

Agenda Item: 17

Housing Review Board

25 June 2009

JG/MH



Repairs Performance monitoring report

Summary

This report sets out details of our performance in relation to routine or responsive repairs undertaken to council homes, together with evidence of our contractors' performance against targets. The report provides detailed repairs information for the period April 2008 – March 2009.

Maintaining and improving tenants' homes is a core landlord activity and an area in which the council and contractors performance has a direct impact on tenant's quality of life and enjoyment of their homes.

This report provides information on the number of repairs reported and undertaken; the speed, quality of service, and tenant satisfaction levels.

We have achieved a consistent level of good performance and high tenant satisfaction, although contractor performance disappointingly did not achieve our target, so I am seeking improved performance through better contract management, tenant involvement and higher ambitions for this service area.

Recommendation

That the performance on repairs to Council homes set out in the report is noted.

a) Reasons for Recommendation

To inform the Board about the performance of the Housing and Social Inclusion Service and our contractors in relation to repairs to council housing and tenants homes. This performance monitoring activity is one of the main functions of the Housing Review Board.

b) Alternative Options

To receive less detailed reports, or reports covering different aspects of the repairs and maintenance process.

c) Risk Considerations

Poor performance in this area of work indicates a failure of the landlord to meet its statutory duty and obligations under the tenancy agreement

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

Positive Impact Overall

Affordable Homes.

Safe Environment.

Green Environment.

Excellent Customer Service.

Providing more service at same cost.

e) Date for Review of Decision

A quarterly report on repairs performance will be submitted.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Maintaining, improving and adapting tenants' homes is one of our core housing management activities. As a consequence we monitor this aspect of our work, and our contractors' performance regularly and carefully.
- 1.2 We have targets for repairs and assess tenant satisfaction in relation to the works undertaken. We operate a Repairs Call Centre and have in place a partnering agreement with our main contractors in order to deliver an efficient and effective repairs service.
- 1.3 Our repairs budgets are set annually as part of the Housing Revenue Account and in 2008/2009 we allowed £1,061,060 for what we call responsive or day to day repairs. In addition, we made provision for £209,000 for repairs and improvements undertaken on a change of tenancy, included in our Major Repairs Account.
- 1.4 The HRA for 2008/09 also contained provision for gas servicing (£290,000), repairs to communal areas (£15,400); servicing appliances (£36,900); lift maintenance (£27,700); external painting (£525,000); interior decoration (£11,000).
- 1.5 We made a provision for improvements (£646,620) which includes fencing; wiring, disabled adaptations etc. There is a detailed budget outturn report elsewhere on this agenda.
- 1.6 The Major Repairs Account (£2,692,000) pays for new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, roofs etc. This budget includes change of tenancy expenditure. Other expenditure (£202,170) pays for work to roads, sewerage maintenance, removal of rubbish etc.
- 1.7 The total budget available for repairs and improvements amounts to £5.5 million in 2008/2009. We also used funds from the Capital Plan to pay for disabled adaptations.

2. Urgent Repairs

- 2.1 The Board may recall from earlier reports that we have three categories of urgent repairs. Immediate – to be carried out in 1 day; Emergency – to be carried out within 3 days; Urgent – to be carried out within 7 days. This year we have a target of completing 96% of urgent repairs within these timescales.
- 2.2 Urgent repairs are categorised when they are reported to the Housing and Social Inclusion Service. The table below gives examples of how certain repairs are categorised.

Immediate (1 day)	Burst pipes, gas leaks, blocked drains with serious leaks of sewerage, faulty power supply.
Emergency (3 days)	Loose missing roof tiles, less serious blocked drains, loose electrical switches/sockets.
Urgent (7 days)	Reglazing communal areas, blocked or broken gutters and down pipes, W.C. pan/seat needs refixing.

- 2.3 We typically carry out 9,000+ urgent repairs each year. The bar graphs in **Annex 1** show our performance in 2008/2009 (April 2008 - March 2009). The bar graphs show the percentage of orders completed against the target line of 96%. I am pleased to report that our two main building contractors achieved the higher target we set for the year.



- 2.4 Again the performance of one of our electrical contractors had a significant effect on overall performance. Our concerns about performance have been highlighted to our partners during regular contract monitoring meetings.
- 2.5 Priority jobs should be carried out within 3 weeks of being reported and include things like re-fitting a chimney pot or repairing doors. Non-urgent jobs should be carried out within 3-6 weeks of being reported and include items such as re-plastering walls or replacing a ceiling.
- 2.6 We monitor tenant satisfaction with repair work. The graphs show the response for each of our contractors to during the previous year. The replies exclude immediate, emergency and change of tenancy jobs, so include all urgent, priority and non-urgent repairs to tenant's homes. Satisfaction with the standard of work remains high at 98% of respondents assessing this as reasonable.
- 2.7 The 2008/09 STATUS Survey revealed that 84% of respondents were satisfied with the way in which their landlord deals with repairs and maintenance, whilst only 9% were dissatisfied. 70% of tenants had requested at least one repair in the past year, all indicated that the repair had been completed. Respondents were asked to rate their last repair "good – poor", 83% rated "good" being told when the workers would call; 82% "good" for the time taken before work started; 89% "good" for the speed at which was completed; 90% "good" for the attitude of workers; 84% "good" for overall quality of repair work; and 88% "good" for keeping dirt and mess to a minimum.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 We treat our responsibility for repairs and improvements to tenants' homes as a core element of our service. We strive to provide a good quality service through our own staff and partnerships with our contractors. We measure performance and report this information to the Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel and regular liaison meetings with our contractors.
- 3.2 There is room for improvement in our contractors' performance and our Housing Services Manager will be improving our contract management arrangements with the aim of providing a better service for tenants. The Audit Commission saw our repairs service as strength, but did usefully highlight some areas for attention.
- 3.3 The Audit Commission also recommended that we adopt "clear policies and practices in rechargeable repairs", which we did at your November 2007 meeting. The other recommendation in relation to repairs is for us to "explore with tenants the costs and benefits of the introduction of an appointments system for responsive repairs, taking account of its impact in other Council's". The Housing Services Manager is researching the alternatives to our current approach, and will involve the Service Review Group and report back to the Housing Review Board.
- 3.4 Monitoring performance on repairs is a key activity for the Housing Review Board and I will continue to submit quarterly reports on repairs performance.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications set out within the report requiring comment.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

Consultation on Reports to the Executive

The Tenant and Leaseholder Customer Panel receive regular reports on repairs performance and members received reports on performance indicator L50.

Background Papers

- Monthly Performance monitoring reports.

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Housing Review Board
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