



Report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee 29th July, 2021

Report by: Nathan Rodgers, Director of Transport, Repairs and Facilities Management

Subject: The Council's Repairs and Maintenance Service

Author of Report: Mark Freeth, Head of Repairs and Maintenance Service

Summary:

- This paper provides an update on the Council's Repairs and Maintenance Service
- The progress that has been made since it was insourced from Kier Services in 2017
- The impact on the service as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and how the backlog of repairs works will be carried out
- How the service is working with Council tenants to deliver a programme of further service improvements
- This paper also invites comments from Members on their experiences along with suggestions and recommendations from the Committee for future development.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	X
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Consider the update provided, discuss the Repairs and Maintenance Service, and provide any comments, suggestions or recommendations on the future development of the service.

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: OPEN

Update on the Repairs and Maintenance Service

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Repairs and Maintenance Service, managed by the Transport and Facilities Management Service within the Place Portfolio is responsible for the delivery of day-to-day responsive repairs, cyclical maintenance (such as the painting programme and gas servicing) and planned programmes of work to 39,000 homes. The Service now employs around 600 employees, approximately 90 apprentices and operates within a budget of £38m, fully funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). In a “standard” year the Service would expect to deliver over 150,000 repairs and around 50,000 statutory elements such as gas servicing, lift maintenance and electrical testing.
- 1.2 The Housing and Neighbourhood Service is responsible for the 30-year integrated Asset Management Strategy for Council Housing in the City and, ensuring the Council’s housing stock is well maintained. The Housing and Neighbourhoods Service is co-producing improvements that tenants want to see in their homes and neighbourhoods for the future Housing Investment Programme. The delivery of responsive repairs is an important contributor to maintaining the standard of Council Housing and informing the Housing Asset Management Strategy and the timing of elemental replacement works. A future comprehensive report is being prepared by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Service regarding the 30-year Asset Management Strategy and Five-year Neighbourhood Housing Investment Plans for a future Council meeting.
- 1.3 In 2015 Sheffield City Council’s Cabinet approved the decision to insource the Repairs and Maintenance Service which had, since 2003, been delivered by Kier Services. In 2017 the Service was successfully insourced back into the Council along with around 500 employees (including apprentices). The rationale for the insource was to create an integrated Housing and Repairs Service that would achieve year on year efficiency savings and contribute to the vision for the wider housing service (which relied on integrating all housing related services) to provide a better experience to customers and deliver benefits to the Council as a whole.
- 1.4 The priority for the service when insourced in 2017 was to stabilise the service within the Council for the first two years and continue to deliver essential services for tenants. At the same time a full assessment of the Service was to be undertaken. The assessment would consider the re-design of the Service to achieve the most appropriate structure – the Target Operating Model (TOM) for delivering the future Repairs and Maintenance Service.
- 1.5 The Cabinet Report stated: “Once transfer of the Service is complete, a full-service review would then be undertaken, and transformation work begun to re-shape the future Service. Insourcing the Service offers a huge opportunity to transform and re-brand the Service – and this would enable the Service to become an externally trading function and so

generating its own income”

1.6 The Target Operating Model (TOM) project was commissioned in April 2018 and concluded in early 2020 with a final report published in September 2020. The TOM project carried out an extensive review of the repairs service, identifying a range of issues and recommendations for improvement.

1.7 Members of the Safer and Stronger Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee have been provided with an update on progress in December 2020.

1.8 This paper provides a further update on the performance of the Repairs and Maintenance Service, the impact that Covid-19 has had on the service and its plans for recovery.

2. Repairs and Maintenance Service Performance

The table below shows the performance of the Repairs and Maintenance Service during the financial year 2019/20 prior to the impact resulting from Covid-19 and associated lockdowns.

