no identified housing need or those who are considered to be adequately housed.</p> <p>As at 1st April 2016 there were 2597 households that remain on the Housing Register in Band 5 whose application dates precede 1st May 2014.</p>	<p>To remove all households in Band 5</p> <p>This would not require further external consultation as this was done when the decision was taken to not accept new applicants with no housing need.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Written notification to all remaining applicants in Band 5 advising of their removal from the Housing Register with a right of appeal.</p>	<p>The change would remove circa 2597 households from the Housing Register. It would also remove the complexity of rules that are different due to the date the applicant applied. This will make the policy more easily understood.</p> <p>This will also make it easier to manage customer expectations as only people with an identified need to move will qualify to appear.</p> <p>Band 5 applicants are increasingly frustrated as there is little chance of them receiving an offer.</p> <p>Maintaining Band 5 applicants places an administrative burden on the service as applications have to be continued to be processed from people who are considered to be suitably housed.</p> <p>Removal of Band 5 applicants will reduce the administrative burden on the service and means resources can be more effectively utilised to assist those with a genuine need to move.</p> <p>There will be some financial savings as these applications will no longer</p>

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
				need to be processed and annual review letters sent.
2.	Removal of Band 4 applicants from the Housing Register	<p>Any applicant who is eligible to join the Housing Register and meets any of the following criteria will be placed in Band 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who share facilities with other households but have their own bedroom • People who need to move to, or remain in, a particular area of Leicester to give or receive emotional support from family, friends or others in the community • People over the age of 50 years requesting 1 bedroom sheltered accommodation only <p>As at 1st April 2016 there were 2191 households in Band 4.</p>	<p>To remove all households in Band 4 except those who are requesting sheltered housing as they will be given increased Band 3 priority.</p> <p>This will mean the Housing Register will just have 3 bands with circa 6766 households (see Appendix 4).</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Written notification to all applicants in Band 4 advising of their removal from the Housing Register with a right of appeal.</p> <p>Existing Band 4 applicants (405) requesting 1 bed sheltered housing will be moved to Band 3 as sheltered housing is readily available.</p>	<p>The change would remove circa 1786 households from the Housing Register.</p> <p>Band 4 applicants have very little chance of receiving an offer other than sheltered housing. There were 40 lettings of sheltered housing to Band 4 applicants.</p> <p>Removal of Band 4 applicants will reduce the administrative burden on the service and means resources can be more effectively utilised to assist those with a genuine need to move.</p> <p>There will be some financial savings as these applications will no longer need to be processed and annual review letters sent.</p>
3.	Removal of existing owner occupiers from the Housing Register	<p>Since 10th August 2015 owner occupiers no longer qualify to join the Housing Register unless there are extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>There are currently 287 households that remain on the Housing Register who are owner occupiers whose application date precedes 10th August 2015.</p>	<p>To review all owner occupiers on the Housing Register and remove those who do not have any exceptional circumstances to remain.</p> <p>This would not require further external consultation as this was done when the decision was taken to not accept owner occupiers onto the Housing Register.</p>	<p>The change would remove circa 287 owner-occupiers from the Housing Register.</p> <p>The change would also remove the complexity of rules that are different due to the date the applicant applied. This would make the policy more easily understood.</p> <p>There would also be equality in the transparency of the policy that all</p>

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact														
			<p>How?</p> <p>Written notification to all remaining applicants who are owner occupiers advising of their removal from the Housing Register with a right of appeal.</p>	<p>owner occupiers are treated the same.</p> <p>As at 01/04/2016 the number of owner occupiers on the Housing Register:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BAND 1</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAND 2</td> <td>32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAND 3</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAND 4</td> <td>71</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAND 5</td> <td>145</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total</td> <td>287</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Total	BAND 1	16	BAND 2	32	BAND 3	23	BAND 4	71	BAND 5	145	Grand Total	287
	Total																	
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BAND 2	32																	
BAND 3	23																	
BAND 4	71																	
BAND 5	145																	
Grand Total	287																	
4.	Removal of applicants with sufficient financial resources to secure alternative accommodation from the Housing Register	Since 10th August 2015 households with a total income of £25k per year (single household) or £40k per year (joint households) or capital assets of over £50k are not allowed to join the Housing Register.	<p>To extend the rules to those with sufficient financial resources whose application date preceded 10th August 2015.</p> <p>This would not require further external consultation as this was done when the decision was taken to not accept people who had the financial resources to secure alternative accommodation onto the Housing Register.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Written notification to all remaining applicants after review, advising there is now a threshold for earnings and savings and financial checks will</p>	<p>The change would remove the complexity of rules that are different due to the date the applicant applied. This would make the policy more easily understood.</p> <p>There would also be equality in the transparency of the policy that all applicants are treated the same.</p> <p>Removing existing applicants who exceed the financial thresholds may also help to reduce the number of council properties purchased under the Right to Buy scheme.</p> <p>Current rules allow any public sector tenant who has been a tenant for 3 or more years at any point to qualify to buy the home they currently live in</p>														

