

LANDLORD SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP)

Thursday, 30 November 2023 - 10.00 am

Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Burys, Godalming

A G E N D A

Circulation:

Members:

Cllr Paul Rivers (Chair)

Terry Daubney, Waverley Tenants' Panel
(Vice Chair)

Cllr Jacquie Keen

Cllr Alan Morrison

Cllr John Robini

Cllr Janet Crowe

Chris Austin, Lucas Field Residents Group

Robert Stratford, Waverley Tenants Panel

Sally Purcell, Waverley Tenants Panel

Danielle Sleightholme, Waverley Tenants
Panel (Co-optee)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence.

2 NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To agree the notes of the previous meeting held on 19th October 2023 and published on the Council's website.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interests under the Waverley Members' Code of Conduct.

4 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF PUBLIC

To receive questions from members of the public.

5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

To receive questions from Members of the Council.

6 Q2 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023-24 (Pages 5 - 18)

The Q2 Corporate Performance Report, Annexe 1, provides an analysis of the

Council's performance for the second quarter of 2023/24.

The Housing Service performance information has been extracted for the LSAB. The full performance report can be found on the Council website.

Recommendation to Landlord Services Advisory Board:

It is recommended that the Board considers the performance of the housing service areas, and

- 1) identifies any areas for comment or further exploration, and
- 2) makes any recommendations to senior management or the Portfolio Holders for Housing as appropriate.

7 AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS SURVEY FEEDBACK - OCTOBER 2023 (Pages 19 - 20)

Board to review the Customer Experience Group's findings and recommendations following the Aids and Adaptations Survey - October 2023.

8 HOUSING DECANT POLICY (Pages 21 - 32)

The report aims to introduce the purpose for a decant policy and review the draft updated version following lessons learnt from experience and a complaint and new financial thresholds.

Recommendation to the Landlord Services Advisory Board

It is recommended that the Board:

- review the decant policy and make any comments to Joint Executive Head of Housing Services and Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Operations and Services),
- supports the adoption and implementation of the policy, and
- to consider and advise, the Service Improvement Manager, on the procedural queries raised.

9 RE-LET REVIEW PROGRESS UPDATE

The Board to receive an update on the progress of the Re-let Review from Annalisa Howson, Housing Service Improvements Manager

10 EXECUTIVE HEAD OF HOUSING UPDATE

The Board to receive an update from Andrew Smith, Executive Head of Housing.

11 WORK PROGRAMME

Work programme to follow.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

HRA Finance Session – 13th December 2023 at 10am.
Next meeting – 25th January 2023 at 10am.

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LANDLORD SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (EXECUTIVE WORKING GROUP)

19 October 2023

NOTES

Present:

Cllr Paul Rivers (Chair)
Terry Daubney, Waverley Tenants' Panel
(Vice Chair)
Cllr Jacquie Keen
Cllr Alan Morrison
Cllr John Robini
Cllr Janet Crowe
Chris Austin, Lucas Field Residents Group
Robert Stratford, Waverley Tenants Panel
Sally Purcell, Waverley Tenants Panel
Danielle Sleightholme, Waverley Tenants
Panel (Co-Optee)

35 Apologies for absence

None received. The Board was in full attendance.

36 Notes of the previous meeting

The Board agreed that the notes of the previous meeting were an accurate and complete record.

37 Smith and Byford Presentation

Daniel Neild, on behalf of Smith & Byford Ltd, addressed the Board and delivered a 6 month progress review.

Danny addressed the challenges faced during the contract's initial mobilisation in February. Issues arose during the transfer of employees from the previous contractor, resulting in a lower than expected number of engineers. Additionally, compliance concerns and a high number of pending repairs added to the complexities during the contract's onset.

Danny highlighted the progress made in performance since the contract's inception. The team had significantly reduced overdue tasks, achieving a 99.79% KPI success rate, surpassing the initially inherited backlog.

The Winter Plan was presented, emphasising improved resources, including a fully staffed contact center, multiple suppliers to tackle parts availability concerns, and increased efficiency in van stocks. Moreover, innovative measures like QR code self-appointment bookings, a safeguarding reporting system, and the imminent implementation of live chat for service requests were highlighted.

The Chair opened the floor for questions.

Call out times for P1 cases (emergencies) were within an hour and completed within 72 hours (mainly gas or water leaks), P2 cases would be completed in up to 28 days with a call out time of 5 working days. He noted that the out of hours team would attend within 24 hours. Danny clarified that P2 referred to an issue that doesn't relate to heating or hot water. We would prioritise certain calls out of hours.

He clarified that there were working contractors on the weekend and therefore the service wasn't restricted to weekdays. Danny explained that they generally provide blow heaters to residents without heating within the arrangement to fix it. He agreed with suggestions to can look at oil heaters in future if someone is struggling to pay electricity.

Cllr Keen explained that some tenants may turn down services, mainly with concerns about the elderly, and asked if there was anything to make these appliances more efficient to reduce prices. Danny reassured that engineers would give safety advice on hot water and regulating temperatures. He noted that on the other end of the scale, people are not using gas due to debt on meters which will not get cleared. He noted that it was their responsibility to provide advice and signposting in such cases. Smith and Byford will generally feedback to the WBC team if there are concerns about vulnerable tenants not using their gas.