Table1: RMS Performance 2019/20

Performance Measure		2019/20
Repairs completed on same day (Right first Time)	Total	152,692
	Same day	142,306
	%	93.2%
Appointments kept within Two-hour time slot	Total	102,678
	Within two hours	91,098
	%	88.7%
Orders completed within timescale	Total	147,452
	Within timescale	135,444
	%	91.9%
Properties with a valid gas safety certificate	Total	35,330
	Within timescale	32,427
	%	91.8%
Void property repairs	Average days to complete repairs	55.3

Covid-19 Context

- 2.1 On the 26 March 2020 national government made several recommendations to reduce the impact and spread of Covid-19. This guidance recommended that only essential services should be carried out and the country should remain at home. This resulted in the repairs service reducing services to essential services only. These were defined as essential health and safety and urgent work only. All routine repairs and planned works were put on hold.
- 2.2 The Covid-19 lockdowns at the national and local level have impacted on the Repairs and Maintenance Service's ability to deliver repairs to its customers. The locally adopted approach has flexed as the guidance has allowed but for much of 2020 the service was restricted to the delivery of emergency and urgent work only.
- 2.3 Non-operative staff were asked to work from home from March 2020 and their work was refocused in response to the developing pandemic and Government policy. The Contact Centre element of the Repairs and Maintenance Service (with most staff working from home) continued to operate throughout the pandemic period, dealing with urgent and emergency repairs only. Frontline operations were significantly affected with only a third of the workforce working at any time. The pace of development and improvement of the new service as a result slowed down, or was halted altogether, while the focus of the service was supporting the Council's Covid-19 response and frontline emergency services.
- 2.4 Housemark, an industry benchmarking group, report that a national backlog of an estimated 800,000 non-emergency repairs had built up by April 2021. Reporting and recording of non-emergency repairs were much lower than normal times. Sector analysis expected this to remain a key issue as landlords planned recovery through late 2021. Nationwide the number of reported non-emergency repairs doubled during June 2020 as landlords resumed full service.
- 2.5 The pandemic has also placed a strain on our supply chain. There have been identified shortages in both materials and labour and while these have fluctuated during this period there are, at the time of writing, significant pressures, for example in supplies for plastering and brickwork. Inside Housing has reported on the "very real and damaging effects on social landlords" caused by a "severe shortage" of construction materials. They describe "a perfect storm of factors" as driving these shortages – "the triple challenge of Covid catch-up, fire safety and net zero carbon...putting significant demand on materials – exacerbated by the lockdown DIY boom". Additional Agency staff resources are being sought to help cope with the demand and authority has been received to approach additional Agencies to seek these tradespeople.
- 2.6 The full Repairs and Maintenance Service was reinstated on 30 March 2021, with full Covid-19 safe working practices remaining in place. The table below shows as a comparison from 2019/20 to 20/21 in the

demand for the service.

Table 2: Comparison of repair volumes 2019/20 and 2020/21

Year	2019/20 Actuals	2020/21 Actuals
Responsive Repairs	116,015	64,222
Cyclical Maintenance	45,327	52,622
Vacant Property Repairs	7,041	3,738
Planned Works	12,442	3,234
Total	180,825	123,816

Performance 2020/21

Performance for 2020/21 showed some positive improvements across a range of indicators:

- Performance on repairs completed on the same day (Right First Time) remained strong, improving from 93.2 percent in 2019/20 to 95.2 percent. Equating to 92,060 out of 96,726 repairs.
- Appointments made and kept improved from 88.7 percent to 95.18 percent.
- Properties with a valid gas safety certificate significantly improved from 91.8 percent to 96.6 percent.

Table 3: RMS Performance 2020/21

Performance Measure	2020/21	
Repairs completed on same day (Right first Time)	Total	96,726
	Same day	92,060
	%	95.2%
Appointments kept within 2 hour time slot	Total	25,166
	Within 2 hours	21,477
	%	95.18%
Orders completed within timescale	Total	74,403
	Within timescale	65,919
	%	88.6%
Properties with a valid gas safety certificate	Total	35,330
	Within timescale	33,490
	%	94.8%
Void property repairs	Average days to complete repairs	53.5

**N.B. the annual figure only includes Q3 and Q4 data as reporting during Q1 and Q2 was suspended due to Covid-19. Emergency repairs continued throughout the year.*

The first quarter of 2021/22 has seen some ongoing improvements in the percentage of orders completed within time, increasing by five percentage points, and in the proportion of properties with a valid gas safety certificate, increasing from 94.8 percent to 96.10 percent. Performance on repairs complete “Right First Time” has continued in excess of 90 percent, with the only area showing a deterioration being appointments made and kept within a two-hour time slot. The Service’s new IT system

and dynamic scheduling will play a major role in improving performance on appointments.

2.7 Customer satisfaction for the repairs service is derived from the results of telephone surveys made to customers with recently completed repairs. To ensure transparency these surveys are conducted by a third-party organisation, Viewpoint, a local social enterprise. Customer satisfaction with their most recent repairs visit shows that performance has improved from 92 percent at the end of 2020/21 to 95 percent for the first quarter of 2021/22.

