

Housing Policy Committee

**Thursday 15 September 2022 at 2.00
pm**

**To be held in the Town Hall,
Pinstone Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillor Douglas Johnson
Councillor Penny Baker
Councillor Ben Curran
Councillor Sue Auckland
Councillor Fran Belbin
Councillor Denise Fox
Councillor Maleiki Haybe
Councillor Sophie Thornton
Councillor Paul Wood

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Housing Policy Committee discusses and takes decisions on Housing matters:

- Public sector
- Private sector
- Homelessness
- Refugee resettlement programmes
- Gypsy and traveller sites

Meetings are chaired by Councillor Douglas Johnson.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk . You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda. Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Policy Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the [Council's Webpage](#) or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Policy Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last on the agenda.

Meetings of the Policy Committee have to be held as physical meetings. If you would like to attend the meeting, please report to an Attendant in the Foyer at the Town Hall where you will be directed to the meeting room. However, it would be appreciated if you could register to attend, in advance of the meeting, by emailing committee@sheffield.gov.uk, as this will assist with the management of attendance at the meeting. The meeting rooms in the Town Hall have a limited capacity. We are unable to guarantee entrance to the meeting room for observers, as priority will be given to registered speakers and those that have registered to attend.

Alternatively, you can observe the meeting remotely by clicking on the 'view the webcast' link provided on the meeting page of the [website](#).

If you wish to attend a meeting and ask a question or present a petition, you must submit the question/petition in writing by 9.00 a.m. at least 2 clear working days in advance of the date of the meeting, by email to the following address: committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

In order to ensure safe access and to protect all attendees, you will be recommended to wear a face covering (unless you have an exemption) at all times within the venue. Please do not attend the meeting if you have COVID-19 symptoms. It is also recommended that you undertake a Covid-19 Rapid Lateral Flow Test within two days of the meeting.

If you require any further information please email committee@sheffield.gov.uk.

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms. Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**HOUSING POLICY COMMITTEE AGENDA
15 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping**
The Chair to welcome attendees to the meeting and outline basic housekeeping and fire safety arrangements.
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Press and Public**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 7 - 10)
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 11 - 16)
To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Work Programme** (Pages 17 - 38)
Report of the Director of Legal and Governance

Formal Decisions

- 8. HRA Business Plan 23/24** (Pages 39 - 54)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 9. Housing General Fund Budget Proposals 23/24** (Pages 55 - 62)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 10. Community Heating pricing Review** (Pages 63 - 68)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 11. Housing Performance Report** (Pages 69 - 100)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 12. Housing Ombudsman Code of Practice** (Pages 101 - 120)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 13. Revenue Monitoring Report** (Pages 121 -

Report of Director of Finance and Commercial Services

Private Items

- 14. HRA Pressures and Savings (linked to item 8)** (Pages 131 - 182)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services
- 15. General Fund Pressures and Savings (linked to Item 9)** (Pages 183 - 204)
Report of Executive Director, Operational Services

NOTE: The next meeting of Housing Policy Committee will be held on Thursday 10 November 2022 at 10.00 am

***(NOTE: The reports at item 14 and 15 in the above agenda are not available to the public and press because they contains exempt information described in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)**

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its Policy Committees, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal and Governance on 0114 2734018 or email gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk.

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Housing Policy Committee

Meeting held 9 June 2022

PRESENT: Councillors Douglas Johnson (Chair), Penny Baker (Deputy Chair), Paul Wood (Group Spokesperson), Sue Auckland, Fran Belbin, Ben Curran, Denise Fox, Maleiki Haybe and Sophie Thornton

1. WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the housekeeping.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Safiya Saeed.

3. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

3.2 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4.1 There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 The following petitions and questions were received and responses were provided.

5.2 Lead Petitioner: Anonymous

The Council has received a petition containing 15 signatures, demanding an effective deterrent to be installed to prevent doves nesting on the council building block on Harrowden Road.

“We the tenants at Harrowden Road, Sheffield S9 who occupy the council building sign this petition against Sheffield City Council to demand that an effective deterrent is installed to prevent feral doves from nesting on the block.

Over 40+ doves use the maisonette building to nest, breed, wake tenants at dawn and leave concentrated droppings on balconies and ledges where they roost. This poses a serious risk to our health and well being because the birds carry diseases that are airborne and can be transferred to humans just by being around droppings. They are a hazard to tenants under the Housing Health and Safety System, as well as a statutory nuisance.

We the tenants demand that Sheffield City Housing fully fund and put in place a deterrent before the end of the financial year 2022/23.”

The Chair acknowledged the petition and explained that he understood housing officers were now looking to investigate the issue to see what could be done.

5.3 A question was received from Emily Procter:

“Ahead of the Housing Policy Committee meeting on 9/6/22 at 10am, I have a question that I would like to ask.

I privately rent in Broomhill, and have faced problems with my landlord not providing a clean flat, and not fixing things quickly enough. Many of my friends in Crookes have faced the same problems. Do you support the introduction of a selective landlord licensing scheme in Crookes and Broomhill, as called for by Sheffield Labour Students?”

Any tenant experiencing issues with poor property condition or concerns relating to management can report them to Private Housing Standards who will investigate. However, it is important that tenants, in the first instance, report repairs etc to their landlord to give them the opportunity to carry out necessary works.

The Chair responded to the question and explained that in order to apply to introduce a Selective Licensing scheme, Private Housing Standards must gather evidence to prove that the issues in the area are serious and extensive and meet the conditions as set out in the Government guidance.

It was explained that the Council are happy to explore the need for selective licensing schemes where it can be clear that there is a need and would welcome a conversation with Sheffield Labour Students to discuss this further.

5.4 A question was received from Geoff Cox.

“Will this committee recommend that SCC finds the funding to set up a Home Insulation and Renewable Domestic Energy Advice Centre to replace and enhance the now disbanded South Yorkshire Energy Centre? Sheffield needs a suitably resourced independent service that can give impartial, trusted advice to home owners on decarbonising their own properties. The Centre should be resourced to respond to the needs of an increasing number of home owners - focussing on the assessment of properties, engaging suitably qualified contractors and the availability of grants, loans, etc. An identical question is being asked of the Regeneration, Transport and Climate Change Committee.”

The Chair acknowledged the question and explained that it would be passed on for officers to look into.

6. HOUSING POLICY COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

6.1 The Director of Housing gave a presentation on the Housing and Neighbourhood services. The presentation included information on:

- Roles and responsibilities

- Structures
- Partnerships
- Vision
- Strategic Approach
- Investment and Growth
- 5 Year Capital Programme
- Council housing
- Neighbourhood and Tenancy Enforcement
- Review of Housing Plus approach
- Specialist housing and support
- New specialist accommodation
- Key performance indicators
- Challenges moving forwards
- Customer Engagement Strategy
- Supporting the next generation of staff

Members of the Committee asked questions and responses were provided by Janet Sharpe surrounding specialist homes, right to buy applications, demands for social housing, repairs, consequences of stock reductions, significant demands for emergency and temporary accommodation and housing strategy provision across tenures.

The committee were asked to note the presentation.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

- 7.1 Alice Nicholson presented the Work Programme and informed Committee that this would be a regular item and although it contained suggestions for what it may contain, it was up to the Committee to decide. Appendix 3 of the report contained the actual work programme which would be visible to the public.

The forthcoming programme was summarised and it was highlighted that the committee has many items that needed addressing.

Members raised points and questions and responses were provided by Janet Sharpe surrounding retro fitting, fortnightly knowledge briefings, letting agents, student accreditation and available interventions within the city. Tom smith supported exploring ways to provide useful data and information and suggested for an informal meeting to discuss further. It was also explained that access opportunities were being explored alongside the customer review that is already underway.

Alice Nicholson reminded that the purpose of pre-agenda meetings would be to inform future work plans.

UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that:

1. With reference to issues raised in this report, consideration be given to any further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Appendix 3.
2. That the committee's work programme as set out in Appendix was agreed.
3. That consideration be given to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in part 6 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme.

8. MONTH 1 MONITORING, FINANCIAL POSITION AND BUDGET TIMETABLE REVENUE AND MONITORING REPORT

8.1 The report brought the Committee up to date with the Council's financial position as at Month 1 2022/23. The report also reported the proposed budget timetable for the development of the 2023/24 budget

8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Housing Policy Committee:-

1. Note the Council's challenging financial position and the Month 1 position.
2. Note the budget timetable set out in this report including the requirement for the Committee to plan to develop budget proposals over the course of the summer.
3. Note that the Strategy and Resources Committee was recommended at its 31 May 2022 meeting to "require any Policy Committee that is forecasting an overspend on their budget to develop an action plan to address the overspend in-year and ask the Finance Sub-Committee to monitor both the development of any required action plans and delivery against them".
4. Commission work from Officers to develop and implement plans to mitigate the overspend in the Housing Revenue Account and deliver stalled savings plans to bring forecast outturn back in line with budget

8.3 Reasons for Decision

8.3.1 By the law the Council must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions which shows how income will equal spend over the short- and medium-term. This can take into account deliverable cost savings and/or local income growth strategies as well as useable reserves.

8.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 8.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

9. **RENT RECOVERY POLICY**

- 9.1 To seek authority to update the Rent Arrears Recovery Policy. The changes to the policy will ensure that the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) monies continue to be collected in a timely manner, with a bigger emphasis on prevention and support, trying to stop people falling into arrears in the first place. This income is used to provide comprehensive tenancy and estate management services for all Council tenancies, Council housing repairs, regulatory compliance and delivery of capital investment programmes to improve the quality of homes and assets held in the HRA account. It enables Sheffield City Council to meet its statutory and regulatory responsibilities to continue the provision of providing decent homes to council tenants and equality of opportunity for people to have affordable housing to live in.

9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That Housing Policy Committee:-

1. Consider the results of the consultation and have due regard to the feedback in reaching their decision.
2. Approves the changes to the current Rent Arrears Recovery Policy.

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

- 9.3.1 The changes to the Rent Arrears Recovery Policy will ensure that the Council's Housing Revenue Account monies continue to be collected in a timely manner. They will enable Sheffield City Council to continue the provision of providing a good quality home to council tenants, and equality of opportunity for people to access a suitable affordable home to meet their needs.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 9.4.1 Not updating the policy could result in a reduction of service and support to tenants to maximise their income and sustain their tenancies. This could ultimately result in increased arrears and reduced income to the Housing Revenue Account.

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Report to Housing Committee

9th June 2022

Report of: Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal and Governance

Subject: Committee Work Programme

Author of Report: Rachel Marshall, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Summary:

The Committee's Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. This aims to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee.

Any changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, have been made in consultation with the Chair, and the document is always considered at the regular pre-meetings to which all Group Spokespersons are invited.

The following potential sources of new items are included in this report, where applicable:

- Questions and petitions from the public, including those referred from Council
- References from Council or other committees (statements formally sent for this committee's attention)
- A list of issues, each with a short summary, which have been identified by the Committee or officers as potential items but which have not yet been scheduled (See Appendix 1)

The Work Programme will remain a live document and will be brought to each Committee meeting.

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. That consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1;
3. That Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme; and
4. *(Add specific recommended actions for issues requiring a steer from the Committee eg in respect of items identified in Section 2 - referrals from other committees and petitions/questions etc)*

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

1.0 Prioritisation

1.1 For practical reasons this committee has a limited amount of time each year in which to conduct its formal business. The Committee will need to prioritise firmly in order that formal meetings are used primarily for business requiring formal decisions, or which for other reasons it is felt must be conducted in a formal setting.

1.2 In order to ensure that prioritisation is effectively done, on the basis of evidence and informed advice, Members should usually avoid adding items to the work programme which do not already appear:

- In the draft work programme in Appendix 1 due to the discretion of the chair; or
- within the body of this report accompanied by a suitable amount of information

2.0 References from Council or other Committees

2.1 Any references sent to this Committee by Council, including any public questions, petitions and motions, or other committees since the last meeting are listed here, with commentary and a proposed course of action, as appropriate:

Issue 1	Pride in Sheffield
Referred from	Resolution of Council on 20 July 2022
<i>Details</i>	A link to the full resolution is available here: (Public Pack)Resolutions passed at the meeting of the Council held on 20th July 2022 Agenda Supplement for Council, 20/07/2022 14:00 (sheffield.gov.uk) Extract in respect of this Policy Committee:

	<p>(J) believes in supporting inclusive housing and LGBTQ+ Sheffields who face homelessness, and that no one in Sheffield should be made homeless as a result of coming out or being rejected by their families by virtue of who they are, and asks the Housing Policy Committee to consider investigating ways this Council can:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) help reduce homelessness in young LGBTQ+ people by supporting LGBTQ+ youth services, as well as providing information and support; (ii) give considerations for LGBTQ+ supported housing for older LGBTQ+ people in Sheffield, dependent on need, as has been done by councils such as Lambeth, as we look to expand our social housing stock; and (iii) continue supporting projects that help people that are homeless and/or rough sleeping in any way we can;
<p><i>Commentary/ Action Proposed</i></p>	<p>The Council via the Equalities and Engagement Team, has supported a range of events in the past year including relating specifically to the LGBTQ+ community in Sheffield, this will be outlined in our Annual Equality Report 2021/22 which will go to the Strategy and Resources Committee in 2022.</p> <p>We currently grant fund LGBT Sheffield, as part of the Equality Partnership for its engagement work in the city. The People Portfolio also grant fund Sayit to support LGBTQ+ young people. We gave small grants in 2021/22 to and supported Pinknic does Pride an event held in the city centre in July, Trans Day of Remembrance and IDAHOBiT. We also support a range of awareness days & months such as LGBT History Month and Pride Month.</p> <p>In June 2021, in collaboration with LGBT Sheffield, set up and supported an LGBT+ survey about experiences in COVID, which also asked about general facilities for LGBT+ people. Through this survey and the wider work through the Equality Partnership it has helped in establishing what support and facilities people in Sheffield said they would like to see.</p> <p>Within the next year we will continue to work with Members and via the Strategic Equality and</p>

	<p>Inclusion Board to take forward the elements of this resolution relating to our LGBTQ+ staff, residents, and visitors and embed them as appropriate within our Equality Objectives and Equality and Engagement delivery plan including our work on Awareness Days. Also, we produce an internal and external equality newsletter that people can sign up to if you want to read about work across all areas of equality, contact the Equality and Engagement team to find out equalitiesandinvolvement@sheffield.gov.uk</p> <p>Action: That the resolution of Council and the range of activity currently being undertaken be noted and officers be requested to continue to work with Members and via the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board to take forward the elements of this resolution relating to our LGBTQ+ staff, residents, and visitors and embed them as appropriate within our Equality Objectives and Equality and Engagement delivery plan including our work on Awareness Days.</p>
Issue 2	Regulation of private landlords
Referred from	North East LAC
<i>Details</i>	<p>The following public question was raised at the meeting:</p> <p>It was mentioned that the North East Community Plan had little mention of how private landlords had a devastating effect on the community. It was added that Selective Licensing was also a total failure. Therefore, what strategic actions does the LAC intend to take.</p>
<i>Commentary/ Action Proposed</i>	TBC
Issue 3	Demolition of Outhouses at Busk Meadow
<i>Referred from</i>	Full Council 20 July 2022
<i>Details</i>	An electronic petition was sent to FC with 10 signatures. The lead petitioner was Cadine Plunkett-Thomson. The petition is as follows:

	<p>We the undersigned petition the council to uphold the commitment they reneged on in the demolition of the structurally unsafe, health hazard, visibly unsightly outhouses they once more backed out of demolishing.</p> <p>Residents that has been tenants of the occupied flats has stated that this has been going on for well over fifteen years and they feel as if their voices doesn't matter. The council made about three, possibly more attempts or lack therefore to demolish these outhouses and has found reasons to suit them to back out.</p> <p>We are no longer having that. As a leaseholder I need it demolished with urgency. The building has Asbestos, which we all know is a health hazard. The building is crumbling and beyond unsightly. Most importantly it is dangerous. The buildings are situated in a communal area where the children plays as there are no parks on the estate it has become unsafe for children to play there with the crumbling of the buildings and the collapsing of the adjoining wall.</p> <p>Having the council do a botch job of "mending it" isn't an option and one that all residents bar two (members of the same family) isn't overlooking. I own one of the outbuilding and as it's dilapidated I have no objections to it been demolished.</p> <p>I want the council to act as if this was in an upscale area. In a Fulwood this would not have even been a debate. We the residents aren't listening to any excuse but one for a date of demolition in the very near future.</p> <p>Started by: Cadine Plunkett-Thompson</p> <p>This ePetition ran from 09/06/2022 to 19/07/2022 and has now finished.</p> <p>10 people signed this ePetition.</p>
<i>Commentary/Action Proposed</i>	TBC

3.0 Member engagement, learning and policy development outside of Committee

3.1 Subject to the capacity and availability of councillors and officers, there are a range of ways in which Members can explore subjects, monitor information and develop their ideas about forthcoming decisions outside of formal meetings. Appendix 2 is an example 'menu' of some of the ways this could be done. It is entirely appropriate that member development, exploration and policy development should in many cases take place in a private setting, to allow members to learn and formulate a position in a neutral space before bringing the issue into the public domain at a formal meeting.

2.2 Training & Skills Development - Induction programme for this committee.

Title	Description & Format	Date

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Part 1: Proposed additions and amendments to the work programme since the last meeting:

Item	Proposed Date	Note
Asbestos Management Plan for Non-Domestic and Domestic Property	TBA	Deferred from September meeting. Future date to be arranged.
Gas Servicing policy and procedure	TBA	Deferred from September meeting. Future date to be arranged.
Housing Strategy (draft for consultation)	TBA	Deferred from September meeting. Future date to be arranged.
Charged Gardening Scheme	TBA	Deferred from September meeting. Future date to be arranged.
Service Charges and Consultation arrangements	TBA	Deferred from September meeting. Future date to be arranged.
Net-Zero Roadmap - for existing public and private homes	TBA	Deferred from September meeting. Future date to be arranged.
Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy	November 2022	Janet Sharpe informed that this item to be moved from Sept to November Meeting.
Budget Proposals 2023/24	November 2022	<p>The Strategy and Resources Committee will meet on 12 October to consider the budget proposals made by each Policy Committee and presented to the September meeting of the Policy Committee.</p> <p>The Strategy and Resources Committee may ask for further work from Policy Committees which may result in changes to the proposals originally made.</p> <p>This report will seek the Policy Committee’s final agreement to any changes to the proposals presented to the Policy Committee’s September meeting.</p>

		Notwithstanding to any late changes in government funding, this report will represent the Policy Committee's final budget position for 2023/24. The November report will amend the September report based on asks from the S&R Committee
Capital Strategy Finance Report	November 2022	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report to be deferred to the November 2022 meeting.