Annalisa Howson added that the Housing Revenue Account Hardship fund was available for tenants who were signposted for safeguarding. She also confirmed that safeguarding concerns had been raised by Smith and Byford which the WBC team were able to look into.

Danny agreed that Smith & Byford should work with the Tenants Panel to improve uptake in the QR code initiative. Annalisa also suggested promoting it in Homes and People – and to further include a tenant feedback on the newsletter about using the QR code.

Members highlighted that fan heaters had a high electricity consumption rate and some may be reluctant to use them (particularly residents on key meters). Danny noted that this would be a safeguarding issue – and this case would be prioritised. He further agreed to the Board's suggestions to consider alternative heaters such as oil heaters during repair periods.

Danny further clarified that when setting up an annual investigation review with a tenant, they would send a standard LGSR letter indicating that they will service in the AM or PM. He noted that tenants could choose slots in the morning (first call) and avoiding school run and a last call slot after 4pm. They could also accommodate servicing after 5:30pm in special circumstances.

The Chair thanked Daniel Nield for this presentation and attendance.

38 Aids and Adaptations Service Review

Adrian Bryant, Repairs and Voids Manager, introduced the report and the action plan, with a few updates;

- The policy and process have been reviewed and are now looking at legal obligations

- Officers are reviewing current processes, namely; lack of communication with Tenants throughout adaptation; a Housing Adaptations Support Group has been set up to inform tenants on A&A case until completion.
- Officers are in the process of carrying out Tenant Satisfaction Surveys, sent out to tenants we have had A&As carried out between Apr-Oct 2023 and in November they can feedback the results
- Officers are in conversations with suppliers and contractors – this will be promoted to tenants about the service
- There had been a lack of tracking identified by the team – therefore they have created a simple tracker to ensure cases are followed through all stages
- Setting up reports to monitor cases – weekly update meetings with contractor to keep on top of cases.
- Action plan is in continual improvement.

In response to the Board, Ibiyemi Akoto, Compliance Manager, confirmed that the Council was in contact with social services teams and hospital outreach teams regarding Aids and Adaptions for tenants.

It was noted that the case which triggered the review involved significant and unreasonable delays in dealing with an adaptation – what caused this?

Andrew Smith, Executive Head of Housing, explained that it was a lack of communication and adherence to the policy. He further noted that the complaint came before the policy had been reviewed. Andrew explained that the appropriate steps have been taken to avoid such cases in the future and it wouldn't be appropriate to go into more detail on this in public session.

The Board requested a review on the progress of the action plan in February 2024. Annalisa Howson noted that they were due to bring TSS info back next month and can programme a review for the Action Plan in that meeting.

39 Senior Living Fire Alarm Upgrade - Contract Award

The Board noted and endorsed the proposals set out in the report.

40 Executive Head of Housing Update

Andrew Smith, Executive Head of Housing, addressed the Board and provided the following updates:

- There is now a fully resourced Compliance Team in place at WBC, which is key for ensuring tenants' safety and satisfaction.
- The Q2 Corporate Performance Report will be presented to the Board next month, and we are keen to see improvements in KPIs, specifically responsive repairs and voids. He noted that progress is slow but steady.
- A new Anti-Social Behaviour Officer has been recruited and will work with housing on neighbourhood disputes and anti-social behaviour.
- 3,304 out of the 5,170 Stock Condition Surveys have been completed and the consultants have had a good response. There is a good number of satisfaction levels.
- The Budget setting process is due to commence so we will be looking at that soon.
- Winter Housing Hellos will take place on 14th, 17th and 23rd November.
- He concluded by thanking the Housing team and the LSAB, rising to the challenges in place.

41 Work programme

Annalisa Howson noted the upcoming items for the next meeting;

- Re-let review update
- Decant Policy
- Retrofit Progress Report (this may be deferred)
- Aids and Adaptations Survey Feedback
- The Board expressed a desire to schedule a HRA Mid-year review finance training session in December to prepare Members to look at the HRA Budget in January

Cllr Rivers raised a point about the Decant Policy and questioned the use of the word “Decant”. The Board agreed and questioned the use of “decant” when talking about people and homes and would be open to suggestions for an alternative name.

42 Date of next meeting

The Board noted that the date of the next meeting would be Thursday 30th November 2023.

Waverley Borough Council

Report to: Landlord Services Advisory Board
Date: 30 November 2023
Ward(s) affected: All
Report of Director: Annie Righton, Community Wellbeing
Author: Jenny Sturgess and Annalisa Howson
Policy and Performance Officer and Housing
Service Improvement Manager
Tel: 01483 523 465 01483 523453
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annalisa.howson@waverley.gov.uk
Executive Portfolio Cllr Rivers
Holder responsible: Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing Operations
Report Status: Open

Corporate Performance Report Q2 2023-24 (July – September 2023)

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The edited Corporate Performance Report, set out at Annexe 1, provides an analysis of the Council's performance for the second quarter of 2022-23 (July to September).

1.2 The Housing Service performance information has been extracted for the Landlord Services Advisory Board. The full performance report can be found on the [council website](#).

1.3 The report is being presented to each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Landlord Services Advisory Board for comment and any recommendations they may wish to make to senior management or the Executive.