3. Repairs and Maintenance Service – Repairs Backlog

3.1 On the 31 March 2021 the Repairs and Maintenance Service reported the following backlog of works:

- 2,133 Responsive Repair Jobs
- 465 Cyclical Maintenance (gas servicing, electrical planned) Jobs
- 399 Void Works
- 1,443 Planned Maintenance Jobs

During 2020/21 the Service responded to 803 quick fix complaint problems and 23 official complaints. For context this compares to 2,294 and 48 respectively for 2019/20. The proportion of official complaints as a percentage of total transactions for 2020/21 is just 0.01%.

A detailed recovery plan is in operation to reduce all backlogs by the end of 21/22, below is a summary of the progress that is being made by the Repairs and Maintenance Service.

Table 4: Comparison of repairs backlog

Service Area	End of March 2021			End of June 2021		
	No. live orders	No. orders out of category	Out of category +12 months	No. Live Orders	No. orders out of category	Out of category +12 months
Urgent and Emergency	121	109	0	98	94	0
Responsive appointed	1,453	127	2	2,883	501	1
Planned	1,863	1,443	470	3,569	1,237	238
Working at Height	1,551	1,108	250	2,036	1,569	138
Void (Orders)	573	399	0	914	497	0
Total	5,561	3,186	722	9,500	3,898	377

*N.B. The figures above are a **snapshot at the end of the month** indicated. They do not represent the full volume of work being conducted (the throughput) each month.*

3.2 The above table shows the backlog of work has risen significantly in the past three months to the end of June 2021. Progress has been made in targeting the orders over 12 months old but the pent-up demand, held

back during lockdown, has been released. There has been a 207.5 percent increase in new orders during 2021/22 and the Service has struggled to cope with this volume of demand.

3.3 To cope with the exceptional “run-rate” of new work the Service has planned for an additional 25 percent capacity. Additional recruitment has taken place to ensure a full establishment of Operatives. Agencies have been approached to provide temporary trades capacity and sub-contractors have been offered additional packages of work. Current estimates suggest that, subject to availability, securing these resources should reduce the backlog by the end of 2021 in line with the SCC One Year Plan.

3.4 However, it must be noted that there is a recognised shortfall in good quality contractors being faced by many landlord repairs services across the country. Strong inflationary pressures currently affecting the construction and works market will undoubtedly feed through to SCC, creating further budget pressures. The Service will work through these issues with our local supply chain, but we cannot avoid these. Some re-procurements will be delayed due to the extreme pressures many companies are currently operating under. Many businesses – particularly smaller, local enterprises simply do not have the resource to tender at the moment.

Disrepair and the Human Habitation Act

3.5 The level of backlog may also be manifesting itself in the level of Disrepair Claims being received by SCC.

3.6 There has been an increasing trend in disrepair claims across the social housing sector, with claims management companies turning their attention from personal injury to social housing, targeting tenants with aggressive marketing tactics and encouraging claims that are then sold onto claimant firms. This practice continued during lockdown, with companies pursuing tenant disrepair claims, regardless of Government guidelines that only urgent property repair should take place.

3.7 The service is facing additional pressure on its resources through the volume of disrepair claims. The Repairs and Maintenance Service is working with Housing and Legal colleagues on proposals to both prevent and react to disrepair claims. However, the impact of a 322 percent increase in claims from 2018/19 to 2020/21 has severely impacted the service. The Council received 128 Disrepair Claims in 2019/20 compared to 277 claims in 2020/21 with an average cost per settled claim of approximately £3,260 (2020/21).

4. Contact Centre

4.1 Analysis of complaints feedback from tenants demonstrates dissatisfaction with contact arrangements for the Service, both via the SCC Contact Centre and the Repairs and Maintenance Service’s own arrangements. The main areas of complaint are call waiting time and updating when repairs will be undertaken. The primary route is through

the SCC Contact Centre. While the Contact Centre performed strongly during the period of taking only urgent and emergency calls, the large increase in calls once all repairs could be ordered has had a significant impact. Evidence is that current average call waiting times are in the region of 15 minutes and that only 63 percent of calls are answered. The Service is working closely with the Contact Centre to jointly address these issues but a focus on this area remains key to improving overall customer satisfaction.