Part 2: List of other potential items not yet included in the work programme

Issues that have recently been identified by the Committee, its Chair or officers as potential items but have not yet been added to the proposed work programme. If a Councillor raises an idea in a meeting and the committee agrees under recommendation 3 that this should be explored, it will appear either in the work programme or in this section of the report at the committee's next meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

Topic	
Description	
Lead Officer/s	
Item suggested by	<i>Officer, Member, Committee, partners, public question, petition etc</i>
Type of item	<i>Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)</i>
Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 2)</i>	
Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)</i>	
Lead Officer Commentary/Proposed Action(s)	

Part 3: Agenda Items for Forthcoming Meetings

Meeting 2	September 2022	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision • Referral to decision-maker • Pre-decision (policy development) • Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring) 	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	(re: decisions) Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Cttee • Another Cttee (eg S&R) • Full Council • Officer
Item 1 - HRA Business Plan 23/24	Consideration of budget setting priorities and savings for 23/24	Janet Sharpe	Pre-decision (policy development)	Yes		This Committee
Item 2 –Housing General Fund Budget Proposals 23/34	S&R has asked each Policy Committee to develop budget proposals on a cash-standstill basis and to report those proposals to the September 2022 meeting. Now added to each Policy Committee Work Programme.	Janet Sharpe	Decision			
Item 3 – Community Heating Price Review	Consideration of a mid-year update to District Heating charges because of energy price rises	Janet Sharpe and Fiona Orr	Referral to decision-maker	Yes		Full Council

Item 4 – Housing Performance Report (4a & b)	Bi-annual overview of HNS and Repairs Service performance (including Capital Programme and Stock Increase Programme updates)	Janet Sharpe	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A		N/A
Item 5 – Housing Ombudsman Code of Practice (5a)	Approval of the Council’s self-assessment against the Ombudsman Code of Practice in Complaint Handling	Bev Mullooly & Vicky Kennedy	Decision	Yes		This Committee
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> • <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i> 					
Budget Monitoring Report - Month 4	Finance Report for Housing General Fund and, Housing Revenue Account	Ryan Keyworth / Jane Wilby	Referral to decision-maker	N/A		N/A

Meeting 3	November 2022	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item	(re: decisions)	(re: decisions)	Final decision-maker (& date)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Decision</i> 			

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to decision-maker • Pre-decision (policy development) • Post-decision (service performance/monitoring) 	Prior member engagement/development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	Public Participation/Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Cttee • Another Cttee (eg S&R) • Full Council • Officer
Item 1	Budget Position for year 2023/2024	Ryan Keyworth	Decision			This Committee
Older Persons Independent Living Strategy	Approve draft OPIL Strategy for consultation	Georgina Parkin	Pre-decision (policy development)	Yes		This Committee
Private Sector Assistance Policy	Approve amendments to existing policy	Georgina Parkin	Decision	Yes		This Committee
Garage and Outhouses Repair and Investment Strategy	To review and approve the approach to carrying out investment options and repairs to the remainder of the HRA garages stock	Nesreen Lowson	Decision	Yes		This Committee
Gypsy and Traveller New Pitch and Sites Plan	Plans for new site provision of G&T sites to meet shortfall	Georgina Parkin	Decision	Yes		This Committee
Gleadless Valley Delivery Plan	Consultation and approval of the Gleadless Valley Delivery Plan	Dean Butterworth	Decision	Yes		This Committee
HRA Business Plan 2023/24	Approval of the final HRA Business Plan and tenant charges for 23/24 prior to referral to Full Council	Janet Sharpe	Referral to decision-maker	Yes		This Committee & Full Council

Housing-related Support Review	Consultation of proposals for SCC housing-related support services	Suzanne Allen	Pre-decision (policy development)	Yes		This Committee
Leaseholder Charging Policy	Approval of the Leaseholder Charging Policy	Catherine Hill	Decision	Yes		This Committee
SIP Monitoring Report and Update	Performance/delivery update on the Stock Increase Programme	Kerry Bollington	Post-decision (service performance/monitoring)	N/A		N/A
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> • <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i> 					
Capital Approvals	Approval of Capital Business Cases	Nesreen Lowson / Alison Charlesworth/ Jo Payne	Referral to decision-maker	N/A		N/A
Capital Finance Report	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Nesreen Lowson / Alison Charlesworth	Post-decision (service performance/monitoring)	N/A		N/A
Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy	Approval of Final Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy	Suzanne Allen	Decision	Yes		This Committee

Meeting 4	TBC	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring) 	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/ development required (with reference to options in Appendix 1)	(re: decisions) Public Participation/ Engagement approach (with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer
Housing Strategy	Approve final Housing Strategy	Suzanne Allen	Referral to decision-maker	Yes		This Committee and Full Council
Domestic heating strategy	To review and approve 10-year heating strategy for domestic dwellings in our aim to achieve net zero.	Alison Charlesworth	Decision	Yes		This Committee
Commercial heating strategy and plans	To approve heating strategy for commercial heating systems to achieve net zero and upgrade failing systems.	Alison Charlesworth	Decision	Yes		This Committee
Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Fees	Approval of annual charges for Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Fees	Jonathan South	Decision	Yes		This Committee

HNS and Repairs Performance Report	Bi-annual overview of HNS performance (including Capital Programme and Stock Increase Programme updates)	Janet Sharpe	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A		This Committee
Review of Selective Licensing/ City wide Licensing Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation/Approval of any changes to Selective licensing/City Wide Licensing schemes 	Catherine Hughes	Pre-decision (policy development)	Yes		This Committee
HRA Community Buildings – BIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of possible changes to the provision of HRA community buildings 	Peter Brown	Pre-decision (policy development)	Yes		This Committee
Customer access points – Review, BIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of possible changes to HRA-managed customer access points 	Dean Fearon	Pre-decision (policy development)	Yes		This Committee
Consultation on amendments to the Allocations Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of proposed Allocation policy amendments. 	David Wilkinson	Pre-decision (policy development)	Yes		This Committee
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Questions/ Petitions</i> • <i>Work Programme</i> • <i>[any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring]</i> 					
Capital Approvals	Approval of Capital Business Cases	Nesreen Lowson / Alison	Referral to decision-maker	N/A		N/A

		Charlesworth/ Jo Payne				
Capital Finance Report	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Nesreen Lowson / Alison Charlesworth	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A		N/A

Meeting 5	TBC	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Referral to decision-maker Pre-decision (policy development) Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring) 	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/ development required (with reference to options in Appendix 1)	(re: decisions) Public Participation/ Engagement approach (with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)	Final decision-maker (& date) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Cttee Another Cttee (eg S&R) Full Council Officer
Shared Ownership Policy	Approval of amendments to existing Shared Ownership policy	Georgina Parkin	Decision	Yes		This Committee
Communal Areas Investment Strategy	Approval of the 5-year investment plan for communal areas for low rise flats.	Nesreen Lowson	Decision	Yes		This Committee
SIP Monitoring Report and Update	Performance/delivery update on the Stock Increase Programme	Kerry Bollington	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Questions/ Petitions Work Programme 					

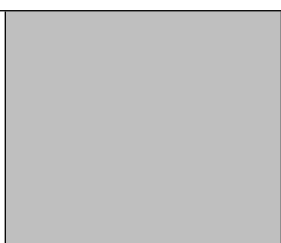
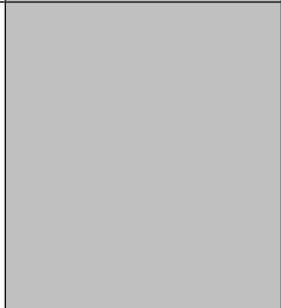
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring] 					
Capital Approvals	Approval of Capital Business Cases	Nesreen Lowson / Alison Charlesworth/ Jo Payne	Referral to decision-maker	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Finance Report	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Nesreen Lowson / Alison Charlesworth	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Meeting 6	TBC	Time				
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/ development required (with reference to options in Appendix 1)	(re: decisions) Public Participation/ Engagement approach (with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)	Final decision-maker (& date)
HNS and Repairs Performance Report	Bi-annual overview of HNS and Repairs Service performance (including Capital Programme and Stock Increase Programme updates)	Janet Sharpe	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A		This Committee
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Questions/ Petitions Work Programme 					

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [any other committee-specific standing items eg finance or service monitoring] 					
Capital Approvals	Approval of Capital Business Cases	Nesreen Lowson / Alison Charlesworth/ Jo Payne	Referral to decision-maker	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Finance Report	Approval of Capital Finance Monitoring Report	Nesreen Lowson / Alison Charlesworth	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Items which the committee have agreed to add to an agenda, but for which no date is yet set.						
Topic	Description	Lead Officer/s	Type of item	(re: decisions) Prior member engagement/ development required <i>(with reference to options in Appendix 1)</i>	(re: decisions) Public Participation/ Engagement approach <i>(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)</i>	Final decision-maker (& date)
NEW Rentsense system recontract	Current contract for support, maintenance, and hosting of the Rentsense system ends in December 22, new	Janet Sharpe	Decision	Prior member engagement yet to be carried out	N/A	Housing Committee

	contract with existing supplier required.					
DEFERRED FROM SEPTEMBER Asbestos Management Plan for Non-Domestic and Domestic Property	Annual Review and update of Policy and the Asbestos Management Plan for properties managed by the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service	Nesreen Lowson	Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)	N/A		N/A
DEFERRED FROM SEPTEMBER Gas Servicing policy and procedure	Approval of a new policy and procedure for managing gas servicing cases and enforcement of annual inspections	Alison Charlesworth	Decision	Yes		This Committee
DEFERRED FROM SEPTEMBER Housing Strategy (draft for consultation)	Approval of draft Housing Strategy to be published for public consultation	Suzanne Allen	Pre-decision (policy development)	Yes		This Committee
DEFERRED FROM SEPTEMBER Charged Gardening Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of a charged gardening scheme for council tenants 	Helen Scott	Policy and Implementation	Yes		This Committee

<p>DEFERRED FROM SEPTEMBER Service Charges and Consultation arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of the possible introduction of service charges for council tenants 	<p>Carl Mullooly</p>	<p>Pre-decision (policy development) – to commence formal consultation.</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>This Committee</p>
<p>DEFERRED FROM SEPTEMBER Net-Zero Roadmap - for existing public and private homes</p>	<p>Approval of plans for achieving Net Zero across SCC homes - Stage 1</p>	<p>Nathan Robinson</p>	<p>Decision</p>	<p>Yes</p>		<p>This Committee</p>

Appendix 2 – Menu of options for member engagement, learning and development prior to formal Committee consideration

Members should give early consideration to the degree of pre-work needed before an item appears on a formal agenda.

All agenda items will anyway be supported by the following:

- Discussion well in advance as part of the work programme item at Pre-agenda meetings. These take place in advance of each formal meeting, before the agenda is published and they consider the full work programme, not just the immediate forthcoming meeting. They include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers
- Discussion and, where required, briefing by officers at pre-committee meetings in advance of each formal meeting, after the agenda is published. These include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers.
- Work Programming items on each formal agenda, as part of an annual and ongoing work programming exercise
- Full officer report on a public agenda, with time for a public discussion in committee
- Officer meetings with Chair & VC as representatives of the committee, to consider addition to the draft work programme, and later to inform the overall development of the issue and report, for the committee's consideration.

The following are examples of some of the optional ways in which the committee may wish to ensure that they are sufficiently engaged and informed prior to taking a public decision on a matter. In all cases the presumption is that these will take place in private, however some meetings could happen in public or eg be reported to the public committee at a later date.

These options are presented in approximately ascending order of the amount of resources needed to deliver them. Members must prioritise carefully, in consultation with officers, which items require what degree of involvement and information in advance of committee meetings, in order that this can be delivered within the officer capacity available.

The majority of items cannot be subject to the more involved options on this list, for reasons of officer capacity.

- Written briefing for the committee or all members (email)
- All-member newsletter (email)
- Requests for information from specific outside bodies etc.
- All-committee briefings (private or, in exceptional cases, in-committee)
- All-member briefing (virtual meeting)
- Facilitated policy development workshop (potential to invite external experts / public, see appendix 2)
- Site visits (including to services of the council)
- Task and Finish group (one at a time, one per cttee)

Furthermore, a range of public participation and engagement options are available to inform Councillors, see appendix 3.

Appendix 3 – Public engagement and participation toolkit

Public Engagement Toolkit

On 23 March 2022 Full Council agreed the following:

A toolkit to be developed for each committee to use when considering its 'menu of options' for ensuring the voice of the public has been central to their policy development work. Building on the developing advice from communities and Involve, committees should make sure they have a clear purpose for engagement; actively support diverse communities to engage; match methods to the audience and use a range of methods; build on what's worked and existing intelligence (SCC and elsewhere); and be very clear to participants on the impact that engagement will have.

The list below builds on the experiences of Scrutiny Committees and latterly the Transitional Committees and will continue to develop. The toolkit includes (but is not be limited to):

- a. Public calls for evidence
- b. Issue-focused workshops with attendees from multiple backgrounds (sometimes known as 'hackathons') led by committees
- c. Creative use of online engagement channels
- d. Working with VCF networks (eg including the Sheffield Equality Partnership) to seek views of communities
- e. Co-design events on specific challenges or to support policy development
- f. Citizens assembly style activities
- g. Stakeholder reference groups (standing or one-off)
- h. Committee / small group visits to services
- i. Formal and informal discussion groups
- j. Facilitated communities of interest around each committee (eg a mailing list of self-identified stakeholders and interested parties with regular information about forthcoming decisions and requests for contributions or volunteers for temporary co-option)
- k. Facility for medium-term or issue-by-issue co-option from outside the Council onto Committees or Task and Finish Groups. Co-optees of this sort at Policy Committees would be non-voting.

This public engagement toolkit is intended to be a quick 'how-to' guide for Members and officers to use when undertaking participatory activity through committees.

It will provide an overview of the options available, including the above list, and cover:

- How to focus on purpose and who we are trying to reach
- When to use and when not to use different methods
- How to plan well and be clear to citizens what impact their voice will have
- How to manage costs, timescales, scale.

There is an expectation that Members and Officers will be giving strong consideration to the public participation and engagement options for each item on a committee's work programme, with reference to the above list a-k.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Janet Sharpe,
Director of Housing

Tel: 0114 2735493

Report of: Executive Director, Operational Services

Report to: Housing Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 15 September 2022

Subject: Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2023/24

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given?				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

The report provides an update of the key national and local contextual influences on the development of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2023/24. It includes an explanation of the legal and financial framework governing the creation of the HRA Business Plan along with an assessment of associated risk. It sets the scene for a more detailed exploration of the potential options for delivering a balanced HRA Business Plan to be considered by this Committee in November 2022.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Housing Policy Committee: -

1. Notes the HRA Business Plan update and wider national and local influences as described in this report
2. Recommends that a further HRA Business Plan 2023/24 report to be presented at the Housing Policy Committee in November 2022 including recommendations around the rent increases for 2023/24, the HRA budget for 2023/24 and savings proposals for 2023/24.

Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Helen Damon
		Legal: Stephen Tonge
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>n/a</i>
		Climate: <i>n/a</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	EMT member who approved submission:	<i>Ajman Ali</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Douglas Johnson</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Janet Sharpe</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Housing</i>
	Date: 7 th September 2022	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Summary

1.1.1 The report provides an update of the key national and local contextual influences on the development of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2023/24. It includes an explanation of the legal and financial framework governing the creation of the HRA Business Plan along with an assessment of associated risk. It sets the scene for a more detailed exploration of the potential options for delivering a balanced HRA Business Plan to be considered by this Committee in November 2022.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 The HRA is the financial account of the Council as landlord. It is ring-fenced in law for income and expenditure in respect of council housing and housing land and certain activities in connection with the provision of council housing only. Other council services are funded through council tax and central government support which benefits all citizens of Sheffield regardless of tenure.

1.2.2 The HRA Business Plan sets out how all aspects of council housing will be funded from income (predominately rents) that the local authority is able to generate in its capacity as landlord.

1.2.3 The HRA operates within a national political context; therefore, any changes within national housing and social policy can have a significant impact on the HRA Business Plan. Some of these key changes are set out in section 3.

1.2.4 Each year the HRA Business Plan is reviewed and updated to set budgets and charges for the year ahead and to provide an updated 5-year plan and 30-year affordability profile

1.2.5 The review of the HRA Business Plan is a dynamic process which reflects the Council's ambitions to be an excellent landlord. This is not just something that we undertake once a year but an ongoing dialogue with tenants to identify investment and service priorities that will improve the quality of homes and services provided.

1.2.6 The recommendations in this report are based on the best information available at the time of writing – August 2022.

1.3 Summary of key national considerations

1.3.1 • The Cost-of-Living Crisis and Rising Inflation

The UK is currently experiencing sharp increases in the cost of living with prices of food, energy, and other essential goods exceeding increases in household income. Inflation rates are predicted to rise throughout the rest of 2022, and this will have significant impact on both our tenants and the HRA

Business Plan. Rising living costs mean many tenants are facing increasingly difficult financial situations, and rent accounts are becoming increasingly complex to manage. The Government have responded by making some provisions that aim to support lower income households such cost-of-living payments and support with rising energy costs. We continue to provide support for tenants who may be struggling financially. We have developed a tailored service for different customer groups, helping those in need of support to manage their money and navigate commitments to rent and other charges. We are also continuing to collaborate and work with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Children's Services, and charities to ensure our tenants and their families are adequately supported.

Rising inflation levels are also directly impacting the HRA. Increasing costs in materials will have an impact on our investment and maintenance programmes of works, making some key areas of investment within the current business plan now unaffordable. This is a key part of this year's update and some difficult choices on which of our future priorities and plans.

1.3.2 • **Social Housing Rent Increases 2023/24**

Rents for council dwellings are set in line with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard which is currently September's Consumer Price Index (CPI) + 1%. This is the maximum amount rent levels can be increased under current Government policy. Rent increases support the delivery of planned activity. Last year's business plan included a rent increase of 4.1% (September 2021 CPI 3.1% + 1%).

The Government launched a consultation on a temporary amendment to the Rent Standard for 2023/24 on 31st August 2022. This new Direction, if approved, would require the Regulator to amend its Rent Standard so that the current CPI+1% limit on annual rent increases would be subject to a ceiling from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The draft direction is based on setting the ceiling at 5%. This would act as an upper limit on the maximum permitted annual rent increase a Registered Provider is allowed to implement. Registered Providers would be permitted to increase rents by 5% or CPI+1%, whichever is the lower. However, within this consultation, the government are seeking views on 3%, 5% and 7% as ceiling options. There are exemptions proposed to the ceiling for new homes and vacant properties upon reletting. The consultation period runs until 12th October 2022.

As the HRA's main source of income is from rents, the financial strategy has been to increase the rent each year in accordance with the Government policy. This is to help ensure the HRA can afford all planned investment activities and fulfil our commitments. At the time of writing this report, we do not know what the September CPI rate is, however, what we do know based on the current trend data is that CPI is much higher than it has been in more recent years. The CPI in July 2022 was 10.1% and there is a high possibility of this further increasing over the next few months with predictions of up to 11% or 12% by September 2022.