2. Recommendation to Landlord Services Advisory Board:

It is recommended that the Board considers the performance of the housing service areas, and

- 1) identifies any areas for comment or further exploration, and
- 2) makes any recommendations to senior management or the Portfolio Holders for Housing as appropriate.

3. Reason(s) for Recommendation:

The quarterly review of the Council's performance is subject to internal as well as external scrutiny. This approach allows for a transparent assessment of how each service performs against its set goals and targets. It also allows the Board to raise any areas of concern to the Joint Management Team or the Executive, which in turn drives service improvement.

4. Purpose of Report

The focus of this comprehensive report is the corporate level performance analysis. The data is collated at the end of each quarter and a broad range of measures have been included to provide a comprehensive picture, and these are:

- Key performance indicators
- Progress of Internal Audit recommendations

- Complaints monitoring
- Workforce data
- Financial forecasting
- Housing Delivery monitoring

5. Strategic Priorities

Review of the Council's performance in all service areas is central to delivering all of the strategic priorities.

6. Background

- 6.1 The Council's Performance Management Framework provides the governance structure to enable the delivery of the Council's objectives. Performance monitoring is conducted at all levels of the organisation, from the strategic corporate level, through the operational/team level, leading to individual staff performance targets.
- 6.2 The report is comprised of the corporate overview section with the Chief Executive's and Section 151 Officer's (Executive Head of Finance) comments, followed by service specific sections with Executive Heads of Service feedback on the performance in their area. The report is used as a performance management tool by senior management.
- 6.3 Annexe One has been edited to provide performance related to the landlord service.

7. Consultations

The report goes through an internal sign off process by the Joint Management Team. The report is a standing item on the Landlord Services Advisory Board and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and any recommendations made travel to the Executive for consideration and response.

8. Key Risks

The scrutiny process of key performance indicators, goals and targets, laid out in this report, allows for an ongoing assessment of potential risks arising from underperformance and the monitoring of improvement or mitigation actions put in place to address potential issues.

9. Financial Implications

The report presents the performance status of a wide range of measures from across the Council, including the quarterly update on the budget position.

10. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report, however some indicators are based on statutory returns, which the council must make to the Government.

11. Human Resource Implications

The full report presents the performance status of a wide range of measures from across the Council, including the quarterly update on the staffing situation.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications resulting from this report. Equality impact assessments are carried out when necessary, across the council to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

13. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

The report does not have direct climate change implications. Service Plans, which are monitored in this report, take into consideration new environmental and sustainability objectives arising from the [Corporate Strategy 2020-2025](#) in light of the [Climate Emergency](#) introduced by the Council in September 2019.

14. Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

15. Appendices

Annexe 1: Corporate Performance Report Q2 2023/24 – Landlord Services Advisory Board Extract

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report. Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	18/10/2023
Legal / Governance	18/10/2023
HR	18/10/2023
Equalities	18/10/2023
Lead Councillor	31/10/2023
CMB - JMT	18/10/2023
Executive Briefing/Liaison	31/10/2023
Committee Services	

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Corporate
Performance Report
Q2 2023/24

Document Version: Final

Last update: 22/11/2023 12:52

LANDLORD SERVICES EXTRACT: 22 November 2023

Lead Officer: Jenny Sturgess
Title: Policy and Performance Officer
Telephone: 01483 523 465
Email: jennifer.sturgess@waverley.gov.uk

1. Performance Assessment with RAG Rating (Red, Amber, Green)

The Report content has been presented in a visual format and a further explanation of the RAG rating used throughout the report can be found in the tables below.

1.1 Performance Indicators RAG Rating per Status Type

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Status Types	Explanation of the Status Type
Data only or Data Not Available/ collection on pause (in Grey)	Data only indicators are those that monitor performance of an area which has not yet established performance patterns allowing an improvement target to be introduced, or those which are out of our direct control such as the number of queries we receive from our residents. We also indicate in grey, statistics for which we were not able to obtain up-to-date figures or areas for which the monitoring activity has been temporarily suspended/paused.
Green	The indicator has performed on or above a set target, no concern.
Amber	Up to 5% off target – Officers investigate the causes of underperformance to establish if an improvement action is required.
Red	More than 5% off target – Officers investigate the causes of underperformance to establish if an improvement action is required.

1.2 Service Plans, Internal Audit, Project Management

Action Status Types	Explanation of the Status Rating Type
Completed – on track (in Green)	Action was completed: on time, within the budget & resources achieving desired outcome.
On Track (in Green)	Action is on track to complete on time, within the budget & resources and expected to achieve desired outcome.
Completed – off track (in Amber)	Action was completed but off track meaning that: Was delivered not on time or/and Requiring additional budget or resources or/and Not fully achieving desired outcome
Off track – action taken / in hand (in Amber)	Action has fallen slightly off target: on time or/and budget or resources or/and or quality, however corrective/improvement actions are already being undertaken to bring it back on track.
Partially Completed	Action has not been fully achieved
Off track – requires escalation (in Red)	Action has fallen significantly off track: on time or/and budget or resources or/and quality and a managerial intervention/escalation is required in order to bring it back on track.
Cancelled (in Grey)	Cancelled Action Status indicates that we will no longer pursue delivery of this action.
Deferred (in Grey)	Deferred Action Status indicates that the action will not be pursued at present but will/might be in the future.