4.2 The introduction of a new telephony system is now in place, and this is reducing call waiting times. In addition, From 24 July 2021 the Contact Centre will be operating a seven days per week service in respect of customers being able to order new repairs. Customers will be able to call between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. This change will be in place initially for eight weeks. Customers calling on weekdays will be informed using a front-end message that new repairs can be ordered on Saturday and Sunday.

5. Repairs and Maintenance Service: Challenges and Improvements

5.1 Despite some of the challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic the Service has continued to invest in immediate, ad hoc improvements and in developing the longer-term solutions offered by the new Target Operating Model.

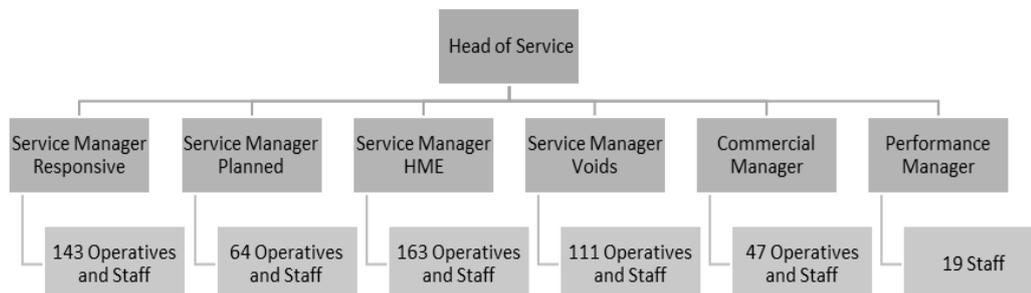
5.2 When the Service was in-sourced the following issues were identified that have impacted on the service's ability to meet customer expectations:

- Some of the core support services did not transfer to the Council. Consequently, there were gaps in the Service's ability to perform the related tasks in relation to performance management, HR, Finance, and Procurement
- The IT operating systems did not transfer. Consequently, the Service has not been able to take advantage of improvements in IT functionality. In addition, under-investment in hardware means that many employees had no means of communicating with management apart from face-to-face meetings
- Little investment in the workforce had taken place and no training records were provided. Consequently, employees had few opportunities to expand their careers, build on their experience and felt under-valued
- New employees were employed on SCC contracts while transferred employees remained on different terms and conditions and pay arrangements. Consequently, there were disparities in rewards and benefits for employees
- Inefficient and undocumented processes with no clear ownership and accountability. Consequently, there is little culture of taking responsibility for follow-up actions and seeing work through to full completion

5.3 To stabilise the service activity has taken place to maintain delivery while the new Target Operating Model has been developed. The

following progress has been made:

- Appointed a new senior management team with lead officers to drive performance improvement and procurement. The new senior team from October 2020 comprises:



- Supplementing our Apprenticeship scheme to benefit the Sheffield employment market and provide sustainable succession planning for our older workforce. The intention is to enrol up to 30 new apprentices each year subject to the availability of appropriate College placements having regard to the likely intentions of our workforce of whom 186 are between 56 and 65 and 147 are between 46 and 55.
- Contributed to the development of our Customer Service Standard for tenants to set out our commitments and the culture that we want to promote
- Preparing a cost model for the Service to ensure future budgets are based on trends in demand so we can match resources to customer expectation
- Increased resourcing where possible to accommodate demand pressures, such as:
 - Responding to issues arising from the Grenfell tragedy including an increase in fire safety work following tower block inspections
 - Accommodating a spike in demand for working at height roofing work following bad weather throughout January and February 2020
 - Tackling a higher volume of void properties - from 60 per week pre-Covid to an average of 80 per week currently
 - Higher numbers of reports of damp and condensation associated with households having to lockdown and isolate at home for lengthy periods of time
- Developing a “hit squad” to gain access for annual Gas Services to reduce the risk to the Council and identify vulnerable tenancy issues
- Particular attention has been paid to the main route for tenants to communicate with the Service through the SCC Contact Centre. Joint work continues in this regard:
 - Chase calls, where a tenant is querying progress on an existing repair, account for approximately 30 percent of all the repair calls received by the Centre but require about 40 percent of the capacity to handle. Advisors refer queries to the back office due

to the lack of system notes. The new IT system will be provided for Contact Centre Advisors allowing them to see individual repair records and answer enquiries