There are significant financial pressures that the 2023/24 HRA Business Plan will have to address including rising significant cost inflation, materials and purchasing constraints and pressures on cost of living. If the rent is set at below the September CPI rate, this will have an impact on our planned activities and in some circumstances mean we are no longer able to deliver everything we have planned to do. A rent increase of below CPI+1% does have a significant impact on the business plan, as the rent 'lost' is a permanent reduction to the rent base.

1.3.3 • **Welfare Reform**

The number of council housing tenants in Sheffield on Universal Credit continues to rise. There are currently around 34% of tenants now on Universal Credit with an additional 2,000 tenants that have now moved onto the full-service Universal Credit. There are still over 8,500 working age tenants claiming Housing Benefit who will need to transition to Universal Credit by 2024. There are around 74% of council housing tenants in total that are receiving full or partial Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

Evidence shows that most new Universal Credit claimants accrue additional arrears in the first 3 months of their claim so we will continue to monitor this and make support available for any tenant that needs it. We promote Direct Debit as the preferred payment method for all tenants, including Universal Credit claimants, as it increases the likelihood of prompt rent payments and is a condition of tenancy. Our work with the DWP includes close working with their case officers who assist new claimants with their Universal Credit claims and offer rent advice at the beginning of a claim. The tailored service that we provide to different customer groups includes those on benefits, and we will support those in need in navigating rent and managing money.

1.3.4 • **The Social Housing Regulation Bill**

The Social Housing Regulation Bill was first introduced to parliament in June 2022. It sets out reforms intended to make landlords more accountable for the services they deliver, changes to the complaints process and the introduction of a set of tenant satisfaction measures that all landlords will have to report against. The Bill also enables the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to proactively regulate consumer standards and be given stronger powers to regularly inspect poor performing landlords.

Compliance with these regulatory requirements will be mandatory, and proactive regulation and monitoring by the RSH is expected. Work is taking place to prepare for the new regulatory regime, and we are actively engaging with the Housing Ombudsman and RSH. The Regulator is expected to publish their final determination on Tenant Satisfaction Measures (which will be collected from April 2023) and consultation on proposed Consumer Standards in the autumn.

1.3.5 • **Fire and Building Safety**

The Fire Safety Act 2021 came into force in May 2022 and provides greater clarity over responsibility for fire safety in multi-occupation residential buildings. For all council owned flat and maisonette blocks, our focus is on reducing the risk of fire for the structure, external walls and doors that open into communal areas. Fire Safety Regulations which introduce new duties under the Fire Safety Order, will come into force in January 2023 with supporting guidance expected to be published later in 2022. The regulations will implement most recommendations made to government in the Grenfell Tower inquiry Phase 1 report.

The Building Safety Act 2022 received Royal Assent in April 2022. The new legislative landscape places significant duties on us as a landlord. This not only considers the buildings but equally important the building occupants. The Act provides the next steps in reforms to give residents more rights and decision making about their homes, powers and protections and sets out significant changes to the way residential buildings should be constructed, managed on a day-to-day basis, and maintained in the future. The Building Safety Act 2022 also creates three new bodies that will provide effective oversight of the new regime (the Building Safety Regulator, the National Regulator of Construction Products, and the New Homes Ombudsman). Many of the detailed provisions in the Act will be implemented over the next two years through a programme of secondary legislation.

1.4 **Summary of key local considerations**

1.4.1 The Housing and Neighbourhoods Service has set out its priorities for 2022/23, which includes 10 key service outcomes to be achieved by the end of 2022/23. These service outcomes incorporate the key commitments as included in the HRA Business Plan 2022/23 that was approved at Full Council in February 2022.

They also align with the ambitions in Council's current One Year Plan and the emerging Medium-Term Plan being considered by Members now.

The following sections provide an overview of each of these service outcomes and update on our HRA Business Plan priority areas. By 2023/24, we will have: -

1.4.2 • **Delivered more rented council, and affordable homes**

A key priority in the business plan is to increase the number of council homes we can provide. At the time of writing this report, we have delivered 795 new homes (a mixture of homes purchased on the open market and new homes built or acquired off plan). A further 256 new homes are currently in construction and expect to be delivered by Winter 2022, with another 440 homes on 7 sites currently at the feasibility and design development stage – including supported accommodation units.

Our first new Independent Living Housing scheme (Older Persons Independent Living with Care) in Parson Cross (Buchanan Green) is due for completion in August 2022. We are also developing plans for new Older Persons Independent Living Schemes in the south and southeast of the city at Hemsworth and Newstead. We completed 17 new temporary accommodation units in June 2022 and our aim is to maximise the resources available across the Council to deliver the best and most economically viable outcomes for this customer group.

The cost of delivering our original target of 3,100 new council homes by 2028/29 has increased. This is due to several factors including inflation, general build cost increases and changes in central government policy. This cost increase means we can no longer afford to deliver the 3,100 homes within budget and in these timescales. Reducing the number of homes we can deliver to 2,310 would bring the cost back to the approved budget for the stock increase programme (£354m). This would still include all developments currently in the 'pipeline' but excludes and 'opportunity' sites.

1.4.3 • **Improved our repairs service**

The Repairs and Maintenance Service has undergone significant change in 2022 already following the successful implementation of a new IT system and staffing restructure. This has been a major achievement considering the continued challenges of COVID and high demand on the service. The changes and improvements to repair processes and a customer focussed culture is the start of ensuring we can deliver an efficient and reliable repairs service to tenants.

The service has continued to prioritise emergency, urgent and routine repairs including damp and fire safety work and are making progress in these areas. Performance on repairing empty properties is improving but quicker turnaround of properties for re-letting is required to reduce relet times and rental income.

Over the next 12 months the Council will continue to modernise its repairs service and develop staff to improve services that we provide to tenants. The new IT system is improving the tenant experience and giving more certainty and confidence when requesting repairs with the ability to book real time availability for appointments and text confirmation and reminders when on route. Online Repairs Ordering is planned to go live in the Autumn of 2022 further improving access to the service for tenants and improving performance at the Contact Centre.

There are considerable challenges remaining from the COVID pandemic and backlogs of repairs with continued high demand. The availability of suitably skilled labour and contractors is a sector wide challenge and there are inflationary pressures, both for staff and materials.

1.4.4 • **Supported our tenants through rising living costs**

We currently collect around £145m in rental income each year and this income can only be spent on council housing activity. The more rental income collected, the more money the Council will have available to spend on providing council housing services and developing new plans.

It is crucial that rent arrears are kept to an absolute minimum, and that we continue develop support for those who need help managing their money. Rent arrears levels are monitored throughout the year and provisions put in place to help reduce rent loss to the HRA such as encouraging continued payments during the 2-week rent free period in December each year.

The ongoing transition to Universal Credit places additional pressure on the successful collection of rent. Most Universal Credit claimants are responsible for paying their rent to us directly, though we promote Direct Debit as the preferred payment method for all tenants as it increases the likelihood of prompt rent payments. Hardship Fund payments and Discretionary Housing Payments continue to be available to help support those most financially affected. This has undoubtedly helped to protect the HRA and support our tenants to sustain their tenancy and remain in their home, alongside other support mechanisms such as providing money management and budgeting advice. We continue to work closely with other partners and agencies to help signpost for additional support to help tenants who need it. The Hardship Fund will continue to be reviewed and options for increasing this in line with any future rent increases will be considered as part of the report that will be presented at November Housing Policy Committee.

1.4.5 • **Accelerated the decarbonisation of homes in Sheffield**

Tackling climate change and reducing our carbon emissions continues to be a priority for the Council. The business plan includes priorities to contribute towards this. Our current funded investment plans aim to bring all council homes to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) level C by 2030, going beyond the government's 2035 for social housing. The most significant areas of investment include cavity, loft, and wall insulation programmes of work as well as improvements in heating.

Since 2021, we have been working with partners to develop a 'roadmap to net zero'. The roadmap will help us to estimate the funding needed to improve our council stock. The cost of upgrading our existing stock will be expensive. It will therefore be important that we make the most cost-effective decisions as part of our plans. We are working with other landlords to share ideas and learn from each other and will continue to work with Government in 2023/24 to maximise any funding opportunities for making our council homes greener.

In 2021, we secured approximately £3m of grant funding through the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme. This enabled the delivery of energy efficiency works to 265 private sector homes and 517 Council homes. Progress under the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (GHG LAD

2) project is advancing and due to complete by September 2022, targeting energy improvement measures to over 500 council homes. In addition, the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2 competition is due to launch in late August 2022, through which the Council intends to secure contributory funds for around 372 homes to receive external wall insulation.

1.4.6 • **Embedded our new approach to neighbourhood management, delivering an excellent service for tenants**

During 2022/23 we have reviewed our neighbourhood services and as a result renewed our approach to tenancy management and enforcement. This has included developing a new training package for staff to improve overall knowledge around issues like anti-social behaviour. This will help to improve how we deal with tenancy breaches and promote a better and more joined up working between teams.

We continue to review how we deliver our front-line services and provide more visibility within our neighbourhoods and estates. Last year we were able to provide 30,000 support visits to tenants and identified and made over 2,800 support referrals to other services to help tenants live independently and have a successful tenancy. It is important that tenants have access to support if they need it and know how to access it.

1.4.7 • **Made homes across the city safer**

It is important for us that our tenants feel safe and comfortable in their homes. Our 5-year investment plan sets out planned improvement and upgrade works that we will make to our homes.

Investment in fire safety remains a key priority and work will continue in 2023/24 to ensure that our council homes, especially our high-rise tower blocks and flat blocks are safe. We are continuing to put in to place provisions because of Government legislation and new regulations that have come into force in 2022, specifically sections 1 and 3 of the Fire Safety Act 2021. This specifically relates to fire risk assessments and the “Responsible Persons” role and responsibilities. We will continue to take a pro-active approach to ensure we have the resources in place to comply with these further legislative requirements as they emerge.

Ensuring our existing homes are in good condition will make our neighbourhoods more attractive and places where people want to live. Further information around the investment programme can be found in the [Capital Strategy and Budget Book 2022 – 2052](#) (Section B4 – Housing Investment). Over £300m investment is required over the next 5 years to be able to make these improvements. Due to the financial pressures the HRA is facing, it may be that some of our planned programme works will need to be revisited and some of our plans revised.

1.4.8 • **Prevented homelessness and provided safe and affordable homes for those who need to move**

As a Housing and Neighbourhood Service, we take a strategic approach, leading on a multi-tenure Housing Strategy addressing housing needs and demand across the city. Our stock increase programme includes provision for specialist housing and accommodation options for people who may need have additional housing needs. Having this type of accommodation not only ensure the extra support provision is there for those who need it, but it can free up general needs accommodation for other households.

Making sure people have the right support in place at the beginning of their tenancy helps to ensure that people are happy and want to remain in their homes. We will continue to develop our approach and will aim to implement new proposals in 23/24 to improve even further.

1.4.9 • **Become more transparent, engaging, and inclusive**

A key theme arising from the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill is transparency. One of the proposed amendments to the Regulator of Social Housing's fundamental objectives is a requirement for registered providers to be transparent with their tenants. This will require us to publish more information and analysis relating to our compliance with regulatory standards.

We recognise the importance of these prospective changes and are preparing accordingly. We know that Tenant Satisfaction Measures will also be a focus of these changes, and are working to improve tenant satisfaction, which will facilitate us in driving improvements in our overall service provision.

Engaging with our tenants is also important to us. We recognise our tenants like to be able to feedback and be involved in different ways. We will continue to explore further engagement opportunities and look at ways in which we are able to reach out to a wider range of tenants that represent our tenant demographic.

Supporting the local economy including providing improved employment and skills outcomes remains a key priority for the Council. The Housing and Neighbourhoods Service continue to promote and offer apprenticeships in several roles across the service, with 14 new apprentices being recruited so far in 2022. The apprenticeship scheme also provides an opportunity to help us improve diversity within the workforce. We will continue to look at ways in which we can promote and encourage new apprentices from a range of backgrounds and communities.

In addition to the apprenticeship scheme, we also offer several graduate roles each year within the service which is having a positive impact on the service and supporting strategic priorities. We currently have 3 graduate trainees in the Service and are in the process of recruiting an additional 3, who will commence employment in 2022. Graduate trainees are also

encouraged and supported to apply for opportunities within the Service following the completion of the programme

A priority for 2023/24 will also be identifying potential skill gaps in our teams and workforce to help with future succession and workforce planning. This will include looking at options around utilising existing employees through career development and the upskilling of our staff prior to any external recruitment.

1.4.10 • **Modernised our ways of working, and reviewed our services and their structure**

Over the last year we have been reviewing our IT systems to see how they can be improved and become more cost-effective. We will start to implement a new system in phases throughout 2023/24 which will help us to work more efficiently, remove duplication and ultimately provide a better service to our tenants.

During 2022/23 we have been able to resume most of our services safely. The pandemic resulted in a large amount of disruption to our key services such as repairs and front-line services. Over the last year we have been working hard to combat some of the backlogs the pandemic created, and we will continue to monitor this to ensure we are able to reduce any backlogs we still have.

1.5 HRA Business Plan 2023/24

1.5.1 The HRA faces significant budget pressures going into 2023/24, and these pressures will impact on the ability of the HRA Business Plan remain affordable over the next 30/40 years. The overall impact of this is on the business plan is that we are unlikely to be in a position where we can fund all the plan's key priorities.

1.5.2 Early projections indicate that significant savings of around £21m are required in 2023/24. The level of these savings may be partly mitigated by any rent increase that the Council decide to make for 2023/24. If these savings are not achieved in 2023/24, then future years savings will need to be more significant. These savings are likely to come from service reductions and staff reductions. Further consultation will be required with tenants, staff, and Trade Union representatives on the impact of these proposals before any decisions can be made. Potential savings options and proposals will be recommended as part of the HRA Business Plan 2023/24 report that will be presented at the Housing Policy Committee in November 2022.

1.5.3 This report will include recommendations on the 2023/24 rent increase. Rent setting below the inflation rate will have a significant impact on the business plan. It is however important to acknowledge the wider social context with many of our tenants experiencing financial hardship linked to the cost-of-living crisis. An increase of rents of over 10% would have a significant impact on most many tenants. Approximately 40% of our tenants are currently on Housing Benefit. These tenants would be covered for any rent increase

through increased Housing Benefit payments. A further third of tenants are now on Universal Credit. These tenants would receive an additional housing element to their Universal Credit payments although for many this would not come directly to the Council. Around a quarter of our tenants pay full rent so would be affected the most by an increase in rent. These households would therefore have to manage a rent increase alongside all other cost of living payments.

- 1.5.4 The HRA Business Plan 2023/24 report to be presented in November will include the usual financial appendix, updated investment plan and recommendations around rent and charges to be implemented from April 2023.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 The proposals in this report are aimed at maximising financial resources to deliver outcomes to council tenants in the context of a self-financing funding regime, developments in national policy, the current economic climate, and reductions in government funding.
- 2.2 The business plan priorities will also contribute and feed into a number wider Council priorities such as: -

- **Our Sheffield - Strategic Priorities**

The Council have developed a new set of strategic priorities for 2023/24 ([Our Sheffield – administration priorities](#)) with the intention for these priorities to form the basis of the new medium term Corporate Plan which is currently in development. To help support this, the Our Sheffield Delivery Plan 2022-23 has been developed. The plan focuses on some of the key challenges the Council need to address before more longer-term strategic goals can be achieved. There are several areas in which housing performance feeds into broader corporate priorities, and as the new Corporate Plan emerges from the administration priorities, we will continue to monitor and report on how we are performing against broader corporate priorities.

- **The Race Equality Commission**

The Race Equality Commission published its final report in July 2022. The outcomes of the report reflect some specific concerns for the housing sector in Sheffield, and that the Council, and the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service in particular, is responsible for acknowledging, exploring, and potentially acting on the findings and recommendations of the report. As the HRA Business Plan provides a financial account of the Council as a landlord, it is important to recognise how our allocation of funding to different aspects of council housing inherently impacts housing and the housing of BAME individuals in Sheffield. Appropriate action is being considered for how the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service can act on these findings

- **Local Area Committees**

Local Area Committees (LACs) are a way for people to get involved in making a difference to their local communities. There is council housing in each of the seven LAC areas, and issues raised within LAC forums often relate to housing, and consequently HRA spending decisions. Therefore, it is important that we work closely with the LACs to understand where there are links to housing issues. We will ensure that the HRA Business Plan priorities feed into the LACs priorities and plans going forward.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 Consultation on business plan activities takes place throughout the year as part of our formal tenant governance activities. This helps us to understand what tenants think about the delivery of current services, but also to identify their priorities and shape future service needs.
- 3.2 Tenants are kept informed of developments in relation to the HRA Business Plan through the Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (HANAP), Housing and Neighbourhoods Partnership Group (HNPG), online meetings, our monthly news e-bulletin – Your Home, Your Neighbourhood and via the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service Facebook page.
- 3.3 As part of a broader community celebration event held in July 2022, tenants were asked to outline business plan priorities that were the most important to them. This type of activity helps us to better understand what things matter most to our tenants. Feedback from this event was that repairs and the maintenance of our existing homes were of most importance to the tenants who attended the event.
- 3.4 We will continue to consult with tenants on the business plan for the remainder of the year. There will also be a requirement to consult with staff and Trade Union representatives on any proposals that will affect future staffing levels.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 A full Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed as part of the HRA Business Plan 2023/24 report that will be presented at the Housing Policy Committee in November 2022.
- 4.1.2 For specific programmes of work and projects as detailed in this report, separate EIAs have or will be completed.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 All financial and commercial implications will be considered and included as part of the report to be presented to the Housing Policy Committee in November.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The duty to keep a Housing Revenue Account and prevent a debit balance on it and restrictions as to what may be credited or debited to the account (“the ringfence”) are governed by Part VI of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (the 1989 Act). This formerly included provision for annual HRA subsidy paid by central Government to local housing authorities, as determined by the Secretary of State. HRA subsidy was abolished by the Localism Act 2011, which provided for the Secretary of State to determine the calculation of a settlement payment to or from each local housing authority. This settlement and its implications for the self-financing HRA continue to inform the HRA Business Plan.
- 4.3.2 The HRA provisions in the 1989 Act include the duty in January or February each year to formulate proposals relating to HRA income and expenditure. Those proposals will be addressed in the November report to this Committee.
- 4.3.3 By section 24 of the Housing Act 1985 (the 1985 Act) the Council has a broad discretion in setting such reasonable rents and other charges as it may determine and must from time-to-time review rents and make such changes as circumstances may require. Such circumstances will of course include other statutory requirements such as those described in this report. The duty to review rents and make changes is itself subject to the requirements for notice of a variation set out in Section 103 of the 1985 Act. The notice must specify the variation and the date on which it takes effect which must be at least four weeks after the date of service. To implement the rent variation recommended in this report notice of the variation must be sent to all tenants within the first week of March at the latest.
- 4.3.4 In February 2019, the Government published a policy statement on rents for social housing from 1 April 2020 onwards and, pursuant to powers under section 197 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, issued the Direction on the Rent Standard 2019. This required the Regulator of Social Housing to set a new rent standard, consistent with the Rent Policy Statement, with effect from 1 April 2020. The Direction applies to the Regulator in relation to the rents of all registered providers of social housing, including local authorities, and replaces a 2014 Direction which applied only to the rents of private registered providers. The requirement that the Council’s rent increases be in accordance with government rent policy is not itself new but with effect from 1 April 2020 this is secured through a regulatory standard.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 A full climate impact assessment has not been completed as part of this report, however full or partial climate implication assessments will be considered as part of the individual work projects and plans that feed into the HRA Business Plan.