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
			be undertaken at point of offer.	if it is eligible for Right to Buy. Qualifying tenants can currently get a 35% discount up to a maximum of 70% or £77,900 for a house.
5.	To limit the qualifying income threshold to join the Housing Register to the level set under the 'pay to stay' limit in the Housing and Planning Act 2016	Currently households who have an income of £40k per year or more do not qualify to join the Housing Register.	To reduce the income threshold to join the Housing Register to the level set under the 'pay to stay' limit in the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which is currently £31k per year. Only taxable income (i.e. income received for work or through investments) will count towards the £31k per year threshold and does not include any benefits that applicants may receive. How? Checks will be made at the point of registration to the Housing Register and at the offer stage to ensure households are within the income threshold.	This would mean any household with a taxable income of £31k per year or more will not qualify to join the Housing Register. The income threshold will increase annually in line with Consumer Price Inflation. 'Pay to stay' means higher income households will be required to pay higher local authority rents than lower income families.
6.	Reconfiguration of the overcrowding banding priorities	Currently there are 3 different priorities given to people who are living in overcrowded conditions. 1. Band 2 'Severe Overcrowding' is awarded for those who are lacking 2 or more bedrooms. This also	Band 2 'Severe Overcrowding' is awarded to all tenants who are lacking 2 or more bedrooms or they are assessed as being statutory overcrowded. Band 2 'Families Living in 1 Bed Accommodation' is awarded to	The removal of non-tenants will result in the number of households with Band 2 'Severe Overcrowding' priority reducing from 798 households to 444 households. This better reflects the overcrowding position of tenants in the city.

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
		<p>includes people who are statutory overcrowded.</p> <p>2. Band 2 'Families Living in 1 Bed Accommodation' is awarded to families living in 1 bed accommodation with their children who need an additional bedroom.</p> <p>3. Band 3 'Overcrowding' is awarded to those who are lacking 1 bedroom.</p>	<p>families living in 1 bedroom accommodation with children 3 years and over.</p> <p>Band 3 'Overcrowding' is awarded to tenants who need 1 additional bedroom e.g. a family living in 2 bedroom accommodation needing 3 bedroom accommodation.</p> <p>How? Any household identified on the Housing Register as being overcrowded will be re-assessed under the new rules and where there is any change to their priority they will be notified in writing.</p>	
7.	Addition of a new banding priority to non-tenants who are living with others and do not have sufficient bedrooms for their own use	<p>People who are non-tenants i.e. lodgers or living with friends or family are treated the same as tenants when assessing overcrowding.</p> <p>No checks are undertaken to verify or confirm the position of non-tenants joining the Housing Register and receiving this high priority.</p>	<p>Creation of a new Band 3 priority for people who are non-tenants who are living with others and do not have sufficient bedrooms for their own use.</p> <p>How? Any applicant who is not a tenant and does not have exclusive use of bedrooms for their household will be placed in this band.</p> <p>Existing applicants who are non-tenants will be re-assessed under the new rules and where there is any change to their priority they will be notified in writing.</p>	<p>This would currently impact on 354 households who are non-tenants and awarded Band 2 'Severe Overcrowding' priority. They would be re-assessed to the new Band 3 priority.</p> <p>Non-tenants who have been given notice to leave or assessed as living in insecure accommodation will be considered for Band 2 'Insecure Accommodation' priority.</p> <p>Statutory homeless households will be re-housed in the private sector unless they fall in one of the exceptions in this category.</p>