- The Repairs Service have undertaken social media activity to try and promote use of the Contact Centre towards the end of the week as currently over 50 percent of call volume occurs on a Monday and Tuesday
- Gas servicing appointments will be moving to predefined slots in the coming weeks, with tenants only required to make contact if they need to rearrange. This will further reduce call volumes
- The Customer Services Leadership Team are completing a full review of the interactions with Repairs' customers. This will be looking in detail at demand, resources allocated, volumes, staff, training, and technology. The output of the review will be ready to report on in August
- The Service has invested in the National Housing Federation's Schedule of Rates to promote clarity and consistency in the pricing of contracts in any future sub-contracting and tendering situations
- A new IT system has been procured with launch planned for September 2021. This will provide a modern system for managing repair delivery and operations. Key features include a dynamic scheduling facility that matches incoming work with available, appropriately skilled Operatives. Consequently, repair jobs are allocated in real-time to Operatives minimising wasted travel time and making best use of resources. Officers and tenants will have better access to track individual live data on repair delivery and progress. Future developments will include options for tenants to self-report repairs through an online reporting facility
- Developed a clear improvement plan for the coming two years branded as "Better Repairs"
- Improved our onsite stores facility at the Manor Lane Depot with enhanced stock control through installing digitised picking and the creation of stock boxes for individual Operatives to collect from
- Improved internal communications and engagement with the workforce, including a regular meeting between the Head of Service and a cross section of frontline employees.

6. Tenant Governance and Scrutiny

6.1 In March 2015, when the Cabinet approved the insourcing of the Repairs and Maintenance Service from 1 April 2017, tenants and leaseholders were consulted regarding the proposals. It was clear that the Repairs and Maintenance Service is the most important element of the housing service for our customers.

6.2 The Council has tenant scrutiny arrangements in place for all aspects of the integrated Housing and Repairs Services which has provided a platform for tenants to raise their concerns and for the Repairs and Maintenance Service to present monthly performance reports. This

includes the Housing and Neighbourhoods Advisory Panel (Tenant Scrutiny Board), Area Housing Forums, Action Planning Groups and regulation through the council's complaints service and ultimately the Housing Ombudsman.

6.3 The government has emphasised the importance of tenant scrutiny and accountability for landlords through the White Paper. This has provided an excellent opportunity to work closely with tenant representatives on how the Repairs and Maintenance Service is to be improved as well as refocusing on the way we engage with tenants, including sharing performance information.

6.4 The Social Housing White Paper – The Charter for Social Housing Residents was published on 17 November 2020 and builds upon proposals set out in the 2018 Social Housing Green Paper – A New Deal for Council Housing. The White Paper sets out reforms that will improve accountability, quality and a transparent relationship with tenants. It will include a greater role for the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman, open publication of performance against standard metrics, and “publicity” of landlord complaints. The detail of the Social Housing White Paper is to be the subject of a more detailed report to be presented by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services at a future Council meeting.

6.5 In March 2021, the Council's Housing and Neighbourhood Service published its new “New Customer Engagement Strategy, 2021-2023” which is the first step in addressing the ‘tenant voice’ chapter of the White Paper.

6.6 As part of this re-design and co-production with tenant representatives a new set of performance measures have been agreed with representatives for the Repairs and Maintenance Service. This will increase the range and type of reporting to reflect what tenants wish to know about the service. This enhanced performance reporting will be supported by the investment in the new IT system. Below is the new set of indicators that will be used for 2021/22.

6.7 The following key performance indicators (KPIs) will be used to measure the effectiveness of the Repairs and Maintenance service:

- Percentage of customers satisfied with the Repairs and Maintenance Service – broken down by responsive, cyclical and planned works
- Percentage of repairs completed Right First Time
- Percentage of responsive repairs completed on time
- Percentage of responsive repairs where an appointment was made and kept
- Percentage of responsive repairs completed within target
- Percentage of repairs which lead to a complaint
- Average number of days taken to complete repairs to vacant properties (key to key)
- Percentage of properties with a valid gas safety certificate

- Percentage of properties with a valid electrical safety certificate
- Percentage of fire safety jobs completed within priority timescales
- Average days sickness absence per employee
- Percentage of disrepair cases where all repairs were completed on time
- Percentage of planned repairs completed on time

7. Summary

7.1 In summary the Repairs and Maintenance Service has faced several significant challenges over the last four years. It has required a whole service review, and a transformation programme to re-design and modernise the Service. Key components include an investment in new IT; a staffing restructure, and; the appointment of a new senior management structure to lead the service through this change.