4.5 **Risk Management**

4.5.1 The risk management plan is the basis of the Council's risk management strategy for the HRA Business Plan.

4.5.2 Since 2012 the HRA has operated on a 'self-financing' basis with local authorities funding council housing from the income generated from rents and other charges. Although 'self-financing' has provided the Council with more flexibility, it has also brought additional risk. Risks are collated and monitored via a risk register and are primarily concerned with threats to income and expenditure that would compromise the viability of the HRA Business Plan. These risks are reviewed and regularly updated

4.5.3 The key risks to the HRA Business Plan are:

- **Welfare Reform**

Welfare Reform and the transition to Universal Credit continues to be an issue for the HRA Business Plan. The number of tenants claiming Universal Credit continues to increase, and experience has shown that most new claimants accrue arrears in the first few months of their claim. We have increased our Hardship Fund for 2022/23 to help mitigate increasing arrears and to continue to help and support those tenants in financial difficulty.

- **Fire Risk on Council Tower Blocks and Other High-Risk Buildings**

The Review of Building Regulation and Fire Safety brings several operational and financial risks. The full cost impact assessment has not been possible because secondary legislation is going to be published over several years. However, budget provision has been made for the next 5 years based on the best information we have and should enable investment in all buildings over 18 metres (high-rise) and any high-rise residential buildings. There continues to be a risk around the market capacity/capability to respond to the scale of need nationally which could lead to the possible inflation of costs.

- **Interest Rate Risk**

The HRA's loan portfolio is made up of both fixed and variable loans, some of which will be exposed to interest rate changes. Although this is a risk to the business plan, part of the role of treasury management is to manage the HRA's exposure to interest rate fluctuation and the risk this brings. However, it is also important to retain a degree of flexibility to take advantage of borrowing at low interest levels should opportunities arise.

- **Inflation Rate Risk**

The HRA Business Plan assumes an ongoing inflation rate which has been factored into the 30-year plan. A change in the assumed inflation rate would impact on the forecasted income to the HRA over 30 years. 2022 has seen a sharp rise in inflation, with significant increases already in contractor and material costs. We will continue to monitor the long-term direction of

construction cost inflation, working with colleagues across the Council and will adjust the business plan accordingly.

- **Repairs and Maintenance**

The delivery of the Repairs and Maintenance service brings several inherent risks including fluctuations in the number of vacant properties, increased turnover due to welfare reforms, on-going stock deterioration rates, changes in government guidance and regulations and the transformation of the in-house service. COVID protection measures have influenced several aspects of the repairs and maintenance service including a backlog of non-urgent repairs, and gas safety inspections. An action plan is in place to tackle these impacts but the risk to the business plan remains.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Sheffield City Council has a statutory duty to produce an annual balanced HRA budget, which is evidenced by the business plan update, therefore no alternative option was considered to producing this report.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 To optimise the number of good quality affordable council homes in the city;
- 6.2 To maximise the financial resources to deliver key outcomes for tenants and the city in the context of a self-financing funding regime;
- 6.3 To ensure that tenants' homes continue to be well maintained and to optimise investment in estates; and
- 6.4 To assure the long-term sustainability of council housing in Sheffield.



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Janet Sharpe,
Director of Housing

Tel: 0114 2735493

Report of: Executive Director, Operational Services
Report to: Housing Policy Committee
Date of Decision: 15 September 2022
Subject: Housing General Fund Savings 2023/24

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given?				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

The report provides an update of the budgetary challenges for the Housing General Fund in 2023/24. It sets the scene for a more detailed exploration of the potential options for delivering a balanced Housing General Fund to be considered by this Committee in November 2022.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Housing Policy Committee: -

1. Notes the Housing General Fund financial pressures 2023/24 detailed within this report
2. Recommends that a further Housing General Fund 2023/24 report to be presented at the Housing Policy Committee in November 2022 including recommendations on savings proposals for 2023/24.

Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer to complete: -		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: <i>Helen Damon</i>
		Legal: <i>Stephen Tonge</i>
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>n/a</i>
		Climate: <i>n/a</i>
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	EMT member who approved submission:	<i>Ajman Ali</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Douglas Johnson</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Janet Sharpe</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Housing</i>
	Date: 7 th September 2022	

1. Proposal

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| 1.1 This paper asks Members to consider Housing General Fund savings options for 23/24 | The Council's Strategy and Resources Committee approved a Medium-Term Financial Analysis and Committee Budget Recommendations in July this year. This report set the savings targets for the Housing General Fund 23/24 which Housing Policy Committee are required to make. This report sets the context for the decisions that will be required by this Committee in November 2022. A series of options for achieving these savings will be developed for this Committee to consider. |
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2. Background

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| 2.1 The Council has an overall budget shortfall for 23/24 | The Strategy and Resources Committee considered the overall budget situation being faced by the Council in their report in July 2022. This identified an overall £53m budget shortfall for 23/34. These figures have been slightly revised following further increases in utility costs and on-going national pay discussions for Council staff. |
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| 2.2 S&R Committee have set a Housing General Fund savings target of £732k for 23/24 | The target saving set by Strategy and Resources Committee for the Housing General Fund is now £723k. The total Housing General Fund budget for 23/24 is £4.4m. This represents a 16% saving on the 22/23 budget. |
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| 2.3 There are 3 components – withdrawal of CIF funding for stock increase, reduction in staffing budgets and increases in energy costs | <p>There are 3 components to the pressures of £723k in 23/24. The first of these is the withdrawal of Corporate Investment Fund (CIF) support. This funding is used to pay for the team delivering the Housing Stock Increase Programme. The second component is the reduction in General Fund contributions to teams delivering housing services to citizens, with the third component relating to the increases in energy costs for these teams. These teams are delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homelessness and housing support to non-council housing tenants• Support and enforcement of standards to tenants living in the private rented sector• Services to Gypsy and Traveller site residents• The City's Housing Strategy |
|---|---|

- Regional homes and loans services

<p>2.4 There are potential impacts on services to vulnerable people because of these savings</p>	<p>The teams listed above deal with some of the most vulnerable citizens in Sheffield. The current cost of living crisis is increasing the number of homeless households and rough sleepers that the service is supporting. The increasing cost of homes in the private rented sector is also putting pressure on temporary accommodation solutions in the city. Standards in some parts of the private rented sector remain challenging, with new Fire Safety legislation coming into force over the next couple of years.</p>
<p>2.5 The specific impacts on the delivery of services will depend on the scale of savings required</p>	<p>The delivery of savings will have an impact on services provided to citizens of Sheffield:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness and housing support to non-council housing tenants - there is a risk of longer waiting times for homelessness applicants with more customers in hotels and temporary accommodation for longer periods and delays in securing move-on accommodation. The Council may be at risk of legal challenges if statutory duties for decision making are not met. • Support and enforcement of standards to tenants living in the private rented sector – the ability to respond in a timely way to enforcement issues could be affected. A reduction in the Council’s ability to protect tenants at risk of illegal eviction would increase the demand and therefore costs for the homelessness service. There may be impacts in the delivery of specific schemes run to support private sector standards in the city. • Services to Gypsy and Traveller site residents – budget reductions could result in slower response times and a less proactive response to issues. • The City’s Housing Strategy – this could impact on the delivery of the Housing Strategy and other related strategic documents and may slow the response to the Race Equality Commission recommendations around implementing a new Strategy. Proactive engagement with Registered Providers may also be affected.
<p>2.6 There may be an impact on new social housing</p>	<p>Affordable housing growth is a key priority for the Council. However, there is a risk that a reduction in budget may slow housing growth in the city. There are significant pressures on</p>

the Housing Revenue Account proportion of the stock increase programme (set out in the HRA Business Plan report to this Committee) which may mean a reduction in the development of new council housing. Reductions in General Fund contributions may also affect the non-council housing parts of the Council's Affordable Housing Programme.

<p>2.7 HPC will need to agree a balanced budget in November</p>	<p>A further report setting out the options for achieving the required £723k savings will be drafted for the next meeting of this Committee in November 2022. The Committee will be asked at that meeting to agree recommendations for achieving a balanced Housing General Fund budget for 23/24. These recommendations will then be further considered by the following Strategy and Resources Committee in December as part of the overall Council budget setting process for 23/24.</p>
<p>2.8 Initial savings options are presented as a Part 2 report</p>	<p>Initial options for achieving the required Housing General Fund savings are contained in a Part 2 report to this Committee. These savings are likely to come from service reductions and staff reductions. Further consultation will be required with tenants, staff, and Trade Union representatives on the impact of these proposals before any decisions can be made.</p>
<p>3. How does this decision contribute?</p>	
<p>3.1 The proposals recognise the difficult financial situation</p>	<p>The proposals in this report are aimed at maximising financial resources to deliver housing outcomes to citizens in Sheffield considering developments in national policy, the current economic climate, and reductions in government funding.</p>
<p>3.2 Housing General Fund services are part of the current One Year Plan</p>	<p>The services listed here have made a significant contribution to the delivery of <i>'High quality, safe homes for all our citizens'</i> as part of the Council's One-year Plan. Specific targets around the delivery of new homes, protecting citizens in the private rented sector and delivery of routes out of homelessness and rough sleeping have been priorities for the Council in 22/23.</p>
<p>3.3 Services will need to reflect the emerging Medium Term Corporate Plan</p>	<p>The Council have developed a new set of strategic priorities for 2023/24 (Our Sheffield – administration priorities) with the intention for these priorities to form the basis of the new medium term Corporate Plan which is currently in development. As the new Corporate Plan emerges from</p>

these administration priorities, we will continue to ensure that our own priorities link and feed into to broader corporate priorities where relevant.

4. Has there been any consultation?

4.1 Consultation will be undertaken as proposals develop	There has been no consultation on this report, however, it is anticipated that the budget process itself will involve significant consultation as the Policy Committees develop their budget proposals. There will also be a requirement to consult with staff and Trade Union representatives on any proposals that will affect future staffing levels.
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5. Risk analysis and implications of the decision

5.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report	Equality Implications There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will use equality impact analyses as a basis for the development of their budget proposals in due course.
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5.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report	Financial and Commercial Implications Each Committee is required to deliver a cash standstill budget for 2023/24, which requires them to find mitigations for any Service pressures over above 2022/23 budget. The purpose of this is to allow the Council to achieve a balanced position for 2023/24 by the time the Strategy and Resources meets on 12 October 2022. The pressures are set out in this paper. Currently this Committee has pressures of £723k to meet. A further report will be presented to the November 2022 Housing Policy Committee to present mitigation proposals to meet its savings target. All Committees savings proposals will be considered by the Strategy & Resources Committee before final sign off to ensure a balance 2023/24 budget for the Council as a whole.
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5.3 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report	Legal Implications In this report Housing Policy Committee are not being asked to make any decisions. Consequently, no immediate legal issues arise from this report. However, in view of the nature of the forewarnings set out in this report, Committee
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members should be mindful to ensure that the report scheduled for consideration in November, wherein they will be asked to make important decisions on reducing expenditure, should be very clear as to what of the Councils statutory functions, if any, will be impacted. Committee members should further seek to be assured in that report how the Council will continue to discharge its related statutory duties and the exercise of which discretionary powers may be adversely impacted by expenditure cuts.

5.4 There are no direct climate implications arising from this report

Climate Implications

There are no direct climate implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will consider climate implications as they develop their budget proposals in due course

6. Alternative options considered

6.1 No other options were considered

The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

7. Reasons for recommendations

7.1 Members are asked to note the challenging budget situation

Members are asked to note the unsustainable financial position highlighted by the medium-term financial analysis presented to Strategy and Resources Committee in July 2022. This report and its recommendations, sets out the scale of the challenge ahead, the limited resources available and some of the difficult decisions that will need to be taken.

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Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report: Fiona Orr –
Service Manager, Home Ownership and
Revenues Unit**

Tel: 07718134172

Report of: Executive Director, Operational Services

Report to: *Housing Committee*

Date of Decision: *September 2022*

Subject: *Community Heating Prices Increases*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i>				

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this paper is to propose a price increase in October 2022 for Community heating charges; to mitigate the risk that the significant price changes over the last 6 months has now put on the Housing Revenue Account.

The current energy crisis puts Sheffield City Council and many other authorities in a very challenging position, the point at which we forecast costs for this year was at a point at which the true cost of gas was still largely unknown. Forecasts ranged daily with a lack of any certainty at a fixed point. A price increase was recommended to full cabinet based on the information at the time which was an assumed increase of 37%. The actual increase is now 107%. Charges are still fluctuating as the crisis is ongoing and further increase will be needed next year.

If charges to tenants are not increased, the current forecast estimates that there will be a short fall of more than £1 million, by the end of the current financial year in the community heating account, which will need to be subsidised by the HRA.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Housing Policy Committee: -

- Approve that the standing rate change remains fixed at £4.90 per week for the duration of the financial year and the kWh charge is increased from 5.69p per kWh to 12p per kWh from October 2022.

Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	<p>I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.</p> <p>Finance: Tina Sharp</p> <p>Legal: Stephen Tonge</p> <p>Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i></p> <p>Climate: TBC</p>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	<p>EMT member who approved submission:</p> <p>Ajman Ali (Executive Director, Operational Services)</p>
3	<p>Committee Chair consulted:</p> <p><i>Councillor Douglas Johnson</i></p>
4	<p>I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.</p> <p>Lead Officer Name: <i>Fiona Orr</i></p> <p>Job Title: Service Manager</p> <p>Date: 6th September 2022</p>

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The “Community Heating” scheme operated by the Sheffield City Council, supplies heating and hot water to almost 6,000 homes. The system provides heat and hot water to groups of properties from central boiler houses rather than using individual property boilers.
- 1.2 Running costs relating to Community Heating are paid by the Council and charged to a separate account within the overall Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Any annual savings or overspends on this account are charged to a separate accumulated Community Heating reserve.
- 1.3 Over the last few years due to the level of reserves that had been built up before meters were introduced, the decision has been made annually to not implement any increases to the kWh rate, keeping the cost to customers low and utilising the reserves to support any short fall. That model of operation is no longer viable in the current climate, the Heating Reserve Balance is currently in deficit by £137,044.
- 1.4 SCC have entered a purchasing model which means that the energy we need is bought over a period of 30 months, allowing us to access the best prices. This is a different model to previous years whereby gas has been purchased at a fixed price. Moving to this model allows greater purchasing power and the ability to reduce risk of having to buy at a set price at a given point in the year. However, this year, due to unprecedented prices, it has meant forecasting is incredibly challenging due to the unknown cost at any fixed point.
- 1.5 In April 2022 we increased the price for community heating customers from 3.04p per kWh to 5.69p per kWh in line with what we understood to be the price increases at the time. A letter was sent to all customers a month before the increase was implemented to advise that the increase reflected the rising utility costs and that due to the instability in wholesale prices that it would be monitored as further increases may well be needed.
- 1.6 It is important to note that non community heating customers have faced significant increases in the costs of their energy bills. Whilst the official increases this year have been 54% so far, households have seen prices rise by over 100% and they are set to rise again. If we do not increase the community heating rate, we will in effect be subsidising these tenants over all other tenants who have also had dramatic increases in their costs.
- 1.7 The proposal is to increase the charge for community heating in October 2022 to allow us to mitigate the impact that increasing gas prices have put on the Housing Revenue Account. This is the first time that we have proposed a mid-year increase and this proposal is purely required due to the ongoing energy crisis and the significant increase in the cost of gas.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 These proposals are consistent with the current One Year Plan priorities around High-Quality Safe Homes for our Citizens. The Council have developed a new set of strategic priorities for 2023/24 with the intention for these priorities to form the basis of the new medium term Corporate Plan which is currently in development. As the new Corporate Plan emerges from these administration priorities, we will continue to ensure that our own priorities link and feed into to broader corporate priorities where relevant.
- 2.2 This proposal will reduce inequalities between tenants who have their own boilers and pay for gas and electricity with their own energy provider and those on community heating. Tenants with their own boilers have seen significant price increases and will face further increases in October. This proposal will mean that community heating tenants will face similar price increases.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 The council is not required to consult on this proposal.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 In progress

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 This proposal is to mitigate the risk to the HRA. The HRA utilised reserves of £137k last financial year to support the deficit in the Community Heating Account. The impact of increasing energy prices will see a further anticipated shortfall of £1,076k over the two years. It should be noted that any temporary contribution from the HRA must be recovered in full, from the Community Heating Account.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 There is no statutory or regulatory bar preventing the Council changing consumption charges for a second time mid-year. Furthermore, the contractual position in the tenancy agreement does not bar further mid-year increases although 4 weeks' notice must be provided.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no immediate implications arising from this report

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 There are no other implications arising from this report

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Consideration was given to either not increasing the prices, or only increasing them a smaller amount now to minimise impact on tenants who have community heating. This was rejected as this would in effect mean we are subsidising community heating tenants over all other tenants. There is also the risk that prices will continue to rise and that a smaller increase now would just mean needing an even larger increase later.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is widely documented that the energy price cap will be increased again in October, whilst community heating does not fall under the price cap at this time, it is a clear point for all other customers that at this stage they can expect to see prices increase. Consumption is also at the lowest in the summer months and changing prices now will not have as much impact. The recommendation to increase the prices is required to relieve the pressure on the Housing Revenue Account and to ensure that tenants on community heating are not subsidised for the increase in energy costs that all other tenants are experiencing.

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report:

Janet Sharpe, Director of Housing

Tom Smith, Director of Direct Services

Tel: 0114 2735493

Report of: Executive Director, Operational Services

Report to: Housing Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 15 September 2022

Subject: Housing Performance Report (Quarter 1) 2022/23

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? <i>(Insert reference number)</i>				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

This report provides the Committee with an overview of housing performance for a range of services within the remit of the Committee. This report covers the period for quarter 1 (April – June) of 2022/2023. The first part of the report provides an analysis of the performance, setting this within both the national and local context in which services are delivered. More detailed appendices are included with data showing comparative data from other landlords and regulatory performance. The report allows the Committee to understand and comment on the performance delivery of housing services to both tenants and citizens.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Housing Policy Committee:

1. Notes the Performance Report update provided for quarter 1 of 2022/2023
2. Highlights any issues of concern

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 – Housing Performance Report Q1 2022/23

Appendix 2 – Repairs and Maintenance Report Q1 2022/23

Lead Officer to complete: -									
1	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.</td> <td>Finance: Tina Sharp</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Legal: Stephen Tonge</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Equalities & Consultation: n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Climate: n/a</td> </tr> </table>	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Tina Sharp		Legal: Stephen Tonge		Equalities & Consultation: n/a		Climate: n/a
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2	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40%;">EMT (Executive Management Team) member who approved submission:</td> <td><i>Ajman Ali</i></td> </tr> </table>	EMT (Executive Management Team) member who approved submission:	<i>Ajman Ali</i>						
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3	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40%;">Committee Chair consulted:</td> <td><i>Cllr Douglas Johnson</i></td> </tr> </table>	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Douglas Johnson</i>						
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Lead Officer Name: <i>Janet Sharpe</i> <i>Tom Smith</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Housing</i> <i>Director of Direct Services</i>								
Date: 6 th September 2022									

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Responsibility of Committee

The Constitution of Sheffield City Council delegates to the Housing Policy Committee the responsibility for regular monitoring of data including performance and financial information, and for monitoring the performance of Housing (public sector, private sector, and related functions) services.

