

# Public Document Pack



## HOUSING MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

Date: Thursday, 14 March 2019

Time: 6.00pm,

Location: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Fungai Nyamukapa

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**Members:**                   **Councillors:** Philip Bibby (Chair), Sandra Barr, Lizzy Kelly, Lin Martin-Haugh and Sarah-Jane Potter

**Resident Members:** Fiona Plumridge (Vice-Chair) (Tenant), Christine Anderson (Tenant), Jon Thurlow (Leaseholder), Len Saunders (Tenant) and Lesley Storey (Tenant)

**Staff Members:** Jaine Cresser (Assistant Director – Housing and Investment) and Craig Miller (Assistant Director – Direct Services)

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### AGENDA

#### PART 1

Item no.	Subject	Lead	Mins allocated	Time
	<b>Refreshments</b>		15 Minutes	5:45pm to 6:00pm
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  To receive apologies for absence and declarations of interest	Chair	2 Minutes	6:00pm to 6:02pm
2.	<b>MINUTES – 21 February 2019</b>  To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) meeting held on 21 February 2019  Pages 3 – 8	Chair	3 Minutes	6:02pm to 6.05pm

<b>3.</b>	<b>HRA BUSINESS PLAN Q3 UPDATE</b>  To consider the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan update for Quarter Three  Pages 9 – 14	Katrina Shirley	20 Minutes	6.05pm to 6.25pm
<b>4.</b>	<b>GAS CONTRACT UPDATE</b>  To consider the Gas Contract performance update  Pages 15 – 22	Dennis Panter	20 Minutes	6.25pm to 6.45pm
<b>5.</b>	<b>REPAIRS AND VOIDS UPDATE</b>  To receive Repairs and Voids update	Craig Miller	10 Minutes	6.45pm to 6.55pm
<b>6.</b>	<b>HOUSING ALL UNDER ONE ROOF UPDATE</b>  To receive Housing All Under One Roof update  Pages 23 – 24	Jaine Cresser	10 Minutes	6.55pm to 7.05pm
<b>7.</b>	<b>UPDATE FROM EXECUTIVE MEETINGS</b>  To receive update from Executive meetings	Cllr J Thomas	5 Minutes	7.05pm to 7.10pm
<b>8.</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>  To consider any business accepted by the Chair as urgent	Chair	10 Minutes	7.10pm to 7.20pm
<b>9.</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>  To be confirmed	Chair		

**Agenda Published 06 March 2019**

## STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### HOUSING MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 21 February 2019

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Shimkent Room - Daneshill House, Danestrete

**Present:** **Councillors:** Philip Bibby CC (Chair), Sandra Barr, Lizzy Kelly, Lin Martin-Haugh and Sarah-Jane Potter

**Resident Members:** Len Saunders (Tenant), Lesley Storey (Tenant) and Jon Thurlow (Leaseholder)

**Staff Members:** Craig Miller (Assistant Director – Stevenage Direct Services)

**In Attendance:** Neil Baker (Community Development Manager), Di Dharmasuriya (Service Manager – Repairs), Greta Gardiner (Investment Project Co-ordinator), Chloe Norton (Corporate Performance & Improvement Officer) and Councillor Jeannette Thomas (Executive Portfolio Holder - Housing, Health and Older People)

**Start / End Time:** Start Time: 6.00pm  
End Time: 7.25pm

#### 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from J Cresser (Assistant Director- Housing and Investment), C Anderson (Tenant) and F Plumridge (Tenant).

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the Minutes of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) meetings held on 25 October 2018 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair
2. That the Minutes of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) meetings held on 20 November 2018 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair
3. That the Minutes of the Housing Management Advisory Board (HMAB) meetings held on 17 January 2019 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

**Update on Actions** – The Chair informed the HMAB that he had recently spent an hour shadowing the Housing Allocations team. It was a worthwhile experience. The Chair encouraged the Board to take up the offer to shadow Housing and Investment teams.

