

**WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**24 MARCH 2015**

**EXECUTIVE – 7 JULY 2015**

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**Title:**

**RESPONSIVE REPAIRS IN-DEPTH REVIEW – FINAL REPORT**

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Carole King]  
[Wards Affected: All]**

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**Summary and purpose:**

In September 2014 the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed the terms of reference for an in-depth scrutiny review of Waverley's Responsive Repairs Service, and asked the Housing Improvement Sub-Committee to undertake the review. The Housing Improvement Sub-Committee's report, including recommendations for making improvements in the services, is attached as Annexe 1 to this report.

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**How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:**

This report supports the Corporate Priorities of Affordable Housing – improving the condition of our properties; Understanding Residents Needs – responding to the history of customer complaints about the Responsive Repairs Service; ensuring that the service meets the reasonable expectations of tenants; and Value for Money – ensuring that Waverley gets good value from its contractors, through an efficient service to tenants and the Council.

**Financial Implications:**

The Council's Responsive Repairs budget in Housing is £2.272m for 2014/15.

**Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. However, the in-depth review will need to consider how the Council discharges its legal obligations to Council Housing Tenants for completing repairs as set out in the Tenancy Agreements. Agreements to change contractual arrangements between Waverley and the contractor may require a deed of variation to be drawn up.

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**Introduction:**

1. At its meeting on 24 June 2014, the Chairman of the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee proposed that the Committee undertake an in-depth scrutiny review of the Council's Responsive Repairs Service. This followed the report to the Executive on the budget out-turn for 2013/14 which included significant additional spending on the responsive repairs budget and provision for contractual payments which had not previously been reported as part of the

monthly budget monitoring. In addition, since the start of the current responsive repairs contract in 2012 there had been a history of tenants' complaints. Whilst the level of complaints had improved considerably, there remained some concerns about the reliability of the high level of customer satisfaction reported by the contractor.

2. Given the additional spending on responsive repairs in 2013/14, the high profile nature of the service and the importance of the service to Waverley tenants, in September 2014 the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed the terms of reference for an in-depth scrutiny review of Waverley's Responsive Repairs Service, and asked the Housing Improvement Sub-Committee to undertake the review.
3. The Housing Improvement Sub-Committee received information on the structure of Waverley's contract with Mears, how the responsive repairs service operated in practice, and the main issues from officers' perspective. In November 2014 and January 2015, representatives of Mears attended the Sub-Committee's meetings and answered questions about the services they provided to Waverley and tenants.
4. The findings of the Sub-Committee and its recommendations seek to build on the programme of improvements already in progress by Housing Officers and Mears, and the action plan will enable the Sub-Committee to monitor progress on improvements.
5. The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee endorsed the final report of the Housing Improvement Sub-Committee, at Annexe 1, including the joint action plan at Annexe 2, and now refers it to the Executive for consideration.

## Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive

1. receives the final report of the in-depth review into responsive repairs and thanks the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its work on the review;
2. gives approval to the Joint Action Plan, as set out at Annexe 2; and
3. asks officers to monitor progress of the action plan and report back to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in six months time.

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