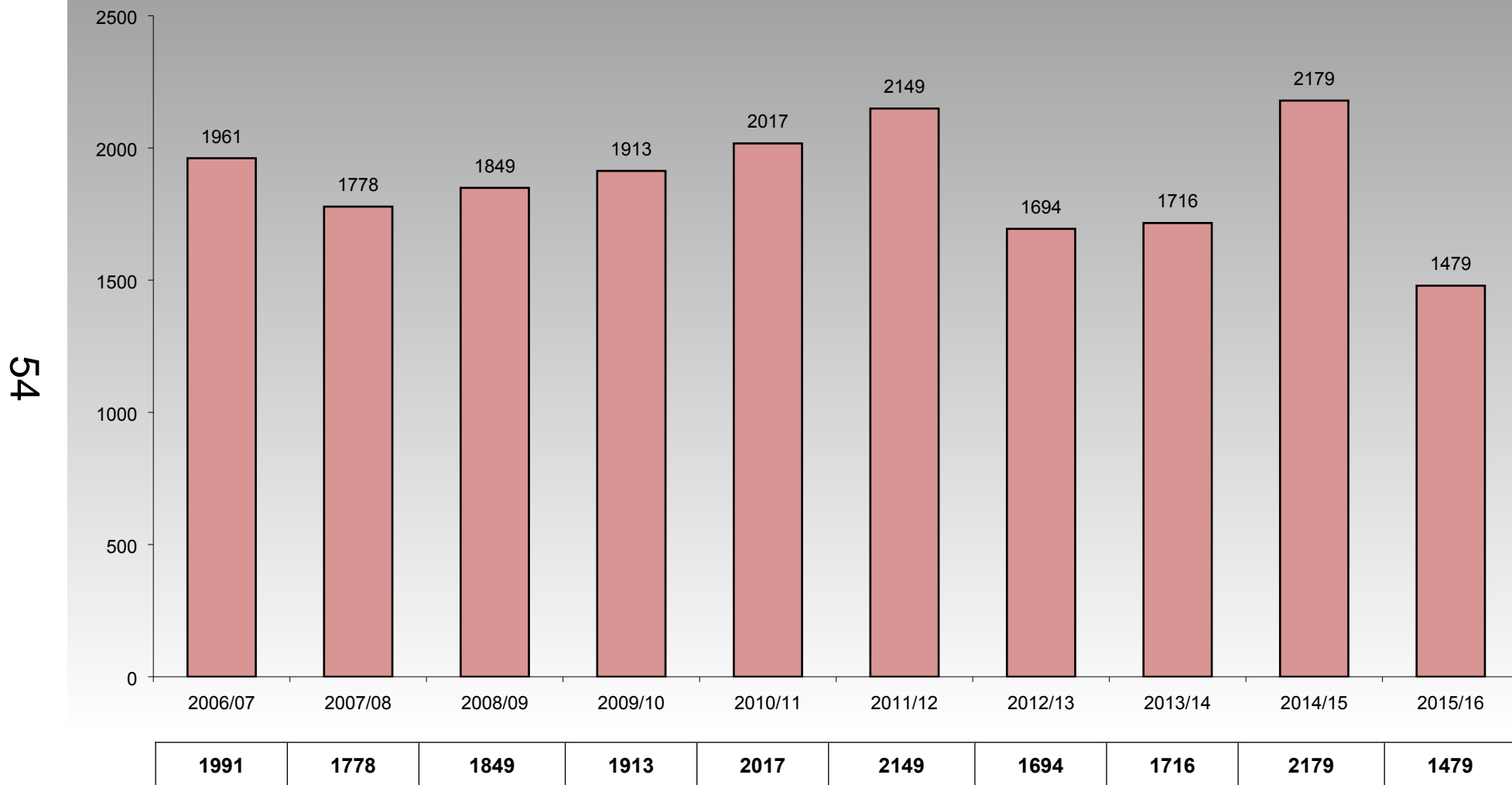
	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
8.	Reconfiguration of the under-occupation banding priorities	<p>Currently there are 3 different priorities given to social tenants who are under-occupying their homes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Band 1 'Priority Under-occupation' is given to those social tenants who are giving up 3 bed accommodation to move to 1 bed accommodation and those giving up 2 bed accommodation to move to 1 bed accommodation. 2. Band 1 'Tenants Incentive Scheme' is given to those social tenants giving up a large home with 4 or more bedrooms and moving to a home with 3 or fewer bedrooms. 3. Band 2 'Under-occupation' is given to those social tenants giving up 3 bed accommodation to move to 2 bed accommodation. 	<p>To only have one Band 1 'Priority Under-occupation' category which is given to under-occupying social tenants who are giving up 2 or more bedrooms, those moving to 1 bed accommodation or any other social tenant who is affected by the bedroom tax following assessment.</p> <p>Band 2 is for under-occupying social tenants who do not meet the qualifying criteria for Band 1 'Priority Under-occupation'.</p> <p>How? Any social tenant identified on the Housing Register as under-occupying will be re-assessed under the new rules and where there is any change to their priority they will be notified in writing.</p>	<p>This will make the policy on under-occupation clearer by only having one Band 1 priority as opposed to two Band 1 priorities.</p>
9.	Addition of a new banding priority to people who are living in insanitary or unsatisfactory housing	<p>Reasonable preference is currently given for this statutory requirement within a number of different priority bandings which includes statutory homelessness, management and access and health priorities.</p>	<p>Creation of a new Band 2 priority for people who are living in insanitary or unreasonable housing for example applicant does not have access to a bathroom or kitchen, or an inside toilet, or access to hot and cold water supplies, electricity, gas or adequate heating as confirmed by</p>	<p>There is a statutory requirement to give reasonable preference within the allocations scheme to people who are living in insanitary or unsatisfactory housing.</p> <p>This will remove incentives to apply as homeless and acknowledge the</p>