This report summarises the performance information for Housing services in quarter 1 of the 2022/2023 financial year. The report highlights areas of note, providing explanation where possible, to facilitate the Committee in carrying out its role in monitoring Housing performance.

1.1.2 Key Areas

The Housing Performance Report for quarter 1 highlights several key areas for the Committee to be aware of:

- The cost-of-living crisis and its impact on tenants and our services
- The COVID pandemic and its lasting impact on our services
- Our performance in safety work
- Tenant contact and how tenants feel about getting in touch with us
- Our delivery of new council housing

1.1.3 Landlord Commitments

Appendix A provides additional information on the performance of Housing services in quarter 1. A copy of the Housing Performance Report Q1 2022/2023 appendix is shared with the tenant-led Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel to facilitate the monitoring of the delivery of the Landlord Commitments to tenants.

The Landlord Commitments were developed by tenants through an extensive engagement exercise in 2020/2021. They are the priorities set by tenants and drive the way that we deliver our services. It is important that the Committee are

aware of the tenant priorities that make up our Landlord Commitments and our performance against them:

We will offer a range of quality homes

- Your repairs will be done right first time, to a good standard and within agreed timescales
- Your home will comply with all health and safety obligations, including electrical, fire and gas safety checks
- Your home will be of a good quality and meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard
- We will increase the supply of new Council housing in the city

We will take care of your neighbourhood

- Your estate and its communal areas will be clean and tidy and maintained to a good standard
- Fly-tipping will be dealt with quickly and we will educate and take enforcement action to help reduce it
- Working in partnership with other agencies we will manage waste effectively in all our blocks of housing
- We will deal with breaches of tenancy including neighbour nuisance as quickly as possible, fairly and effectively

We will provide a good service to you

- It will be easy to contact us to ask a question or ask for support
- We will be polite and professional and listen to what you say and treat you fairly and with respect
- We will be polite and professional and listen to what you say and treat you fairly and with respect
- We will learn from your views and complaints and use them to improve what we do

1.1.4

Housemark Benchmarking

The performance information included in this report also allows us to benchmark our performance as compared to Housemark's standard metrics.

Housemark is the leading data and insight company for the UK housing sector and using their standard metrics to measure our performance helps us to better understand how we are performing in different areas as compared to their metrics. The metrics also allow us to understand how we are performing as compared to national medians, and similar landlords.

1.1.5

Upcoming Regulatory Changes and Tenant Satisfaction Measures

The Regulator of Social Housing, which sets consumer and economic standards for social housing providers, is set to get enhanced powers from next year. This will give landlords new responsibilities and place them under increased scrutiny.

Performance will be closely monitored under proposed changes. It is essential that we prepare for this by prioritising the quality of our performance information, along with the monitoring of it. It is expected that areas such as safety and repairs will be of particular focus.

The Regulator is currently creating a new system for assessing how well landlords are doing at providing quality homes and services which will involve Tenant Satisfaction Measures for landlords to report on. We are currently piloting these measures which will better prepare us for any incoming changes and help us to identify areas which we need to concentrate on. The Regulator measures are highlighted in the performance appendix to this report.

1.1.6

Perception and Transactional Surveys

We collect satisfaction feedback from our tenants via a range of surveys. Our main neighbourhood satisfaction survey is a perception survey, which means that we ask a random sample of all tenants about their perception of our performance in a range of areas. We also carry out some transactional surveys, which are often carried out following a repair or complaint. When carrying out transactional surveys we are usually asking tenants to think about their recent interaction with us, rather than their overall perception. These different surveys can produce quite different results and so it is important to highlight the potential variability in these two different methodologies.

The Regulator measures related to satisfaction included in the Housing Performance Report appendix report are from perception surveys undertaken with tenants (unless otherwise stated). The satisfaction information included in the Repairs and Maintenance Performance Appendix is based on transactional surveys undertaken with tenants who have had a recent interaction with the Repairs and Maintenance Service. Transactional and perception surveys do generate different results which can be seen in the performance appendices.

1.2 How are we performing?

1.2.1 The Cost-of-living Crisis

We know that the cost-of-living crisis is affecting our tenants

Consumer inflation has risen sharply during 2022, placing additional pressures on our tenants who are forced to make tough decisions around eating, heating, and debt. Sheffield is seeing a rise in rent arrears in line with a trend being experienced by social landlords nationwide. This comes as many tenants are facing difficult financial situations.

With satisfaction with the overall service also significantly below target in quarter 1 (63% [target 80%]), it will be important to monitor how tenants experience with our services is affected during the crisis.

The crisis is placing additional pressures on our services

An increase in rent arrears may present a challenge to our 2022/2023 service priority of **reducing rent loss**, however we are still performing well with our rent collection rates, maintaining a 99% rate of rent collection in quarter 1.

Our Repairs and Maintenance Service has reported that the crisis may be contributing to issues of disrepair and problems with properties, suggesting that when people are struggling to afford to sufficiently heat, ventilate, or maintain their homes, this may lead to problems with damp and disrepair. Officers are developing a draft policy around, damp, mould and condensation, primarily in response to the recent Housing Ombudsman's revised guidance but also in response to the cost-of-living crisis which will impact on the fabric of our homes.

There are also anecdotal reports that some tenants may not be allowing the service into their properties to undertake gas safety checks because they are embarrassed about not having credit on meters.

Going forwards, it may also be important to monitor how the cost-of-living crisis is affecting our priority of **making homes across the city safer**.

We are responding to additional challenges by amping up the support we offer to tenants

During quarter 1 we awarded an increasing number of Hardship Fund payments to our tenants (a total of 52).

Our officers in the Income Management and Financial Inclusion Team (IMFIT) are also providing support to people to help them manage money and pay rent.

As we collect more performance information throughout the year, we will continue to monitor the impact of the cost-of-living crisis both on our tenants and our services.

The crisis may present an additional challenge to our homelessness services

Homelessness services have seen an increase in duty acceptances due to increased customer traffic to the service post-COVID. The need for Temporary Accommodation remains high in Sheffield. Bed and Breakfast use remains higher than our target amounts. We are responding to this through plans to increase our Temporary Accommodation stock, and plan to eliminate all family Bed and Breakfast use.

Since last year there has also been a slight increase in successful prevention outcomes. This may be due to the increased resources targeted at prevention, including a Prevention Team and increased prevention culture in the service. Resource has also increased in the Access Team to capture prevention cases at earlier stages.

We will continue to monitor how the cost-of-living crisis affects demand for our homelessness services, and work to our 2022/2023 priority of **preventing homelessness and provided safe and affordable homes for those who need to move.**

1.2.2

COVID Recovery

We are still feeling the effects of COVID

During the height of the COVID pandemic, a decision was taken to only undertake emergency repairs which meant that many responsive and planned works did not take place. This was alongside reduced visits to housing properties and less active tenancy management.

The service has seen a 30-40% increase in demand for repairs compared to pre-COVID and repairs are typically larger and more expensive than they would have been if COVID had not so extensively limited our activity. We are still working to a significant backlog of repairs, meaning that waiting times for repairs are still too long at times.

However, in quarter 1 of 2022/2023 tenant satisfaction with the Repairs and Maintenance Service was 84% (based on transactional surveys). This is a positive figure and reflects that despite challenges with demand and waiting times, customers are reporting positive experiences with our Repairs and Maintenance Service.

COVID also delayed a reorganisation process in the Repairs and Maintenance Service, in which staff were brought onto the Council's terms and conditions, and productivity in the service increased. However, the new structure for the Repairs and Maintenance Service was implemented on 1st July 2022.

Since COVID, we have also had increasing challenges around disrepair claims in our properties, which have proven increasingly costly. We know that this is an area we need to

prioritise and are targeting additional resource at it. During quarter 1 our performance improved in responding to disrepair liability admissions within target times to almost 95%. This is positive and we will continue to work to improve our performance in all areas of disrepairs.

We are gradually getting back on track in some areas

Backlogs of work in the Repairs and Maintenance Service are reducing and have fallen significantly across most service areas between quarter 4 of 2021/22 and the end of quarter 1 2022/23. The backlog has reduced to from 4,000 planned repairs and 4,000 responsive repairs to 3,400 and 2,700 repairs respectively in that period. The service currently receives around 2,600 new routine repairs a week.

Also, in overall terms the number of days for a repair to be completed has reduced between quarter 4 of 2021/2022 and quarter 1 of 2022/2023.

The service is working hard to speed up the reduction of the backlogs and have employed several private sub-contractors to support this work, alongside additional resources in the service. Sub-contractor mobilisation and performance has however not been as good as we would have expected. This is an area that we are working to improve.

We are seeing positive improvements in some areas of repairs, but stagnation in other areas. Therefore, as the year progresses, we will continue to closely monitor how we continue to address backlogs and deliver on our 2022/2023 priority of **improving our repairs service**.

We continue to lose rent on vacant properties

Reducing the loss of rent is a key priority for 2022/2023. This is particularly important this year due to the difficult financial situation that the service and wider Council faces this year.

The average calendar days taken to relet empty properties has increased during quarter 1 which is concerning given the direct implications this has on our ability to collect rent for the Housing Revenue Account.

The repairs backlogs exacerbated by the COVID pandemic are contributing to this problem, as it is taking us longer to bring empty properties back into use. Our performance in relation to repairs on vacant properties has worsened slightly.

The ongoing problems we experience with reletting empty properties continues to negatively impact our financial position.

Significant work is currently taking place between the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service and the Repairs and Maintenance Service to review our approaches to vacant

properties and improve the speed with which they are repaired and relet. This includes benchmarking and sharing of information with several other Local Authorities.

Our gas safety performance needs to improve

Our 2022/2023 priority around **making homes across the city safer** is hugely important, particularly given that we are responsible for managing and maintaining over 39,000 council homes across Sheffield.

The percentage of properties with a valid gas safety certificate fell between the end of 2021/2022 and quarter 1 of the current year. This was due to issues with data and the move to a new ICT (Information and Communication Technology) System (Total Mobile). During quarter 1, performance in this area has improved with 93% of our properties having a valid gas safety certificate in July 2022.

Gaining access to some properties is a significant issue. Our compliance figures increase to 96% if we discount the 1,386 properties that have been visited 3 times without successful access.

It is worth noting that the Council is however currently at 99.99% legal compliance. This level of compliance is based on our ability to demonstrate that we have taken reasonable steps to gain access to Service Gas appliances as per Regulation 39 of the Gas Safety Regulations.

Only 44 properties have not had a Service visit within the year which equates to 0.00125% of the total. We are prioritising these 44 properties.

Nevertheless, we know that we need to continue to prioritise our gas safety performance to deliver on our priority of having made homes safe across the city by 2023/2024.

We also know that from next year we will face increased Regulator scrutiny in this area as gas safety check rates are one of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures that will come into formal force from next year. Ahead of this we need to keep prioritising gas safety performance.

Our fire risk assessment performance needs to improve

There is a considerable backlog of works identified through Fire Risk Assessments and this is of concern given the potential impact on tenants.

Whilst this has reduced over the last few months, it needs to reduce more quickly given its importance. The issues have been exacerbated due to very high level of properties where access is a problem (with a number not being able to be accessed for many months) and a lack of appropriately skilled

staff to undertake the work, for example appropriately qualified joiners.

This will also be an area which will face increased Regulator scrutiny from next year as rate of fire risk assessments is another Tenant Satisfaction Measures that we will be judged against. This needs to be an area of focus in the year ahead.

We are helping tenants in private rented housing by identifying and removing serious hazards

As well as ensuring our council homes are safe for our tenants, the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service also supports tenants in private rented accommodation across the city, ensuring landlords are complying with health and safety standards. During quarter 1, 33 fire safety hazards in the private sector had been resolved, resulting in 168 occupants living in safer homes because of our intervention.

Category 1 hazards are defined as a hazard that is a serious and immediate risk to a person's health and safety. Category 2 hazards are defined as less serious or less urgent but still required attention to resolve. For quarter 1, the service had help to make 242 private rented occupants' homes safer through the removal of Category 1 hazards or high scoring Category 2 hazards. Much of this work is based on reactionary work and is reliant on officers encountering hazards in properties, timeframes for abatement of hazards, and occupancy numbers.

1.2.3

Tenant Contact

Tenants remain frustrated with getting through to us on the phone

Tenant satisfaction with how we as a landlord listen to views and act upon them scored 57% for quarter 1, although this may appear as a low score it is only 3% off Housemark's median benchmark score which is 60%. Average tenant satisfaction with the contact centre was 62% for quarter 1. This score may reflect an ongoing frustration amongst tenants with how they can contact us.

Telephoning our contact centre remains the main method by which tenants can contact us with issues, such as repairs. We know that people can find waiting times frustrating, and we are working to bring additional resource into the contact centre to tackle this. However, frustrations remain with our telephone system.

Housemark has identified that nationally landlords with a greater take-up of electronic media are more likely to have higher satisfaction rates for ease of contact.

Becoming a **more transparent, engaging, and inclusive landlord** is one of our key priorities for 2022/2023, and we continue to explore options that would help us deliver on this,

including the digitalisation of our services, and the methods by which tenants are able to contact us.

We know that repairs enquiries make up a large volume of our contact centre calls, and we are looking into digitalising Repairs reporting so that people can report repairs online. This change would reduce pressure on the contact centre and make it easier for tenants to contact us about repairs.

We are performing better in some areas of tenant contact

Despite ongoing challenges around contact centre volumes, the average contact centre call waiting time for housing has fallen since the start of quarter 1.

It is important to note that the beginning of quarter 1 falls within peak demand season for the contact centre due to the end/new financial year, and new rent bills. We will continue to monitor how we cope during our busier periods and how resources are being best utilised during these times.

Also positive is the reduced average waiting time to report a repair through the Repairs contact centre. This fell from 29 minutes in quarter 4 of 2021/2022 to 14 minutes in quarter 1 of 2022/2023.

When tenants do have interactions with staff, they agree that we treat them fairly and with respect (83%). This is our highest satisfaction score from our Neighbourhood Survey which is an excellent reflection on our staff and tenant's experiences with them.

We are also scoring better on tenant satisfaction with being kept informed about the things that matter to them. This is a positive reflection on our efforts to continually develop our communication methods. For example, in the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service we are increasingly utilising e-bulletins, our Facebook page, and direct emails.

We also continue to develop our engagement methods, working closely with Tenant and Residents Associations (TARAs), utilising consultation and surveys.

Satisfaction with the overall service lies at 63%, which falls significantly short of the Housemark median 88%. Whilst this score is below what we need it to be, it gradually improved during quarter 1, and we will continue to work on how we can bring this score up and target the key areas tenants told us they were concerned with (repairs, and the contact centre).

How we handle our complaints requires improvement

Satisfaction with our handling of complaints and tenant knowledge of how to make a complaint are included as part of our Neighbourhood Survey and will be key areas the Regulator will be interested in. Tenant satisfaction around the handling of complaints has scored second lowest out of all the

neighbourhood survey questions for quarter 1. However, satisfaction levels around knowing how to make a complaint scored quite highly and possibly links to "keeps tenants informed" and general communication with tenants. New tenants will have information in their new tenancy literature and so this may have been reflected in responses from new tenants.

As part of our requirement to self-assess against the Housing Ombudsman Handling Code, we have identified areas for improvements and are developing an action plan to ensure we are complaint across all areas in relation to how we manage complaints. Our performance data across complaints will help to reflect that we are doing this, and we will continue to monitor this closely in 2022/23.

We are continuing to deliver new council housing despite some delays

Our stock increase programme includes both acquiring and building new council homes. The overall target for 2022/23 is 358 new homes (137 acquisitions and 221 new builds).

For quarter 1, a total of 25 acquisitions have been completed. (16 general acquisitions and the 9 new build acquisitions at Baxter Court for Temporary Accommodation). This falls in line with the expected delivery for quarter 1 and is in line with budget and cashflow forecasting.

With regards to New Build delivery, 8 homes were delivered against the expected target of 14 in quarter 1. This is due to drainage and highways delays occurring on the Berners site where 6 handovers were anticipated. These are now expected to be delivered in quarter 2. Even though the numbers subject to delay appear to be small, the number of tasks and processes involved in the delivery of new builds, regardless of the numbers of homes to be delivered, are numerous.

For Berners specifically, the delay of 6 homes amounts to only 8% of the total units on this scheme and the relative budgetary impact, due to delay at a late construction stage, is small. As the delayed homes are planned to be delivered in quarter 2, the maximum impact on forecasting, cashflow and income will only span 3 months.

For specialist accommodation such as Older Persons Independent Living and Learning Disability units, the timely delivery can be critical as a new tenant may be moving from a different facility or private rented accommodation where approval and notice periods are lengthy. This is not applicable in quarter 1 but will be monitored in quarter 2 when the 140 Older People's Independent Living homes at Adlington (Buchanan Green) are due for completion.

Delays in programme delivery can have several impacts such as meaning there is less availability of suitable housing options; the inability to reduce pressure on waiting times and priority lists; delays in delivery of pre-allocated units and extended construction disruption for existing tenants neighbouring live sites. Delays to the programme can also create potential budget impacts such as slippage to capital project delivery, not meeting funding target requirements, additional contract costs (if delay is due to no fault of the contractor) as well as revenue implications such as rent loss compared to anticipated income.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 Our Sheffield – Priorities and Delivery Plan 2022-23

The Council have developed a new set of strategic priorities for 2023/2024 ([Our Sheffield – Administration Priorities](#)) with the intention for these priorities to form the basis of the new medium term Corporate Plan which is currently in development. To help support this, the Our Sheffield Delivery Plan 2022-23 has been developed. The plan focuses on some of the key challenges the Council need to address before more longer-term strategic goals can be achieved. There are several areas in which housing performance feeds into broader corporate priorities, and as the new Corporate Plan emerges from the administration priorities, we will continue to monitor and report on how we are performing against broader corporate priorities.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 There has been no consultation on this report, however, it is anticipated that the Committee's response to issues documented in the report may necessitate future consultation.

We do regularly report to the Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (HANAP) wherein we seek input and feedback from our tenants on our performance reporting, and our targets for performance.