Action Status Types	Explanation of the Status Rating Type
Transferred (in Grey)	Transferred Action Status indicates that although the action was not yet fully completed its delivery will continue in the coming year or that the action ownership has now changed.

2. Service Dashboard – Housing Operations

This service area includes Housing maintenance and repairs and Landlord services.

2.1 Key Successes & Lessons Learnt, Areas of Concerns

2.1.1 Summary from Executive Head of Service – Q2 2023/24

Landlord Services

Over the summer the Teams continued to focus on priorities to address and improve compliance, damp and mould and responsive repairs services.

Following a period of vacancies and employment of interim staff the Compliance Team is now fully staffed, including a Compliance Manager, Compliance Gas and Electrical Safety Officer and Mechanical and Electrical Manager. The new postholders have made a positive start.

The Asset Team successfully recruited to new posts: a Land Officer and Assistant Housing Asset Data Analyst. These officers will ensure the service maintains robust accurate records on housing property and land.

The Property Services Team have worked on an Aids and Adaptations review, following the Housing Ombudsman's finding of maladministration due to extensive delays in a particular case. A comprehensive action plan has been developed to assess the performance and identify areas of improvement within the service, which was presented to the Landlord Service Advisory Board – Executive Working Group in October.

Progress was made on procurement projects for the Asset Management IT system, fire equipment servicing, aids and adaptations works and buy back of former council properties.

During the quarter the Fire Safety Policy and the Damp and Mould Policy were approved providing clear guidance on the responsibilities and aims of the Landlord Service to ensure tenants are safe in their homes.

The Service Improvement Team shared reflections and learning following the summer housing conferences at the July Landlord Services Advisory Board. The Team also worked with the Board to provide feedback to the Regulator of Social Housing proposed consumer standards consultation.

Partnership working has been the focus for the Housing Management Team. Close working with the Police and other agencies has led to the successful resolution and closure of some longer term cases. The Team also prioritises vulnerable tenants to help sustain their tenancies and address issues such as hoarding and exploitation. The Resettlement Team are working with refugees in council homes, providing practical advice and assistance to support integration.

Andrew Smith, Executive Head of Housing

2.2 Key Performance Indicators Status

2.2.1 Table of Service Specific Performance Indicators presenting data for the five past quarters and their performance against the target

PI reference	Description		Q2 22-23	Q3 22-23	Q4 22-23	Q1 23-24	Q2 23-24	Target
H1 (NI)	Number of homeless households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter (lower outturn is better)	No.	3	7	8	2	3	<5
H2	Total current tenants rent arrears as a percentage of the total estimated gross debit (lower outturn is better)	%	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%	1%
H3	Average number of working days taken to re-let 'normal void' property (lower outturn is better)	Days	26	31	30	39	39	25
H4	Percentage of annual boiler services and gas safety checks undertaken on time (higher outturn is better)	%	99.7%	99.4%	99.3%	99.9%	99%	100%
H5a	Responsive Repairs: How would you rate the overall service you have received? (Tenants' view of the service) (higher outturn is better)	%	77%	79%	74%	74%	81%	90%
H5b	Responsive Repairs: Average number of days to complete a repair (lower outturn is better)	Days	20	20	22	27	12	7
H6a	Responsive Repairs: Was repair completed right first time? (Tenants' view of the service) (higher outturn is better)	%	68%	61%	64%	62%	68%	78%
H6b	Responsive Repairs: Percentage of jobs not completed within 28 days (lower outturn is better) *	%	14.0%	13.0%	22.0%	39.0%	13%	10%
H7	% of tenancy audits completed against scheduled appointments in a quarter.	%	Suspended until April 2023			100%	80%	95%
H8	Number of Affordable homes - Granted planning permission (Data only - higher outturn is better)	No.	7	9	33	0	119	Data only
H9	Number of Affordable homes - Started on site within a quarter (Data only - higher outturn is better)	No.	76	69	99	3	3	Data only
H10	Total Number of affordable homes delivered by the Council and other providers (gross) (Data only - higher outturn is better)	No.	78	58	84	3	27	Data only
H10a	Number of affordable homes delivered other providers (gross) (Data only - higher outturn is better)	No.	78	58	84	3	27	Data only
H10b	Number of affordable homes delivered by the Council (gross) (Data only - higher outturn is better)	No.	0	0	0	0	0	Data only

2.2.2 Comment:

Rents:

The Rents Team have failed to maintain the target for the first time since covid. This is due to a number of complex cases, that are nearing solutions, and the teams aim to avoid evictions. 1,600 tenants are in arrears, with 1,000 owing less than £100 and 25 tenants owing over £2,000. 90% of tenants in arrears are engaged with their Rent Accounts officer and have repayment plans in place. The team also remain under resourced with one staff vacancy and another on long term absence.

Relets:

The Team continues to be challenged by the target with an increase in the number of empty homes, embedding new contracts and increase in works required to homes. A Relet Review is underway, with the introduction of dedicated officer for tenancy end and starts to support tenants through the process. The findings of the Relet Review will be presented to the Landlord Services Advisory Board on 30 November to give an update on progress and plans to improve performance.

Gas Safety:

Following the challenges with the previous contract and embedding of new contractor the team pleased to see the continued improvement in performance. As at the end of September 11 homes were without a valid gas safety certificate, due to issues with access and appointments. Two have since been completed at the start of October. Of the nine remaining the majority are overdue by less than a month and two were due in August.