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
			<p>Environmental Health Officer.</p> <p>How?</p> <p>Environmental Health Officer will provide a written report to Housing Options Service confirming that a person's current accommodation is considered to be insanitary or unsatisfactory housing.</p>	reasonable preference groups.
10.	To adopt the Government's Bedroom Standard which will mean persons of the same sex sharing a bedroom up to the age of 20 years	<p>Currently the bedroom rules as used by Housing Benefit to determine how many bedrooms a household is eligible for has been adopted.</p> <p>A separate bedroom is allocated to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each married or cohabiting couple or single parent • Any other person aged 16 years or more • Each pair of children of either sex under 10 years • Each pair of people of the same sex aged under 21 years. • Any person who cannot be paired 	<p>We adopt the current Bedroom Standard as set out in the Housing Act 1985. This means two persons of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 20 years.</p> <p>A separate bedroom is allocated to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each married or cohabiting couple or single parent • Any other person aged 21 years or more • Each pair of children of either sex under 10 years • Each pair of people of the same sex aged under 21 years. • Any person who cannot be paired <p>How?</p> <p>Any family identified on the Housing Register with children 16 years and over will have their bedroom eligibility adjusted and notified in</p>	<p>Under the current bedroom eligibility criteria any person aged 16 years or more is allocated a separate bedroom.</p> <p>This has resulted in families with older children eligible for larger size accommodation, for example, a family with 4 children (2 daughters ages 12, 16 and 2 sons ages 14, 18) would currently be eligible for 5 bedroom accommodation.</p> <p>Given the shortage of large properties, families do not always want to be considered for large properties.</p> <p>They often want to be considered for a property with fewer bedrooms than they are eligible for in order to give themselves a better chance of securing an offer of accommodation.</p> <p>Many local authorities (see Appendix</p>

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
			writing.	5) have adopted the Government Bedroom Standard when determining bedroom eligibility. We will continue to allocate additional bedrooms where there is a health need or where there is a fostering arrangement in place by Leicester City Council.
11.	To enable applicants more choice of accommodation options on the Housing Register, households will be able to choose to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom than they are eligible for.	Households are able to apply for accommodation up to two bedrooms less than they are eligible for, providing it does not create statutory overcrowding. Families with children also cannot apply for one bedroom accommodation.	Due to increasing need and managing customer expectations households are able to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom than they are eligible for to prevent severe overcrowding. How? Any household identified on the Housing Register who is able to apply for one less bedroom will have their bedroom eligibility adjusted and notified in writing.	Current and proposed changes to the bedroom rules seek to maximise occupancy. Allowing families the opportunity to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom than they are currently eligible for, gives them a better chance to secure an offer of accommodation The proposed change seeks to minimise overcrowding whilst still giving families an element of choice. There will be however still be occasions where households will not be able to apply for accommodation with one less bedroom, for example, where a family have been awarded overcrowding priority as this would result in moving to like for like accommodation.
12.	To enable applicants more choice of accommodation options on the Housing Register and to reduce the pressure on the demand for 2	Families with children are not able to apply for one bedroom accommodation.	Families with 1 child aged 2 years and under are able to choose to apply for 1 and 2 bedroom accommodation.	It is not unreasonable for families with 1 child under 3 years to resolve their immediate housing predicament to move to 1 bedroom

	Proposed Change	What we do now	What we're proposing	Rationale for changes and the potential impact
	bedroom accommodation, families with 1 child aged 2 years and under will be able to choose to apply for one bedroom accommodation		<p>How? Any household identified on the Housing Register who is able to downsize will have their bedroom eligibility adjusted and notified in writing.</p>	<p>accommodation to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>This may enable them to secure accommodation quicker as there were 472 lettings of 1 bedroom flats in 2015-16. This accounted for 32% of all lettings.</p> <p>The change would allow circa 928 families with 1 child under 3 years the choice to apply for one bedroom accommodation</p>

Lettings from the Housing Register 2006 - 2016



Current Banding Table

Band	Summary Descriptions (Reason)	Household Circumstances	Number of Households in Band (as at 01/04/2016)
Band 1	Referred Case	People in need of urgent re-housing and referred by Adult Social Care or Children's Services.	722
	Compulsory Homelessness	People in need of urgent re-housing whose properties are directly affected by public redevelopment programmes.	
	Tenant Incentive Scheme	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a large property (four bedroom or more) and who wish to move to a property with fewer bedrooms.	
	Priority Under-occupation	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a two or three bedroom property and who wish to move to a property with one bedroom.	
	Harassment	People suffering from any form of harassment.	
	Management Case	Council tenants who need to move for management reasons - see the current allocation policy, section 3.6 (available at leicester.gov.uk/allocations).	
	Wheelchair Adapted Housing No Longer Required	Council and housing association tenants occupying a purpose built wheelchair adapted property who no longer require it.	
	High Medical	People whose current housing conditions are having a seriously adverse affect on the physical or mental health of either the applicant or a member of their household.	
	Young Person Leaving Care	Children leaving the care of Leicester City Council's Children and Young People's Service (CYPS).	
Band 2	Statutory Homelessness	People who are statutory homeless and are owed the full housing duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996.	2821
	Severe Overcrowding	People whose homes are deemed to be severely overcrowded (two bedrooms or more short of their assessed need).	
	Overcrowded Families in 1 Bed	Families who are overcrowded and living in one bedroom accommodation.	
	Under-occupation	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a three bedroom property by one bedroom and need two bedrooms.	
	Insecure Accommodation	People identified as needing urgent re-housing to prevent homelessness.	
	Temporary Accommodation (Single)	Single people living in designated temporary or supported accommodation.	
	Temporary Accommodation (Family)	Families living in designated temporary accommodation in the city.	