The Repairs and Maintenance Service also report to their reference group of tenants around performance, and similarly gain input and feedback on a range of performance areas.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. There are likely to be equality implications arising from the Council's response to many of the issues documented in

this report equality impact assessments will be undertaken for these as needed.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 There are no direct financial and commercial implications arising from this report. There may be financial and commercial implications arising from the Council's response to many of the issues documented in this report. Any budgetary implications that arise will need Member approval and decisions around this may to be made at a future Housing Policy Committee.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 Specific legal issues arising for consideration have been correctly explained at the relevant points in the report. Save for those no legal implications arise from this report.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 There are no direct climate implications arising from this report. There are likely to be climate implications arising from the Council's response to many of the issues documented in the first part of this report: climate impact assessments will be undertaken for these as needed.

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 There are no other direct implications of this report. There may be other implications arising from the Council's response to many of the issues documented in this report.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 The Housing Policy Committee has delegated responsibility for the regular monitoring of data including performance and financial information, and the performance monitoring of Housing (public sector, private sector, and related functions) services. Therefore, no alternative options to the production of this report have been considered.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Housing Policy Committee has delegated authority to monitor the performance of Housing services to ensure that:
 - 6.1.1 The service is delivering for tenants, and that tenant satisfaction is closely monitored
 - 6.1.2 Limited resources are maximised due to budgetary pressures
 - 6.1.3 The Council is delivering on corporate priorities
 - 6.1.4 Performance information is shared with external organisations such as the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman for scrutiny

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Housing Performance Report

Quarter 1 2022/23

We will offer a range of quality homes

Your repairs will be done right first time, to a good standard and within agreed timescales

Satisfaction with the repairs service over the last 12 months

65%

Q1

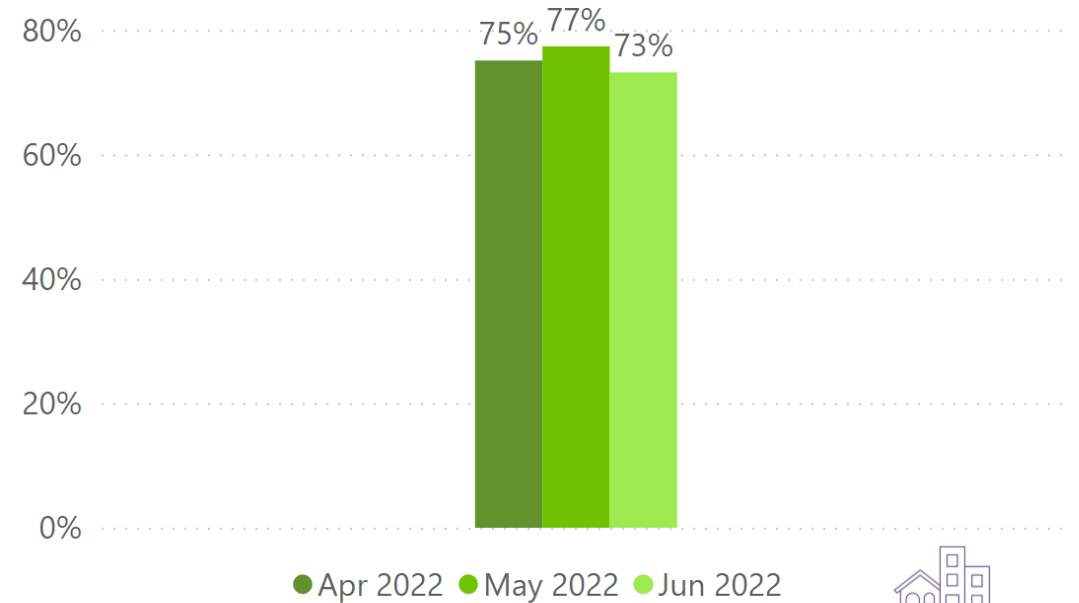


Satisfaction with the quality of repairs

81%

Q1

Percentage of repairs completed on time



Page 865

Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair

66%

Q1



Percentage of repairs completed right first time

75%

Q1

Satisfaction with the repairs service and time **taken to complete most recent repairs** are new additions to our neighbourhood survey which align with the Regulator requirements from next year. The main comments from tenants around their satisfaction with repairs related to **workmen not turning up for appointments, long waiting times for non-urgent repairs to be resolved** and **not being able to get through on the phone**. For tenants who have had a repair in the last year, **around two thirds were satisfied with the time they had to wait**. This score excludes tenants who are still waiting for their repair. Satisfaction with the **quality of repairs has gradually improved** over Quarter 1 and is performing around the same as the 2021/22 actual score which was 81%. **Repairs completed right first time** and **repairs completed within the timescales** have fallen in Q1. The target is 95% for right first time so improvements are required in this area.

We will offer a range of quality homes

Your home will comply with all health and safety obligations, including electrical, fire and gas safety checks

Percentage of homes that have had all the necessary gas safety checks

99%
Page 87

92%

Q1



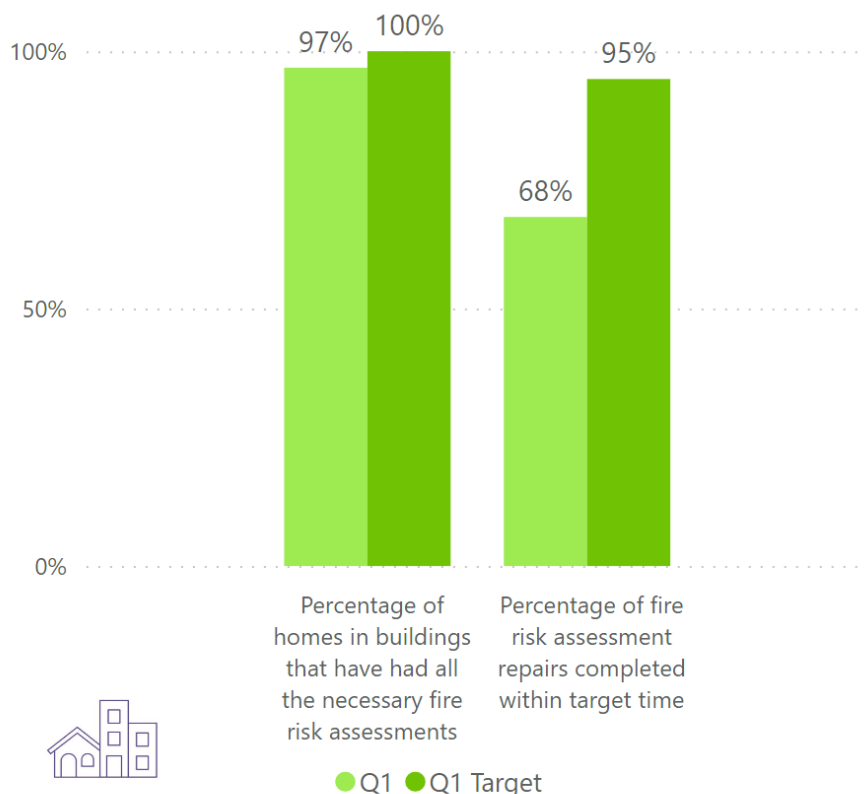
Percentage of homes with up to date electrical certificates

97%

Q1



Fire risk assessments and repairs



The percentage of properties with a valid **gas safety certificate** fell between the end of 2021/22 and Quarter 1 of the current year. This was largely due to issues with data and the move to a new ICT system (Total Mobile). Performance is has however improved over the last few months with **93% of properties with a valid gas safety certificate in July 2022**. Gaining access to some properties is a significant issue and if the properties that have been visited three times but not been able to be accessed are removed (currently 1,386), compliance increases to 96%

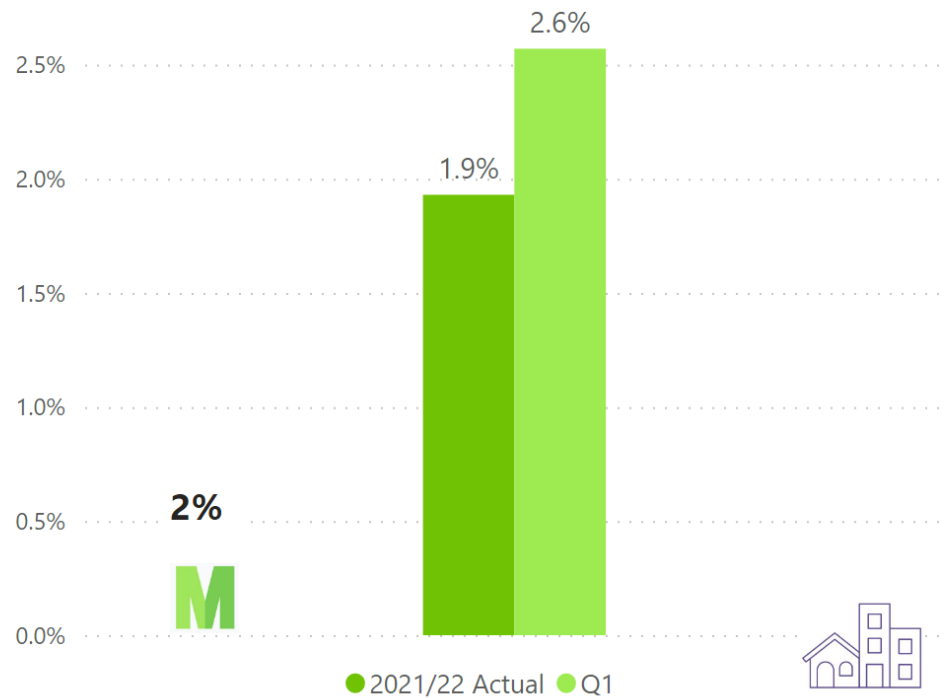
We have used the Electrical Upgrade Programme (EUP) over the last four years to **target all properties that had electrical certificates older than 5 years**. Gaining access to some properties is problematic, however we are following a robust access procedure to gain access to carry out this work activity including liaising with the appropriate neighbourhood teams/officers. We are also taking advice from the Council's Legal Team to help with this.

Fire risk assessment repairs is performing significantly below target. This is due to a back log of repairs. To address the backlog, extra joiners from other teams are being used to assist. Trial appointment letters to try and avoid no access cases where telephone contact cannot be made are going to be tested, until Total Mobile is fully equipped to automate this.

We will offer a range of quality homes

Your home will be of a good quality and meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard

Percentage of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard



Satisfaction that the home is well maintained and safe to live in is a new addition to our our neighbourhood survey which aligns with the Regulator requirements from next year. Satisfaction with this **has gradually improved over Quarter 1**. The main feedback has been from tenants who live in shared buildings, relating to problems in communal areas such as external doors not locking.

The increase in homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard is due to the windows failing on the tower blocks at Deer Park but these are included on a works programme so this will soon be rectified.

Page 88
Satisfaction that the home is well maintained and safe to live in

82%

M

73%

Q1



We will offer a range of quality homes

We will increase the supply of new Council housing in the city

Number of homes acquired for Council Housing

25

Number of homes built for Council Housing

8

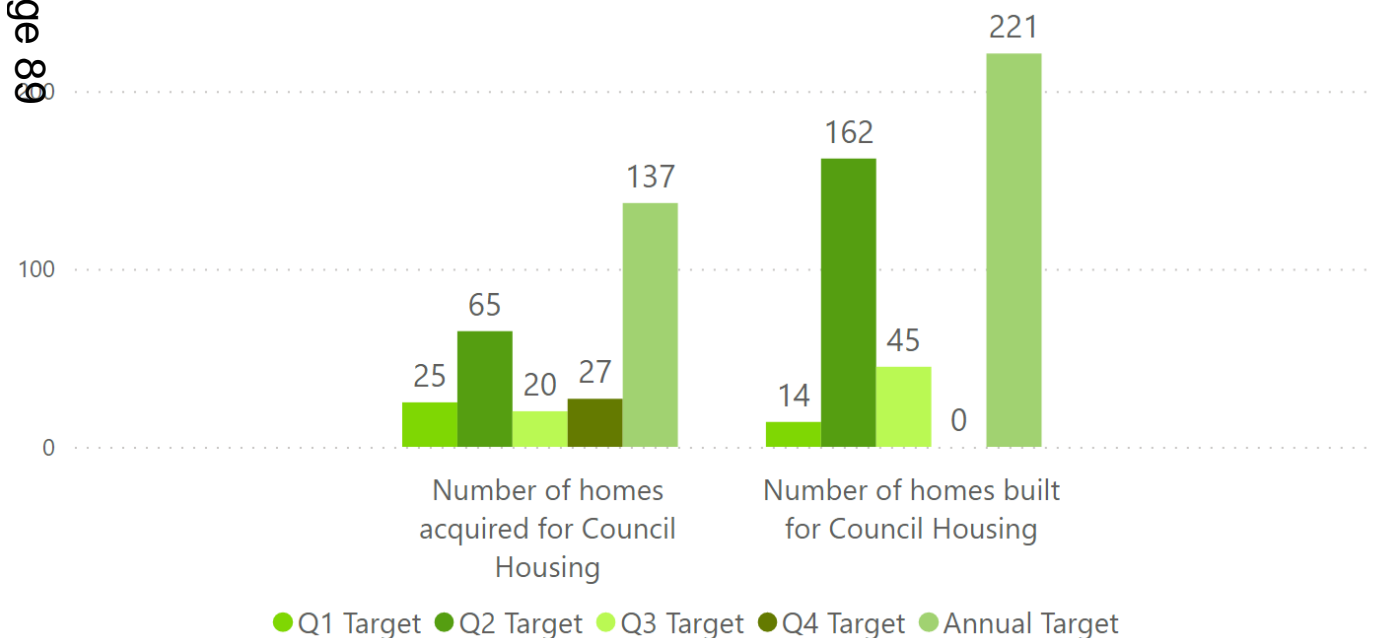
Our stock increase programme includes both **acquiring** and **building new council homes**. The **overall target for 2022/23 is 358 new homes** (137 acquisitions and 221 new builds).

The overall **acquisitions target** for 2022/23 is **137 new homes**. This target is made up of **93 general acquisitions** and **44 new build acquisitions**: For Quarter 1, a total of **25 acquisitions** have been completed. (16 general acquisitions and the 9 new build acquisitions at Baxter Court). A **further 77 general acquisitions** and **35 new build acquisitions** (28 at Handsworth and 7 open market value units at Owlthorpe) are forecast to complete during 2022/23.

The overall **new build completions target** for 2022/23 is **221 new homes**. **8 new homes at Meersbrook Park Road** have already completed and have been handed over to the service in Quarter 1. **140** new homes at Adlington and a further **28** new homes at Daresbury and Berners are currently forecast to complete in Quarter 2. The remaining **45** homes at Daresbury and Berners will complete in Quarter 3.

Stock increase planned programme 2022/23

Page 89



We will take care of your neighbourhood

Your estate and communal areas will be clean and tidy and maintained to a good standard

Satisfaction with your neighbourhood as a place to live

79%
Page 90

79%

Q1



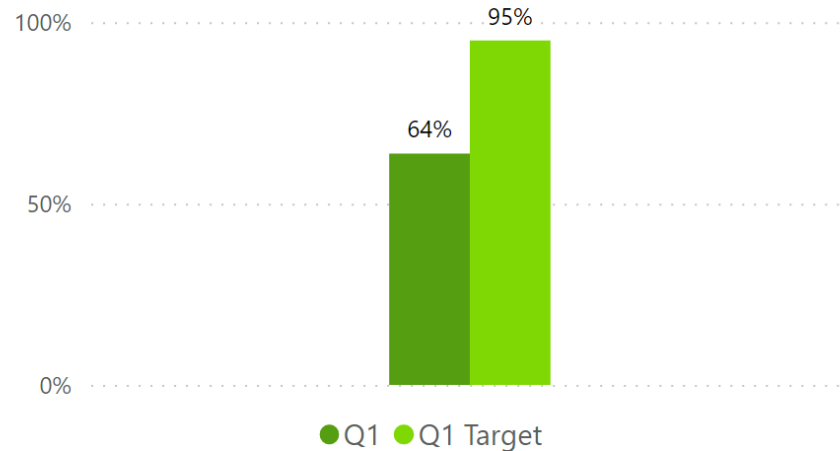
Satisfaction that communal areas are kept clean, safe and well-maintained

67%

Q1



Percentage of blocks inspected for health and safety within the agreed timescale



Satisfaction with the shared green areas around my home are well maintained

66%

Satisfaction with your neighbourhood as a place to live and satisfaction with communal areas are included as part of our neighbourhood survey and are measures expected by the Regulator. **Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live has performed well in Quarter 1.** For those who raised issues, **nearly 40% were around ASB.** Other comments were around fly-tipping and wider crime activities.

For **communal areas** there is a large discrepancy in the scores between May and June. June's satisfaction survey focused mainly on surveying **new tenants** and feedback from Viewpoint (our telephone survey company) is that **new tenants tend to have better opinions than longer term tenants.** Comments around communal areas tend to be split between other tenants making a mess and cleaning not taking place/not being done thoroughly.

In our neighbourhood survey, **over 13% of further comments are about green spaces.** The most common topics are grass not being cut, clippings not being collected, and trees and bushes that need pruning.

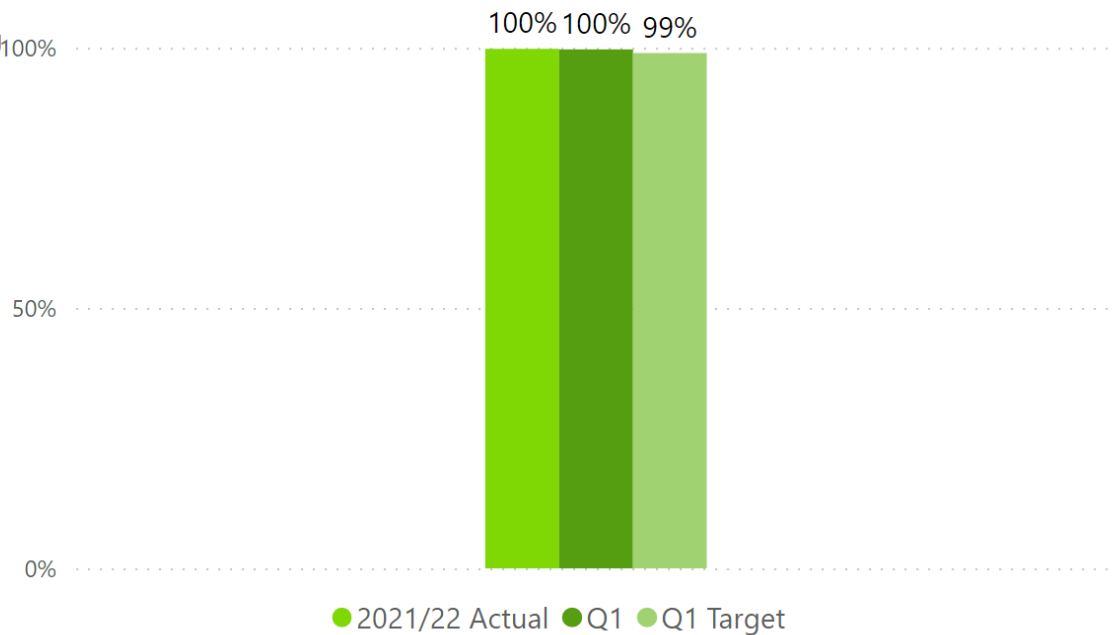
Health and safety inspections have performed below target in Quarter 1. There have been some issues with the inputting of the data into the system, however this has now been rectified so this should start to be reflected in the following quarter.