Responsive Repairs and Voids:

There continues to be challenges with meeting the responsive repairs and voids targets, but the team are working well together and seeing a level of improvement and progress in performance. Consideration is also being given to strengthening the team in terms of contract management. The Housing Operations Manager and Responsive Repairs Contract Manager presented to Landlord Services Advisory Board on 28 September to give an update on progress and plans to improve performance. They advised that they have reviewed their operational management structure to provide more clarity on roles and responsibilities, reviewed the supply chain, recruited seven new operatives and completed a performance review leading to the departure of underperforming operatives. Performance data shared identified:

1. between 1,100 and 1,200 repair jobs per month,
2. the reduction in work in progress as a backlog in jobs is addressed, from 1,280 in April to 668 in August, and
3. an improvement in performance with 100% emergency, 98% urgent and 84% jobs completed in timescale in August, compared to 85%, 63% and 57% in April.

Tenancy Audits:

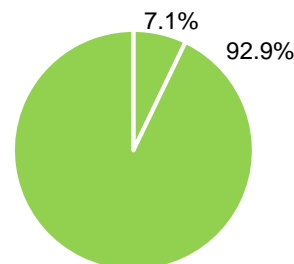
The audit target was not fully met due to a significant increase in caseload for the Housing Management team in recent months. The team are prioritising their cases by category in order to reduce numbers and have a target through to March.

2.3 Service Plans – Progress Status

2.3.1 Summary Table and Pie Chart

Q2 Progress on Housing Services Service Plans 2023/26

Total	100%	42
Completed	7.1%	3
On track	92.9%	39
Off track - action taken / in hand	0.0%	0
Off track - requires escalation	0.0%	0
Cancelled / Deferred /Transferred	0.0%	0



2.3.2 Summary comment on the service plans

Comment: All service plan actions are completed or on track.

2.4 Internal Audit Actions Progress Status

Comment: At the end of Q2 the following Internal Audit Actions, from the Use and Occupation charges audit, were outstanding for this service area as they were due end of September:

IA23/08.001.1 Training

IA23/08.001.3 Local Policy (due end Oct)

IA23/08.002.1 Tenancy Audits

IA23/08.003.1 Staff Training

IA23/08.004.1 Performance Management

For further details please refer to the latest [Review of Progress in the implementation of Internal Audit Actions](#) (from the Audit Committee 11 September 2023). Please note the outstanding actions were completed the first week of October.

2.5 Complaints Statistics

2.5.1 Table presenting statistics of Level 1 complaints for this service area for the past 5 quarters

KPI	Description		Q2 22-23	Q3 22-23	Q4 22-23	Q1 23-24	Q2 23-24	Target
Level 1	Total number of Level 1 complaints received in a quarter	Number	New service structure effective 1 Oct 2022	23	34	44	32	Data only
Level 1	Number of Level 1 complaints dealt with on time in a quarter	Number		19	26	26	18	Data only
Level 1	Level 1 Response rate (the percentage of complaints responded to against the 10 working days target)	%	N/A	82.6%	76.5%	59.1%	56.3%	95%

2.5.2 Table presenting statistics of Level 2 complaints for this service area for the past 5 quarters

KPI	Description		Q2 22-23	Q3 22-23	Q4 22-23	Q1 23-24	Q2 23-24	Target
Level 2	Total number of Level 1 complaints received in a quarter	Number	New service structure effective 1 Oct 2022	0	23	12	14	Data only
Level 2	Number of Level 1 complaints dealt with on time in a quarter	Number		0	22	12	12	Data only
Level 2	Level 1 Response rate (the percentage of complaints responded to against the 10 working days target)	%	N/A	N/A	95.7%	100%	85.7%	95%

2.5.3 Summary Comment on the statistics

Due to an increase in complexity of complaints the Team has had challenges in investigating and responding to tenants within the timescales.

Overall there has been a decrease in complaints however, the level of complaints related to damp and mould has increased, following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale and the national campaign 'Make Things Right' The Executive Head of Housing is reviewing resources to improve capacity to respond to complaints. The Make Things Right campaign has been relaunched this autumn.

2.6 Finance Position at the end of the quarter

2.6.1 Housing Services General Fund Account Table

HRA					
	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast variance £'000	Adverse/ Favourable	% variance
Housing Services					
Expenditure	30,184	30,399	215	Adverse	1%
Income	-37,300	-37,479	-179	Favourable	0%
Housing Services Total	-7,116	-7,080	36	Adverse	-1%

HRA – Core Capital

	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Sum of Savings £'000
Communal & Estate works	190	190	
Health & Safety Works	1,121	1,121	
MRA Prog Decent Homes Occupied Properties	900	900	
MRA Prog Decent Homes Void Properties	630	630	
MRA Prog Disabled Adaptations Occupied Properties	300	300	
MRA Programmed work	3,716	3,504	-212
Roofing & Associated works	1,230	980	-250

St James Court	140	140	
Structural & Damp works	247	247	
Windows & Doors	450	45	
Grand Total	8,925	8,463	-462

New Build/Stock Remodelling

	Approved Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Sum of Carry forward £'000
Chiddingfold schemes	7,525	2,900	-4,625
HRA Feasibility Studies	511	511	-
Latent defects	189	189	-
Ockford Ridge schemes	4,613	4,613	-
Pre-development Expenditure	170	170	-
Zero carbon retrofit pilot	1,739	1,739	-
85 Aarons Hill Starter Homes (Land adj)	819	819	-419
Borough Wide Refurbishment	339	339	-
Catteshall Lane	2,845	700	-2,145
Grand Total	18,753	11,563	-7,190

2.6.2 Summary Comment on revenue position at the quarter end

HRA shows overall adverse variance due to additional costs due to number and works of voids. However, the HRA including regeneration is overall favourable.