	Leaving Residential Care	People ready to leave residential care supported by Leicester City Council and/or NHS.	
	Care Package	People with a care package where Adult Social Care (LCC) assess that a move will assist independent living.	
	Medium Medical	People whose current housing conditions are having a negative affect on the physical or mental health of the applicant or a member of their household.	
	Leaving Armed Forces	People leaving the armed forces within the last 5 years but do not have a home to return to.	
Band 3	Adult Leaving Care	People identified by Adult Social Care as ready to leave the care of family or carer	2818
	Single NFA	Single people who have no settled accommodation and are of 'no fixed abode'.	
	Care & Support Medical	Families needing to move to a particular area of Leicester where hardship would be caused if they do not move.	
	Overcrowded Household	Families who are living in overcrowded conditions under Leicester City Council's overcrowding standard (one bedroom short of their assessed need).	
	Working Households	Working households or those in local training schemes who need to move closer to their job/training scheme	
Band 4	Sharing Facilities	People who share facilities with other households but have their own bedroom.	2191
	Care & Support Emotional	People who need to move to, or remain in, a particular area of Leicester to give or receive emotional support from family, friends or others in the community.	
	Sheltered Accommodation	People over the age of 50 years requesting 1 bedroom sheltered accommodation only.	
Band 5*	All Other Applicants	People who do not have any of the housing circumstances listed in bands 1, 2, 3 and 4.	2597

* With effect from 1st May 2014 no new applicants are accepted into Band 5

Proposed Banding Table

Band	Summary Descriptions (Reason)	Household Circumstances	Expected Number of Households in Proposed Bands (based on waiting list as at 01/04/2016)
Band 1	Referred Case	People in need of urgent re-housing and referred by Adult Social Care or Children's Services.	722
	Compulsory Homeless	People in need of urgent re-housing whose properties are directly affected by public redevelopment programmes.	
	Priority Under-occupation	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a two or three bedroom property and who wish to move to a property with one bedroom.	
	Harassment	People suffering from any form of harassment.	
	Management Case	Council tenants who need to move for management reasons.	
	Wheelchair Adapted Housing No Longer Required	Council and housing association tenants occupying a purpose built wheelchair adapted property who no longer require it.	
	High Medical	People whose current housing conditions are having a seriously adverse affect on the physical or mental health of either the applicant or a member of their household.	
Young Person Leaving Care	Children leaving the care of Leicester City Council's Children and Young People's Service (CYPS).		
Band 2	Statutory Homelessness	People who are statutory homeless and are owed the full housing duty under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996.	2821
	Severe Overcrowding	People whose homes are deemed to be severely overcrowded (two bedrooms or more short of their assessed need).	
	Overcrowded Families in 1 Bed	Families with children 3 years and over who are overcrowded and living in one bedroom accommodation.	
	Under-occupation	Council and housing association tenants who are currently under-occupying a three bedroom property by one bedroom and need two bedrooms.	
	Insecure Accommodation	People identified as needing urgent re-housing to prevent homelessness.	
	Temporary Accommodation (Single)	Single people living in designated temporary or supported accommodation.	
	Temporary Accommodation (Family)	Families living in designated temporary accommodation in the city.	
Insanitary or Unsatisfactory Accommodation	People who have been assessed as living in insanitary or unsatisfactory accommodation.		

	Leaving Residential Care	People ready to leave residential care supported by Leicester City Council and/or NHS.	
	Care Package	People with a care package where Adult Social Care (LCC) assess that a move will assist independent living.	
	Medium Medical	People whose current housing conditions are having a negative affect on the physical or mental health of the applicant or a member of their household.	
	Leaving Armed Forces	People leaving the armed forces within the last 5 years but do not have a home to return to.	
Band 3	Adult Leaving Care	People identified by Adult Social Care as ready to leave the care of family or carer.	3223
	Care & Support	People needing to move to a particular area of Leicester where hardship would be caused if they do not move and people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds.	
	Overcrowded Household (tenants)	Tenants who are living in overcrowded conditions under Leicester City Council's overcrowding standard (one bedroom short of their assessed need).	
	Overcrowded Household (non-tenants)	Non-tenants living in overcrowded circumstances	
	Sheltered Accommodation	People over the age of 50 years requesting 1 bedroom sheltered accommodation only.	
	Working Households	Working households or those in local training schemes who need to move closer to their job/training scheme	

Bench Marking with Neighbouring Local Authorities

Local Authority	Number of Bands in Allocations Scheme	Bedroom Rules	Do people with no housing need or low need qualify to go on the Housing Register?
Derby City Council	2	Adult/Children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom (no upper age limit)	No
Nottingham City Council	5	Adult/Children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 20 years	No
Northampton Borough Council	3	Adult/Children of the same sex are expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 20 years	No

Housing Scrutiny Commission

10th October 2016

STAR services

Assistant Mayor Housing : Cllr Andy Connelly

Lead Director: Chris Burgin



City Mayor

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Suki Supria
- Author contact details: suki.supria@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: V4

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update and overview of the STAR service (Supporting Tenants and Residents) that is currently provided to tenants within Leicester.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report and make any observations.

