



City of Westminster

Committee Agenda

Title: **Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

Meeting Date: **Monday 18th November, 2019**

Time: **7.00 pm**

Venue: **Rooms 18.01 & 18.03, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP**

Members: **Councillors:**

Melvyn Caplan (Chairman)	Matt Noble
Antonia Cox	Emily Payne
Adam Hug	Mark Shearer
Guthrie McKie	James Spencer

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion Part 1 of the Agenda

Admission to the public gallery is by ticket, issued from the ground floor reception. If you have a disability and require any special assistance please contact the Committee Officer (details listed below) in advance of the meeting.



An Induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Officer, Toby Howes, Senior Committee and Governance Officer.

**Tel: 020 7641 8470; Email: thowes@westminster.gov.uk
Corporate Website: www.westminster.gov.uk**

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contacts are shown at the end of each report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting. With regard to item 2, guidance on declarations of interests is included in the Code of Governance; if Members and Officers have any particular questions they should contact the Head of Committee and Governance Services in advance of the meeting please.

AGENDA

PART 1 (IN PUBLIC)

1. MEMBERSHIP

To note any changes to the membership.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest by Members and Officers of any pecuniary Interest or any other significant interest in matters on this agenda.

3. MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee for the meeting held on 12 September 2019.

(Pages 5 - 10)

4. CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY AND REGENERATION UPDATE

Councillor Rachael Robathan (Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration) to update the Committee on current and forthcoming issues in her portfolio.

(Pages 11 - 20)

5. CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING SERVICES UPDATE

Councillor Andrew Smith (Cabinet Member for Housing Services) to update the Committee on current and forthcoming issues in his portfolio.

Report to follow.

6. HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICES UPDATE

Report is attached.

(Pages 21 - 44)

7. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ON ESTATES TASK GROUP REPORT

Report is attached

(Pages 45 - 60)

8. WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER

The Work Programme for 2019-2020 and the Action Tracker are attached.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

To consider any other business which the Chairman considers urgent.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RECOMMENDED: That under Section 100 (A) (4) and Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below and it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

<u>Item Nos</u>	<u>Grounds</u>	<u>Para. of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act</u>
11	Information relating to the financial and business affairs of an individual including the authority holding the information and legal advice	3

11. MINUTES

To approve the confidential minutes of the Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12th September 2019.

**Stuart Love
Chief Executive
8 November 2019**

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CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Thursday 12th September, 2019**, Rooms 18.01 and 18.03, 18th Floor, City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Melvyn Caplan (Chairman), Richard Elcho, Adam Hug, Matt Noble, Mark Shearer, Elizabeth Hitchcock, Guthrie McKie and James Spencer.

Also Present: Councillor Rachael Robathan (Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration), Councillor Andrew Smith (Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services), Barbara Brownlee (Executive Director - Growth, Planning and Housing), Neil Wightman (Director of Housing), Greg Ward (Director of Regeneration and Economic Development), David Hodgkinson (Director of Corporate Finance and Property), Aaron Hardy (Policy and Scrutiny Manager) and Toby Howes (Senior Committee and Governance Officer).

1 MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 It was noted that Councillor Guthrie McKie was a newly appointed Member on the Committee, replacing Councillor Pancho Lewis.
- 1.2 It was noted that Councillor Elizabeth Hitchcock was replacing Councillor Antonia Cox.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 Councillor Richard Elcho declared that he has undertaken unpaid pro bono work for the Free Representation Unit, who he would refer to in relation to item 4 in the agenda.

3 MINUTES

3.1 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2019 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of proceedings.

4 CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY AND REGENERATION UPDATE

- 4.1 Councillor Rachael Robathan (Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration) highlighted the success of the event “Ebury on Sea” at Ebury Bridge that had taken place in August. There had been a positive mood at the event, with the community fully engaged. The Futures Group was also providing considerable input in helping to shape the regeneration of Ebury Bridge.
- 4.2 The Committee sought an update in respect of the Fair Funding Review and the Spending Review. It was asked in what ways the Budget Task Group could assist and what processes would be involved in setting the Budget. Members welcomed the 200 homes allocated for the Infill Programme and asked when the first new homes would be built. An update was sought on how much money had been raised to date in respect of the Community Contribution. With regard to the London Living Wage (LLW), Members asked what steps were being taken to improve contract monitoring to ensure that external organisations were adhering to what they had promised to undertake and could the Council insist that the LLW be mandatory for all new contracts. An update was also sought in respect of the review of W/C provision.
- 4.3 Members enquired how the housing developments impacted upon temporary accommodation in Westminster and was a residents’ ballot being considered in respect of the Ebury Bridge renewal project. Updates were sought in respect of Farm Street, proposals involving the Jubilee Community Sports Centre, Cosway Street, Beechcroft and whether negotiations with regard to Luton Street had resulted in any material changes to the scheme. A Member welcomed the support the Council and Westminster Citizens’ Advice Bureau was providing for residents. He asked whether the Council could do more to build bridges between residents and pro bono organisations like the Free Representation Unit, which provided residents with support for their benefit appeals.
- 4.5 In reply to the issues raised, Councillor Robathan advised that the Fair Funding Review would not be completed this year, whilst there were no major implications for the Council in respect of the Spending Review. The Council was continuing with its three year savings plans, taking a strategic approach. In respect of the Infill Programme, some new homes had already opened and a further set of homes were shortly due to go to the planning permission stage. Good engagement between the Council, ward councillors and residents was also taking place in helping to move this programme forward. The number of families on housing waiting lists in Westminster was a real issue, and every effort was being made to provide as much affordable housing as possible. With regard to Ebury Bridge, Councillor Robathan stated that the ongoing consultation and engagement with residents was more productive and more fruitful than a one-off ballot.
- 4.6 Councillor Robathan advised that around £800,000 had been collected from the Community Contribution to date. Councillor Robathan stated that every effort was being made to promote implementation of the LLW. She advised

that steps would be taken to ensure that contract monitoring was as robust as possible and organisations would be informed that it would be expected that they would implement the LLW for staff for organisations who had contracts with the Council, however legally the Council could not make the LLW mandatory. The need to provide community W/Cs was recognised, however some had closed due to assaults on staff and anti-social uses. The W/C review was being finalised and Members would be updated on this. The Committee heard that the development at Farm Street had been delayed due to issues to be resolved with the contractors, whilst 19 affordable homes would be onsite at the Jubilee Sports Centre by the end of the year. In respect of Luton Street, a 50/50 split agreement had been agreed with the developer, however the allocation would remain unchanged. Councillor Robathan advised that the homes at Beechcroft were being soft marketed and there had been a number of expressions of interest. Further consideration would also take place in respect of working with community organisations supporting residents with benefits issues.

5 CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING SERVICES UPDATE

- 5.1 Members had before them an update from Councillor Andrew Smith (Cabinet Member for Housing Services). The Committee sought further information in respect of progress on fire doors and sprinklers, including fire doors in tower blocks. In respect of the consultation underway for the process of issuing leaseholder bills, Members asked what would happen to those leaseholders who had already received their bills. Members asked what criteria was used in respect of prioritising major works. Details were also sought on the Section 20 process in relation to providing estimated major works charges.
- 5.2 Members welcomed the steps being taken on homelessness prevention and asked if the main causes of homelessness in Westminster had been identified. In addition, Members enquired if there were any preparations in helping homeless people with the onset of winter. In noting the number of people in temporary accommodation, a Member asked why a substantial amount of accommodation being built would be available at market rates. It was also asked why there was no mention of customers in the five key priorities set out for Housing Services. Another Member welcomed progress on implementing traffic management orders and asked how many orders were now in place.
- 5.3 In reply, Councillor Smith advised that consultation with leaseholders regarding fire doors was taking place as part of the major works planning. There was also a specific fire door programme in respect of tower blocks. With regard to prioritising major works, Councillor Smith advised that consideration was given as to what was viewed as most urgent and steps were being taken to ensure that access to sites happened earlier. Councillor Smith commented that there was a focus on early intervention in tackling homelessness and there was on-going consultation in developing the Homelessness Strategy. Councillor Smith added that there was a cold weather protocol in place in respect of homelessness. Members heard that 1,850 new affordable homes were planned for Westminster and residents on

the housing list would also receive support in finding long term accommodation in the private sector.

5.4 Neil Wightman (Director of Housing) advised that there was every intention to ensure that Housing Services was customer focused and this would be made more clear in future communication.

5.5 **ACTIONS:**

1. How much parking enforcement has been rolled out on former CityWest Homes estates under the Traffic Management Orders programme to date and what is the completion date for the programme. (Action: Sam Swales [Project Manager] and Kevin Goad [Director of City Highways].)
2. Briefing note to be sent to Councillor Matt Noble on the Section 20 process. (Action: Neil Wightman [Director of Housing Services].)
3. Provide a timeline for the Council acquiring property and an update on the property acquired to date, to be provided in the next update. (Action: Gemma Stanton [Cabinet Officer].)
4. Reply to be provided on Councillor Richard Elcho's query raised at the previous meeting on the use of drop keys at Orsett Terrace in Bayswater. (Action: Neil Wightman [Director of Housing].)

6 PROGRESS ON HOUSING AND REGENERATION

- 6.1 Barbara Brownlee (Executive Director, Growth, Planning and Housing) introduced the item and emphasised the Council's commitment to building quality housing and to regenerate estates. This included a commitment to build 1,850 affordable homes and she was confident that this target would be met.
- 6.2 Greg Ward (Director of Regeneration and Economic Development) then gave a presentation on this item and set out the design principles and potential delivery models in achieving the housing and regeneration objectives. During the course of the presentation, he emphasised that consultation and community engagement were vital in helping to shape future housing and regeneration in Westminster.
- 6.3 During discussions, Members commented on the need to increase intermediate housing and the importance of changing direction in situations where projects were not making headway. Members stressed the need to encourage key workers to take up intermediate housing and asked why the Council had not applied for Greater London Authority (GLA) funding for regeneration schemes. Further consideration needed to be given to ensure that more Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding was provided on site. Members commented of the need to protect independent shopkeepers by not increasing business rates. It was also asked how confident was the Council in achieving the schemes listed in the appendices of the report.

6.4 In reply, Councillor Robathan advised that schemes were monitored closely throughout the process. Problems were more likely to be encountered where schemes were developer led because of market conditions, however an increasing number of schemes were now being self-delivered which gave the Council more control over progressing them. Councillor Robathan acknowledged the need for intermediate properties and to help attract and maintain key workers and families in the area. She also acknowledged that every opportunity obtain funding wherever possible, including CIL funding and other funding streams and also to increase the ratio of affordable housing.

6.5 Barbara Brownlee advised that a number of schemes were already underway and that she was confident that the large schemes would be delivered. Every effort was also being made to attract key workers to Westminster.

6.6 **ACTION:**

- What were the specific reasons why the Council did not apply for GLA funding that was £100,000 per unit for regeneration schemes. (Action for: Neil Wightman [Director of Housing]) and Barbara Brownlee [Executive Director – Growth, Planning and Housing]).

7 WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER

7.1 The Committee noted the Work Programme and Action Tracker. The Chairman stated that the Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group was nearing completion of its work and a Major Works Task Group was due to commence by the end of October.

7.2 Aaron Hardy (Policy and Scrutiny Manager) advised that a review of Housing Management Services would be considered at the next meeting in November.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

8.1 The Committee considered the call-in of a confidential report Cabinet Member report with officers' response on the disposal of homes where decisions had recently been taken.

8.2 Following discussions of the call-in, the Committee agreed that the decisions of the Cabinet Members be endorsed.

The Meeting ended at 9.07 pm.

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____

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Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Committee date:	18 November 2019
Author:	Councillor Rachael Robathan
Portfolio:	Finance, Property and Regeneration
Please contact:	Gemma Stanton gstanton@westminster.gov.uk 020 7641 3411

Finance and Resources

1. Fair Funding Review and Spending Review

As previously mentioned, there are three key variables that will determine the Council's future funding position. These have previously been anticipated (based on released information and past trends) to likely have adverse impacts on the Council's future resources beyond 2020/21. These variables are:

- HM Treasury's three-year Spending Review (SR);
- Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) Fair Funding Review (FFR);
- MHCLG's Business Rates Reform;
- Overarching economic instability.

The three-year SR was previously announced to be conducted between July 2019 and conclude by Autumn 2019 but was deferred and replaced with a one-year Spending Round for 2020/21 in September 2019. The delayed SR has meant that the FFR and Business Rates Reform have been pushed back from being implemented in April 2020. Although the Spending Round for 2020/21 contained generally positive messages for the Council (such as a continuation and increase of social care grants for 2020/21), the delayed three-year SR ultimately prolongs the uncertainty facing the sector as a whole on the future of funding levels.