HRA Capital programme shows overall favourable variance from savings in procurement and delays in programme timeframes. The team are looking to increase other programmes to use the forecasted saving.

The New Build budgets were updated following the strategic review on the Housing Revenue Account in 2022/23. Seven million will be carried forward to 2024/5 due to delays in planning, procurement and contract negotiation.

NB Further details can be found in the HRA Business Plan mid-year review.

Housing Service: Aids & Adaptations Survey Results - October 2023

Customer Experience Group Findings

Introduction

There were 109 Aids and Adaptations works reported completed in the six months from 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023. This group was contacted either by phone or email to ask for feedback on the works they had in their homes. 13 responded, giving a response rate of around 12%. They completed a survey, the questions of which, along with an overview of their responses are listed below.

A combination of the low response rate and confusion over the meaning of the questions asked means that these results are not statistically robust.

Survey Questions and Responses

Q1. Overall, how satisfied were you with the aids and adaptation work carried out on your home?

Seven respondents reported that they were satisfied with the work completed. They commented on the quality of the work, how safe they now felt, and the speed of the work. However, some respondents who were overall very satisfied were unhappy with how long it took and the number of visits, but happy with the work once completed.

Six respondents reported dissatisfaction with the work due to the quality of workmanship and/or contractors generally.

Q2. How satisfied were you with the contact officer that you were assigned during the works?

This question was interpreted by respondents as contact with the contractors undertaking work. Those who responded were happy with the attitude of people working on their house.

There was dissatisfaction from those who had received no contact from a contact officer or the council generally.

Q3. How satisfied were you with the communication from the council during the works?

This question ties in with the last one and was similarly misinterpreted. Some respondents felt they had no contact from the council, and some hadn't been informed of contractor appointments.

Q4. How easy was it to report the works that you needed done?

All respondents found it easy and had no issues with reporting works.

Q5. What has been the impact on your life since having the works completed?

There were comments on tenant's lives being made easier and safer. Generally, people were happy, but a couple felt the works had either not been fully completed, or not been completed to a high enough standard.

Q6. How could we improve the service that you received?

Comments for this question suggested better and more frequent communication. In addition, having operatives who were both more competent and more reliable to avoid poor workmanship and delays.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there were no discernible trends from this survey data. However, it was encouraging in the comments of questions five and six to see that Aids and Adaptations have a positive impact on people's lives once completed.

The Group note from the Aids and Adaptations Service review report to LSAB in October that the aids and adaptations policy and process are being updated to improve communications with tenants and the monitoring of works. Therefore, this pilot data can be a soft benchmark to compare with future surveys.

Although statistically unrepresentative the experience of individuals shows the importance of communication and getting it right first time.

Recommendations

The Group requests the Board's view and support for the suggested recommendations.

It is recommended that the housing team:

- use the survey to assess the impact of the new policy and procedure on communications,
- continue to seek tenants feedback following the completion of works,
- should consider ways to increase the response rate,
- refine the survey questions following the initial pilot with the Customer Experience Group,
- consider sending surveys immediately after works have been completed, and
- offer the opportunity to complete the survey by phone or in person.

Increasing the response rate will provide data from a more statistically significant number of tenants. Thus detailing the outcomes of the service and highlighting the key issues and trends to inform continuous service improvement.

Joseph Warriner and Customer Experience Group

November 2023

Waverley Borough Council

Report to: Landlord Services Advisory Board

Date: 30 November 2023

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director: Community Wellbeing

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Report Status: Open

Housing Decant Policy

1. Executive Summary

To introduce the purpose for a decant policy and review the draft updated version following lessons learnt from experience and a complaint and new financial thresholds.

2. Recommendation to LSAB

It is recommended that the Board:

- review the decant policy and make any comments to Joint Executive Head of Housing Services and Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Operations and Services),
- supports the adoption and implementation of the policy, and
- to consider and advise, the Service Improvement Manager, on the procedural queries raised.

3. Reason for the recommendations

To provide the Board members the opportunity to comment on the updated policy and support the implementation of the policy. To seek views on procedure options.

4. Purpose of Report

To raise awareness of the policy and promote commitment to quality services and positive tenant/landlord relationships.

Report to Landlord Services Advisory Board for comments. Policy to be adopted by Executive Head of Housing in consultation with Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing.

5. Strategic Priorities

The report supports the Council's Corporate commitment to promote "*Good quality housing for all income levels and age groups*" and aim to "*be the best council landlord in the South East and to be acknowledged so by our tenants.*"

6. Background

6.1 The process of having to move a tenant out of their home on a temporary or permanent basis is known as a decant. On average there are approximately five cases a year.