### 3 **MAJOR REFURBISHMENT CONTRACT**

The Investment Project Co-ordinator provided an update on the Major Refurbishment Contract (MRC). Members were informed that:

- The programme was on schedule and on budget
- Spend to date is low in view of the stage of the financial year
- Productivity levels have now increased to levels that support the total spend requirement for the year
- Following lessons learned from previous contracts the project team took a deliberate decision to mobilise slowly in order to ensure that the process was as effective as possible
- Processes and procedures were agreed and benchmarking had been done
- Works are in progress in Broadwater area blocks (Wates) and in Southend Close, Albert Street and Splash Drive (Mulalley)
- The standard of works completed to date is considered by SBC to be high
- Tenant satisfaction surveys based on 44 returns are currently running at 100%

The MRC programme had achieved a number of major deliverables including the following:

- Completion of all Year 1 surveys
- Resident consultation events held for all open blocks and nine further blocks due to commence in February 2019
- First set of section 20 (s20) Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 consultations complete
- Further s20 consultations ongoing at various addresses

The MRC programme had faced delays related UK Power Network (UKPN) work scheduling and suspected bat roosts on properties. The Investment Project Co-ordinator informed the HMAB that SBC work requests were not prioritised by UKPN. UKPN were expected to be on site towards the end of March. Members were informed that work was suspended following the discovery of suspected bat roosts in Albert Street. Scaffolding will be removed at a cost to the Council and will be re-erected in June/July after bat emergence surveys.

The Executive Portfolio Holder (Housing, Health and Older People) assured the HMAB that the MRC will not be affected by any changes in the MRC programme management team.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the update is noted
2. That the report on lessons learned on the MRC to date be shared with the HMAB

#### 4 **HOUSING SERVICE PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

The Corporate Performance and Improvement Officer presented the Housing Service Performance Report for Quarter 3. The report provided performance highlights for Compliance, Customer Service, Homelessness and Housing Support, Income/Spend and Repairs & Voids.

**Compliance** – The percentage of Council assets known to be Health and Safety compliant (statutory) and percentage of Council assets known to be Health and Safety compliant (as per SBC enhanced definition) were below target. A new contractor was engaged in January 2019. The new contractor has more robust IT processes and the upload of compliance certificates is expected to improve.

**Customer Service** – Feedback indicates that customer experience regarding the approach and outcome of internal works being carried out on housing properties is improving significantly. Percentage of complaints closed on target, percentage of MP and Members enquiries within 10 days and percentages of stage 2 & 3 complaints upheld fully or partially were below target. Housing and Investment will not achieve their targets by the end of the financial year as they would need exceptionally high volumes to compensate for poor performance in earlier quarters.

**Homeless and Housing Support** – The newly formed Housing Options and Supply Team have worked hard to deliver homelessness preventions in excess of the quarterly target. It is expected that there will be a noticeable increase in footfall in Quarter 4.

**Income/Spend** – Rent collection has been consistently increasing since April 2018. Although the measure for Aids & Adaptations completion is below target (red) year-to-date due to an issue with works not being recorded promptly, in Quarter 3 they completed 100% on time (53 of 53).

**Repairs and Voids** – Repairs are being fixed promptly and exceeding target. Voids General Needs Major Works, Voids Loss, Voids Sheltered Major Works and Voids Sheltered performed below target during the review period. Repairs and Voids team were reviewing key performance indicators with the aim of removing hard to let property performance figures from the overall performance report. This will provide a true representation of repairs and voids performance. The properties will still be tracked.

It was **RESOLVED** that the update is noted.

## COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS UPDATE

The HMAB considered the community development aspect of the Communities and Neighbourhoods Business Unit review and the outcomes. The Community Development Manager's presentation covered the following:

- Communities and Neighbourhoods vision
- Three new Service Groupings
- Proposed structure
- Delivering positive change
- New Community Development approach
- New way of working

The Community Development Manager informed the Board that the Council had an objective to deliver better outcomes and a smoother service for residents. The soon-to-be launched Community Engagement Framework will enable a council-wide approach to community engagement and involvement. Community Development has introduced new patch-based teams involving a Community Development Officer and Neighbourhood Warden per area. The Community Development Manager highlighted the new way of working across the town creating a more locality-focused team who could work in unison with other council teams to develop locally driven solutions to community needs. In addition to the current roles within the team, Community Development would introduce a fixed term Community Inclusion Officer who would develop a more integrated approach to social inclusion within Community Development.