However, this presents the Council with a new opportunity to continue its engagement with HM Treasury and MHCLG to highlight the risks to its funding from the above and options to provide financial independence to the Council without placing additional burdens on HM Treasury.

There is further uncertainty around the 2020/21 local government finance settlement, which is normally announced in December, because of the announcement of the General Election.

2. Revenues (Council Tax and NNDR (Business Rates))

Council Tax collection has improved and collection is now only 0.2% below the same point last year. At this time last year, our end of year collection rate was 96.7%, which was the Council's highest ever collection rate.

The current year collection rate for National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) is progressing well and is exactly equal to the same point last year, which should mean that we are likely to meet, or hopefully exceed, last year's collection rate of 98.0%.

The Council also collects Business Improvement District (BID) levies for the borough's 12 BIDs. Collection is progressing well with nine of the 12 BIDs showing improved collection on last year.

3. The Transition from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit

The Council continues to work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) on a regular basis to ensure that the future transition of existing Housing Benefit claimants (who are not from an exempt category, such as pensioners, residents in supported housing or temporary accommodation, or residents with an existing benefit which includes a Severe Disability Premium) to Universal Credit will be as smooth as possible. This transition is called the 'DWP's Managed Migration' and is due to start in 2020. The migration rollout will follow a DWP pilot in 2019 with a single local authority area (Harrogate).

4. Community Contribution

The Community Contribution has raised £888,499 (including gift aid) to date.

The City of Westminster Charitable Trust controls the Community Contribution Fund, including how much is allocated and which local projects are supported. The Trust is independent of the Council. The Trust has so far allocated funding to 19 projects. £128,025 has been spread across 9 Rough Sleeping projects (of which £60,000 was a direct award). £129,922 has been spread across 10 Youth Support projects.

5. Treasury

Investment balances as of 30 September 2019 stood at £895.9m. The weighted average return as at end of Period 6 was 0.91%. This compared to an average investment balance of £967.0m in Period 5, which generated an average return of 0.92%.

On 9 October 2019, the Public Works Loans Board announced a surprise 1.00% addition to all local authority loan interest rates with immediate effect. The move pushed the 50-year maturity rate from 1.63% to 2.63%. While this will increase the cost of borrowing, such a scenario will increase the return on the cash investment portfolio and the current weighed average return can be expected to improve from the current 0.91% level. Such an increase can be expected as local authorities look to alternative sources for capital funding and the demand for short to medium term inter authority loans can be anticipated to increase, thus increasing the investment return for Westminster's cash investment portfolio.

6. Pensions

The valuation of the Council's Pension Fund as of 30 September 2019 was £1.493bn. The estimated funding level for the Fund as assessed by the actuary at 31 December 2018 was 94.5%. The position is an improvement on the 31 March 2018 of funding level of 92.2% and is

significantly up on the funding level of 80% that was calculated at the triennial valuation of 31 March 2016. An up-to-date funding level will be provided by the actuary once they have completed the triennial review as the actuarial assumptions and membership data are due to change. An initial valuation report went to the Pension Fund Committee on 23 October 2019.

The value of pension fund investments managed by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) pool, London Collective Investment Vehicle (LCIV), at 30 September 2019 was £1.035bn. The LCIV holdings represent 69% of the pension fund investments of £1.493bn as of 30 September 2019.

7. London Living Wage Adoption

We set a very challenging target to achieve accreditation by the Living Wage Week which commences on the 11 November. The final submission was made on the 22 October, and on the 5 November the Living Wage Foundation confirmed that our application had been successful. Cllr Robert Rigby will formally accept accreditation at an event hosted by the Mayor of London at Somerset House on the 11 November in his capacity as Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration.

8. Procurement Restructure

The scope of the new procurement service will be extended to include procurement activity currently undertaken by separate teams within Adults and Children's Commissioning. At present, final preparation to begin the formal restructure is underway.

9. Supplier Financial Resilience

An initial round of training for Procurement, Finance and Commissioning colleagues has been completed and further work continues to embed a standardised approach to financial assessment across both Westminster City Council (WCC) and RBKC. The next steps will be to formalise trigger mechanisms within contracts, raise awareness of 'early warning signs of financial distress' and to develop pilot a 'monitoring' scheme. This work will also form part of the implementation of the new Contract Management Framework.

Corporate Property

10. Coroner's Court

The Coroner's Court is overseen by Dr Fiona Wilcox, Her Majesty's Senior Coroner for Inner West London (WCC, RBKC, Merton and Wandsworth). In addition to investigating unexplained and sudden deaths and carrying out inquests, the Court is the administration centre for dealing with large numbers of fatalities potentially caused by terror attacks and disasters.

Proposals have been developed to refurbish, remodel and extend the Court, to ensure it is fit for purpose. The building project aims to address these challenges by providing a modern relevant facility where the separate needs of funeral directors, court visitors and bereaved families will be met by the service in one location.

11. Portman Early Childhood Centre

It has been apparent for some time that the existing boilers and distribution pipework at the Portman Centre have reached the end of their lifespan and require complete renewal. It has

therefore been decided the existing site at Portman will be retained to not only benefit from a new heating and distribution system but also be remodelled into a family hub which is the Council's strategic aim. The project has a total budget of £2.951m, inclusive of contingency.

The end service users at the Portman Centre have to date been successfully decanted to 4 Lilestone Street, which is currently operating and functioning satisfactorily. 4 Lilestone Street is scheduled to be redeveloped as part of the Church Street regeneration programme. It is estimated that the construction and redevelopment work at Portman will commence in November 2019 and be completed in November 2020.

12. Public Conveniences

A review of the future service provisions in respect of public conveniences has recently been completed. Officers have been considering value for money in coming to a view as to the best way forward. Further progress is expected to be made by the end of Autumn 2019.

Officers are aware of a number of recent service issues and are addressing these with the facilities team and the Council's contractor to improve the service.

Regeneration and Development

13. Church Street

13.1. Sites, A, B, C and the Lisson Grove Programme

Following the decision to progress with Option Three as the preferred way forward, the financial viability, decanting and phasing work continues. The Outline Business Cases for both Site A and the Lisson Grove Programme (separately) are being prepared which will capture these strategies.

Residents of Site A and Gayhurst House have been contacted to advise them of the approach and anticipated timescales. Leaseholders have also been notified of the offer to acquire interests in line with the Council's Housing Renewal Policy, and work is underway to facilitate the move process for affected resident households. Tenants from Site A will be offered the first opportunity to move to the newly built offsite development at Lyons Place which is scheduled to complete in late 2019. Lyons Place is located along the Edgware Road and in close proximity to the Church Street Renewal Area, and the Council intends to take advantage of this as a means of providing Church Street residents in affected blocks with the opportunity to achieve a local move to a brand-new home.

13.2. Luton Street

The Council's wholly owned housing company, Westminster Housing Investments Limited (WHIL) has now entered into a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) to enable the development and delivery of the Luton Street scheme only.

WCC's partner, Linkcity (Bouygues UK), has already set up on site with demolition due to commence imminently, signalling to the Church Street neighbourhood that regeneration is well underway. This project is due to be completed in 2022.

The development at Luton Street is one of several significant projects that will complete the first phase of the Church Street regeneration programme. The project will provide 168 homes, of which there will be:

- 109 market sale homes, funding the development of 59 affordable homes (40 social rent and 19 intermediate);
- A sports hall and community space;
- 3 new affordable homes on Fisherton Street;
- A green space that will form the first part of Church Street's 'green spine';
- £3m contribution towards infrastructure and public realm funds;
- £2.4m towards improvements to existing Church Street homes around the project.

14.3 Ashmill, Ashbridge and Cosway

Ahead of the demolition of buildings in January 2020, a package of enabling works commenced on site in late October, which includes the stripping-out of fixtures and fittings, removal of asbestos and the erection of the site hoardings.

The full-scale demolition will commence in January 2020, with construction commencing from Spring 2020. The team remains on-track to achieve completion of all units in the first quarter of 2022.

14.4 Church Street Market

The Church Street Regeneration Team continues to distribute new gazebos to eligible traders on the market. The holiday season for traders and staff delayed distribution however a concerted effort is underway to ensure all gazebos are received by traders before the year end.

The beginning of September saw two temporary CCTV cameras installed along Church Street. One is placed by the junction of Lisson Grove and the other on the junction of Salisbury Street. These cameras will be in place for approximately three months with a view to extend for a further three months.

14.5 The Antiques Anonymous Vintage Market

This year's event took place on Sunday 22 September 2019 from 11am – 5pm and saw approximately 60 antiques dealers from across the UK and Europe attend. There was also good representation from partner organisations and community stalls. The Lord Mayor attended and spoke with local businesses and visiting traders at the event.

The main objective of the event is to raise awareness of the existing Antiques Quarter and the profile of Church St as a whole. The event seeks to bring new visitors to the area in the hope this will translate to further visits during the year. It also markets the street to traders from across the country who may be considering a London outlet.

The event brings local businesses and communities together which has gone some way in improving relationships along the street and the wider area. As well as the antiques traders, the event offers stalls to local entrepreneurs, community projects and charities.

15 Ebury Bridge

The Ebury Bridge project has commenced formal pre-planning consultation with residents, neighbouring groups, amenity societies and councillors in surrounding wards. Over 220 people have so far visited the Ebury Bridge exhibition at the pop-up consultation space on Ebury Bridge Road. The initial detailed designs have been developed through two years of collaboration with the Ebury Bridge Community Futures Group and the residents of the estate. The feedback received from groups and individuals will then be carefully considered before a further exhibition is held later in the year. It is anticipated that the planning application for the scheme will be submitted in early 2020.

In preparation for the start of the delivery of the new Ebury Bridge estate, many workstreams are underway or nearing completion. One such workstream is the re-housing of a small number of residents in blocks impacted by Phase 1 of the scheme. The majority of all residents living in Phase 1 of the scheme have moved to appropriate temporary or permanent homes. The few remaining residents have identified properties and work is underway in preparing these homes.

To continue the land assembly work contracts have been advertised across a number of disciplines and procurement is underway. This includes a contractor to undertake early levelling work and a design and build contractor to build the first two new blocks and public square. Other procurement streams have also included specialist advice to assist in progressing the scheme.

In September the innovative 'Ebury Edge' Meanwhile Use project was granted planning permission. The project will see a range of temporary structures built providing premises for local enterprises and community uses. The project is the first of its kind to be delivered in Westminster and will also see the creation of a new events space, a community café and growing plots. The space will be in operation over the next five years and will create a new destination for visitors in the South of the Borough. We are currently in the process of procuring a contractor to build the temporary structures with work starting in November.

As part of the Council's commitment to creating a greener and cleaner city, the Ebury Bridge renewal project is investigating new renewable energy sources that can be used to heat and cool the new homes. Over the coming months, the project team will explore whether the use of Ground Source Heat Pumps is a possible option for the new estate. This technology utilises underground water sources as a means of heating homes with a vastly reduced carbon footprint. The team are exploring these possibilities in addition to Air Source Heat Pumps and Photo Voltaic (Solar Panels) which could cut energy bills for Ebury residents by over 80%.

16 Paddington Green (Parsons North)

A consultation event is planned for December to inform residents of the new entrance and internal residents' room to Parsons House. The Council will also provide imagery showing the design of landscaping improvements.

Work is being undertaken to finalise the management arrangements for the scheme on completion. Alongside this, the sales and marketing team are developing the marketing material for sales launch in the new year.

During half-term in October, residents of Parsons House were taken by the contractor Osborne on a visit to London Zoo.

17 Tollgate Gardens

Clarion Housing, the developer of the Tollgate Gardens renewal, is reporting an end of 2019 finish for the programme. Whilst the Council is disappointed with the delay to programme, we have been very clear with Clarion that we will not accept a rushed finish that compromises the quality of the completed works. All works will be subject to detailed quality checks before they are handed over to the Council. Residents have been updated of the current timeline that Clarion have provided. Those households that have temporally moved to enable the development to take place have been advised that all returning moves will take place early in the new year. In the meantime, in advance of moves, from November the Council will start the process of showing residents the new completed homes. Residents will be able to begin the process of choosing their new home.

On completion, the scheme will deliver 86 affordable homes, 78 of which will be at social rent. The scheme will also provide the communal refurbishment of Tollgate House, as well as

improved landscaping and a new community centre. The community centre has been handed over by the developer and is currently undergoing internal fit out works.

18 Beachcroft

Completion of the care home is scheduled for April 2020 which will be followed by fitting out the building with furniture and other equipment, staff familiarisation and training. This will lead to registration by the Care Quality Commission.

A current task is finalising and approving the interior design for the care home using a specialist advisor and drawing experience from Sanctuary as well as from within the Council. A benchmark flat will be provided by the contractor, allowing for the professional team to review and approve the agreed standard of a finished care bedroom, this agreed standard will then be delivered to the other 83 rooms.