We will take care of your neighbourhood

Fly-tipping will be dealt with quickly and we will educate and take enforcement action to help reduce it

Percentage of fly-tipping removed within 24 hours

Page 91



Number of fly-tipping reports

949

Q1

The number of **fly-tipping reports for Quarter 1 is lower than this time last year** (the number of reports in Quarter 1 in 2021/22 was 1,115)

Fly-tipping removed within 24 hours is also performing well and exceeding the 99% target and demonstrates a continuation of the good performance from 2021/22.

We will take care of your neighbourhood

Working in partnership with other agencies we will manage waste effectively in all our blocks of housing

Page 92

Satisfaction with communal waste management

68%

Q1

Satisfaction with communal recycling facilities

65%

Q1

Satisfaction with waste management and communal recycling facilities are new additions to our neighbourhood survey. **These questions are asked specifically to tenants who live flat and maisonette blocks.**

A common theme about **communal waste management is rubbish being left in the communal areas**, particularly when bins are full. Other areas highlighted include **issues with bin chutes and bins often overflowing**. Similar themes also came out from the **communal recycling facilities** question, as well as comments around there **not being enough recycling bins** and bins not being emptied.

We will take care of your neighbourhood

We will deal with breaches of tenancy including neighbour nuisance as quickly as possible, fairly and effectively

Satisfaction with our approach to handling of anti-social behaviour

63%

Q1



Percentage of ASB subjects contacted within 5 days of complaint raised

94%

Q1

Average tenant satisfaction with the speed of service received at the first point of contact of ASB complaint

55%

Q1

Our neighbourhood survey now includes a question around **satisfaction with how we handle ASB**. This is to align with expectations from the Regulator.

Percentage of ASB subjects contacted within 5 days has scored 94% which is inline with performance on this measure last year (95%).

Tenant satisfaction with the speed of service scored 55% for Quarter 1. Performance around this measure has gradually improved over the Quarter and is currently performing below last year's score which was around 65%.

We will provide a good service to you

It will be easy to contact us to ask a question or ask for support

Satisfaction with how easy it is to contact us*

44%

Q1



Satisfaction with the contact centre

62%

Q1

Average contact centre call waiting time for housing (minutes.seconds)

16.33

Q1

Satisfaction with **how easy it is to contact us** is a new addition to the neighbourhood survey and is a measure we will be expected to report to the Regulator from next year. Overall performance for this measure in Quarter 1 is low, however performance did improve across the 3 months of the quarter.

The Contact Centre record satisfaction data via surveys following calls from customers. The first question asks **if you have contacted the Council before about an issue - over 40% have, so scores could reflect frustration of the whole customer journey**, as well as waiting times longer than pre-pandemic (average 16 minutes). The end/new financial year and new rent bills is the peak demand season for the Contact Centre. Waiting times in May were half of April's, with similar timings in May despite training new starters to fill vacancies.



We will provide a good service to you

We will be polite and professional and listen to what you say and treat you fairly and with respect

Satisfaction that we listen to tenant views and acts upon them

60%

M

57%

Q1



Satisfaction that we treat our tenants fairly and with respect

83%

Q1



Satisfaction around the landlord **treating tenants fairly and with respect** and that the **landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon** them are measures that the Regulator will expect us to submit to them from next year.

Tenant satisfaction around **listening to tenants' views** has scored **low for Quarter 1** but is inline with the median score for this measure. This ties in mainly with not **being able to get through on the telephone**. **Tenants do however feel they are treated fairly and with respect** when they do have interactions with staff as Quarter 1's high satisfaction score reflects.

We will provide a good service to you

Your complaints will be dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively

Satisfaction with our handling of complaints

50%

Q1



Tenant knowledge of how to make a complaint

76%

Q1



Satisfaction with our handling of complaints and tenant knowledge of how to make a complaint are new additions to our neighbourhood survey.

Tenant satisfaction around the **handling of complaints** has **scored second lowest** out of all the neighbourhood survey questions. for Quarter 1.

However, satisfaction levels around **knowing how to make a complaint** scored quite highly and possibly links to "keeps tenants informed" and general communication with tenants. New tenants will have information in their new tenancy literature and so this may have been reflected in responses from new tenants.

The **complaints service** has switched to a new reporting system and have not yet been able to provide some of the complaints data such as **number of complaints per 1,000 homes we own** and **percentage of complaints responded to within Housing Ombudsman timescales**. We will have this information for the next report and will include as part of that.

We will provide a good service to you

We will learn from your views and complaints and use them to improve what we do

Satisfaction that we keep tenants informed about things that matter to them

69%

Q1



Satisfaction with the overall service

88%

M

63%

Q1



Both of these measures are part of our neighbourhood survey with satisfaction that we keep tenants informed about things that matter to them as a new addition to the survey in line with likely Regulator requirements.

Keeping tenants informed about things that matter to them has also improved during Quarter 1. The Housing & Neighbourhood Service have a number of communication methods in place to keep tenants informed e.g. e-bulletin, Facebook page, direct emails which is likely to be helping with this score.

Overall satisfaction with the service has been gradually improving over Quarter 1, although the overall score is still significantly below target. The main comments from tenants around **overall service** dissatisfaction were with **repairs (45%)** and with the **contact centre (30%)**.

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	2022/23				Quarterly Trend			Q1			Current Quarter		Monthly Trend
	2021/22	Q1	Q2 (provisional)	Q3	Q4	(RAG)	April	May	June	July	Aug	(RAG)	
Gas Compliance													
Properties with a valid Gas Safety Certificate (%)	96.20%	92%	96%			4.00%	85.00%	91.00%	92.00%	93.00%	96.00%	3.00%	
Properties with a valid Gas Safety Certificate (exc 'no access') (%)	86%	96%	99%			3.00%	86%	92%	95%	99%	99%	4.00%	
No. properties awaiting access (Number)	4319	3300	1419			-1881	4319	2552	3300	2512	1419	-1093	
Backlogs													
Number of repairs out of time (backlog):													
Gas Repairs	320	58	68			10	168	113	58	68		10	
Fire Stopping	593	442	352			-90	573	594	442	352		-90	
Void Repairs	361	148	192			44	424	385	148	192		44	
Working at Height	2422	1397	1511			114	1347	1285	1397	1511		114	
Responsive Repairs	727	588	868			280	709	744	588	868		280	
Planned Repairs	3817	3556	3443			-113	3624	3380	3556	3443		-113	
Repair Completion times													
Average wait time for repairs (days):													
Void Repairs	56	72	61			-11	80	66	71	61		-10	
Working at Height	85.88	45.32	37.89			-7	46.93	44.32	44.76	37.89		-6.87	
Responsive Repairs	17.24	20.15	19.96			0	17.82	18.15	24.54	19.96		-4.58544	
Planned Repairs	82.71	30.61	39.95			9	26.35	29.22	40.37	39.95		-0.41783	
Longest wait for repairs (days):													
Void Repairs	278	161	180			19	117	139	161	180		19	
Working at Height	623	334	349			15	293	301	334	349		15	
Responsive Repairs	853	786	684			-102	553	676	786	684		-102	
Planned Repairs	1034	685	350			-335	313	237	685	350		-335	
Repairs completed on time (%):													
Responsive Repairs	89.28%	74.94%	75.89%			1%	74.53%	77.15%	73.02%	75.89%		2.9%	
Planned Repairs	72.84%	88.99%	93.87%			5%	92.93%	87.91%	83.13%	93.87%		10.7%	
Appointments kept (%)	85.00%	90.30%	91.32%			1%	88.89%	91.21%	90.84%	91.32%		0.5%	
Repairs completed on first visit (%)	84.32%	71.80%	72.26%			0%	73.09%	73.63%	68.54%	72.26%		3.7%	
Disrepair Claims													
Number of claims received (number)	595	351	93				133	95	123	93		-30	
Customer Services													
Average call waiting time to report a repair (minutes)	29	14				-15	23	9	11	waiting Data			
Longest call waiting time to report a repair (minutes)	n/a	n/a				#VALUE!	n/a	n/a					
Tenants satisfaction with property when moving in (%)	70%	70%	65%			-5%	70%	68%	71%	65%		-6%	
Overall satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service	81%	84%	85%			3%	78%	84%	83%	85%		2%	
Productivity													
Average jobs per day, per operative (jobs per operative, per day)	5	5	5			0	n/a	n/a	5	5		0	

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Report to Policy Committee:

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Vicky Kennedy, Operational Team Manager (Author) / Bev Mullooly, Head of Service (Lead Officer)

Tel: 07896 793842

Report of: Executive Director, Operational Services

Report to: *Housing Policy Committee*

Date of Decision: *15th September 2022*

Subject: ***Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code - Self-Assessment***

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? (<i>Insert reference number</i>)				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

The Complaint Handling Code was introduced in July 2020 by the Housing Ombudsman and updated further in April 2022. It sets out how the Housing Ombudsman expects social landlords to manage customer complaints, describes best practice and supports landlords in responding to complaints effectively and fairly.

A requirement of the Code is that social landlords assess their complaints handling against the Code annually, using a standard template provided by the Housing Ombudsman. Local Authority landlords must report the outcomes of the assessment to Elected Members and publish the assessment on their website and in their annual report.

An assessment against the code was undertaken in July 2022 and the purpose of this report is to:

- Inform Housing Policy Committee of the outcomes of the assessment, and of the actions agreed to address non-compliance.
- Seek the Housing Policy Committee's approval to publish the outcomes of the assessment.

Recommendations:

- That the Housing Committee notes the outcomes of the self-assessment against the Code.
- That the Housing Committee gives their approval for the outcomes of the assessment to be published.

Background Papers:

(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)

- SCC's completed Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code Self-Assessment Form

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	<p>I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.</p> <p>Finance: Tina Sharp</p> <p>Legal: <i>Stephen Tonge</i></p> <p>Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i></p> <p>Climate: <i>N/A – no climate-related implications of the proposals</i></p>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	<p>EMT member who approved submission: <i>Ajman Ali</i></p>
3	<p>Committee Chair consulted: Cllr Douglas Johnson</p>
4	<p>I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.</p> <p>Lead Officer Name: Bev Mullooly <i>(Insert name)</i></p> <p>Job Title: Head of Service, Housing and Neighbourhoods Service <i>(Insert job title)</i></p> <p>Date: <i>26th August 2022</i></p>

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 In July 2020, the Housing Ombudsman introduced its Complaint Handling Code, with which all social landlords are expected to comply. Updated further in April 2022, the Code sets out how the Housing Ombudsman expects social landlords to manage customer complaints. It also requires social landlords to assess their handling of complaints against the Code annually and publicly share the outcomes.

1.2 Most of the elements within the Code are 'must do' requirements and all social landlords are expected to comply with these. A smaller number of requirements are given as 'best practice guidance' and social landlords should aim to comply with these wherever possible. Our initial priority will be to address any gaps against the must-do mandatory elements, but longer term our aim is to also be fully compliant with all best-practice guidelines.

1.3 Officers from the Housing and Neighbourhoods Service, Repairs and Maintenance Service and Customer Services have undertaken this year's self-assessment over the last 3 months. This has involved reviewing policies, procedures, information provided to customers, training materials, customer satisfaction data and performance information – to assess how well we comply with each element of the Code.

1.4 In total, there are 70 elements within the Code and overall, we measure well against the requirements and are compliant with the majority. Our complaints policies, procedures and principles are in line with the Code, our tenants have access to clear and comprehensive complaints information on the Council's website, staff are suitably trained in handling complaints, and we put things right.

1.5 However, there are 2 'best practice' elements against which we are currently non-compliant, and a further 10 against which we can demonstrate only partial compliance (4 of which are mandatory elements).

1.6 An action plan has been developed which addresses all the gaps identified. Main ones are:

(i) Improving the time taken to respond to complaints.

(ii) Improving the complaints information available to those customers without online access

(iii) Expanding performance measures to capture all data required by the Housing Ombudsman

(iv) Improving how we capture, report, and utilise the wider learning from complaints.

1.7 The action plan is a working document and will be updated as actions are completed. A new Customer Services Improvement Group – consisting of key officers from Housing and Neighbourhoods, Repairs and Maintenance Service and Customer Services – will be responsible for overseeing the action plan and ensuring / supporting its implementation.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 By completing the self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's code, sharing the outcomes, and taking actions to address the gaps identified, we are demonstrating a clear commitment to effectively handling and learning from housing-related complaints. This contributes to the commitment in the corporate One Year Plan to *"Improve the ways in which people can get in touch with the council and improve the experience that they have when they do."*

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 Officers from the Housing and Neighbourhood Service, Repairs and Maintenance Service and Customer Services team have worked together to draft the self-assessment.
- 3.2 Once the self-assessment has been approved by Housing Policy Committee, it will be published on the Council's website and to residents via our usual communications channels (e.g., tenant newsletters and our Facebook page). We will consult with the Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (a group which consists of elected tenant representatives from across the city) on the action plan and seek their views on how we can improve how we manage and learn from complaints.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report. However, it is a key requirement of adherence to the Housing Ombudsman's Code that all complaints are handled consistently and fairly, regardless of who has submitted them. The Code also requires us to facilitate reasonable adjustments in how we deal with complaints where the customer requires this. Therefore, adherence to the code promotes equality and fairness in how we deal with complaints.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 There are no financial or commercial implications arising from this report.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The Housing Ombudsman Scheme is approved by the Secretary of State under section 51 of and Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1996. The Act requires social landlords, as defined by section 51 (2) of the Act, to be members of an approved scheme. It is mandatory for all local authorities and registered social housing providers to be members of the Ombudsman Scheme.

4.3.2

A new version of the Housing Ombudsman's "Complaint Handling Code" came into effect on 1 April 2022, but landlords have until 1 October 2022 to become compliant with it. Landlords are expected to do their self-assessment on this new version of the Code at a time that best assists them with auditing compliance and/or the work they are intending to do to achieve compliance by 1 October.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no climate implications arising from this report.

4.5 Other Implications

- 4.5.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Code and publication of the outcomes, are a requirement of all social landlords. Therefore, in this respect there were no other alternatives considered.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Housing Policy Committee is being asked to note the self-assessment and to give its approval for publication of the assessment on the Council website because this will help us achieve transparency and accountability in how we manage with housing-related complaints. It is also a requirement of the Housing Ombudsman for all social landlords that we do so.

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Appendix B – Self-Assessment Form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and discussed at the landlord's governing body annually.

Evidence should be included to support all statements with additional commentary as necessary.

Explanations must also be provided where a mandatory 'must' requirement is not met to set out the rationale for the alternative approach adopted and why this delivers a better outcome.

Section 1 - Definition of a complaint

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.2 Page 107	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'An expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	Our definition is "Any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not. This could be about a service that the Council delivers or is responsible for (e.g. a service delivered on behalf of the council by a contractor)." This definition is comparable, this is evidenced by the policy itself which demonstrates that we will accept a complaint whatever channel is used. Evidence: SCC Policy 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1
1.3	The resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	We are compliant. Evidence: SCC Policy 9.3
1.6	... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.	Yes	Our procedure says that we ask the individual if they want their issue treating as a complaint. If a customer has to chase a request for service this would be logged as a complaint.
1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	Our policy is clear that we will deal with all complaints through the agreed process unless certain conditions apply. Evidence: SCC Policy section 3

1.8	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents.	Yes	Paragraphs 3.8 – 3.11 of our Complaints Policy outline matters that have other dedicated routes for consideration; matters that fall outside of the scope of the policy or situations where we would not consider a complaint under the complaints policy. Exclusions exist where there are legitimate and justifiable reasons. Page 11 of the process (“Best Practice”) requires us to always explain to the customer our reasons for rejecting.
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.	Yes	We rarely reject a complaint – at times we may refer to other routes where this is applicable, and the reasons for this explained to the customer.

Best practice ‘should’ requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request, where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received.	Yes	We are compliant – if any doubt we will log a complaint
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	Partially	Automated responses for completed text surveys signpost to complaints info. These needs adding to online and telephone surveys.

Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness

Mandatory ‘must’ requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.	Yes	Customers can make a complaint through our website (on-line form), by email, by telephone, in writing or in person. We do not require customers to make their complaint in writing. Evidence: SCC Policy 1.4

2.3	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.	Yes	Evidence: https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints The complaints policy and process are published on the website and cover all the required elements. (Links to 2.6 below)
2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website.	Yes	Evidence: https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints There is a dedicated page on the website, which comes up at the top of the search results if a customer searches for 'complaints.'
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.	Yes	Evidence: https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/access-disabled-people The above link outlines the Council's general approach to equalities and reasonable adjustments. SCC Complaints Policy states that we will aim to ensure that individual needs are considered when dealing with complaints. The complaints info on the website also signposts customers to our policy on reasonable adjustments. The complaints process refers to reasonable adjustments and gives guidance on how to deal with them and the process tells staff to "Consider whether the complainant needs support understanding your decision. This may be a meeting to discuss the findings" Equalities training is mandatory for all staff to ensure equalities are considered in all aspects of our work.
2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.	Partially	Complaints information is clearly published on the website, and complaints correspondence to customers references the Housing Ombudsman. But we could do more on this, using existing communications channels (e.g. tenant bulletins and our Facebook page).
2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	This information is available on the SCC website and our templates have been amended to ensure complainants are advised that they have this right of access on at all stages of the process.

2.8	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.	Yes	All relevant templates have this info included.
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Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.2	Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained	Yes	We do accept complaints via our Face Book page. And complaints received this way are subject to the same handling as all other complaints.

Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the "complaints officer."	Yes	There are two Complaints Managers within the Customer Services Team which provide this support. There are a number of Complaints Investigating/ Accountable Managers in Housing and Neighbourhood Service (H&NS) and Repairs and Maintenance Service (R&M).
3.2	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	There are no conflicts of interest and staff do not investigate complaints relating to themselves. Complaints handlers are required to attend the corporate training. Corporate HR policy requires all staff to sign and complete the 'declaration of interest' form annually.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.3	<p>Complaint handlers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be able to act sensitively and fairly be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. 	Yes	We are compliant and all these requirements are covered in complaints training.