Members sought clarification on plans to engage young people who would not normally participate in local decision making. The Community Development informed the members that restructure of the Youth Council had recently taken place, increasing membership from 8 to 18 young people from a wide variety of backgrounds. This transformation was continuing over the next year, with young people working hard to ensure the voice of young people was heard and actioned. The Community Development Manager acknowledged that the Youth Council had not always submitted questions for consideration at Council meetings, but that the transformation of the Youth Council would make this more likely moving forward. Questions were also raised around the support needed for older people and the need to ensure that this was a clear thematic area for Community Development Officers. The Community Development Manager informed the members that older people's needs were covered under diversity themes, but was open to making this more clear.

It was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the update is noted
2. That the Community Development Manager provides an update on arrangements for Older People in relation to Community Development Officer tasks
3. That the Community Development Manager updates the HMAB on revised

plans to engage young people including those not normally involved in local democracy

## 6 REPAIRS AND VOIDS UPDATE

The Assistant Director (Stevenage Direct Service) provided an update on the Repairs and Voids service. Members were informed that Stevenage Direct Service had taken on responsibility for the caretaking service. The Service Delivery Manager had scheduled a familiarisation visit with the caretaking team. The Assistant Director informed the HMAB that plans were in place to introduce an estate management offer. The offer will provide a single point of contact to signpost residents to relevant Council services.

Members welcomed plans to exclude hard-to-let properties from performance statistics. A Member highlighted the case of repair work going on for more than ten weeks at one three-bedroom property. The Service Delivery Manager informed the HMAB that repair turnaround times were dependent upon the state of the property and complexity of the repair request. On average it took seven to ten days to complete minor repairs on three-bed properties. The most complex cases were encountered in properties that had structural damage or required environment cleans or asbestos removal. The Assistant Director informed the Board that there was a mix of one bedroom and studio properties in the hard-to-let category. The Repairs and Voids team worked with Finance teams to appraise options for hard-to-let properties.

It was **RESOLVED** that the update is noted.

## 7 UPDATE FROM EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

The Executive Portfolio Holder (Housing, Health and Older People) informed the HMAB that the 2019/20 General Fund and Council Tax Setting, Capital Strategy 2018/19 – 2023/24 and Annual Treasury Management Strategy including Prudential Code Indicators 2019/20 were the main items on the February Executive meeting agenda. The Executive had recommended that the items be approved at the February Council meeting.

## 8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair reminded Members to start thinking about the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for the next Municipal Year. The positions of Chair and Vice-Chair are elected annually at the Away Day or the first meeting after Annual Council whichever comes first. The next Chair will be a tenant/leaseholder and the Vice-Chair will be a councillor.

The Chair sought clarification on the Council's position regarding review of tenancies. The Executive Portfolio Holder (Housing, Health and Older People) informed the HMAB that the Council was awaiting government guidance and will consider options after the guidance is published.

The leaseholder member reported that he recently attended a leaseholders meeting.

Some leaseholders had suggested that the Council should follow up on Survey of tenants and residents (STAR) responses if respondents waived anonymity and consented to being contacted. Members were informed that the MRC was a topical issue among leaseholders. Leaseholders sought more openness on the nature of work to be carried out on properties under the MRC programme and the related costs. It was acknowledged that trust is built over time through initiatives such as the scheduled MRC Residents' Consultation meetings.

It was **RESOLVED** that the update is noted.

9 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Thursday 14 March 2019, 6.00pm**, Shimkent Room, Daneshill House, Danestrete, SG1 1HN

**CHAIR**



## HMAB HRA BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE, QUARTER 3, 2018/19

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**Subject: HRA Business Plan Update**

**Date: 14 March 2019**

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**For Information**

**Author: Katrina Shirley**

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### **Action Required:**

To note progress in delivering activities associated with the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan during 2018/19.