Residents will begin to move in when all construction works are complete on site from July 2020.

The Masefield, which includes the 31 flats for sale on the same site as Beachcroft, will complete June 2020. The sales launch is planned for late October and all work necessary for this to be done is in hand. Interest remains strong and our agents are confident that our sales target figures will be achieved.

Work continues to be in progress on finalising the care contract with Sanctuary and establishing effective estate management processes. The team is working with Housing and Property colleagues to establish an ongoing management strategy of schemes across the Development portfolio.

Good progress is being made on site, the works are sufficiently progressed to allow for the removal of the tower crane; which allows for the site compound to be relocated to facilitate the commencement of works to the new sensory garden.

A full review of the internal decorations proposals has been undertaken with a dementia-friendly design specialist, the recommendations are being incorporated into the scheme, we do not envisage any significant programme impact arising from this. The project remains on-track to complete in June 2020.

19 Carlton Dene, the Lodge, Peebles House, and Westmead

19.1 Carlton Dene and Peebles House

As has been noted previously Carlton Dene will be 100% affordable, including replacement of the 8 social rented flats in Peebles House. The selected architects, Levitt Bernstein, have produced design studies that incorporate comments from the Council's Adult Social Care Department (ASC) and have now agreed the design brief with ASC. We are looking at ways to rationalise the design to ensure future management arrangements are fully considered at an early stage. A revised business case is anticipated in early 2020 and a planning application in Summer 2020.

19.2 The Lodge

Initial design studies have been provided by Calford Seaden and these are being discussed with ASC to determine the most appropriate for the complex needs of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

19.3 Westmead

Architects have been appointed and are exploring design options for Westmead. It is anticipated that a planning application will be made in Summer 2020, following a full community consultation.

20 Pimlico (Balmoral/Darwin)

The final drop in sessions as part of early engagement for the Balmoral Castle project are now complete and a range of views have been expressed on the emerging proposals. The engagement has included face-to-face meetings with those residents of Darwin House who have requested it. Further consultation will be held in late Autumn on the Council's response to the feedback received, taking into account all the constraints which apply to the site, especially the heritage of the site, and the mature trees and views to the river. It remains the Council's intention to deliver a scheme that provides new social and intermediate homes on the site. All existing council tenancies will be replaced with council tenancies of newly built homes.

Subject to consultation, the development of a full proposal for the site and planning approval, the Council anticipates work could commence on site in Summer 2022.

21 Farm Street

Following determination of the building contract relating to performance, the developer (Cauldwell Properties) have now formalised their contract with Ardmore Construction. Ardmore are on site undertaking intrusive surveys to all elements of the works completed by Chase Construction Ltd. The Council's development team has been monitoring Ardmore's approach and progress and is satisfied that they are acting properly and showing intent to deliver a high-quality building.

Once the surveys have been completed and the results analysed, Ardmore will provide a firm programme. Current indications are that the works will be completed in Spring 2020.

22 The Infill Programme

Planning permission has recently been received on a number of Infill schemes across the Borough. Lapworth Court, on the Warwick Estate, will deliver 7 family homes all at social rent. Two other approved schemes also on the Warwick Estate, Desborough Close and Senior Street, will result in four additional social homes. Other recent approvals are Wellington Street, a garage conversion site in Regent's Park ward, will deliver two further social homes on completion. Another Infill scheme at Blomfield Mews received planning permission and will deliver 14 intermediate homes.

Following completion of public consultation rounds, a proposed scheme at Queens Park Court has been submitted for a planning decision. Subject to approval, this will provide 23 new homes, all at social rent. Consultation has completed on the Torridon House car park scheme and a planning application will be submitted shortly. This scheme will deliver 21 affordable homes if approved.

All homes will be subject to a local lettings plan, meaning that current residents in housing need will have bidding priority on completion.

The Infill programme is progressing feasibility assessments on further schemes, all will be subject to detailed consultation with ward members and resident to hear their views.

23 Wholly Owned Housing Company (WOC)

During October's meeting, the WOC board signed and thereby entered into a limited liability partnership with their partner Linkcity (Bouygues UK) to enable the development and delivery of the Luton Street project, the housing company's first scheme. This will shortly be followed by Jubilee Phase 2 with contracts due to exchange in November.

The WOC Board is concluding a business plan review and considering the future pipeline of schemes. This is being done as part of the Council's consideration of the overall regeneration and development pipeline and the funding available within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and from other sources to support that pipeline together with assessment of the most appropriate delivery options. It is expected that the WOC will play an increasing role as more mixed tenure schemes come forward.

The WOC will utilise Council staff to carry out its activities under a Service Agreement between the Council and the WOC. This would provide for re-charge of costs for the services provided. This Agreement together with the basis for re-charging services provided was concluded prior to the Luton Street completion.

24 Jubilee

Following extensive negotiations with Ecoworld it has been agreed that Jubilee Phase 2 will be split into two parts; 2a will include the redevelopment of the Jubilee sports centre and 19 sub-market homes purchased by the Councils wholly owned housing company, and 2b will provide the remainder of the 37 residential units, totalling 56 homes.

To date, the asbestos strip out works, and utility disconnection works have been completed, a build over agreement with Thames Water to allow the constructions works to start is being negotiated, alongside investigations to stop up a small piece of public highway that abuts one of the edges of the site. The actual demolition period will start once the legal terms are concluded and a Thames Water Agreement is in place. It is envisaged these works will commence in the new year and will last approximately 4-5 months.

25 Dudley House

The project achieved Practical Completion on 28 August. Pinnacle Housing who have been appointed by Westminster to manage this scheme on behalf of the Council have entered into a lease agreement with the Council so they can provide tenancies to households who are eligible for intermediate housing in Westminster, that includes household who have lived or worked in Westminster for at least the last 12 months and have household earnings of less than £90,000.

There are 197 homes provided at Dudley House, including studio, 1-bed and 2-bed apartments. Rents at Dudley House are set at approximately 70% of the local market and range from £240 per week for a studio, £320 per a 1-bed and £550 per week for a 2-bed. The 2-bed flats can be occupied by two households sharing.

Household incomes required to afford to rent a property at Dudley will be approximately £31,000 for a studio and £36,000 for a 2-bed where two households are sharing a 2-bed.

Over 300 applications have been received to rent a home at Dudley House. Pinnacle are currently checking all applications ensuring anyone offered a tenancy is an eligible household. It is expected that the first tenants will be move in in November.

26 Policy for Tenants in Housing Renewal Areas

The Policy has now been finalised and an easy to read summary is being produced and will be distributed to affected residents. The Policy sets out the rights and options for council tenants that need to move due to housing renewal which are in summary:

- Move straight into one of the new council homes if this is possible;
- Move into another social home in Westminster for a temporary period and then move into one of the new council homes when they are ready;
- Move into another social home in Westminster;
- Have high priority for any of the new intermediate homes developed in the housing renewal area.

The new social homes will be of size needed, rather than the same size as the current home, so overcrowding will be resolved, but under occupiers could be offered a smaller home. The Policy provides information on how the size of the new home will be assessed and the general processes that will be followed.

The Policy also sets out the support offered to other tenants in housing renewal areas. Homeless households living in temporary accommodation, that are within twelve months of being rehoused into social housing, will be awarded additional priority to help them move more quickly, so they do not have to move twice in a short period of time. Those that do not meet these criteria will be prioritised for alternative temporary accommodation within Westminster (if they meet existing criteria) or in London. Private tenants will be visited at least once and those at risk of homelessness referred to the relevant services.

The Policy represents an improved offer to tenants, compared to the 2015 one, in that:

Council tenants

- The right to remain in, or return to, the housing renewal area has been extended to older tenants in Community Supportive (sheltered) Housing;
- Tenants needing to move will have the highest priority in the Allocation Scheme, meaning they can move ahead of most other groups;
- Single people, living in one-bedroom homes, that would normally only be eligible for studio, will be offered one-bedroom homes;
- There is a discretion to offer under occupiers' homes with one bedroom above their assessed need, for permanent rehousing (subject to available supply);
- There is a longer period of time to make an appeal under the Policy.

Other tenants

- Temporary accommodation tenants will be prioritised for alternative temporary accommodation in London or in Westminster if they meet existing criteria;
- Private tenants will be visited at least once and referred to homelessness services if needed.



Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Committee date:	18 November 2019
Report Of:	Neil Wightman, Director of Housing
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Report Author and Contact Details:	Andrea Luker aluker@westminster.gov.uk

1. General Update

- 1.1 It is seven months since responsibility for housing service delivery transferred to Westminster Council and a year since the Task Group issued its recommendations for service improvement. This report provides an update on progress against the recommendations and a general overview of housing service improvement activities. A status report against the recommendations is provided at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The Task Group recommendations were divided over three headings which form the structure for this report:
 - Strategic priorities
 - Customer services
 - Major works and repairs
- 1.3 The new Housing Director took up post at the end of May and set out five key priorities for housing services, which recognise the areas identified by the Task Group and the needs of the housing service as a whole:
 - a. Improve the responsiveness and quality of the repairs service and major works
 - b. Provide a better service for leaseholders, particularly in relation to major works
 - c. Support vulnerable residents
 - d. Develop a local offer and increase resident involvement, and
 - e. Prevent Homelessness
- 1.4 The service improvement priorities are underpinned by a programme of work to fully integrate housing services into the Council. That programme includes the transition of IT systems and culture change work. Together this work forms the housing service improvement programme.
- 1.5 Progress has been made against all of the Task Group's recommendations over the past year, but it is recognised that further improvements are needed to the service and it will take some time to fully integrate the housing service into the Council. Those that are not yet delivered have been incorporated into the housing service improvement programme and progress is tracked corporately.

2 Strategic Priorities

Culture change

- 2.1 The Task Group heard that the service lacked a customer service ethos and that it had distanced itself from residents. Culture change and improved communications with both residents and councillors were recommended.
- 2.2 The transfer of the service back into the Council and TUPE transfer of staff has accelerated the process of culture change. Staff previously located at CWH' offices at 21 Grosvenor Place now work from City Hall, consequently joint working between departments is now a matter of routine.
- 2.3 Staff have benefitted from the Council's programme of activities on the Westminster Way, and attendance at WCC and GPH staff conferences. Staff workshops have been held by external consultants to understand what remains to be addressed and a departmental awayday took place on 26th September which focussed on service improvement, culture and values.

Councillor Communications

- 2.4 Prior to the transfer, the contact centre structure was reviewed, and improvements and training are ongoing, including regular customer care training.
- 2.5 The Task Group recommended a change to the approach to answering calls and emails from councillors and residents, and points of contact. The dedicated team established to deal with members' enquiries is now a permanent part of the service delivery structure. Revised arrangements to deal with calls and emails from residents have resulted in significantly improved performance. Performance for the year to date is provided 3.4 of this report.

The Local Housing Services Offer

- 2.6 The immediate operational priority for the housing service is to restore its focus on residents, which is seen to have been lost. Historically, more residents engaged with the service through traditional residents' associations and estate inspections, and local access to the service was popular. The local offer seeks to reinstate those important elements and return the service to its previous position. The local housing service offer combines better access to housing staff locally; new ways for residents to engage with us and an offer to every estate or neighbourhood to develop an action plan which is jointly owned by residents and housing service advisers.
- 2.7 Development of the first estate action plan started on 24 October at Lillington & Longmoore estate with an event attended by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Director of Housing. The event included a visit from the mobile service Westminster on Wheels (WoW), estate walkabouts to identify issues for improvement and spring bulb planting.
- 2.8 The local housing services offer was launched in the October edition of 'Your Home', which provides news and events for housing residents. The offer includes:
 - An offer of help to residents to join or set up residents' associations
 - An offer to join a new online resident group to be involved in shaping services
 - Development of an estate action plan for every estate/neighbourhood
 - Estate walkabouts, linked to the estate action plans

- A new timetable for surgeries, including using more library locations and WoW visits to bring the service to more places
- 2.9 A timetable is in place for every housing service adviser to develop a plan with their local residents' association, resulting in 22 plans by December 2019.
- 2.10 The estate action plans will be reviewed monthly with Resident Associations and published on the housing website for residents to track progress.
- 2.11 To support the local offer, we have consulted staff on branded clothing and provided them with a branded jacket to be worn when working out of the office so that residents can find them more easily. The jackets were positively received by both residents and staff at the Lillington & Longmoore launch event.
- 2.12 Proposals to change the formal resident engagement structure were presented to the Cabinet Member in September for discussion. Consultation with resident representatives is being undertaken during October/November. The proposal includes a regular meeting with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Director of Housing.
- 2.13 The new online community of residents has been well received and 100 lessees have already joined the online lessee group. We are collecting names for the wider community following issue of 'Your Home' in October. We already have a list of issues to consult on so that momentum can be built with the groups quickly.
- 2.14 The online housing forum members will form a subset of the Council's wider online engagement community and will be offered the opportunity to comment on other Council services if they wish to do so.
- 2.15 The Westminster on Wheels initiative, providing a mobile surgery service has been a success, demonstrating the Council's commitment to providing residents with local, face to face services.
- 2.16 We are working with tech companies to develop mobile working technology so that staff are more effective when carrying out inspections, visiting residents and holding surgeries. This work is joined up with the Council's Customer Experience and Digital programme.
- 2.17 As at October 2019, nearly 1500 residents have visited the bus and for the period April-October:
- 95% were very happy or happy with the bus being on the estate.
 - 96% found the bus accessible
 - Nearly 3/4 of issues were resolved on the bus
 - 76% believed Westminster Housing services will improve
 - 84% found the service met their expectations
 - 40 referrals to the employment service have been made
- 2.18 Westminster on Wheels provides residents with access to a team of staff from different disciplines and quicker resolution than surgeries are able to provide. The current WoW vehicle is too large for many locations so leasing a smaller vehicle is being investigated. Some of the surgeries could then potentially be replaced by WoW, subject to consultation.
- 2.19 Plans to link estate walkabouts with WoW are in place and WoW and surgery dates are being advertised to the end of December.