3. Supporting information including options considered:

3. Background

- 3.1 Supporting Tenants and Residents (STAR) Leicester City Council is made up of 4 distinct parts. The 5 community based STAR teams, STAR Family Support service provided from Border House, STAR Amal team responsible for support to Syrian refugees part of the resettlement program and the Revolving Doors team that deal with repeat homelessness cases.

3.2 Community Based STAR

The STAR community based service provides support to vulnerable council tenants who are threatened with homelessness, have a history of homelessness or those threatened with eviction due to rent arrears or behaviour which breaches their tenancy agreement, e.g. hoarding and anti- social behaviour. The aim of the service is to enable some of the most vulnerable and excluded tenants to sustain their tenancy and continue to thrive as part of their local community.

- 3.3 The make-up of the teams under the Service Manager is Team Leaders, Housing Related Support Workers and Administration Support workers.
- 3.4 STAR recognises vulnerable service users by various factors including a history of homelessness, mental ill health, ill health, disability, poverty ; however there can be other contributory factors or barriers to using services which could include age language, literacy, substance use and learning difficulties. Service users predominantly with these issues or, contributory factors are much more likely to lose their tenancy without on- going professional support. The above list of vulnerabilities is not exhaustive, but a mere indication of the most frequent vulnerabilities, service users have when requesting support from STAR. The current indications are that those service users with mental health difficulties and also suffering from the current welfare reform changes are in need of support services to sustain tenancies.

- 3.5 The service provides a non-judgmental, multi-agency, holistic approach to resettlement and tenancy support services. The support is based on a case management basis where each service user has an allocated Housing Related Support Worker. The support workers key role is to enable the service user to sustain their tenancy through various mechanisms; for example by maximising their income and supporting them to navigate the challenging reformed welfare system. The service also provides an advocacy role with other statutory and voluntary agencies. This includes housing, health, mental health and adult and children's services and education. The 5 STAR teams are based in Beaumont Leys, Eyres Monsell, St Matthews, New Parks and Braunstone. The teams are situated in decentralized offices with the highest levels of local authority tenancies and in estates /areas of social deprivation. These teams only deal with customers who have a Council Tenancy. Other service users without a council tenancy will be sign posted to the most appropriate support agency.
- 3.6 Access to the STAR service is based on an Eligibility Criteria (Appendix 1) which prioritises service users who are the most likely to fail in their tenancy, for example customers leaving temporary accommodation and moving into a tenancy (they may not have the appropriate attributes to sustain a tenancy), those that may be in rent arrears, low income and struggling to make ends meet, and finally those that may have breached the tenancy agreement and facing potential eviction. Service users threatened with losing their tenancy will be allocated a worker who will work the customer and have a plan of action to sustain the tenancy. In addition to the eligibility criteria cases are also prioritised by the vulnerability assessment, to ensure that those in the most need are provided with a service in a timely manner (Appendix 2).
- 3.7 The STAR service approximately receives 90% of its referrals from the Income Management Team. These would normally be tenants who are in rent arrears, facing litigation with a view that the City Council will be seeking possession of the dwelling. Other referrals can come from the Hostels and Homeless Section, Housing Management, Health, Adult Social Care and the Police.

3.8 STAR – Family Support Service

The STAR Family Support Service assists homeless families in their transition from Border House Hostel to independent living. Homeless families are amongst of the most vulnerable groups in society. They have often experienced traumatic events which have contributed to their homelessness including: drug use, domestic violence, abuse, poverty and war. Due to the often chaotic and transient nature of the family life, homeless families are often referred to as 'hard to reach' and there is a high risk to children, who may be hidden from professional support, sometimes resulting in neglect and injury.

- 3.9 The STAR Family Support service is made up of one Team Manager, Family Support Workers and Child Support Assistants. The STAR Family Support Service has been developed to ensure homeless families receive a comprehensive child centered package, to ensure their health and wellbeing is prioritized and prevent future homelessness. This services also includes 'family Centre' called the Corner Club next to the Border House Hostel which provides a safe environment for children to thrive and for parents to engage with professionals and learn the foundations of child development, and parenting. The Corner Club is staffed by

qualified Child Support Assistants who provide the service in liaison with the Family Support Workers. The service also provides a variety of play and therapeutic support sessions, a crèche and holiday play schemes for hostel residents and the local community.