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### **1. BACKGROUND:**

1.1 In November 2016, the Executive agreed a set of revised HRA Business Plan service proposals and financial assumptions that include a significant investment plan to support commitments relating to new build, existing housing assets and service improvements.

1.2 These commitments aimed to achieve the following outcomes:

<b>FTFC Priority</b>	<b>HRA BP Outcomes</b>
Housing Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New council homes, meeting the needs of local people on the Housing Register</li><li>• Total number of council homes remains stable over 30 years</li><li>• Increased income into the HRA</li></ul>
Investing in Homes to be Proud Of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tenants living in safe, well maintained, structurally sound, warm and dry homes</li><li>• Fit for purpose sheltered stock</li><li>• Increased tenant and leaseholder satisfaction with their homes</li><li>• Positive return on our HRA assets</li><li>• Value for Money achieved through contract procurement and effective programming</li></ul>
Excellent Council Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsive, accessible, well-managed services, with a 'right first time' approach</li><li>• Flexible support services that adapt to the changing needs and vulnerability of older people</li><li>• Improved processes and technological solutions that support service delivery</li><li>• Improved customer satisfaction</li><li>• Transparent service and support charges based on actual costs</li><li>• Lettings that achieve a balance between meeting local housing need and promoting sustainable communities</li></ul>

1.3 A report on business plan achievements in 2017/18 was presented to HMAB in July 2018. An update on further activities and investment in the year to date (2018/19) is given in Section 2 below.

## **2. UPDATE**

### **2.1 Housing Development**

2.1.1 The Council's Housing Development programme was established in 2014 and since then has facilitated the completion of 168 (affordable) homes to December 2018. Thirty-six homes have been delivered since the beginning of this financial year.

2.1.2 In Q3, two open market acquisitions were completed. One of these properties will be converted into seven units of temporary accommodation to enhance the supply of this property type and assist the Council to meet the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

2.1.3 The contractor for Burwell Court and Ditchmore Lane is on site and both developments are progressing well. Both schemes remain on track for delivery in Q3 2019/20.

2.1.4 Architectural and site preparation work is currently being completed for the three sites that will be developed during 2019/20:

- The North Road Scheme - 21 homes: in a blended modern and period style: Plans have been finalised and submitted to planning and are expected to be considered at the April Planning Committee.
- The Symonds Green Scheme - 29 homes: public consultation was carried out in December, and feedback was also sought via the Council's Facebook page. A planning application was submitted in February 2019.
- The Shephall Way Scheme - 9 homes. A planning application was submitted in February 2019.

2.1.5 Following consultation earlier in the year, the Kenilworth (236 homes) scheme was granted planning permission and work is now being carried out to identify the best route for delivery of the scheme. Included within this scheme is provision for new retail shops, a new community centre and an independent living scheme for older people.

