



RE: HOUSING REPAIRS REVIEW UPDATE
REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE DIRECTION)

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide members with an update on the progress made against the Action Plan produced in response to the review of the Housing Repairs Service.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That members:

- Note and endorse the progress made to date.

3. **BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

3.1 In response to two independent reviews and a further internal financial review, an Action Plan was developed to address the issues identified within the Housing Repairs Service. Delivery against this Plan continues to be closely monitored.

3.2 This Plan was reported to members at the previous meeting and it was agreed that updates and significant variations to the plan would be reported back. This report will therefore set out some of the key areas of progress made to date. Progress against the plan will also be assessed as part of the next Internal Audit Review of Housing Repairs, along with testing of the improved controls and procedures.

3.3 There were 15 tasks within the Action Plan and all but four have been fully implemented. Updates against each action are provided below.

Key Task	Comments
Clear historical backlog of jobs through the Orchard System.	There had been an issue identified where jobs were not been completed in a prompt fashion with in the System and this was causing delays in the finance system also being updated. This has now been completed and the backlog has been cleared. Additional procedures were introduced to ensure this is now carried out regularly. This has resulted in more meaningful reporting of work in progress within the system Complete
Review structure and allocation of budgets.	The budgets were fully reviewed and revised accordingly. This included a cleansing exercise for some erroneous codes and also new budget lines have been created to enable more detailed financial reporting. A new methodology for budget monitoring was also developed between the service and the Finance Team which

Key Task	Comments
	<p>will include a more accurate forecast position. Specific targets have also being set, such as target cost per void property. Any variations from these are challenged accordingly.</p> <p>Complete</p>
<p>Work in Progress (WIP) within the Orchard System is to be analysed and monitored.</p>	<p>This is now done routinely as part of the performance management and budget monitoring process.</p> <p>Complete</p>
<p>Map existing processes for responsive repairs.</p>	<p>These have been done for existing and new processes.</p> <p>Complete</p>
<p>Update Service Procedures and Controls.</p>	<p>Day to day procedures have been reviewed, updated and implemented. These procedures require prompt delivery and closure of jobs on the system based upon new procedures adopted by the engineers. The review has also identified additional policies that were required, such as Acceptable Vehicle Usage and operational requirements regarding engineers availability.</p> <p>Complete (however also under constant review).</p>
<p>Review use of Schedule of Rates and Job Cost Data.</p>	<p>A review of the existing rates is being procured and due to be completed by end November. Changes were made to how job cost data was captured to ensure more efficient use of resources.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>System Training.</p>	<p>Training has been delivered on required systems / modules and this will remain under review as further systems and modules are implemented.</p> <p>Complete</p>
<p>Develop Procurement Plan.</p>	<p>This has been produced and delivery against it will be monitored alongside delivery of the overall Housing Investment Plan.</p> <p>Complete</p>
<p>Review Invoicing Procedures.</p>	<p>There had been a delay of approximately 2 months for invoices from materials suppliers which was having a negative impact on the accuracy of budget monitoring. This has now been resolved and invoices are now received on a timely basis weekly.</p> <p>Complete</p>

Key Task	Comments
Review staffing structure.	<p>The proposed structure introduces more defined client and contractor roles and should also create more resilience within the service. For example, at the moment, the surveyor roles are split and are either in Responsive Repairs or the Planned Maintenance Team. There is a greater pressure on the Responsive Team in terms of inspections and as part of the revised structure, all of the surveyors are within the same team within the client function and as such they will be required and able to cover for all inspections when required.</p> <p>Much of the Principal Repairs Officer's current role is back office administration relating primarily to voids work. Under the revised structure, as more of a contractor, this role will have much needed capacity for allocation of work and management of the engineers. The administration elements are more client related functions and as such will be undertaken by the surveyors.</p> <p>Complete</p>
Introduce Performance Management.	<p>A suite of performance indicators have been identified as part of our membership with Housemark. This data is currently being collated and input to Housemark for reporting and benchmarking. Once the baseline has been established, appropriate targets will be set.</p> <p>The indicator reported upon historically is the Customer Satisfaction level. This is obtained by issuing customer satisfaction questionnaires to all tenants once a job has been completed. At the moment (latest relating to September) is 95.23% against a target of 87% which is high performance. Work is also underway to understand more about which of our tenants typically respond to these questionnaires and the % of responses overall.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Review pre and post inspection regime.	<p>This has been done as part of the structure review in terms of who carries out the inspections and as part of the Orchard Browser Upgrade in terms of when inspections are typically required.</p> <p>Complete</p>
Complete "health check" of Orchard System and data.	<p>This is being done as part of the Orchard Browser Upgrade. All data and system processes are being updated as part of the upgrade work.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Consideration to diagnostic software.	<p>There is some functionality for this within the Orchard System. This is therefore now being done as part of the Orchard Browser Upgrade.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Manage risk of overspend.	<p>This is ongoing as part of the revised budget monitoring procedures and remains a strategic risk and is reflected as such on the Corporate Risk Register.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

- 3.4 The service is also working extensively on delivery of the Stock Enhancements agreed as part of the Investment Strategy. This is a significant programme of work to be delivered over the new five years and needs to be resourced appropriately.
- 3.5 The service is working more closely with Housing Officers and the Housing Management service to be able to deliver a more tenant focussed service. This involves a number of measures.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (KP)

- 4.1 As at September 2013, the Housing Repairs revenue account is forecasting total savings of £50,000 to the end of 2014 due to salary savings identified in the service. The Capital Programme and associated work in progress continue to be monitored closely, with particular attention to the costs associated with processing voids. Any over commitment in this area can be met from the HRA contingencies budget of £252,970 which is currently underspent to this value.
- 4.2 Pending approval, the proposed re-structure of the housing repairs service will be factored into the base establishment budget for 2014/2015. At present this is expected to be cost neutral.
- 4.3 The cost of the systems advances required for this plan are included within the Capital budget for the Orchard system corporate upgrade which is held at £103,820 for 2013/2014.
- 4.4 Any savings identified from the above action plan will be transferred to the Housing Repairs account which had an audited opening balance as at 1st April 2013 of £242,000

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (LH)

None arising directly from the report

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The Housing Repairs Service significantly contributes to the delivery of “Creating a Vibrant Place to Work and Live”.

7. RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is the Council’s policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer’s opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of Significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating Actions	Owner
Variances to Housing Repairs Account	An improvement plan for the service has been developed.	Julie Kenny

9. **KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

10. **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: None

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