3.10 STAR AMAL

The STAR AMAL Team was developed in response to the governments Vulnerable Persons Resettlement (VPR) Programme. This programme is delivering on the government commitment to accept a designated number of the most vulnerable refugees that have been displaced from Syria. The refugees may be vulnerable due to their mental or physical health, torture, exposure to the trauma of conflict and living in refugee camps for a number of years. The team of 3 Arabic and 2 non- Arabic speaking Housing Related Support Workers provide intensive resettlement and cultural orientation for newly arrived Syrian refugees who are part of this programme. The team is currently working with 9 families made up of 8 adults and 27 children.

3.11 .The Revolving Door Team

The Revolving Door (RD) Team is made up of two Team Leaders (one vacant) thirteen Housing Related Support Workers (HRSW) (2 vacancies) and one admin assistant. The Revolving Door Team was developed to provide the support needed to break cycles of repeat homelessness. Their main aims and objectives are to support clients that have experienced multiple stays in accommodation based support and where the individual continues to be homeless or have a chaotic lifestyle.

The team provide support to those in commissioned bed spaces and well as in tenancies regardless of tenure and as well as those in prison and the vulnerably housed, including sofa surfers and rough sleepers. The team also support those that experience long stays in commissioned bed spaces.

3.12 The Housing Revenue Account is currently subject to severe cuts as a result of government requirements that the rent is reduced by 1% per year for the next 4 years (2016 to 2020).The savings needed has been estimated at £11.72m needed over a 4 year period (Housing Revenue Budget Rent Setting Report to the Executive 2016/17). The STAR service will not be exempt from these budget reductions and the service will be reviewed accordingly

- Key Achievements
- STAR provided long term support to 1,056 vulnerable Leicester City Council tenants (662 closed cases and 394) for 2015/16.
- 93% of service users completed a planned programme of support (614 closed cases out of 662 closed cases)
- STAR provided 2,609 short term support interventions to reduce tenancy failure (1st April 2015- 31st March 2016).
- STAR received 146 compliments in 2015/16 and 1 complaint
- Braunstone, St Matthews, Saffron and Eyres Monsell STAR teams are all established in the new Transforming Neighbourhood Hubs. New Parks and Beaumont Leys will be moving in the TNS hubs in January 2017.
- Initiating the development of the multi-agency Hoarding policy with Leicester Fire Service. The procedure aims to support Leicester City Council tenants

- who have issues around hoarding which are affecting their tenancy.
- The successful development of the STAR Amal team in December 2016 to meet the requirements of the Vulnerable Persons resettlement programme.

4. Details of Scrutiny

4.1 This is an overview of existing services and for information only

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

5.1.1 This is an overview of existing services and for information only

5.2 Legal implications

5.2.1 Legal services have not be contacted over this report as this is an overview of the current service

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

5.3.1 This is an overview of existing services and for information only

5.4 Equalities Implications

5.4. 1 This is an overview of existing services and for information only

6. Background information and other papers:

None

7. Summary of appendices:

None

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

No

9. Is this a “key decision”? No

Appendix 1. STAR Eligibility Criteria – LCC

Priority	Band
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Council and Home Come tenants moving from Temporary Accommodation ii. Council tenants at high risk of losing their tenancy (Eviction Threat – Letter Sent) iii. People who have been identified as Group A and referred to STAR in last 2 years. 	A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Council tenants at medium risk of losing their tenancy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Notice served b. Introductory tenants c. First Independent Tenancy d. Young Person under 25 years with less than 12 months in the tenancy. ii. Council Tenants with 2 or more factors from following list <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. History of arrears b. Previous support from STAR c. Known vulnerability e.g. Mental Health, Substance Use, Domestic Violence etc. d. Failure to engage with NHO and IMT e. Current or previous court action 	B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Council or Home Come Tenants who ask for help from STAR, or who the NHO, or other agencies are concerned about. 	C

Appendix 2. Vulnerability Assessment

Critical Needs – 20 points each (Tick all that apply)		
Person from abroad with Benefit Issues	History of Homelessness within 2 years	Physical or Sensory Disability Restricted Mobility/Terminal
Child Protection	Care Leaver	High Level Mental Health issues e.g. Personality Disorder
Domestic Violence./History	Learning Difficulties/ Cognitive impairment	Vulnerable Adult at high risk e.g. Hoarding, self-neglect
Other Support needs (Tick all that apply)		Points
Introductory Tenancy		15
Suicide/Self Harm		15
Age 18-24		10
Age 55+		10
Benefit Cap		10
Benefit Problems/ Sanctions		10
Housing Benefit Problems		10
High Level Priority Debts		10
Rent Arrears		10
Nil Income		10
Non Dependant Charge		10
Substance Use		10
Under Occupying/Bedroom Tax		10
Mental Health		5
Physical Health		5
Sensory Impairment		5
ASB/Harassment		5
Carer for resident vulnerable adult		5
Child Behavioural Issues		5
Children under 18 in household/Pregnant		5
Ex-offender		5
Issues with Utilities		5
Poor Literacy		5
Language		5
No Bank Account		5
Other household members disability		5