6.2 Waverley housing has a generic decant policy last updated in 2013. In addition, there was a specific local letting plan for the Ockford Ridge redevelopment. The service recognised that the Decant Policy needs to be updated to reflect lessons learnt and new financial thresholds.

6.3 The service recognises that decants, as with any move, can be challenging and should be treated with care and sensitivity. The policy lays out the commitments that made to tenants who must move home. Fundamental to this is that each decant is treated on an individual basis with a designated member of staff identified who will consult and visit with the tenant to discuss expectations and requirements. Tenant's needs will be at the heart of the decision making.

6.4 The policy outlines what compensations and financial assistance a tenant may be entitled to depending on the circumstances of the decant.

6.5 The policy explains the impact of decants on tenancy type – permanent decant tenants will retain the type of tenancy they held in their original home (introductory or secure). Temporary decants tenants will retain the tenancy they hold at their original home and be issued a temporary license at the temporary home.

6.6 The policy also outlines the Council's right to pursue legal action where the tenant refuses to be accommodated elsewhere and reserves the right to offset payments against any debt to the Council.

6.7 On approval of the revised policy, information on the website will be updated.

6.8 To adopt the policy a project team has been set up to review and improve the decant procedure and communications. The Tenants Panel were invited

to be involved in the project, and experiences of recently decanted tenants were included in the review, in the spirit of co-creation.

6.9 The project team have drafted new letters, leaflets for clear communication and improved the procedure guide. However there were a couple of points that the team would like the Boards thoughts on:

6.9.1 Gesture of goodwill - One off payment to all decanting tenants
Suggested payment in recognition that decants are stressful, distributive and the process can take a lot of tenant's time which we do not compensate for. Counter thought was that as a landlord it is our responsibility to update / keep our stock safe and decent and decants can be required to ensure that this happens, as with any responsive or planned works. The cost of the gesture, due to the small number of temporary decants in any year, wasn't seen to be a major issue. However the potential impact on benefits may need to be considered.

6.9.2 Payments in advance for subsistence
Where tenants are decanted to hotel accommodation reasonable costs for foods are reimbursed the project team were divided on when these payments should be made. Options a) set amount in advance per person, or b) payment on receipt of receipts.

7. Consultations

Project lead attended the Tenants Panel meeting on 7 September to discuss the policy and procedure, seeking views and suggestions for service improvement in line with regulations. The policy was also updated in consultation with Housing Development and Property Services Teams and reflects lessons learnt from tenant complaints.

8. Key Risks

Failure to adopt or adhere to the Decant Policy could result in service delivery, legal/regulatory, reputational and financial risks to the Council.

9. Financial Implications

Any impacts as a result of this policy update will be funded from within existing budgets and delivered by existing resources.

10. Legal Implications

The Council as landlord, will from time to time have to undertake decants in order to undertake works or for other related reasons. This Policy supports the Council in conducting this in a fair and appropriate way, having regard to the landlord

obligations under Land Compensation Act 1973 (Section 30, 37 and 38), Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, Home Loss Payments Regulations 2008, Housing Act 1996 Part VI and Homelessness Act 2002.

11. Human Resource Implications

Procedure confirms that Housing Officers are responsible for implementing the decant policy for emergency or redevelopment/regeneration cases and the Resident Liaison Officer is responsible for all decants for planned works.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, ensuring the policy includes the requirement to identify and accommodate the individual need(s) of tenant(s).

13. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

The Decant Policy may support the delivery of energy efficient initiatives, to reduce carbon emissions from energy use, where tenants are required to move whilst works completed.

14. Summary of Options

To support adoption of updated policy or not.

15. Conclusion

The team have fully reviewed the limitations and problems with current policy and drafted a new policy which reflects tenants needs and good practice to provide a quality service.

16. Background Papers

There are no background papers, as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

17. Appendices

Annexe One – Draft Decant Policy

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report. Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	CK 9 Nov 2023
Legal / Governance	RT 8 Nov 2023
HR	n/a
Equalities	n/a
Lead Councillor	30 Oct 2023
CMB	7 Nov 2023
Executive Briefing/Liaison	14 Nov 2023
Committee Services	

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Waverley Borough Council
Decant Policy
Policy for tenants required to move home

Latest version number: v1.5
Latest publication date:
Lead Officer / Team: Brenda Glover / Service Improvement Team

Document Information & Governance

Approval & Publication:

Approving Body	Approval route requirement	Publication Type	Publication requirement	Review frequency	Document owner	Next Review Date
<i>Executive Head of Housing Service</i>	<i>There are no legal or constitutional requirements for approval</i>	<i>Internal and external</i>	<i>Regulatory requirement to publish tenancy management policies</i>	<i>Two yearly</i>		<i>November 2025</i>

Version Control Information:

Version	Version Status (Draft, Approved /Published Internally or Externally)	Date	Version Comment	Version Author
V1	Approved	2013		
V1.1	Draft	05/10/2022	Creation of the document	BG
V1.2	Draft	06/10/2022	Input from key stakeholders	BG
V1.3	Draft	06/01/2023	Approved by Annalisa Howson	BG
V1.4	Draft	28/07/2023	Updated following further input from key stakeholders	BG
V1.5	draft	25/10/2023	Plain English edit	AH
			Legal comments	
V1.4	Final Approval			
V2	Published			
V2.1	Draft			
V2.2	Final Approved & Re-Publication			
V2				

Impact Assessments and Consideration:

Impact Assessment Type	Required / Not Required	Date Completed	Impact Assessments and Considerations Comment	Assessment Owner
Equality Impact Assessment	Completed	5/10/2022	Policy takes into account tenant(s) needs.	BG
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required			
Climate Change	Not required			

Introduction

Improvement works and major repairs are normally carried out whilst the tenant(s) remains in their home. However, in certain circumstances it is necessary for the council to move them either temporarily or permanently from their homes. This is known as a “decant”.