Section 4 - Complaint handling principles

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.1	Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt.	Yes	<p>New Customer Relationship Management (CRM) complaints module went live November 2021. All problem solved complaints are now recorded. Where complaints are not problem solved, they are logged for investigation and acknowledgment letter sent within 3-5 days.</p> <p>Page 8 of the Procedure confirms our timescales meet this. If complaints are 'problem solved' this is done within 3 working days, so still compliant.</p>
4.2	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Partially	Page 11 of the procedure explains how staff will define / verify the complaint with the individual. However, our acknowledgement letters could be more detailed in their explanation of the complaint and the outcomes wanted.
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Yes	Our complaints policy ensures that this is the case: https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-

			council/complaints 2.4 in the Policy describes our overall approach to handling complaints.
4.7	The complaint handler must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with complaints on their merits • act independently and have an open mind • take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest • consider all information and evidence carefully • keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter. 	Yes	Our complaints policy ensures that this is the case: Corporate Complaints Procedure: Effective Complaint Handling Guide (sheffield.gov.uk) Section 9 of the Policy explains how we maintain confidentiality
4.11	Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication	Yes	Our policy states that we will keep customers regularly updated on the progress of their complaints. Page 4 of the Procedure references giving 'regular updates'
4.12	The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to set out their position comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made.	Yes	Investigation responses inform resident of landlord's position and gives the customer the right to respond and request a review of the complaint investigation by a more senior manager. Where the complaint is about a particular staff member, the Investigating Officer will talk to that person as part of their investigation.
4.13	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint	Yes	Our policy makes this clear. Evidence: https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints
4.14	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.	Yes	Paragraphs 3.8 – 3.11 of the Complaints Policy clearly outline the circumstances in which we would not accept a complaint.
4.15	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties and any reports or surveys prepared.	Yes	A new Complaints Recording Management system was implemented in November 2021 – where this information is recorded
4.18	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their	Yes	This is included in our Complaints policy: https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/complaints

	representatives when pursuing a complaint.		Section 11 of the Policy covers this, as does page 18 of the process.
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Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.3	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic	Yes	Page 11 of the complaints process references the requirement on staff to 'manage expectations' and this is also made clear in the guidance for effective complaints handling.
4.4	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	The problem-solving stage gives us this opportunity and our process is designed to do exactly this. (4.2 – 4.3 of the Policy).
4.5	Landlords should give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord where this is reasonable.	Yes	We are compliant as long as we have the authority to discuss with a representative. 9.3 of the policy covers this in part
4.8	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Partially	We do engage our Legal Team in complaints responses where necessary.
4.9	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	Yes	We are compliant unless the complaint is about a staff member.
4.10	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	Page 12 of the Process requires staff to "Keep the complainant informed at all stages of the investigation, especially if there is a delay"
4.16	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture.	Yes	We include complaints-related questions as part of its regular 'Neighbourhood Survey' (these are perception surveys, as required by the regulator) Corporate complaints team also undertake their own satisfaction surveys.
4.17	Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained.	Partially	Our new CRM system will support us to achieve this. Performance reports will soon be circulated to Directors to enable them to identify key issues / trends, etc. All staff are offered training on complaints.
4.19	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010	Yes	Section 11 of the Policy and Page 18 of the Process explain our policy re unacceptable behaviour. Also clearly covers how any special needs / equalities issues should be considered.

Section 5 - Complaint stages

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.1	Landlords must respond to the complaint <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	The timescales set down in our complaints process are compliant with this.
5.5	A complaint response must be sent to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue, are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Partially	Our timescales are set out in the policy. We need to improve communication with the resident when responding to complaints
5.6	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	We are compliant and have letter templates for staff to use and refer to.
5.8	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer 	Yes	We are compliant and have letter templates for staff to use and refer to.

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.9	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one, it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	Our policy and process demonstrate compliance.

5.10	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Yes	Our policy is compliant with this
5.11	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	We are compliant. The policy and process both demonstrate this.
5.12	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	We are compliant. The policy and process both demonstrate this.
5.13	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	The timescales set out in our complaints policy and process.
5.16	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: · the complaint stage · the complaint definition · the decision on the complaint · the reasons for any decisions made · the details of any remedy offered to put things right · details of any outstanding actions and · if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three · if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied	Yes	We are compliant

Best practice 'should' requirements Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.2	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	We do this as part of our process.
5.3	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	No	We currently do not include this information in our letters, so our templates need amending.
5.4	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the	Yes	Investigating Managers will review all the history of a case as part of their investigation.

	complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.		
5.7	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant, and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	We are compliant

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.14	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	We are compliant
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response	No	We currently do not include this information in our correspondence.

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Section 6 - Putting things right

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.	Yes	Our policy and procedures cover this – see: Corporate Complaints Procedure: Effective Complaint Handling Guide (sheffield.gov.uk) , page 11 Letter templates also demonstrate this
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	Section 5 of Complaints Policy outlines approach to “Putting things right and learning”. Our approach to remedies are consistent with the key principles used by the Housing Ombudsman. Page 15 of the Process explains in more detail our approach.
6.5	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Our templates evidence this.

6.6	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.	Yes	Our guidance on putting things right is clear and detailed (pg. 15 of the procedure). It states that we should 'put the complainant back in the position they would have been had the fault not occurred.' It also incorporates the LGSCO's 'Guidance on Remedies' to ensure we are adhering to those principles, and requires officers to take into account the distress and / or inconvenience caused.
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Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.3	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Partially	A new 'Learning Dashboard' is to be introduced by March 2023. Currently complaints information is shared regularly with managers so that improvements and learning can be identified
6.7	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.	Yes	We are compliant and we do this, where there is a legal element to a complaint.

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Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement

Mandatory 'must' requirement

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.2	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels.	Partially	We do report on learning from complaints in our annual report, but we need to do this more frequently through other communication channels

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that	Yes	Bev Mullooly is the Head of Service and oversee complaints taking reports to meetings with managers and tenant representatives. This self-assessment is being reported to Housing Policy Committee.

	provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance.		
7.4	<p>As a minimum, governing bodies should receive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders • Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling, • The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable • Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. • The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge. 	Partially	The annual self-assessment is taken to the Housing Policy Committee. We need to provide more information on complaints to the Housing Policy Committee in future
7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.	Yes	Reports are presented to the Housing Leadership Team showing performance and trends and is also reported in the Annual Governance Statement
7.6	<p>Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others • act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing. 	Partially	Training emphasises how complaints are 'everyone's business,' and this will be embedded through annual performance reviews and one-to-ones with staff.

Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
8.1	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	Completed in December 2020 and December 2021

8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Not applicable currently, but we would do this if a change in circumstances required it.
8.3	<p>Following each self-assessment, a landlord must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members • publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents • include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance 	Yes	<p>This assessment is to be published once approved by the Housing Policy Committee. The previous assessment undertaken in 2021 is on the website.</p> <p>We also include information about complaints performance in our annual report to tenants.</p>

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Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Ryan Keyworth,
Director of Finance and Commercial Services

Tel: +44 114 474 1438

Report of: *Ryan Keyworth*
Report to: *Finance Sub-Committee*
Date of Decision: *15 September 2022*
Subject: *Month 4 Monitoring*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes		No	X	
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes		No	X	
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes		No	X	
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes		No	X	

Purpose of Report:

This report brings the Committee up to date with the Council's financial position as at Month 4 2022/23.

Recommendations:

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the Council's challenging financial position as at the end of July 2022 (month 4).

Background Papers:

[2022/23 Revenue Budget](#)

Lead Officer to complete: -					
1	<p>I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Finance: <i>Ryan Keyworth, Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Legal: <i>David Hollis, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Equalities & Consultation: <i>James Henderson, Director of Policy, Performance and Communications</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Climate: <i>n/a</i></td> </tr> </table>	Finance: <i>Ryan Keyworth, Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>	Legal: <i>David Hollis, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance</i>	Equalities & Consultation: <i>James Henderson, Director of Policy, Performance and Communications</i>	Climate: <i>n/a</i>
Finance: <i>Ryan Keyworth, Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>					
Legal: <i>David Hollis, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance</i>					
Equalities & Consultation: <i>James Henderson, Director of Policy, Performance and Communications</i>					
Climate: <i>n/a</i>					
<p><i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i></p>					
2	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>SLB member who approved submission:</td> <td><i>Ryan Keyworth</i></td> </tr> </table>	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Ryan Keyworth</i>		
SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Ryan Keyworth</i>				
3	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Committee Chair consulted:</td> <td><i>Cllr Bryan Lodge</i></td> </tr> </table>	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Bryan Lodge</i>		
Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Cllr Bryan Lodge</i>				
4	<p>I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lead Officer Name: <i>Ryan Keyworth</i></td> <td>Job Title: <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i></td> </tr> </table> <p>Date: <i>1st September 2022</i></p>	Lead Officer Name: <i>Ryan Keyworth</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>		
Lead Officer Name: <i>Ryan Keyworth</i>	Job Title: <i>Director of Finance and Commercial Services</i>				

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 This report brings the 22/23 M4 monitoring information for each committee. Executive directors and Directors will be required to develop plans to mitigate the in-year forecast overspends.

1.2 Council Portfolio Month 4 2022/23

1.2.1 The Council is forecasting a £21.7m overspend against the 2022/23 budget as at month 4.

Full Year £m	Outturn	Budget	Variance
Corporate	(462.0)	(461.2)	(0.8)
City Futures	47.1	46.6	0.5
Operational Services	115.0	114.9	0.1
People	313.2	293.7	19.5
Policy, Performance Comms	3.2	2.9	0.3
Resources	5.2	3.1	2.1
Total	21.7	0	21.7

1.2.2 This overspend is due to a combination of agreed Budget Implementation Plans ("BIPs") not being fully implemented and ongoing cost / demand pressures that are partially offset by one-off savings.

Full Year £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
Corporate	0.0	0.0	(0.8)	(0.8)
City Futures	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.5
Operational Services	(5.0)	2.4	2.7	0.1
People	0.1	15.3	4.0	19.4
Policy, Performance Comms	(0.1)	0.3	0.1	0.3
Resources	(0.3)	1.7	0.7	2.1
Total	(5.3)	19.7	7.2	21.7

1.3 Committee Financial Position

1.3.1 Overall Position - £21.7m overspend at Month 4

There is a £12.4m overspend in the Adult Health and Social Care Committee and a £7.5m overspend in the Education, Children and Families Committee	Full Year Forecast £m Month	Outturn	Budget	Variance
	Adult Health & Social Care	163.1	150.8	12.4
	Education, Children & Families	136.1	128.6	7.5
	Strategy & Resources	(440.1)	(442.3)	2.1
	Economic Development & Skills	11.0	10.9	0.1
	Housing	8.8	8.8	(0.0)
	Waste & Street Scene	56.2	56.2	(0.0)
	Transport, Regeneration & Climate	41.8	41.9	(0.1)
	Communities Parks and Leisure	44.9	45.2	(0.3)
	Total	21.7	(0.0)	21.7

The 22/23 pay award proposal affected the outturn in the General Fund by £3.3m The proposed pay award of £1,925 flat rate per employee has been factored into forecasts in M4. Within the outturn at M3, an increase of £4.2m had already been accounted at service level, £5.6m had been provisioned corporately meaning an additional pressure of £3.3m has now been forecast in the M4 outturn, broken down into committees as follows:

£000s	Increase (inc on costs)	Pay Pressures covered	Corporate Funding	Remainin g Pressure
Committee				
Education, Children & Families	3,882	1,181	1,655	1,046
Strategy And Resources	2,817	1,209	1,201	407
Adult Health And Social Care	2,658	815	1,133	709
Communities, Parks, And Leisure	1,570	483	670	418
Waste And Street Scene	820	255	350	215
Transport, Regen & Climate	546	227	233	86
Economic Development & Skills	410	27	175	208
Housing	396	-	169	227
Grand Total	13,100	4,197	5,586	3,317

The overall position worsened by £1.4m from M3 to M4, improvements elsewhere have offset the full impact of the pay award. The £3.3m pressure for pay was offset in M4 by improvements totalling over £2m across the organisation:

- Transport, regen & climate committee budget position improved by £1.2m due to a release of a one-off provision to mitigate the loss of income from the delayed go live date for the clean air zone
- Education, children's & families improved by £700k due a combination of better-quality forecasting in services and slippage in recruitment
- Strategy & resources improved overall by £270k mainly due to higher investment returns in the market

Most of the full year forecast overspend is attributable to shortfalls in Budget Implementation Plans (BIPs) delivery	Variance Analysis £m	One-off	BIPs	Trend	Total Variance
	Month 4				
	Adult Health & Social Care	(0.3)	8.5	4.1	12.4
	Education, Children & Families	0.7	6.8	0.0	7.5
	Strategy & Resources	(0.3)	1.9	0.6	2.1
	Economic Development & Skills	(0.0)	0.0	0.1	0.1
	Housing	0.0	0.0	(0.0)	(0.0)
	Waste & Street Scene	(3.0)	0.2	2.8	(0.0)
	Transport, Regeneration & Climate	(2.1)	2.1	(0.1)	(0.1)
	Communities Parks and Leisure	(0.3)	0.2	(0.1)	(0.3)
	Total		(5.3)	19.7	7.3
				7.3	21.7

£5.3m of one-off savings are mitigating part of Contributions from provisions for energy and waste inflation mitigate the in-year impact of rising baseline costs. These are one-off contributions that will not help our position in 23/24 as the trend continues.

the ongoing overspend

Balancing the 22/23 budget was only possible with £53m of BIPs, £33m are reported as deliverable in year	£m Portfolio	Total Savings 22/23	Deliverable in year	FY Variance
	People	37.7	22.4	15.3
	Operational Services	7.1	4.7	2.4
	PPC	1.2	0.9	0.3
	Resources	6.7	5.1	1.6
	Total	52.7	33.1	19.7
Focus must be on delivering BIPs in 22/23 and preventing the budget gap from widening	Of the £33.1m BIPs forecast as being deliverable, £10.1m are rated red, which indicates considerable risk of increased overspending. Of the £19.6m savings that are forecast to be undelivered this year, some can be delivered next financial year. It is estimated that £10m of this year's undelivered savings will still be unachievable in 23/24 and form part of the baseline pressures captured in the draft medium term financial analysis presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 5 th July 2022.			
Adult Health and Social Care are forecast to overspend by £12.4m	The high cost of packages of care put in place during covid has increased our baseline costs into 22/23. Work is underway as part of an investment plan with additional resource to tackle the underlying issues although recruitment issues are impacting our ability to deliver.			
Education, Children and Families are forecast to overspend by £7.5m	Forecast under-delivery of budget implementation plans in the service are the main cause of overspends; plans to reduce staffing and increase income from Health are looking unlikely and the residential children's home strategy looks unlikely to deliver financial benefits. The service needs to provide mitigations to bring overspends back in line with budgets.			

The following section provides further detail for the Housing Committee.

1.4.1 **Housing Committee - General Fund Balanced but Housing Revenue Account overspend of £13.4m at Month 4**

The Housing General fund is forecast to be broadly in line with budget.	Full Year Forecast £m @ Month 4	Outturn	Budget	Variance
	Housing General Fund	8.7	8.7	(0.0)
	Housing Growth	0.1	0.1	0.0
	Total	8.8	8.8	(0.0)

The Housing Revenue Account is forecast to overspend by £13.4m.	Full Year Forecast £m @ Month 4	Outturn	Budget	Variance
	Net Income – Dwellings	(149.1)	(152.6)	3.5
	Other income	(6.5)	(6.5)	(0.0)
	Repairs & Maintenance	48.6	41.4	7.2
	Depreciation	25.0	25.0	0.0
	Tenant Services	52.8	54.0	(1.2)
	-Disrepairs	2.2	0.9	1.3
	-Council Tax	5.2	2.6	2.7
	Interest on borrowing	13.6	13.6	(0.1)
	Contribution to Capital Programme	8.2	21.6	(13.4)
	Total	(0.0)	0.0	(0.0)

The impact of the proposed pay offer creates an additional £2.1m pressure to the committee	<p>The proposed pay award of £1,925 flat rate per employee has been factored into forecasts in M4, resulting in an additional cost of £2.1m. This comprises £1.1m for HRA Tenant Services staff and £1.1m for the Housing Repairs Team. This is an additional underlying pressure that will require mitigation.</p> <p>It should be noted that the pay offer cost is an initial indicative estimate which will require further work to fully understand the actual impact on each service.</p>
Vacant properties are resulting in a forecast loss of £3m in rent.	<p>The loss of rental income is forecast to be £3m for the year largely due to the speed of turnaround in the repairs and maintenance service resulting in vacant properties.</p> <p>The Business Plan assumes a voids rate of 1.84%, but the current rate of voids is significantly higher. Although plans are in place to reduce this in 2022/23, the current void rate is more like 3.5%.</p>
Vacant properties also result in £4m of additional forecast cost.	<p>The current forecast includes a £1.3m of additional costs for council tax on empty properties and £2.7m extra costs for legal fees from increasing disrepair claims.</p>
Tenant Services is underspending by £1.2m.	<p>Forecast underspends across Tenant services of £2.1m, are offset to some extent by a £0.9m overspend on furnished accommodation.</p>
High inflation poses a risk to the business plan.	<p>The HRA Business Plan assumes rental income to increase by CPI +1%. CPI is currently running at 10.1% which is significantly higher than the 4.1% agreed in 22-23. This needs further consideration in the business plan going forward.</p>

Energy inflation at around 100% is forecast to add an additional cost pressure of around £1.8m in 22/23. This cost is forecast to be offset this year from specific earmarked reserves, but clearly this is not sustainable.

The Housing Repairs Service is forecast to overspend by £7.2m

There are significant overspends on employees, sub-contractors, and material costs in dealing with responsive repairs. Gas servicing and repair work to address voids has also caused excess costs.

Community heating account is forecast to overspend by £1m due to rising energy prices

Full Year Forecast £m @ Month 4	Outturn	Budget	Variance
Income	(3.3)	(3.3)	(0.0)
Expenditure	4.1	3.2	1.0
Total	0.8	(0.1)	0.9

Overspends in the HRA impact the capital programme

Without significant savings in revenue budgets, the long-term capital programme is not affordable. The month 4 outturn position results in a reduced contribution to the future programme

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 The recommendations in this report are that each Policy Committee undertakes any work required to both balance their 2022/23 budget and prepare for the 2023/24 budget.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 There has been no consultation on this report, however, it is anticipated that the budget process itself will involve significant consultation as the Policy Committees develop their budget proposals

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will use equality impact analyses as a basis for the development of their budget proposals in due course.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 Under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer of an authority is required to report on the following matters:

- the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of determining its budget requirement for the forthcoming year; and
- the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.

- 4.3.2 There is also a requirement for the authority to have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer when making decisions on its budget requirement and level of financial reserves.

- 4.3.3 By the law, the Council must set and deliver a balanced budget, which is a financial plan based on sound assumptions which shows how income will equal spend over the short- and medium-term. This can take into account deliverable cost savings and/or local income growth strategies as well as useable reserves. However, a budget will not be balanced where it reduces reserves to unacceptably low levels and regard must be had to any report of the Chief Finance Officer on the required level of reserves under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, which sets obligations of adequacy on controlled reserves.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from this report. It is expected that individual Committees will consider climate implications as they develop their budget proposals in due course.

4.4 Other Implications

- 4.4.1 No direct implication

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

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