Priority Band		A	B	C	Vulnerability points	
Critical Needs?	Yes	No		Complex needs (4 or more other support needs)	Yes	No
Dated assessed from referral form:				Name of Team Leader:		

Housing Forward Planner 2016/17 (14/09/2016)

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

MEETING DATE	MEETING ITEMS	LEAD OFFICER	ACTION AGREED
10th October 2016, 6.15pm Agenda meeting 14 September 2016	Introduction of new departmental staffing Northgate IT update Rent arrears quarterly update STAR (including refugee resettlement programme) – update Review of the Housing Register / Housing Allocations Policy Work programme	Chris Burgin Mike Watson	
15th November 2016, 6.15pm Agenda meeting 26 th October 2016	Homelessness strategy Stores service contract procurement Individual meters for district heating system tenants: legality and cost Council House Building Tenant forum – meeting notes Work programme		
19th December 2016, 5.30pm – Special Meeting	Special meeting to consider HRA proposals and rent setting Work programme		
30th January 2017, 6.15pm Agenda meeting 4 th January 2017	Area managers' presentation – 12 month changes and challenges Quarterly Rent Arrears Ex-forces Homelessness Work programme		

Housing Forward Planner 2016/17 (14/09/2016)

<p>20th March 2017, 6.15pm Agenda meeting 22nd February 2017</p>	<p>Area managers' presentation – 12 month changes and challenges</p>		
<p>To be allocated 2016/17 70</p>	<p>Technical services programme: budgets, targets and delivery model Tower block management Goscote House remodelling Pay to stay High value vacant homes levy UC/HB cap/ bedroom tax/ rent arrears Corporate plan: Future stores options for housing and highways (part of using buildings better review) Key decisions: Syrian resettlement programme</p>	<p>Awaiting government information</p>	<p>Late 2016</p>

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17			
MEETING DATE	MEETING ITEMS	LEAD OFFICER	ACTION AGREED
<p>18th April 2016</p> <p>Agenda Meeting : 23rd March 2016</p> <p>✓ Papers to be submitted on 5th April 2016</p>	<p>Housing Voids Progress report</p> <p>Area Manager's briefings: Braunstone and Humberstone wards</p> <p>Housing Division Reconfiguration and Challenges</p> <p>Housing voids task group</p>	<p>Vijay Desor</p> <p>Ellen Watts</p> <p>Chris Burgin</p> <p>Jerry Connolly</p>	
<p>4th July 2016</p> <p>Agenda meeting 8th June 2016</p>	<p>Voids task group update</p> <p>Tenant forum – meeting notes</p> <p>Work programme</p> <p>Departmental structure</p> <p>Homelessness/rough sleepers: position statement</p> <p>Mayor's delivery plan (housing issues)</p> <p>Rent arrears update</p> <p>Empty Homes</p>	<p>Jerry Connolly</p> <p>Jerry Connolly</p> <p>Jerry Connolly</p> <p>Chris Burgin</p> <p>Caroline Jackson/Miranda</p> <p>Jerry</p> <p>Vijay Desor</p>	

<p>22nd August 2016 Agenda meeting 27 July 2016</p>	<p>Homelessness - two year review St Peter's tower block project update Council house-building update Voids task group Work programme Tenant forum – meeting notes if available</p>	<p>Caroline/Miranda Chris Burgin Chris Burgin Jerry Connolly</p>	
<p>10th October 2016 Agenda meeting 14 September 2016</p>	<p>Introduction of new departmental staffing structure - £1.5m savings. Review of the tenancy management service (minute 48: December 2015) Northgate IT update Rent arrears update Work programme Tenant forum – meeting notes Mayor's delivery plan STAR</p>	<p>Suki Supria/ Gurjit Kaur Minhas</p>	
<p>19th December – Special Meeting</p>	<p>Special meeting to consider HRA proposals</p>		
<p>28th November 2016 Agenda meeting 2 November 2016</p>	<p>Stores service contract procurement Individual meters for district heating system tenants: legality and costs</p>		

<p>30th January 2017 Agenda meeting 4th January 2017</p>	<p>Area managers' presentation – 12 month changes and challenges</p>		
<p>20th March 2017 Agenda meeting 22nd February 2017</p>	<p>Area managers' presentation – 12 month changes and challenges</p>		
<p>73 To be allocated 2016/17</p>	<p>Rent arrears quarterly update New departmental management structure Technical services programme: budgets, targets and delivery model Tower block management Goscote House remodelling Work of STAR (including refugee resettlement programme) Pay to stay High value vacant homes levy UC/HB cap/ bedroom tax/ rent arrears Northgate IT system Ex-forces' personnel homelessness Traveller sites: update report Corporate plan: Future stores options for housing and highways (part of using buildings better review) Affordable housing programme annual review: 2015-2019 Key decisions: Syrian resettlement programme</p>	<p>Vijay Desor Chris Burgin</p>	<p>Late 2016</p>