### **2.2 Housing Investment**

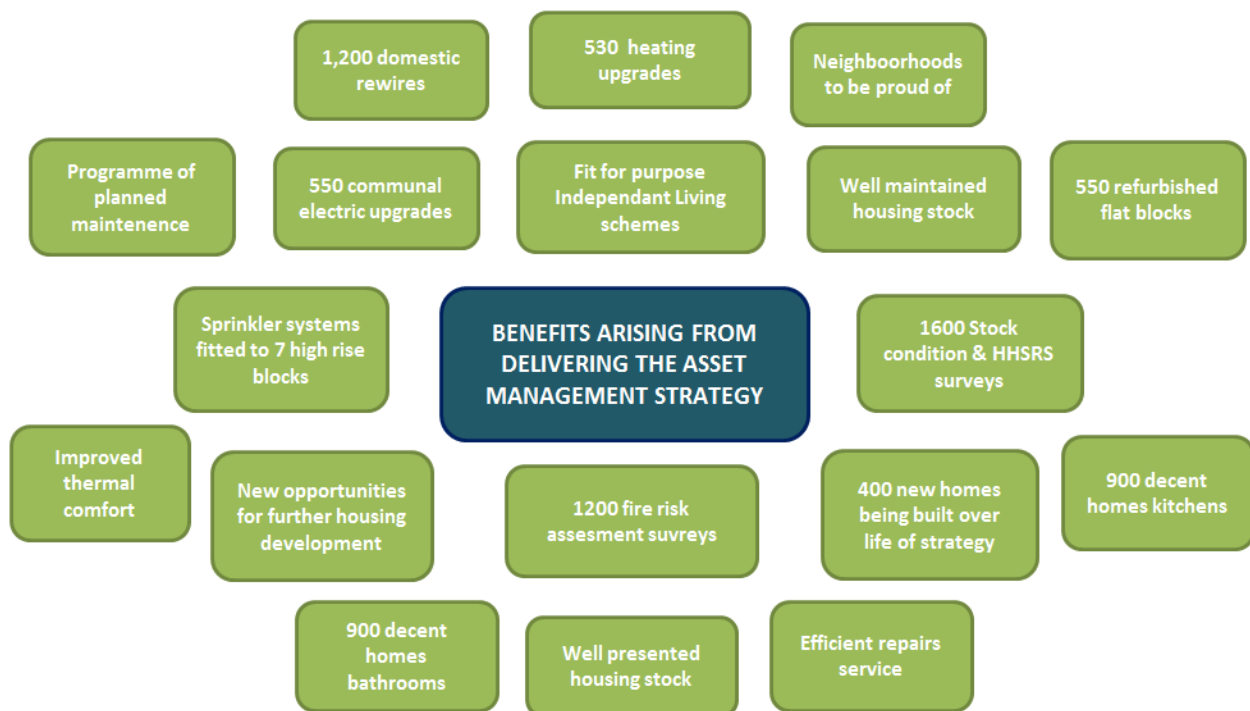
2.2.1 At the end of December 2018, 82.6% of council homes were decent, meeting the Quarter 3 target. Satisfaction with internal works was reported as 95.7% and satisfaction with external works was 89.7%.

2.2.2 HMAB received reports on the Major Repairs Contract (MRC) in November 2018 and February 2019 and key updates were as follows:

- The SBC Delivery Team had worked very closely with Mulalley and Wates over the first 6 months of the programme to develop processes and procedures to ensure robust management of the MRC programme. Pilot works went well and the quality of works from both contractors was to a high standard.
- Spend at February 2019 was £1.041m against the annual budget of £5.324m but it was anticipated that works and productivity levels would increase significantly.
- Works were in progress to blocks in the Broadwater area (Wates) including to two large sheltered schemes (Pitt Court and Gladstone Court) and in Southend Close, Albert Street and Splash Drive (Mulalley).
- In addition, to support the programme of works to ensure homes are ‘warm and dry’, Wates and Mulalley have been issued a batch of street properties which require any combination of window, door and insulation measures.

2.2.3 With regard to investment to the ‘amber’ sheltered schemes, works at Fred Millard Court are now complete and the Silkin Court project has been agreed following consultation and is currently out to tender.

2.2.4 On 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019, the Executive will be recommended to approve the Housing Asset Management Strategy (AMS) 2019-2024. The AMS sets out the underlying principles that sit behind excellent asset management for SBC, and the key strategic projects and programmes that will ensure the council derives maximum value from its assets, whilst providing high quality homes for its tenants. The AMS will allow us to meet our strategic goals of having fit for purpose, safe, well-maintained and well-presented stock, with a view to optimising housing development opportunities where appropriate. Below are some examples of the benefits to be seen over the lifetime of the strategy.