Purpose of policy

The purpose of this policy is to direct the management and delivery of a decant service to tenants who must move from their homes.

Types of Decant

Temporary Decants

A temporary decant is when tenants will return to their home after the works are completed. There are different types of temporary decants.

- Emergency – an unknown event occurs and the tenant must move out of the property straight away eg fire, flood, serious disrepair.
- Unplanned– unplanned repair work is needed which cannot be completed with the tenant in situ. The tenant does not have to leave immediately and a mutually convenient decant will be arranged..
- Planned – as part of planned works programme eg regeneration, reprofite. A decant programme will be arranged to support the completion of works.

Permanent Decant

A permanent decant is when the tenant cannot return to their home. There are different types of permanent decants.

- An unplanned event happens – may or may not be an emergency.
- A temporary decant is expected to take a long time and the tenant would prefer to move permanently.
- The property is due to be disposed off, demolished, part of a redevelopment..

Aims of policy

The aims of this policy are to:

- ensure decants operate in a fair, equitable and reasonable manner.
- consult and get feedback from tenants that need to be decanted at the earliest opportunity and throughout the process.
- enable decants to be carried out with the minimal disturbance to tenants as possible.
- build a trusted relationship with decanting tenant(s), with agreed expectations and clear communications
- enable the Council to make best use of stock through timely access for improvement, development and remodeling works or where a decision has been made for disposal.
- minimise rent loss to the Council and ensure that the best use is made of Council resources.

Scope of policy

In line with legislation and existing best practice, assistance with decants will be offered to Waverley tenants and family members – spouses, partners and children. This policy does not apply to leaseholders. The Council will not rehouse unauthorised occupants, sub-tenants, lodgers, licensees and other non-secure occupants.

The Council recognises moving away from your home can be stressful, especially when you haven't chosen to move. The aim will be to assign a single point of contact officer who will work with the household through the decant process, ensuring that the Council complies with its legal obligations. These include:

1 Consultation

All affected tenants will be consulted with as early in the process as possible. They will be offered support and assistance before, during and after works have been completed, as appropriate to meet the needs of the tenant(s)

2 Alternative Accommodation

For a temporary decant the Council will work with tenants to identify the best option taking into the household's needs and nature of the decant (e.g emergency) and cost implications. These include options of staying with family and friends, hotel accommodation or in another council owned property. Where the decant is an emergency and the tenant(s) has contents insurance they will be advised to check if the policy would support a move to alternative temporary accommodation.

Where the move is permanent tenant(s) will need to join the Housing Needs Register. Allocations will be in line with the Council's Allocation Policy. In larger redevelopment schemes a local letting plan will be agreed for local direct allocation of homes.

3 Tenancy

Tenants moving temporarily will retain the tenancy they hold at their original home. If staying temporarily in another council property, this will be on a licence basis. Tenants will continue to pay rent for their original home. Rent is not charged for temporary council accommodation.

Tenants moving on a permanent basis will be given the same tenancy type as they currently hold.

4 Compensation

Tenants should not suffer financially because the Council needs them to be moved.

Disturbance Allowances are aimed at compensating tenants for the actual cost of moving from their home. Details about Disturbance Allowance payments can be found in the Council's Compensation Policy.

Home Loss Payments may be made to tenants who have to move permanently (subject to certain eligibility criteria). Details about Home Loss payment can be found in the Council's Compensation Policy.

Subsistence payments will be made to tenants who are decanted to temporary accommodation with no cooking facilities.

The Council reserves the right to offset payment against any debt to the Council.

5 Access to the property

If a tenant refuses the Council access, or declines to move out of their home, the Council will discuss the reasons with the tenant with a view to understanding and resolving the situation. The Council retains the legal right to commence possession proceedings as a last resort to obtain possession of property (with the provision of suitable alternative accommodation).

Data Protection and retention of information

All decant cases will be handled in accordance with the requirements of General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018. The handling and storage of personal data will be managed and stored in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and our Record Retention Disposal Schedule.

Equality and Diversity

This policy identifies that all tenants' differing needs and preferences are considered. Central to this is the personal visit to carry out a needs assessment at the beginning of the process, which allows the Council to:

- Identify those who may need more support, such as a full packing service or extra help.
- Ensure tenants are kept informed in the way most appropriate to them.
- Make suitable rehousing offers, with full consideration made of any adaptations required, and.
- Identify locations that needs taken into consideration.

Legal Framework and Provisions

Land Compensation Act 1973 (Section 30, 37 and 38)

Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

Home Loss Payments Regulations 2008

Housing Act 1996 Part VI

Homelessness Act 2002

Document Improvement

The Council welcomes comments and feedback on its policies and procedures. Please contact Brenda Glover Service Improvement Team if you have any comments.

Related information

Other Related Council Policies / Information

Housing Compensation Policy

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