7.2 However, the delivery of interim measures has demonstrated the Service's willingness to change and improve for example in tackling delays to gas servicing. Combined with a proactive approach to handling the challenges of the Covid-19 backlog and setting out a clear agenda for future improvement the Service is equipped to deliver further enhancements.

7.3 The Service's agenda for change is set out in detail in the two appendices – The Target Operating Model and the Service Improvement Plan. These approaches include the detail of the Service's approach to further continuous improvement and tackling our environmental impact. In summary some of the headlines are:

Activity	Scheduled Delivery
Phase 1 IT Implementation	September 2021
Implementation of Contact Centre Review	November 2021
Phase 2 IT Implementation	December 2021
Commence Manager Training Programme	January 2022
Continuous Improvement Cycle	February 2022 onwards
Phase 3 IT Implementation	February 2022
Fleet Utilisation Review – green fleet	June 2021 – June 2022
Renegotiation of supply chain	August 2021 – April 2022
Self-evaluation against new standards	July 2022
Feed full year of IT results into Asset Plan	September 2022
Review staff resource model	September 2022

7.4 To pick out some key deliverables in coming months that will provide assurance:

- Introduction of a cross party panel for Members (chaired by the responsible Executive Committee Member) to meet every six weeks and review progress (September 2021)
- Undertaking an independent health and safety review to be conducted by North Yorkshire County Council (August 2021)

- Undertaking a peer review of our recovery and improvement plan to be conducted by the Local Government Association (Autumn 2021)
- Supplementing the existing proposals around complaints and compliments by delivering a full review of how these issues are handled (early 2022)

7.5 Further resource is required to reduce the turnaround times for vacant properties and address the significant backlog of planned repairs. The Backlog Recovery Plan has been implemented to address these pre-existing issues and tackle the legacy from the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. However, external factors including inflationary pressures are still playing out in resolving these challenges.

7.6 The implementation of the TOM will ensure the full redesign of the service is implemented by April 2022. At that stage with improved engagement with tenants; more investment in our employees, and; increased resources to deal with customer complaints the transformation of the Service will be evident. Of particular note will be the delivery of the Service's new IT system. The new system and hardware provide functionality that the Service has not benefited from in the past such as:

- Dynamic scheduling of Operatives that routes the appropriate trade to incoming calls minimising journey times and unnecessary mileage
- Text reminders and updates for tenants to track the delivery of their repair
- Live dashboard reporting of performance in particular categories removing the need for paper-based systems for example in voids management
- Ability to order follow-up activity live, onsite and arrange convenient appointment slots with tenants
- Options to drill-down into performance information to understand individual delivery and barriers to service improvement.

7.7 The activity set out above will be supported by the Council's Asset Management Strategy and investment in our homes. Together with improvements at the Contact Centre these changes will restore tenants' confidence in the Service. Performance reporting to the Customer Repairs Forum, the HANAP meeting, local Area Housing Forums, Local Area Committees, in addition to Housing Newsletters and social media will enable the service to keep tenants informed of all relevant changes.

7.8 Risks and issues remain many of which are out of our control and have national and international dimensions, notably:

- Availability of materials and skilled labour in the post Covid-19 world. Pent up demand may absorb the supply with the potential to force up costs (direct and sub-contractor) and delay delivery
- Demand for repairs outstrips the Service estimates which have been modelled on a 25 percent increase in volumes in the six months after the release of lockdown restrictions

- Ongoing Covid-19 restrictions on our own workforce and for sub-contractors as a result of requirements to isolate due to proximity to confirmed cases.
- 7.9 We recognise that there is an urgent need to supplement our supply chain to progress the backlog of works as quickly as possible. Initial planning to tackle this began back in the summer of 2020. However, it is challenging to source contractors at the moment and our existing, largely local, supply chain is working at capacity.
- 7.10 In an attempt to mitigate risks, we are pursuing a number of avenues to supplement our existing core workforce and supply chain. As time is of the essence, we are turning first to local and regional frameworks and “Dynamic Purchasing Systems” (DPS) to ensure we maximise the opportunities for local contractors and keep the pound within our area. This will also streamline the procurement process. We will first seek to negotiate with contractors in accordance with the terms of the framework or DPS in order to save time from the tendering process. This should also ensure that our work packages are as attractive as possible to the market, as contractors will not need to spend time and resource preparing a (potentially abortive) tender. This will maximise our chances of securing contractors as quickly as possible. Colleagues across the Council will work to ensure that value for money is obtained before any contract is awarded.
- 7.11 Should demand for works continue to out-strip supply (of labour and materials) for any considerable period then further work may be required to consider the prioritisation and batching of work to ensure essential works are delivered. Communication with our tenants, other stakeholders and Members will be crucial to determining this prioritisation should this option need further exploration. Full, appropriate consultation and engagement will be conducted to inform any decisions that may need to be taken.