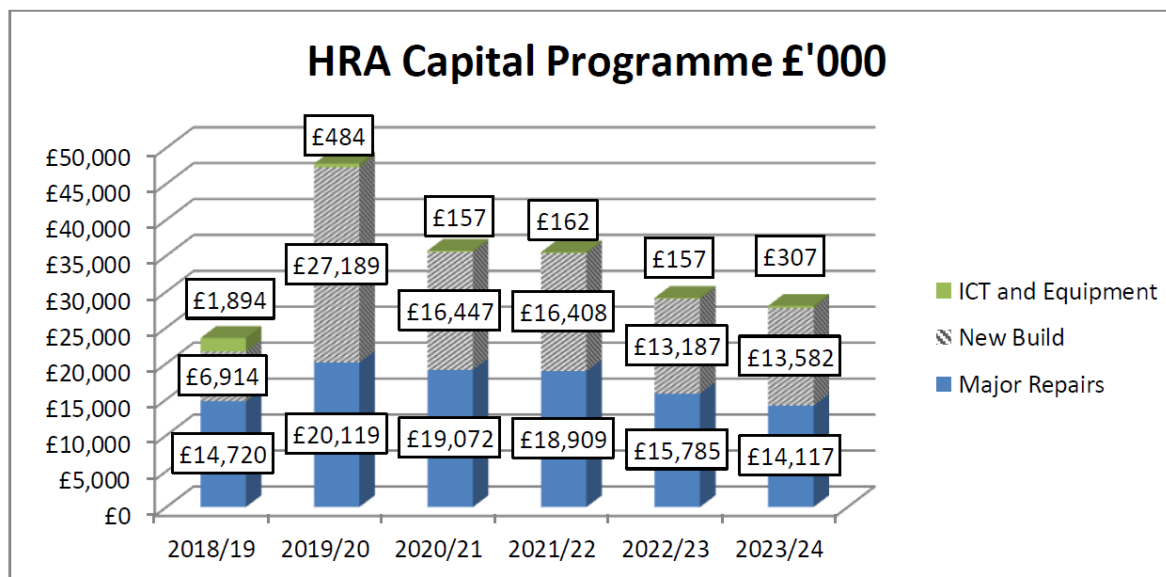
## **2.3 Housing Management and Maintenance Services**

- 2.3.1 In January 2017, Members agreed to invest £1.5m over three financial years to enable the delivery of the 'Housing All Under One Roof' (HAUOR) programme. HAUOR phase one began in July 2017 and finished in December 2018. In just under 18 months the team completed fifteen out of twenty three projects. The remaining eight projects (seven live) have been moved to continue in phase two.
- 2.3.2 The review of the 5<sup>th</sup> tier management structure for Housing and Investment began in November. The proposals include a new leaner and more efficient staffing structure. It is anticipated that the new structure will be in place from April 2019.
- 2.3.3 An external review on how the Council could further enhance the use of its current digital housing system has been completed. Plans will now be developed to implement the enhancement recommendations.
- 2.3.4 A range of new digital services are being implemented to help enhance service efficiency, these include:
- Electronic Document Management – this system now holds key customer, property and case management documents which will reduce the need for physical storage space and provide instant access to documents that will enable staff to better address customer enquiries at the first point of contact. Go live is planned in March 2019 following extensive staff training.
  - A new mobile digital application - this application is allowing housing support staff to spend more time out in the community as they now have access and update customer records on the go. Other service teams are appraising how the technology could help to enhance future service delivery.
  - Implementation of Northgate Task Manager – this has led to an increase in collection of court costs as the system automatically starts to collect such costs once an account is clear of arrears. The improved functionality is also now automating the production of key government returns.
- 2.3.5 The Welfare Reform Group continues to co-ordinate activity around Universal Credit (UC). The Tenancy and Income team has undertaken a study of UC to better understand the journey and claiming patterns of current UC recipients. Further customer surveys are planned to gain more insight into the experiences of claimants as the numbers increase to help inform future service delivery.
- 2.3.6 The 'Enhancing our Repairs Programme' was formally completed in 2017/18 and the Repairs and Voids service continues to implement an ongoing programme of improvements. Turn-around times for property repairs and voids remain a major area of focus for the Repairs and Void team. Officers have adopted a case management approach to ensure each case is effectively dealt with. This, coupled with efforts to review and improve processes, has improved performance and productivity: key performance measures relating to 'right first time', satisfaction, appointments made and

kept, routine repair times and standard general needs voids have all improved over the course of the year and are meeting or exceeding target.

### 3 HRA INVESTMENT STRATEGY & SAVINGS

3.1 The HRA capital programme was revised as part of the HRA Business Plan update to the November Executive. The 30 year HRA capital programme totalled £1,283Million. The capital programme (2018/19-2023/24) was subsequently approved in February and is summarised below.