2.20 Work to improve the effectiveness of surgeries is underway and over the Winter, a new plan will be drawn up for face to face services, to ensure all residents can access an effective service regardless of where they live in the borough. This will review the success of surgeries, WoW and area office reception services.

3 Customer Services

3.1 The Task Group heard that the contact centre (launched in June 2017) had failed to cope with call volumes. Call numbers were higher than predicted due to a repairs backlog which accumulated during re-letting of contracts and the transfer of responsibility from exiting to incoming service providers. There was a general complaint that the service had lost its local presence and that surgeries had not been successfully implemented.

3.2 Since the Task Group reported, incremental performance improvements have been made in both the repairs service and contact centre. Previous backlogs have been cleared and the spikes in call volumes experienced during the Autumn/Winter of 2017/18 have not been repeated.

3.3 Since April, contact centre performance has been positive, with call handling performance remaining within target. The IVR options were changed and are regularly reviewed and repeat calls have dropped through improving communication on repairs.

3.4 Year to date performance to the end of September 2019:

- 101,048 total calls received
- 82% of calls were answered within 30 seconds (target of 70%)
- 5% of calls were abandoned (target of <8%)
- 74% of calls were resolved on first contact (target of 60%)
- 87% of residents were satisfied with call handling (target 80%)
- 89% of complaints and 92% of members' enquiries were responded to within target

3.5 Satisfaction is measured through a post-call survey immediately after call handling. The figures are based on responses from 2776 callers. This gives a confidence interval of +/- 1.3%).

3.6 A speech analytics project started in September and is analysing 30,000 of calls which will help us understand the drivers of customer contact, reasons for service failure and tracking residents' emotions as they interact with the service. The results of this work will be available by the end of October.

3.7 The repairs service is also performing well against industry standards, with a number of service enhancements delivered by contractors.

3.8 The repairs service is making progress, with incremental improvements across the KPIs:

- 84% of repairs were completed on the first visit
- 93% of repairs appointments were kept
- 87% of routine repairs and 99.2% of emergency repairs were completed in priority
- Satisfaction with the repairs service is at 84%
- Satisfaction with the quality of repairs is at 83%

- Statutory services relating to electrical testing, gas safety checks and water tank monitoring all continue to perform very well, with compliance levels all at 100%.

- 3.9 Repairs satisfaction is based on a random sample of tenants are surveyed using phone and e-mail by Kwest, an independent market research company. The satisfaction figures relate to all contractors and are based on 1,832 replies YTD. This gives a confidence interval of +/-1.7%).
- 3.10 The repairs service is by far the largest customer service delivered to residents and failure to deliver can impact directly on quality of life. For example, a satisfaction rating of 84%, whilst an improvement on 18/19 performance, indicates that over 200 repairs per week have not been delivered to the satisfaction of residents. Service improvement work, in partnership with suppliers, will continue throughout the duration of the contracts, with the aim to achieve scores in the high nineties across all indicators.
- 3.11 A key concern was the volume of calls generated from residents chasing repairs. The repairs backlog was cleared and the volume of work in progress now remains under control.
- 3.12 Residents often call to seek reassurance that appointments will be kept, so repairs contractor Morgan Sindall now provide a text messaging service to keep tenants advised on the progress of their repair. Immediately after a repair order is raised, Morgan Sindall send the tenant a text to confirm the appointment; a text is sent the day before the appointment and on the day of the appointment, with a link to a vehicle tracker to monitor the progress of the contractor's van to the property. On completion a further text is sent with a link to a satisfaction survey service operated by 'Rant and Rave'. This service allows residents to provide direct and instant feedback about repairs that have been completed, and uses powerful data analytics to provide information on service quality and improvements needed.
- 3.13 Improving management of follow-on work is ongoing and is a source of confusion and frustration for residents. Co-location of Morgan Sindall staff with WCC staff and changing to an area based approach has helped speed up the process for authorising work and improved communications with residents. Issues can be escalated by staff to WCC/MS managers and at weekly joint meetings. However there is no formal escalation procedure for customers outside of the complaints process and progress in improving the process from the resident's perspective is ongoing.

4 Major works and repairs

- 4.1 The Task Group focussed on the need to reduce the costs associated with major works and improve affordability for lessees. Communication with lessees on major works was also called out for attention.
- 4.2 New major works contracts were mobilised in 2018 and the impact on the cost of managing works has been very positive. Those contracts cover planned works and cyclical repairs undertaken throughout Westminster for ten years.
- 4.3 The Project Management costs (including Procurement) for major works have halved following the award of the term contracts and are forecast to realise savings of approximately £28m over the full ten-year term.
- 4.4 When the Task Group met, project management costs were running at 16-18% and have been reduced to approximately 8%, with the reductions varying depending on the size of

the project. Further details of improvements are provided at Appendix A. It is recognised that lessees will not see the benefit of these changes for some time. It will take approximately 12 months for final bills to be issued for schemes procured under previous procurement arrangements.

- 4.5 The lessee billing process, particularly around timing, accuracy and frequency of bills needs improving. Work is in progress to address the required changes in time for the 2020/21 estimates, issued in March 2020. The actual service charge account invoices were redesigned and despatched at the end of September 2019. The invoices were in a simpler format and were accompanied by a new guide to the charges.
- 4.6 Currently, we issue half yearly estimated service charges and the second estimated demand was issued with the actual accounts. This will be the last time that we serve two estimated service charge demands for the same financial year. The estimated service charge demands for the period April 2020 to March 2021 will be a single annual estimated demand rather than two half yearly demands. The proposed changes and the new format will be tested by the online 100 lessee group prior to implementation in March 2020.
- 4.7 The on-line lessee forum are already commenting on changes and shaping priorities. A recent exercise covered self help online videos on a range of subjects chosen and prioritised by lessees. The videos will be available on the housing website before the end of 2019.
- 4.8 A review of lessee payment options is underway to ensure the options better reflect the current size of bills and the needs of lessees. Sinking funds will also be addressed and a report is due within the next two months.
- 4.9 Engagement with residents on major works projects typically starts 12-18 months before work is due. The engagement covers a range of methods and is aligned to the key milestones of the project. This approach allows residents to contribute at the initial planning and detailed design and approvals stage, before formal leaseholder consultation on costs. Residents can raise any issues they have in relation to the works being carried out, at an early stage. Formal leaseholder consultation reaffirms the discussions held with residents in the development of the project.
- 4.10 Recently the need to review the scope of works and to build in fire safety and H&S related works has caused delays to schemes. The above process has so far not been changed to keep residents advised when delays occur. As a result, some residents are unaware of the current status of work planned to their home and why progress is not being made. More work is needed to ensure regular communications are provided with residents once the consultation process has started.
- 4.11 For a typical project the engagement before formal leaseholder section 20 consultation consists of six written updates and up to three resident meetings/drop-ins/surgeries. From the introduction stage of a project there is a named officer in the property services communications team as a point of contact to coordinate queries and this includes a direct e-mail address for ease of contact. In addition, each project has a dedicated webpage and all correspondence and updates are published.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 The housing service improvement programme will run for a further 12 months. Progress will continue to be tracked through a departmental programme board and through the Council's Change Board, chaired by the Chief Executive.



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Appendix 1. Updated response to recommendations of the CityWest Homes Task Group, November 2019

	Recommendation	Status	Update
Strategic Priorities			
1	Change the culture at all levels of CityWest Homes. If CityWest Homes is to succeed, then it needs to be a more resident friendly organisation committed to clearer and fairer communication with all residents.	In progress	<p>Since the service came in house, staff have benefited from the Council's programme of activities on the Westminster Way, and attendance at WCC and GPH staff conferences.</p> <p>Staff workshops have been held by external consultants Just Housing Group to understand what remains to be addressed and a departmental awayday took place on 26th September which focussed on service improvement, culture and values</p> <p>The contact centre structure has been reviewed and improvements and training are ongoing.</p> <p>The review of resident engagement is opening up many more opportunities to participate and influence decision making so that housing services are more resident focussed.</p> <p>The Director's organisational change and priorities are in delivery and culture is a driver for change.</p>
2	Ensure that all CWH employees understand and accept ownership of issues in all resident engagements.	Implemented	<p>This message has been communicated to all staff repeatedly and is understood and accepted.</p> <p>Contact centre staff have been trained in customer care using the Gober Method, which is an established model of customer care, to improve empathy and quality in call answering rather than speed.</p>



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			<p>The responsibilities of frontline services have been clarified to ensure they take forwards all reports from residents and own problems and can establish links with wider Council and public-sector services to improve outcomes for residents.</p> <p>We are widening access through our local housing offer publicised in the October edition of Your Home and ensuring a more visible staff presence on estates with staff empowered to act on concerns that are raised with them.</p> <p>We are providing staff with a branded jacket, so they can be recognised when out and about and are developing mobile technology, so staff can resolve issues effectively when working on estates.</p> <p>Tenant Association Chairs and Councillors have been provided with the contact details of their local housing teams.</p>
3	Change the approach to answering calls and emails from residents and councillors to ensure this is done in a timely manner and that ownership is accepted by the recipient of the contact.	Implemented	<p>A Central Members Enquiry team was established which continues to perform well and reports to Cabinet Member regularly.</p> <p>YTD performance at the end of August shows 92% of members' enquiries responded to within the 5 day target. Members have expressed confidence in the team who are now encouraging members to refer new service requests through the contact centre so that they can be triaged to the appropriate team.</p> <p>Performance in the contact centre continues to be delivered above target and is very much under control. YTD 101,074 calls have been offered of which 94% have been answered - tracking 2% above target. Additionally, 79% of calls have been answered within 30 seconds against a target of 70%.</p> <p>23,761 emails have been received into the contact centre with 95% of all emails handled within 48 Hours. 100% of Twitter enquires (549) have been handled within 4 hours</p> <p>Councillors have been provided with contact details for area managers.</p>



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4	Provide clear points of contact for councillors that is not just the Chief Executive or Managing Director or their office.	Implemented	A dedicated team is in place to respond to Cllr enquiries and contact details for key members of staff are shared with Councillors.
5	Ensure data on long-term plans is routinely shared with councillors.	Implemented	A regular councillor newsletter managed by Communications in PPC provides updates on all long-term plans
6	Adopt an approach of reviewing all mass resident communications with councillors prior to its issue.	Implemented	<p>All City-wide communications relating to policy changes are now discussed with the Cabinet Member for Housing ahead of distribution.</p> <p>Local operational updates are emailed at least 24 hours ahead of distribution to ward Councillors. This includes information relating to meetings with contractors enabling the local Councillors to voice concerns ahead of the correspondence being issued or to attend any meetings arranged. The exception is emergency correspondence which is copied to councillors as it is distributed to residents.</p> <p>For major works communication, the property services team send correspondence to ward councillors 48 hours in advance for feedback and comments. This includes discussing any proposed major works meeting dates with ward councillors, so these can be agreed together.</p>
7	Review clienting relationship between WCC and CWH.	Implemented	Arrangements for overseeing housing performance have been established within the council, including a detailed performance dashboard presented to the Cabinet Member each month and regular detailed reporting to Audit & Performance Committee.
8	Greater emphasis and interest should be shown in 'Block inspections' by CWH. Residents should be allowed to access all areas including stairwells and roofs. (subject to normal health and safety concerns).	Implemented	<p>The new Local Housing Offer sets out a new approach to delivering local services and the Estate Inspection regime that is now in place.</p> <p>All estates are inspected on a monthly basis for cleaning, H&S and communal repairs.</p> <p>Councillors and residents are invited quarterly to accompany staff on walkabouts. The location of these walkabouts are set by the Councillors and residents and</p>