Appendix A The Target Operating Model

The Target Operating Model (TOM, see 1.6 above) was designed to significantly improve customer satisfaction, operating performance, and reduce costs to help achieve the savings expectations made of the Service.

The TOM report (published September 2020) set out three main workstreams for attention. These were:

- The IT systems that support the Service
Since insource in 2017 the Service has maintained the legacy IT arrangements that were chosen. These systems fail to deliver all the advantages of the latest IT advances, for example dynamic scheduling which automates the allocation of work to the most appropriate individual Operative. In addition, there are limits to the IT hardware made available to our mobile workforce. For example, many operatives have no SCC equipment on which they can access emails or corporate support services.
- The structure of the Service and HR arrangements
Some of the arrangements still reflect a “client-contractor” arrangement with employees double-checking the delivery of their colleagues causing a duplication of effort and repeat visits to tenants. There are long-standing discrepancies in employee remuneration and job packages stemming from the TUPE insource. These differences have had an influence over staff morale and individual performance.
- The existing processes and procedures
Few of the Service’s processes are effectively documented and there is uncertainty about how delivery should be achieved in a consistent and effective manner that meets SCC’s regulatory requirements. The new IT system will improve the timely delivery of repairs, but further improvement activity is needed to drive quality, reliability and efficiency. The TOM proposed a programme of work around processes, standard operating procedures and clear delineation of responsibilities.

Work to date to implement the TOM has provided the foundations for longer term change and improvement. The Service has recruited to a new senior management team and delivered on some of the key TOM recommendations:

- A new IT system for the Service has been procured and is due to go live in Autumn 2021. The system will offer significant performance improvement benefits and new features. For example, immediate changes include:
 - text reminders being offered to customers
 - reduced mileage through enhanced routing
 - removing the reliance on Co-ordinators manual intervention in rescheduling work

- freeing up time to respond to new initiatives such as the introduction of liaison with Local Area Committees
- Fresh arrangements for consultation with tenant representatives have been instigated with a monthly forum the “Customer Repairs Focus Group” now established. Additional activity has also taken place to engage tenants through social media routes, for example a survey regarding the processes used to deliver the annual Gas Service.
- An MER document has been developed (see Appendix) and has been shared with Union representatives. The proposals will be shared with all staff by mid-July 2020 at a range of Covid secure events. The proposals include offering all employees flexi-time (subject to delivery requirements) and opening up Out of Hours opportunities to all Operatives.

The timeline for delivery of the MER is:

Individual discussions with staff on Terms and Conditions	w/c 19 July 2021
Implementation of new structure and roles	1 April 2022

Appendix B The Service Plan

The Service has already developed the route map for improvement beyond the foundations provided by the TOM – we have branded this “Better Repairs”.



The Service Plan 2021-23 sets down the Service’s Vision, our five priority aims and a roadmap for delivery.

Our Vision

“The Repairs and Maintenance Service’s vision is to become a recognised and celebrated asset for SCC and the citizens of Sheffield. We will promote strong relationships with our tenants that inspire trust, confidence and ensure we focus on their priorities of repairs done quickly and right first time. Building on foundations of strong financial control and value for money, RMS will be responsive in developing a sustainable organisation - with the aim of achieving a net zero carbon position. Our employees are our greatest asset, and we will be recognised as an employer of choice, foster a healthy work environment and have a skilled workforce reflective of the communities we serve.”

To deliver this Vision we have set ourselves the following Aims.

Our Aims



Value for money service

Managing our resources, driving efficiencies and cost savings support our ambition to provide a great value for money service. Having the best commercial approach across the service will support our ambitions for the future.



A great place to work

Our workforce is our greatest resource. Supporting and investing in our staff, so they can provide the best services to our customers is key.



Customers at the heart of what we do

We aim to provide a customer focused service, where we understand and listen to customer needs, learn from their feedback and work in partnership to improve our service.



