

Mapping exercise for Community Select Committee – Housing Voids Scrutiny Review Updated for 9 January 2023 Community Select Committee meeting

Issue	Who identified to address this/provide data and interview? (whether they are internal SBC or external partner)	What evidence/data can they provide?	Link to meeting interview/ evidence received date:	Meeting scheduled for date & how the information will be gathered:	Action & date required If complete sign off in table:
Provide an officer presentation to CSC on the challenges around void properties	Housing Investment and Direct Service officers	A PowerPoint presentation that outlines the challenges for the service	Community Select Committee - 5 September 2022 05.09.2022 - Voids Presentation for CSC September 2022	5 September 2022	✓
Interview with Exec Portfolio Holder for Housing Investment	Executive Portfolio Holder for Housing Investment, Cllr Jeannette Thomas.	Face to face conversation with CSC Members to discuss Portfolio's priorities and views.	Final CSC Minutes - 2.11.22.doc	2 November 2022	✓
Speak to tenants about their experience of the lettings process.	Tracy Jackson, Operations Manager – Providing Homes to advise.	Some anecdotal evidence. Could be supported by current new tenancy surveys		Possibly undertake this work outside a formal meeting setting.	Possible Recommendation from CSC. Request Lettings do a short survey when completing a letting. Monitor complaints.
Arrange site visits	The Scrutiny Officer has asked officers for possible dates in October to		Agenda for Community Select Committee on	Site visits arranged for CSC members who can attend a daytime site visit. 13	Tracy Jackson arranged site visits ✓

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	undertake some site visits to properties at various stages in the Void/let process. Tracy Jackson Operations Manager – Providing Homes to advice by the end of September.		Wednesday, 2 November 2022, 6.00pm (stevenage.gov.uk) (see item 4)	10 22	
Sign off a scoping document	Scrutiny Officer submit draft scoping document to CSC 11 Oct 2022	Draft scoping document.	Agenda for Community Select Committee on Tuesday, 11 October 2022, 6.00pm (stevenage.gov.uk)	11 October 2022	✓
CSC consider the mapping exercise document	Scrutiny Officer write up and maintain the document	Mapping document	Agenda for Community Select Committee on Tuesday, 11 October 2022, 6.00pm (stevenage.gov.uk) Agenda for Community Select Committee on	11 October 2022 & 2 November 2022	Ongoing

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			Wednesday, 2 November 2022, 6.00pm (stevenage.gov.uk)		
Meetings with Cllr John Duncan as critical friend to the review	Cllr John Duncan meet with Rob Gregory, Steve Dupoy, Dean Stevens, Tracy Jackson on ad hoc basis.			A meeting took place on 30 August 2022. Cllr Duncan has said he is willing to meet again to provide further professional advice if called up by officers.	✓
Identify circumstances why prospective tenants do not take up properties when they are offered it?	Tracy Jackson Operations Manager – Providing Homes. Members raised this as a question during the officer presentation, as it seemed at odds with the dire need for social housing and the competitive cost of social rents		Final CSC Minutes - 2.11.22.doc	Tracy Jackson to update the Committee 2 November 2022.	✓

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	compared to the private sector.				
Specific measures identified in the scoping document – Identify ways to reduce the time to carry out works in the property before it is relet	Dean Stevens Maintenance Manager, SDS	Work to be undertaken outside of the formal committee meetings and then a verbal update from officers /draft written options to Committee when available.		Update from Tracy Jackson, 9 January 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Asset Management Strategy to seek to maintain the condition of existing stock before it becomes Void • <u>Repairs Service review</u> to help optimise the Repairs Service. • <u>Assessment of Voids Teams capability to turn around current number of Void properties and explore the options of working with external contractors</u> • Targeting more funding through the HRA Business Plan towards <u>cyclical/planned preventative maintenance works</u> • More HRA funding to <u>increase tenancy audits</u> including pre-void contact as soon as notice is received to identify alterations carried out by the existing tenant, damage to the property and the level of clearance required • <u>Lettable standard review to focus on an agreed new standard</u> – post works inspections and Lettings packs signed by project officers to drive up standards and avoid properties not being ready to let. • <u>Improved reporting on Voids path to track works</u>, identify issues & drive up performance

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Specific measures identified in the scoping document – Re-engineer the letting process	Tracy Jackson Operations Manager – Providing Homes & Dean Stevens Maintenance Manager, SDS	Work to be undertaken outside of the formal committee meetings and then a verbal update from officers /draft written options to Committee when available.		Update from Tracy Jackson, 9 January 2023.	Voids review to identify opportunities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Pre-void inspections</u> by Resident & Estates Officer • <u>Streamlined end of tenancy process</u> – Keys returned to a ‘safe box’, improved online documentation for ending a tenancy following the death of tenant • <u>Empty Homes Co-ordinator recruited</u>. Start date 9.1.23. Will track progress and manage the progress of a property as it passes between teams • <u>Aids and Adaptations process being reviewed</u> to mitigate delays
Specific measures identified in the scoping document – Better define the thresholds for standard void and major void	Rob Gregory Operations Director & Steve Dupoy, Assistant Director, SDS.	Work to be undertaken outside of the formal committee meetings and then a verbal update from officers /draft written options to Committee when available.		Update from Tracy Jackson/Rob Gregory, 9 January 2023.	The review of Voids will establish a clear definition for Standard and Major Voids to ensure properties are correctly managed along the Void path and performance is effectively managed.
Specific measures identified in the scoping document – Review the	Tracy Jackson, Operations Manager – Providing Homes	Work to be undertaken outside of the formal committee		Update from Tracy Jackson, 9 January 2023.	<u>Lettable standard being updated:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voids Team & Contractor must meet Lettable Standard before signing off property as Ready to Let.

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lettable standard		meetings and then a verbal update from officers /draft written options to Committee when available.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettings packs to be signed by project officer following a post works inspection. • KPIs to be introduced to track performance e.g. number of properties returned that meet Lettable standard.
Specific measures identified in the scoping document – Benchmark with like for like “family group” or similar composition local authorities	Dean Stevens Maintenance Manager, SDS and Tracy Jackson Operations Manager – Providing Homes The Scrutiny Officer has approached Welwyn Hatfield Council to see if they would meet with officers to start a conversation about benchmarking.	Work to be undertaken outside of the formal committee meetings and then a verbal update from officers /draft written options to Committee when available.		Update from Tracy Jackson, 9 January 2023.	Meeting with officers from Welwyn Hatfield District Council on October 22 identified possible service improvements to link in with SBC's Transformation programme. Further conversations being explored with Dacorum, Hemel Hempstead & Harlow, as possible benchmarking partners.