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			<p>they can access all areas of the block during those walkabouts, subject to safety requirements.</p> <p>The actions from these walkabouts will be published in new estate action plans to be rolled out over the coming year and available on the website and followed up by staff.</p>
9	Reform CWH board. This needs to consider the purpose of the board and the skill mix that is required to meet that purpose.	Closed	No longer relevant
10	Review CityWest Homes staff organisational structure to make clearer who is responsible for repairs and major works.	In Progress	<p>A restructure is currently underway of the housing service management team which includes streamlining responsibility for repairs and major works management. The restructure will not be complete until 2020 but the intention is to place responsibility for both functions under one head of service.</p> <p>Repairs surveyors, Morgan Sindall repairs managers and repairs teams are all aligned to the area offices. This ensures that they work together as one team, are accessible to residents when queries aren't resolved by the contact centre and they are familiar with the specific challenges of individual blocks and estates. This is improving the service, and further work is in progress to ensure the service meets resident expectations. The first point of contact on repairs and major works after the contact centre, is the surveyor and then the Area Repairs Manager</p> <p>For major works, where engagement on a major works project has started, typically 12-18 months before work is planned, there is a named member of the property services team as a point of contact to coordinate queries and this includes a direct e-mail address for ease of contact.</p>
11	The relevant Policy and Scrutiny Committee should review CityWest Homes at least annually.	Implemented	<p>The Housing, Finance and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee is the lead group for scrutinising housing.</p> <p>Arrangements for overseeing housing performance have been established including a detailed performance dashboard presented to the Cabinet Member each month and regular detailed reporting to Audit & Performance Committee.</p>



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Customer Services			
12	Provide estate management contacts for residents/councillors. These contacts should be officers that are responsible for looking after a block or an estate and who are empowered to act on concerns that are raised.	Implemented	<p>Tenants continue to be encouraged to use the contact centre to report any estate issues in the first instance, and we are now widening access through our local housing offer publicised in the October edition of Your Home.</p> <p>We are ensuring there is a more visible staff presence on estates and that our staff are empowered to act on concerns that are raised with them.</p> <p>We are providing every member of staff with a branded jacket so that they can be recognised when out and about and are developing mobile technology, so staff can resolve issues while out on estates. Tenant Association Chairs and Councillors have been provided with the contact details of their local housing teams</p>
13	Remove the current call centre interactive voice response (IVR) menu. Changes should be made immediately even if further improvements are then planned in the near future as part of wider improvement work.	Implemented	There are now only 4 options, where previously 26 existed, plus an option to speak to an adviser. IVR is reviewed regularly and amendments made as necessary
14	The distinction of lessee vs tenant should not be the first IVR question. This enables block or estate queries to be raised and understood. The current IVR and call centre approach is too prescriptive.	Implemented	The distinction between lessee and tenant has been removed as the first IVR question. There are now 4 options, plus an option to speak to an adviser. There is work being completed to implement further improvements to the IVR.
15	Ensure all locations where residents have contact with CityWest Homes staff have areas private areas for where personal information can be discussed.	Implemented	All the area offices have interview rooms where private discussions can take place. Staff have been briefed about recognising the instances where issues cannot be discussed in the reception area. As for surgery locations, it may not be possible where the surgeries take place in locations off the estate. However, in such instances an appointment will be arranged for either a home visit or for the



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			resident to attend the area office. Staff have been provided with additional training and guidance on dealing with sensitive issues.
16	Introduce an improved CRM system for all customer contact points, and ensure it is fully integrated with repair contractors to allow for better interaction and sharing of data between call centre and repairs contractor.	Development	The housing service is now joined up with the council and CRM requirements are being scoped with a view to moving to MS Dynamics 365 with some functionality to be implemented this year. This is part of the council's customer experience and digital work.
17	Monitor as a KPI repeat calls and put in place an action plan to avoid repeat calls.	Implemented	Tracking is in place to monitor the volume of calls in relation to existing repairs. A speech Analytics project in September reviewed 30,000 calls to identify drivers of repeat contacts and understand customer sentiment. That date is now being analysed and areas for improvement identified.
18	Continue to monitor call wait time, longest wait time and length of calls and report exceptions to CWH management and to the CWH board.	Implemented	Monthly data is provided to the Cabinet Member and Director of Housing. Targets have been standardised with those for the council's contact centres and performance has been above target for each month since the service came in house.
19	Review the arrangements for surgeries, including location and current usage, to ensure they meet the needs of residents.	Implemented	<p>Attendance at surgeries is variable, with some receiving few customers. We have revised the next round of surgery dates according to demand and will be publicising additional surgeries at Queens Park library, Marylebone library and Lydford Hall.</p> <p>Westminster on Wheels has been well received at most locations and provides residents with access to a team of staff from different disciplines and quicker resolution than surgeries area able to provide. The current WoW vehicle is too large for many locations so leasing a smaller vehicle is being investigated. Some of the surgeries could potentially be replaced by WoW, subject to consultation.</p> <p>We plan to link estate walkabouts with WoW and are working with the Communications team to publicise both WoW and surgery dates to the end of December.</p>



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			Surgeries were also set up for leaseholders in the four area offices following the receipt of the recent service charge invoices to assist with any queries about the billing. A total of just 20 appointments were made over the 4 surgery days.
20	Establish, outside of the complaints procedure, clear communications channels for residents to discuss works not being carried out or other 'questions'.	Implemented	Residents can email the contact centre with any enquiry. Performance of this service is good with queries currently being dealt with within target times. Residents who prefer face to face contact can visit a surgery, WoW or their area office.
21	Undertake a data mining/interrogation exercise and analysis of IVR and calls logged to produce intelligent data on repeat calls/missed appointments with a view to identifying causes and reducing incidents.	Implemented	A speech analytics project started in September and has analysed 30,000 calls which will help us understand the drivers of customer contact, reasons for service failure and tracking our residents' emotions as they interact with our service. It is anticipated that the results of this work will be available by the end of October.
22	Ensure a higher proportion of repairs are inspected upon completion to rebuild residents' confidence that repairs are done correctly. Special attention should be given to leaks.	In progress	We have increased the level of post inspections since the Task Group report, and area surveyors (responsible for specific geographic areas) have increased targets for post inspections. We are also growing the post inspection team to be able to achieve a higher overall percentage of repairs post inspected. In addition we are using other techniques to identify, inspect and address poor quality work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are now surveying tenants immediately after work is completed which helps to quickly identify work that is sub-standard for inspection and follow-up.



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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors are required to provide a photograph of completed work which provides a 100% desktop post inspection regime and provides a record for any future queries eg. related to service charges. The Morgan Sindall contract includes a sum for the contractor to undertake their own post inspections. We are in the process of varying a sum out of the contract and giving that resource to the repairs team to further increase post inspections so that the council can be confident that work is delivered to the required standard. <p>The post-inspection regime in place is consistent with industry norms, which provide acceptable confidence levels of workmanship and quality of repair.</p>
23	Produce clear information for all residents on what is allowed with regards to short term letting (e.g. through Airbnb).	Implemented	<p>The website was updated last year to raise the awareness of the issue and to provide the rules for tenants and leaseholders to increase the understanding of the terms of the tenancy and lease in respect of subletting.</p> <p>All residents have been advised through the newsletter of responsibilities and restrictions on short term lettings.</p> <p>A register of all known and reported sublets is maintained and reports received by the contact centre are passed on for investigation. Checks are made to differentiate lessees who are subletting their flat on a longer term basis from suspected short term letting in breach of the 90 day rule. Online activity is checked and a letter is issued by email and post to the leaseholder to advise of the breach of the terms of the lease. Once the appropriate supporting evidence has been compiled, a claim for breach of the terms of the lease can be made and enforcement action undertaken. IT advances are being developed to produce AI which will scan for instances of short letting within our residential housing stock. This tool will be developed to help identify cases where short letting is taking place.</p> <p>There is close cooperation with Planning and PPC in relation to a strategic plan to deal with short term lets.</p>



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24	Develop a clear protocol for dealing with tenants/lessees who will not allow access to their properties. Engage in legal proceedings at an earlier stage if emergency access is needed to enter a property to stop damage to other properties.	In progress	<p>Gaining access to properties is of particular importance when dealing with leaks and this remains the most frequently occurring reason for delays in carrying out repairs to leaks.</p> <p>A process for gaining entry was put in place in 2018 and has been reviewed for effectiveness post implementation. The process has shortened the time taken to gain access in many cases. Where it is necessary to resort to legal action delays remain. Work is ongoing to agree points of contact with registered providers with leasehold properties within the housing stock to reduce related delays.</p> <p>Introduction of a planned preventative maintenance programme has resulted in a reduction in reported leaks.</p>
25	Review engagement activity and produce a strategy that ensures residents can be empowered to scrutinise CityWest Homes' activity and performance.	In progress	<p>The Housing, Finance and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee is the lead group for scrutinising performance in housing.</p> <p>The resident engagement structure is under review and proposals were presented to the Cabinet Member on 27 September for discussion. The proposed structures include a regular meeting between residents and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Director of Housing. Resident consultation will take place during October/November and a report for decision will be presented to the Cabinet Member in December.</p>
26	Improve the feedback system for residents on the progress of issues they have raised (e.g. repairs or major works). This would include a formal escalation procedure within CWH to track such issues and the use of technology to provide updates.	In progress	<p>Repairs</p> <p>The principle repairs contractor (Morgan Sindall) provide a text messaging service to keep tenants advised on the progress of their repair. Immediately after a repair order is raised, Morgan Sindall send the tenant a text to confirm the appointment; a text is sent the day before the appointment and on the day of the appointment, with a link to a vehicle tracker to monitor the progress of the contractor's van to the property. On completion a further text is sent with a link to a satisfaction survey service operated by 'Rant and Rave'. This service allows residents to provide direct and instant feedback about repairs that have been completed, and uses powerful data analytics to provide information on service quality and improvements needed.</p>



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			<p>Repairs are tracked at patch level by the area surveyors who have targets for ensuring repairs are completed within target timescales. Morgan Sindall staff are located in the area offices working alongside housing staff, and also in the contact centre which assists in resolving issues efficiently such as agreeing follow-on works and communication with the customer. Issues can be escalated by staff to WCC/MS managers and at weekly joint meetings. Currently, there is no formal escalation procedure for customers outside of the complaints process.</p> <p>Major works For a typical project the engagement before formal leaseholder section 20 consultation consists of six written updates and up to three resident meetings/ drop ins/surgeries. From the introduction stage of a major works project there is a named officer in the property services communications team as a point of contact to resolve queries at that stage or escalate if required. This includes a direct e-mail address for ease of contact</p> <p>Each project has a dedicated webpage and all correspondence and updates are published. In addition to the above our contractors are also committed to providing regular updates during the works. This includes providing regular site updates as well as hosting regular surgeries and drop in's as well and regular walkabouts with residents so that they can obtain feedback about their performance on site and make improvements where required.</p> <p>It has been necessary to review the scope of some schemes recently and to build in fire safety and H&S related works. This has resulted in delays and residents have not been kept regularly advised of progress. This has been identified as an area of frustration and we are reviewing how best to keep residents advised of delays.</p>
27	Improve the way that customer satisfaction information is collected. Use different milestones during projects and by using a greater variety of methods aimed	Implemented	A range of surveys are in place to measure customer satisfaction. Kwest, an independent market research agency are employed to gather satisfaction feedback from residents immediately after they have used the following services by e-mail and telephone:



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	<p>at increasing the amount of feedback received. Improving data collection should be a KPI.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In flat repairs • ASB resolution • Complaints handling • Signing up for a new tenancy • Completion of major works <p>We also monitor satisfaction with contact centre call handling as part of the centre management using specialist software.</p> <p>Going forwards, for all new major works schemes, satisfaction with consultation will be measured when we reach the stage that consultation is complete.</p> <p>A quarterly survey is also in place to measure resident perception of the housing service across a random sample of lessees and tenants. The results of the surveys are reviewed with the Cabinet Member.</p>
Major Works			
28	<p>Commence consultation with lessees in advance of issuing s20 notices on all major works projects.</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>Early engagement on major works projects is important in delivering successful projects. For a typical project, Westminster starts this engagement 12-18 months before any planned work is due. The engagement encompasses a range of methods and is aligned to the key milestones of a project. This approach allows residents to contribute at the initial planning and detailed design and approvals stage, before formal leaseholder consultation. It also gives an opportunity for residents to escalate any issues they have in relation to the works being carried out, at an early stage. The rationale for this approach is that the formal leaseholder consultation should reaffirm the discussions held with residents in the development of the project.</p> <p>For a typical project the engagement before formal leaseholder section 20 consultation consists of six written updates and up to three resident meetings/ drop ins / surgeries. From the introduction stage of a project there is a named officer in the property services communications team as a point of contact to coordinate queries and this includes a direct e-mail address for ease of contact. In addition, each project has a dedicated webpage and all correspondence and updates are published.</p>