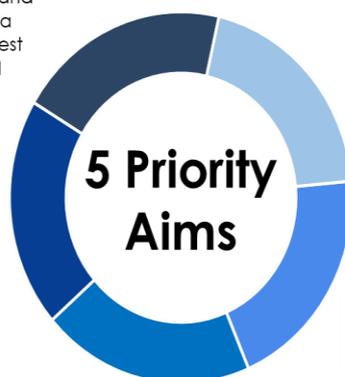
Safe quality well maintained homes

We repair and maintain the Council's housing stock of 40,000 homes. Keeping customers safe is our top priority and fundamental to providing quality homes where tenants feel safe and secure.



High performing services

Our customers have a right to expect a high quality repairs and maintenance service. We aim to be a top performing organisation providing excellent services across every aspect of repairs and maintenance.



Activity to achieve these aims has included the following in addition to the TOM foundations (Appendix A):

- Responding to issues arising from the Grenfell tragedy including an increase in fire safety work following tower block inspections
- Accommodating more working at height roofing work following bad weather throughout January and February 2020
- Tackling a higher volume of void properties - from 60 per week pre-Covid to an average of 80 per week currently
- Developing a “hit squad” to gain access for annual Gas Services to reduce the risk to the Council and identify vulnerable tenancy issues
- Supplementing our Apprenticeship scheme to benefit the Sheffield employment market and provide sustainable succession planning in the Service
- Contributed to the development of our Customer Service Standard for tenants to set out our commitments
- Preparing a cost model for the Service to ensure future budgets are based on trends in demand so we can match resources to customer expectation
- Particular attention has been paid to the main route for tenants to communicate with the Service through the SCC Contact Centre. Joint work continues in this regard:
 - Chase calls, where a tenant is querying progress on an existing repair, account for approximately 30% of all the repair calls received by the Centre but require about 40% of the capacity to handle. Advisors refer queries to the back office due to the lack of system notes. The new IT system will be provided for Contact Centre Advisors allowing them to see individual repair records and answer enquiries
 - The Repairs Service have undertaken social media activity to try and promote use of the Contact Centre towards the end of the week as currently over 50% of call volume occurs on a Monday and Tuesday
 - Gas servicing appointments will be moving to predefined slots in the coming months with tenants only required to make contact if they need to rearrange. This will further reduce call volumes
 - The Customer Services Leadership Team are completing a full review of the interactions with Repairs’ customers. This will be looking in detail at demand, resources allocated, volumes, staff, training, and technology. The output of the review will be ready to report on in August

To deliver our aims we have developed the following roadmap and timetable for delivering key actions.

Our Roadmap



In line with the Aims and the Roadmap we have set out, the Service is seeking to achieve the following outcomes, within the next two years. These outcomes will be recognised by our tenants, our employees, and our stakeholders.

We will know if we have succeeded if we deliver:

Outcomes for Tenants

- Higher satisfaction with our repairs service
- Repairs delivered more quickly and to a consistently high standard
- Regular forums to share views about existing service delivery
- Clear, consistent and timely feedback on individual complaints
- Online repair reporting option
- More flexible delivery times for appointment slots
- Additional communication routes for individual repairs and wider performance information
- Publicised opportunities for involvement in future service delivery
- Improved customer-focus from employees and Service generally as evidenced by improved satisfaction levels
- Higher satisfaction with our repairs service
- Repairs delivered more quickly and to a consistently high standard

Outcomes for Employees

- Recognition that the organisation they work for is committed to their health and safety
- Appropriate, regular and consistent supervision sessions
- Open discussion around individual performance that encourages top performance
- Opportunity to take advantage of SCC flexi-time arrangements

- Access to out of hours scheme to benefit from additional overtime payments
- Modern IT equipment to allow for access to standard SCC back-office support
- Opportunities to engage in informal routes to feedback on service delivery and improvement
- Access to training to re-skill, where appropriate, around renewable sources and energy efficiency

Outcomes for Stakeholders

- Reliable and timely performance data to assess Service delivery and inform decision-making with partners
- Coherent routes for reporting issues and complaints and taking responsibility for actions
- Regular communications on service delivery
- Clear financial position and credible future projections for the Service
- Contractor portal for receiving repair orders and submitting invoices
- Full suite of data to demonstrate performance against compliance and regulatory issues
- An array of external accreditation that supports internal assessments and assures Regulators

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