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29	Investigate the possibility of appointing a quantity surveyor who would act for residents to assist them with evaluating major works schemes.	Implemented	<p>This has been piloted at Gloucester Terrace and offered to residents at Luxborough Tower (this scheme is at an early stage). Residents nominate a consultant to act on their behalf and assist them with the technical and commercial evaluation of projects and their fees are paid by the Council.</p> <p>Following early positive dialogue with the consultant for Gloucester Terrace and encouragement from the working group, the consultant has decided not to continue. Feedback has been provided to the resident working group who acknowledge the Council's good intentions.</p> <p>The current arrangement, with the fees paid directly by the Council is not truly independent and consultants seem uninterested in performing this advisory role which may involve challenging the Council.</p> <p>An alternative proposal (based on a Monitoring Surveyor model) has been proposed where residents directly approach consultants to agree a scope of service. Under this proposal, the Council would offer a proportionate sum to the resident group to directly appoint and pay the consultant and in doing so preserve their independent status. Certain parameters would be specified, including RICS accreditation and Professional Indemnity insurance appropriate for the services commissioned and the council would need to support residents in becoming more organised and establish the infrastructure necessary to manage and pay consultants.</p>
30	Investigate the possibility of establishing leaseholder-linked sinking funds and an improved flexible payment system with a view to introducing one or both of them.	In progress	<p>Legal advice has been obtained on the options for sinking funds. Any change would require the consent of lessees so we are devising a consultation paper and survey to gauge the appetite of lessees for the implementation of a sinking fund. The accompanying information will provide details on the concept of a 'sinking fund' along with questions to allow our lessees to better understand the proposal and the implications to their service charge liability and reserve fund payments. Early examination confirms that few London local authorities offer the provision of sinking funds to their leaseholders and generally this is for new build blocks. A full report will be drafted within the next two months.</p>



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31	Produce a coordinated plan dealing with leaks that identifies necessary repairs and major works that are needed to address the issue.	In progress	<p>One third of all repairs reported are plumbing related and half of those jobs result in more than one call to the contact centre. The need for roofing works is also a source of leaks and overall, this area remains a challenge.</p> <p>Planned preventative maintenance programmes are in place for roofs, drains and gullies which now receive regular inspection and clearance. So far on the drainage PPM in the first year (phase 1) Sept 2018 – Sept 2019, we have completed 290 blocks across 28 estates. Improved linkages between asset strategy and repairs have been created, with prioritisation of roof renewals being programmed in future years major works programmes.</p> <p>We have just commenced phase 2 and plan to clear stacks and gulleys at 171 blocks across 18 estates and also 35 standalone buildings. During these works we are identifying further works required such as cracks within stacks which are repaired using inner sleeves or applying a waterproofing sealant. We are also installing roof drainage cowls - 'hedgehogs', to stop leaves entering the stacks and causing further blockages.</p> <p>We have also identified a number of roofs that have required replacing, roofs have been replaced at 4 blocks.</p>
32	Set a KPI for CWH that prioritises bringing management and professional fees in line with industry to give value for money.	In progress	<p>Benchmarking with other London boroughs in 2018 provided an industry standard for professional fees of 10%. At that time, CWH' costs were approximately 16-18%, using traditionally procured contracts. The new major works contracts have significantly reduced the direct management and professional fees associated with major works reduced to approximately 9% and are forecast to further reduce to approximately 6% in 2019/20 which is low compared with peers. Further reductions may be possible as the contracts mature but performance and quality must not suffer by starving resource.</p> <p>Due to the time taken to complete major works schemes, it will be some time before schemes started under this new regime will reach completion. Lessees will therefore not see the benefit of new arrangements until xxxx</p>



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33	Review the information provided to leaseholders to ensure that there is complete transparency on how costs for major works are calculated.	In progress	<p>Changes were made in 2018 following the task group recommendation and the revised format subject was first used in February/March 2019.</p> <p>The new Director of Housing has made simplification of lessee bills a priority and further work is underway to improve all lessee communications.</p> <p>Leasehold operations provide the full breakdown of the costs to be incurred within the statutory section 20 notification and associated documentation. During the observation period (30 days plus an allowance of 5/7 days due regard to postage) our leaseholders are invited to view the full contract specification. The full contract documentation can run to hundreds of pages, but costs relevant to an individual block or estate can be provided to our residents free of charge. The apportionment of the service charge (the calculation) is provided at the Section 20 stage and upon receipt of the service charge demand.</p> <p>The format of the actual service charge accounts, issued in September 2019 were simplified and from April 2020 an annual service charge demand will be issued to our leaseholders. Work is in progress to simplify the mailing to ensure clear and transparent information is provided to all of our leaseholders, which explains the basis of calculation, the rationale for the works and the method of payment. A lot of development work is underway on the web pages to provide dated updates on information and full cost breakdowns for each contact by scheme name, postcode and by wards.</p>
34	Establish an appropriate review mechanism within CWH to ensure that major works projects provide good value for money for residents and are appropriate based on the condition surveys carried out.	In progress	<p>Two governance boards for Major Works are in place - Project Board (operational) and Programme Board (strategic), responsible for ensuring all proposed projects deliver value for money.</p> <p>Client Briefs are prepared by the Asset Strategy team and define the scope of works which is informed by independent condition surveys and site walkabouts where they consult with interested stakeholders. Client Briefs are published on the council's website.</p>



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			<p>Detailed surveys are conducted by both the Service Providers and the Major Works team and at least three competitive prices obtained for business cases where these are relevant. Proposals received from Service Providers detailing strategies, pricing, designs and the like are scrutinised by the Major Works team before notices are prepared and issued to leaseholders and works commence on site. Proposals received from Service Providers are again published on the councils website.</p> <p>The new contracts are very specific about the scrutiny process and ensuring value for money for both the HRA and Leaseholders and prices are routinely validated against the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) schedule of rates to ensure Service Providers are providing competitive prices for major works.</p> <p>A Working Group has recommended that citywide prices are prepared for frequently adopted components/trades such as roofing and fire doors introducing further added value to work undertaken. Soft Market Testing has confirmed that preferential terms can be secured without additional cost such as 30 year guarantees for roofs rather than 25 years typically offered by manufacturers. The contracting terms and relationship with the existing Partnering Team Members is yet to be agreed but tendering processes will begin subject to Core Group approval and will secure best value across the city improving not only prices but the service offered by the second tier supply chain.</p> <p>An Operational Excellence framework has been introduced that identifies the activities and best practice necessary to ensure projects within the Investment Programme provide value for money and meet the expectations of stakeholders. In the first year of introduction projects scored 3 (out of 5) against the criteria defined in the model and measured improvement is planned for as the contracts and processes mature.</p>
35	Produce a plan for reducing costs on major works projects.	In progress	Reducing costs on major works contracts has been a priority and we have clear plans on how to achieve that.



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The award of the two major works term contracts has moved us significantly further forward on this. Those contracts cover planned works and cyclical repairs undertaken throughout Westminster for ten years.

It will take some time for all of the schemes procured under previous procurement arrangements to complete and reach final billing stage so it will be approximately 12 months before lessees see the benefit of the new arrangements in reduced bills.

The Project Management costs (including Procurement) for major works have halved following the award of the term contracts and are forecast to realise savings of approximately £28m over the full ten-year term.

Following the procurement of the Major Works term contracts, the only remaining variable components of costs are:

- Project duration (Preliminaries).
- Business cases for second tier supply chain.

All other pricing components are fixed except net profit which both Service Providers priced at 2%. That profit is subject to performance against four KPI's.

Project Management costs have reduced from 16-18% to approximately 8% since the award of the term contracts, with the reductions varying depending on the size of the project, but as an average they have halved. Arrangements to reduce the costs include:

Better project programming to minimise duration and preliminaries

Project programmes and durations are agreed between the Service Providers and WCC Commissioning Team. Programme durations vary depending on the complexity of works and are discreet to each individual project. Project programming is a specialist activity and we are recruiting a dedicated Task Programmer. This new role will ensure works are sequenced in the most efficient way to reduce management and health and safety costs.



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			<p>Business cases</p> <p>A minimum of three competitive prices (Business Cases) are obtained for each component/trade package of work that could not otherwise be priced under the NHF schedule of rates included in the contract (version 7.4). The Business Cases are net of any discounts, rebates or other preferential terms, so the cost paid represents the best market price for each component/trade. Prices are regularly validated against the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) schedule of rates to ensure Service Providers are providing best value for money.</p> <p>A Working Group established following the Task Group's recommendations identified that citywide Business Cases should be prepared for frequently used components/trades such as roofing and fire doors. Soft Market Testing has confirmed that preferential terms can be secured without additional cost such as 30 year guarantees for roofs rather than 25 years typically offered by manufacturers. Contracting terms and relationship with the existing Partnering Team Members are to be agreed and tendering processes will begin subject to Core Group approval and will inform the net cost of work delivered throughout the city.</p>
36	Review why certain blocks or estates are not currently planned for major works to ensure that all buildings are maintained in a timely fashion.	In progress	<p>The strategic approach to stock investment is set out in the council's Asset Management Strategy. It is currently being refreshed and a new strategy will be in place in spring 2020.</p> <p>The new strategy will set out the council's priorities for investment over the next five years. With finite resources available, the priorities will be driven by compliance, health and safety, decent homes and condition. Where blocks are not earmarked for investment, it will explain the rationale for those blocks not being included.</p>

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Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Monday, 18 th November 2019
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Report of the Anti-Social Behaviour on Estates Task Group
Report of:	Executive Director of Policy, Performance and Communications
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Housing Services Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Licensing
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for All
Report Author and Contact Details:	Aaron Hardy x2894 ahardy1@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the ASB on Estates Task Group

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

The Committee is asked to

- Agree the recommendations of the task group.
- Forward the relevant recommendations to the Cabinet member for response.

3. Background

In June 2019 the committee established a task group to investigate Anti-Social Behaviour on Estates. The task group undertook its investigation over four meetings between July and September 2019.

Following approval by the committee the report will be published on the Council's website. The published version would include some cosmetic additions to the report such as an executive summary and case studies to illustrate some points.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Aaron Hardy
ahardy1@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Report of the ASB on Estates Task Group Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Chair's foreword, introduction and conclusion to be completed once content finalised

DRAFT Anti-Social Behaviour on Estates Task Group Report

Chair's foreword

To be completed once report finalised

Executive Summary

To be completed once report finalised

Introduction

Westminster has a unique population made up of residents, the business community, visitors and tourists. Our estates are also diverse places with a mixture of social housing, leaseholders and private tenants. Reducing crime, disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is a major concern for Westminster residents.

Living in the vibrant, diverse and dynamic city that is London, we expect our residents to accept a certain level of noise from day-to-day living and be tolerant of other people's life-styles. However, we also expect our residents to behave in an acceptable manner at all times.¹

Following the decision to bring housing management services in-house from April 2019, the Housing ASB team is now part of the council. This is an appropriate time to review how that function is performing and how it is integrated with other parts of this council. Although we touched on some wider ASB issues, the focus of this task group was ASB on council-managed housing estates.

What is anti-social behaviour (ASB)?

Anti-social behaviour is a broad term used to describe the day-to-day incidents of crime, nuisance and disorder, that may make many people's lives a misery – from litter and vandalism, to public drunkenness or aggressive dogs, to noisy or abusive neighbours.

Westminster Housing Service currently defines anti-social behaviour as:

- Acting in a manner that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to any person.
- Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises.
- Conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person which directly or indirectly relates to or affects our housing management functions.
- Using or threatening to use residential premises for immoral or illegal purposes.²

¹ City of Westminster's Statement of Policies and Procedures on Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour which was published in May 2014 and was reviewed in March 2019

² City of Westminster's Statement of Policies and Procedures on Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour which was published in May 2014 and was reviewed in March 2019

How we categorise ASB

On our estates, we use the Housemark ASB Benchmarking Categories which are based on the National Standard for Incident Recording 2011. Examples of activities by category that may cause ASB include but are not limited to the following:

- Verbal abuse/harassment/intimidation/ threatening behaviour
- Hate related incidents
- Domestic abuse
- Physical violence – other than domestic abuse
- Alcohol related nuisance – including drunken behaviour.
- Drug / substance misuse & dealing
- Noise
- Litter / rubbish / fly-tipping
- Vehicle nuisance
- Pets and animal nuisance -
- Misuse of communal areas/ public space/ loitering
- Vandalism and damage to property - including graffiti, criminal damage
- Prostitution/sexual acts/kerb crawling
- Garden nuisance

The Council's general approach to ASB³

In summary, the council's general approach to ASB is based on the following principles:

- We will not tolerate ASB in any form.
- We expect our residents to behave in an acceptable manner at all times.
- Tenancy agreements and leases set out the standards of behaviour.
- We will respond promptly to all reports of ASB and in accordance with our published service standards.
- We will treat all complaints impartially and maintain confidentiality at all times.
- We will support and advise complainants, victims and witnesses of ASB throughout the process of tackling the problem.
- Any action we take will be reasonable and proportionate.
- We will take full account of the impact of the ASB on the complainant and wider community.
- We actively promote prevention to foster an environment where anti-social behaviour is less likely to arise in the first place. We currently invest around £1.5 million per year to provide security improvements, tackle crime and disorder and divert young people from anti-social behaviour.
- By using appropriate and timely intervention we aim to resolve complaints at the earliest opportunity.
- We use our enforcement powers in appropriate circumstances and in particular where all other attempts at resolution have either failed or have been exhausted.
- We continue to develop a wide range of initiatives to combat nuisance, harassment and ASB, based on learning from resident and stakeholder feedback and comparing our performance with other organisations.

Recommendations:

³ City of Westminster's Statement of Policies and Procedures on Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour which was published in May 2014 and was reviewed in March 2019

1. Review the definition of Anti-Social Behaviour to ensure it includes all relevant issues and that it captures issues reported through all channels.
2. Review the way that ASB issues are recorded so that all issues and complaints related to a particular property or individual are recorded.
3. Ensure residents who raise concerns or complaints about ASB issues are kept up to date on the status and outcome of their complaint. Residents who raise concerns should be confident that their case will be dealt with confidentially.
4. Ensure all of the council's call centres are integrated in a way that allows all housing related ASB issues to be captured and recorded.
5. Where necessary acquire and install appropriate case management systems that will enable the council to record all the reported issues.
6. Produce appropriate leaflets and update the council's website to be clear on how issues can be reported, what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and potential penalties. Literature should also include contact details of relevant services both within the council and the council's partners.
7. Produce guidance about who to contact about different types of complaint and emergencies.

What type of ASB is in Westminster?

The top three categories of ASB in 2018 and 2019 were noise (41.2%); verbal abuse, harassment and intimidation (23.2%) and drug use and drug dealing (12.3%), this reflects the national average.

Case category* 2018	Category totals	% of overall ASB
Noise	174	41.2%
Verbal abuse/harassment/ intimidation/ threatening behaviour	98	23.2%
Drugs/ substance misuse/ drug dealing	52	12.3%
Misuse of communal areas/ public space or loitering	34	8.1%
Hate related incidents	13	3.1%
Vandalism and damage to property	13	3.1%
Physical Violence	10	2.4%
Litter/ Rubbish/ Fly-tipping	7	1.7%
Criminal behaviour/ crime	6	1.4%
Domestic abuse	5	1.2%
Alcohol related	3	0.7%
Pets and Animal Nuisance	3	0.7%
Nuisance from vehicles	2	0.5%
Garden nuisance	1	0.2%
Prostitution/ sexual acts/ kerb crawling	1	0.2%
Total number of case categories	422	

*First category under which a case is logged. Cases may involve multiple issues.

Noise

Noise cases have seen a decrease of 9% between 2018 and 2019, but account for the largest category of cases in both 2018 & 2019.

Noise nuisance makes up almost a third of the Housing ASB team's total case load. These cases are difficult to resolve as people have different lifestyles and evidence is hard to gain. The council's first response to noise complaints is always encouragement of self-management and intervention before enforcement.

The ASB team can usually only consider enforcement if there is evidence of persistent noise taking place and this has been professionally witnessed (usually by an environmental health officer from the noise team). If the noise team act, the ASB team will consider this as a breach of tenancy and will consider what action is proportionate. This may be a warning letter, a letter before action from solicitors or a civil injunction. In serious cases where a noise abatement notice is breached the council can consider serving a notice of seeking possession on mandatory grounds under the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

The Westminster housing website advises:

Complaints about, for example, household noise, are often reported to us as anti-social behaviour. Common complaints include children playing, doors closing, furniture being moved and hearing footsteps.

These matters would not be considered anti-social behaviour. Your neighbour may not be aware that they are causing a problem and you may be able to resolve the issue quickly and easily without reporting it. Our brand new 'dear neighbour' cards can help you to do this. Download a card or pick one up from your local Area Service Centre. The cards can be dropped off anonymously to let your neighbour know they may have caused a noise."

Recommendations

8. Ensure that, when recording ASB issues, a differentiation is made between a case being closed and a case being resolved to the satisfaction of the original complainant.
9. Ensure that all lessons learnt from ASB cases are captured and produce a guide for officers.
10. Recruit residents as ASB champions on each estate to help promote ways that residents can raise ASB issues, flag any issues with council officers and other partners and help identify ways of addressing ASB.

The Housing ASB team records the reason for closing an ASB complaint. The most common reason for closure of a case is early intervention by housing management staff, which is followed by an informal warning. This illustrates the Housing ASB team's approach to ASB, which is to deal with complaints as tenancy management issues where possible.

Closure reason 2018/19	All cases	Noise cases
CCTV Installed	1	
Eviction	5	2
Informal warning (verbal or written)	148	49
Management Transfer of Perpetrator	1	
Notice of proceedings for possession (NPP)	2	1

Notice of Seeking Possession (NSP)	9	3
Notice of Seeking Possession on mandatory grounds for possession	1	
Other early intervention by housing management staff	228	67
Other enforcement action specified in ASB Act 2014	1	
Perpetrator Visit / Interview	57	16
Referral of Complainant to support or counselling service	1	
Referral to or provision of drug or alcohol support services	1	
Referral to MARAC or similar advocacy	2	
Referral to or provision of mediation	20	11
Referral to or provision of mental health/ community care services	11	2
Referral to another agency or group	28	11
Referral to Police	51	5
Surrender of property by ASB perpetrator	5	2
Voluntary agreement to stop ASB (e.g. ABC)	11	
N/A	1	

The case closure statistics above show how the case came to an end, but not if that result was to the satisfaction of the resident who raised the complaint. The performance of the Housing ASB service is currently measured using a KPI based on the results of a survey. The survey is completed by complainants and is about their satisfaction with the way their case was handled. When a case is opened on the system, it can be low, medium or high risk, or record only, this classification is made with a national risk assessment matrix which comprises 14 questions based around vulnerability, the individual and what they are experiencing. Cases marked as record only are not surveyed as they are cases where we are not the lead agency working on it. For example, if the report is a police matter, and so would not be appropriate for survey.

The survey is completed by an external company called KWEST following the case being closed on our system. KWEST make a phone call to the complainant and will also try email if they cannot reach the person by phone. KWEST ask the complainants two open questions about their satisfaction with the way their case was handled, and if they are happy with the outcome when the case was closed. Feedback from customers is used to create development plans for individual case managers. **However, the service is not measured on the outcome of the case.**

Legal powers

The council has a number of powers as a landlord, freeholder and local authority which sit within different teams. They include:

- A civil injunction
- Community protection notice
- Criminal behaviour order
- Public Spaces Protection Order
- Closure powers
- Noise Abatement Notice

Civil Injunction⁴

Civil injunctions are used to stop or prevent individuals engaging in ASB by quickly nipping problems in the bud before they escalate. They are aimed at preventing conduct that:

- (i) causes or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person; or
- (ii) causes nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises or the conduct is capable of causing housing-related nuisance⁵ or annoyance to any person.

Civil injunctions are taken through County Court. The injunction will include prohibitions and can also include positive requirements to get the perpetrator to address the underlying causes of their anti-social behaviour. They can also include a power of arrest and exclusion of the tenant from their home if the ASB includes the use, or threatened use of violence against other persons or significant risk of harm to other persons from the perpetrator. A civil injunction can be applied for with or without notice. Breach of a civil injunction is a civil contempt of court punishable by up to 2 years in prison and/or an unlimited fine.

Community Protection Notice⁶

Community Protection Notices are designed to tackle the behaviour that has a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality and is persistent, ongoing and unreasonable by targeting those responsible. The Community Protection Notice (CPN) can deal with a range of behaviours; for instance, it can deal with noise nuisance and litter on private land. The CPN can include requirements to ensure that problems are rectified and that steps are taken to prevent the anti-social behaviour occurring again. A written warning must first be issued informing the perpetrator of problem behaviour, requesting them to stop, and informing them of the consequences of continuing. **However, an advance warning does not have a formal period before which the Council can seek a CPN.** A CPN can be issued including requirement to stop things, do things or take reasonable steps to avoid further anti-social behaviour. Failure to comply with a CPN is an offence in respect of which the Council can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of up to £100 or prosecute in the magistrate's court. CPNs can allow councils to carry out works in default on behalf of a perpetrator. On conviction the Magistrates Court can also order the forfeiture of any item and/or authorise the seizure of items that have been used in the commission of the offence.

Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO)⁷

⁴ Sections 1 to 21 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

⁵ "Housing-related" means directly or indirectly relating to the Councils housing management function. This can also be used to tackle housing issues such as hoarding and flooding of premises by water because for instance the tenant has left the water tap running.

⁶ Sections 43 to 58 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

⁷ Sections 22 to 33 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

The Council can request that the CPS pursue a Criminal Behaviour Order. The CBO can be used to deal with a wide range of anti-social behaviours following an individual's conviction for a criminal offence; for example, threatening others in the community, persistently being drunk and aggressive in public, or to deal with anti-social behaviour associated with a more serious conviction, such as for burglary or street robbery. The CBO can also be used to address the anti-social behaviour of gang members, for example to prevent them from affiliating with certain individuals or to require them to attend a job readiness course to help them get employment.

However, an application for a CBO does not require a link between the criminal behaviour which led to the conviction and the anti-social behaviour it addresses, for it to be issued by the court. Agencies must make proportionate and reasonable judgements before applying for a CBO, and conditions of an order should not be designed to stop reasonable, trivial or benign behaviour that has not caused, or is unlikely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to victims or communities. A CBO can include both prohibitions and requirements such as attendance at an anger management course

Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)

Public Spaces Protection Orders are intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a specific area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life, by imposing conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone. They are intended to help ensure that the law-abiding majority can use and enjoy public spaces, safe from anti-social behaviour.

Given that these orders can restrict what people can do and how they behave in public spaces, it is important that the restrictions imposed are focused on specific behaviours and are proportionate to the detrimental effect that the behaviour is causing or can cause, and are necessary to prevent it from continuing, occurring or recurring. PSPO's have a maximum duration of 3 years and the Council must consult with the police and community representatives before publishing the PSPO.

Recommendation

11. Review the security in housing blocks and look at the feasibility of limiting access to the blocks that residents live in as opposed to having access to all areas of an estate.

Closure powers⁸

The closure power is a fast, flexible power that can be used to protect victims and communities by quickly closing premises that are causing nuisance or disorder. A Closure Notice is issued out of court in the first instance. Flowing from this the Closure Order can be applied for through the courts. A Notice can close premises for up to 48 hours but cannot

⁸ Sections 76 to 93 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

stop owners or those who habitually live there accessing the premises. An Order can close premises for up to six months and can restrict all access. Both the Notice and the Order can cover any land or any other place, whether enclosed or not including residential, business, non-business and licensed premises.

Consultation is required prior to serving the Closure Notice. Before issuing a notice, the council must ensure that they consult with partners and anyone else they think appropriate. This should include the victim but could also include other members of the public that may be affected positively or negatively by the closure, community representatives, other organisations and bodies, the police or local council (where not the issuing organisation) or others that regularly use the premises. There may also be people who use the premises as access to other premises that are not subject to the closure notice but may be impacted on by the closure.

Working with the police, Westminster has undertaken two closure orders in past year. The process of obtaining a closure order involves consultation with every relevant partner to establish potential other options and assess the vulnerability of the tenant. Partial closure orders are also available and can be used more flexibly, for example, to provide a resident with temporary respite.

Recommendation

12. Investigate increasing the use of closure orders with a view to increasing their frequency in more cases where possible.

Noise Abatement Notices⁹

The Council has the power to take steps to stop a noise nuisance occurring (EPA 1990) and to take away noise making equipment (e.g. stereos) without notice to stop noise (NA 1996). The Council can issue a noise abatement notice. A noise abatement notice is a legal order requiring an individual to control the amount of noise coming from their property. Failure to comply with the notice by continuing to make excessive noise is an offence and may lead to the Council applying for a Warrant at the Magistrates Court.

Environmental Health then has the power to enter property and take away noise making equipment. If the Warrant is granted, the seizure will take place as soon as possible.

Use of legal powers

The Council clearly has a number of useful tools at its disposal to address ASB. We were told that some practitioners will say that going to court is a last resort. However, we believe that **the council should go to court when facts warrant it, there is sufficient evidence and importantly, when residents would expect the council to act.**

The council also has powers as a landlord. Westminster's tenancy agreements have requirements for tenants to make sure their guests do not cause ASB. Westminster also has

⁹ Environmental protection Act 1990, section 81, Noise Act 1996, Section 10

powers as a freeholder and can forfeit a leaseholder's property. The threat of forfeiture can be an effective tool. The council should use these powers when appropriate.

The council should be clearer with residents about what the council's powers are, both by communicating those powers and doing so in a clearer way.

The council's powers are currently being exercised across different teams and there is not enough joined up working across these teams to identify the most effective power to address an issue. The council should develop toolkits that teams can use to identify how cases should be resolved and what the council's powers are. The council should track cases and be willing to take more test cases.

Recommendations

13. Use more legal letters (from legal services, not the housing team) to enforce and warn of enforcement against ASB issues as this sends a stronger message.
14. Set up workshops between the ASB team, legal team and other partners enabling all agencies to learn more about what tools they have at their disposal. These workshops should be used to develop a resource for officers.
15. Investigate the number of cases that are unresolved and establish a review mechanism that increases the use of legal proceedings in more cases.

Evidence gathering issues

The amount and quality of evidence required to prove ASB is fact sensitive and dependant on the legal power that the council is trying to use. A serious one-off incident could be enough, there is not always a need for a long history of evidence to be collected.

The use of resident evidence depends on the issue. For an issue such as noise nuisance, the council cannot rely just on a resident's evidence. Statutory noise cases require evidence gathered by a professional noise officer. However, for other ASB cases, a resident's evidence may be more useful. In some cases, it is one person's word against another without corroborating evidence. In these cases, officers can do things like carry out a door knocking exercise near to the time of the alleged ASB. This can discover corroborating evidence and act as a deterrent for the ASB being repeated. However, it may be that the noise has stopped by the time the officer arrives, this can make gathering evidence difficult.

Although residents should be encouraged to come forward to make complaints and provide evidence (and supported by the council when they are) some residents may not want to for fear of reprisals. In these cases, officers can present hearsay evidence in court.

Vulnerable residents

As part of our work, task group members were interested in the placement of vulnerable residents who may be the victims of, or cause, ASB.

The council has a duty to prevent someone from losing their home as well as helping someone that has become homeless. ASB cases predominantly involve single adults, and

those individuals are usually over 35 with a number of vulnerabilities. Of the clients who approached the Housing Solutions Service for housing advice in 2018/2019, 995 were single adults (56%). 87% of single households who the council accepted a duty to in 2018/2019 were accepted under the priority need category as vulnerable (52% mental illness or disability, 44% physical disability, 4% elderly).

Single adults have to pass a vulnerability test to trigger the priority need and homelessness duty. For the vulnerability test, the definition is 'the person must be significantly more vulnerable than an ordinary person in need of accommodation and likely to suffer greater harm in the same situation'. The majority of people that are assessed as meeting the test tend to have mental health issues.

Once a priority need or relief duty has been established the council will place a person in temporary accommodation, but only those for which the council has accepted a duty will be placed in to permanent placement route.

The council has an allocations policy which applies to individuals with vulnerabilities, however there are a number of pathways as part of the scheme that the council can use to support those individuals.

There are temporary accommodation placements that are supported specifically for single adults with vulnerabilities. There is also a single person's pathway if the council has concerns about an individual's ability to live alone. The individual can be assessed for six months in temporary accommodation with floating support.

High risk individuals that are assessed by mental health professionals can be on a delayed list until they are able to go into an estate setting. The threshold for mental health placements is very high so few people are placed on that list. The threshold for people to not be allocated a property because of their mental health issues is very high.

The council can make direct offers of accommodation if it believes someone has particular vulnerabilities that would make certain allocations unsuitable for them. The council can also stop people bidding for properties that would be unsuitable for them. It is also possible to exclude certain people being put in to particular blocks that have had ASB issues in the past if they are unsuitable.

The council also has a supported accommodation referral process. Westminster has 618 supported housing beds across the borough (by pathway: mental health: 382, young adults: 136, ex-offenders: 20, single women's: 45, domestic abuse refuge: 35). This excludes 430 Rough Sleeping beds as rough sleeping clients do not access services through the Housing Solutions Service, and 758 Community Supported Housing homes who are for those aged over 60 and are nominated to through allocations process under our statutory duties. Each year there is a small allocation of permanent properties (approx. 20 -30 studios/1beds per year) that are made available for those who are living in a hostel and have been assessed as being able to manage a tenancy and are suitable for general needs as their move on option.

Referrals into supported housing pathways do not all come from the Housing Solutions Service. Partners such as Mental Health, Children's, London Probation Service, and Domestic Abuse Services, can also refer into the pathways directly. The housing team can ask for a capacity assessment to be conducted on a tenant. If the support package is not good enough for a resident, and this could lead to them being evicted, the housing team will ask adult social care to put the resident forward for supported accommodation referral.

The Council also has sensitive lets, this is a measure requested by the housing ASB team to the housing solutions team when a property becomes vacant as a result of the previous tenant being evicted or another measure taken to resolve ASB. The Housing ASB team ask that the prospective tenants do not have a history of ASB with previous tenancies/ landlords in order to prevent further ASB being experienced in the building again.

We were told that, since the housing management service came back in-house there has been better communication with adult social care and steps such as agreeing new safeguarding procedures have been taken. However, there are still improvements to be made. Housing services have the ability to refer clients to services like Drug and Alcohol Welfare Service, but need those clients' consent, or might need something like a closure order to force the issue.

Recommendations:

16. Housing and Adult services should be more joined up on cases involving vulnerable residents (particularly after allocation). There also needs to be increased co-operation between all agencies including the police.
17. Review and where possible improve the support provided when moving vulnerable applicants from temporary housing to permanent housing.
18. Review the use of the delayed priority list to see if capacity could be increased.
19. Review the use of single persons pathway to see if capacity could be increased.
20. Ensure that the thresholds for allocating vulnerable people to independent living accommodation are fit for purpose; learn lessons from any placements that have resulted in ASB.
21. Review and where possible improve the use of specialist recovery housing for those undergoing substance misuse treatment.
22. Review whether we have an ongoing review in relation to individuals that have complex needs and have caused issues for their neighbours.

Conclusion

To be completed once report finalised

Recommendations

1. Review the definition of Anti-Social Behaviour to ensure it includes all relevant issues and that it captures issues reported through all channels.

2. Review the way that ASB issues are recorded so that all issues and complaints related to a particular property or individual are recorded.
3. Ensure residents who raise concerns or complaints about ASB issues are kept up to date on the status and outcome of their complaint. Residents who raise concerns should be confident that their case will be dealt with confidentially.
4. Ensure all of the council's call centres are integrated in a way that allows all housing related ASB issues to be captured and recorded.
5. Where necessary acquire and install appropriate case management systems that will enable the council to record all the reported issues.
6. Produce appropriate leaflets and update the council's website to be clear on how issues can be reported, what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and potential penalties. Literature should also include contact details of relevant services both within the council and the council's partners.
7. Produce guidance about who to contact about different types of complaint and emergencies.
8. Ensure that, when recording ASB issues, a differentiation is made between a case being closed and a case being resolved to the satisfaction of the original complainant.
9. Ensure that all lessons learnt from ASB cases are captured and produce a guide for officers.
10. Recruit residents as ASB champions on each estate to help promote ways that residents can raise ASB issues, flag any issues with council officers and other partners and help identify ways of addressing ASB.
11. Review the security in housing blocks and look at the feasibility of limiting access to the blocks that residents live in as opposed to having access to all areas of an estate.
12. Investigate increasing the use of closure orders with a view to increasing their frequency in more cases where possible.
13. Use more legal letters (from legal services, not the housing team) to enforce and warn of enforcement against ASB issues as this sends a stronger message.
14. Set up workshops between the ASB team, legal team and other partners enabling all agencies to learn more about what tools they have at their disposal. These workshops should be used to develop a resource for officers.
15. Investigate the number of cases that are unresolved and establish a review mechanism that increases the use of legal proceedings in more cases.
16. Housing and Adult services should be more joined up on cases involving vulnerable residents (particularly after allocation). There also needs to be increased co-operation between all agencies including the police.
17. Review and where possible improve the support provided when moving vulnerable applicants from temporary housing to permanent housing.
18. Review the use of the delayed priority list to see if capacity could be increased.
19. Review the use of single persons pathway to see if capacity could be increased.
20. Ensure that the thresholds for allocating vulnerable people to independent living accommodation are fit for purpose; learn lessons from any placements that have resulted in ASB.
21. Review and where possible improve the use of specialist recovery housing for those undergoing substance misuse treatment.

22. Review whether we have an ongoing review in relation to individuals that have complex needs and have caused issues for their neighbours.

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Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	18 th November 2019
Classification:	General Release
Title:	2019/20 Work Programme
Report of:	Director of Policy, Performance & Communications
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	All
Report Author and Contact Details:	Aaron Hardy x 2894 ahardy1@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

1. This report presents the 2019/20 work programme to the committee for its consideration.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Review and approve the draft list of suggested items (appendix 1) and prioritise where required
- Note the action tracker (appendix 2)

3. Topic Selection

- 3.1 The proposed list of topics (Appendix 1) takes in to account comments by the committee at its previous meeting.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the
Background Papers, please contact Aaron Hardy**

ahardy1@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Suggested topics

Appendix 2- Action Tracker

WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020
Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

ROUND THREE 18 NOVEMBER 2019		
Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Andrew Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Rachel Robathan, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration
Housing Management Services	Update on housing management services following transition in house	Director of Housing
ASB on Estates Task Group Report	To agree the recommendations of the ASB on Estates Task Group	Councillor Melvyn Caplan

ROUND FOUR 30 JANUARY 2020		
Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Andrew Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Rachel Robathan, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration
Corporate Property	Review the council's approach to corporate property. Possible focus in use of property by third parties at discounted rates	

**ROUND FIVE
11 MARCH 2020**

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Andrew Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Rachel Robathan, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration
Development	Investigate the council's development and delivery of the capital program. Item should include a site visit to Dudley House or Beachcroft.	

**ROUND SIX
23 APRIL 2020**

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Andrew Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Rachel Robathan, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration

**ROUND SEVEN
TBC**

Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Andrew Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Rachel Robathan, Cabinet Member for

		Finance, Property and Regeneration
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ROUND EIGHT TBC		
Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Andrew Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing Services
Cabinet Member Q&A	To update the committee on key areas of work within its remit and the Cabinet Member's priorities	Councillor Rachel Robathan, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Regeneration

UNALLOCATED ITEMS		
Agenda Item	Reasons & objective for item	Represented by
Universal Credit Rollout	Review the impact on Residents of the rollout of universal credit (link with Family and People Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee)	
Housing strategy	Review the approach to developing/updating a housing strategy	
Domestic Abuse	Review of women's refuge provision. How have changes in funding been implemented and how will it affect services?	
Empty Properties	Review the approach to developing an empty properties policy or strategy	
Business rates	Review the impact of business rates changes on local businesses and the Council's finances	

TASK GROUPS AND STUDIES

Subject	Reasons & objective	Type
Budget Task Group	Annual review of budget setting	Task Group
Major works		Task Group

ACTION TRACKER 2019/20
Housing, Finance and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

ROUND TWO 12 SEPTEMBER 2019		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Housing Services	Provide an update on how much parking enforcement has been rolled out on former CWH estates to date and what is the completion date for the rest?	Completed
	Provide Councillor Noble with a note on s20 process	Completed
	In the next cabinet member update provide an update on the change of approach in the council’s asset strategy to use temporary accommodation as a source of capital investment.	In progress
Regeneration Update	What were the specific reason the Council did not apply for GLA funding for regeneration schemes? (the funding that was £100k per unit)	Completed
Call-In	Provide an update on Does Westminster have any Temporary Accommodation with ACM cladding on it?	Completed

ROUND ONE 5 JUNE 2019		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Finance Property and Regeneration	Circulate details of which officers are responsible for which services in the new housing management team	Completed
	In Councillor Smith’s next update include the details of fire door inspections	In progress
	Reply to Cllr Elcho’s query regarding the use of drop keys	Completed
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Housing Services	Provide a briefing on the council’s apprenticeship scheme	Completed

	Provide a note on the number of homes the council has started/completed year by year as well as a list of schemes on site	Completed
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