3.2 The revised business plan was produced prior to the lifting of the debt cap and revenue receipts were utilised as opposed to borrowing, because the HRA had very little room to borrow with the government prescribed debt cap in place.

3.3 However, with the announcement in late 2018 to lift the debt cap, there is scope to convert revenue to borrowing and so increase the size of the capital programme, based on identified need and affordability. As part of the November Business Plan update Members approved an action plan in order to refocus the Business Plan to reflect the changes in borrowing rules. Officers will take the following actions and bring recommendations back to Members during 2019/20:

- Review new build schemes that could be brought forward/identified and the resources required to deliver them.
- Review the Asset Management Plan for new identified refurbishments versus redevelopment (under new build programme) and the resources required to deliver them.
- Review Management and Maintenance needs within the HRA to deliver new/different service options.

- Review the borrowing strategy to unlock funding provision for the HRA as outlined above. This will include use of borrowing versus revenue contributions to capital, length of borrowing and targets for interest rates for the HRA.
  - Review the priorities and recommend schemes for approval and a new borrowing strategy.
- 3.4 The HRA 2019/20 budget was approved by Council on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019. It incorporated a 2019/20 HRA savings/efficiency package of £354k along with HRA growth of £190k. Officers together with the Leaders Financial Security Group (LFSG) will be working towards achieving the as yet unidentified Financial Security target for 2020/21-2022/23, which totals £650K.

## Liberty Update

The current gas contract is now entering the final 6 months of a 48 month contract. The procurement of a new contractor is now well underway and is on time for an October the 1<sup>st</sup> start date. The contract has at times been quite unsteady and has given cause for concern. There have been times of numerous complaints about the service provided by Liberty. The reasons for this are numerous and include issues with staffing levels, bad management and a general lack of commitment.

Eight months ago we met with the Director of Liberty and asked that the then, current Contract Manger, be removed from contract and replaced. We then had an active part in the interviewing of the new Contracts Manager. Once the new Contract Manger was in place we then introduced a 45 point improvement plan. This plan had issues, objectives, milestones and completion dates. Weekly meetings were held between ourselves and Liberty to discuss and update the improvement plan, ensuring that it was on track. Initially these discussions took place weekly face to face with daily phone calls as and when necessary. Over time most of the improvement plan was met on time. Some of the improvements are as follows;

- Complaints responded to usually the same day. Historically un-responded to.
- Greater communication between our Admin team and Liberty Admin team.
- Since having a dedicated engineer for voids it has been running very smoothly. Good feedback all-round.
- Winter planning in place and running smoothly.
- Heaters held in stock.
- Tool box talks monthly with all engineers, SBC Gas Manager attend these.
- Weekly meetings with Dave Sandford to discuss and update improvement plan and any issues, plus daily phone calls.
- 45 plus point improvement plan in place with actions and deadlines.
- We are looking at cost savings such as alternatives to scaffold.
- Dedicated contact for damp surveyor.
- More training for all engineers such as Baxi training.
- Supervisor and lead engineer call me directly in an effort to sort out issues as they arise.
- More quality checks to be undertaken including checking the competency of all engineers monthly.
- New phone line provider has meant that there has been very little disruption to service unlike previously.
- New reports being received daily and other being set up in order to give us greater visibility of the contract.

- All engineers have new PDAs and are able to order parts while they are still at the address. These orders are processed by an embedded Parts Centre member of staff.
- Liberty's call back feature for the call centre is up and running.
- Service programme attached successfully condensed with the peak now into the summer period using the MOT style servicing programme through 2019, this enabled the release of engineering resource to support the peak demand in repairs through the autumn/winter periods. This is working well
- Through collaborative working with the SBC gas team actual LGSR compliancy has been and remains at 100% consistently
- Sub contract labour was engaged September to December inclusive to support the completion of the ASV programme through those months; thus facilitating release of direct labour to support the increase in repairs demand during that period – Any new contractor recruit are engaged following the strict Liberty Gas induction process including testing both gas theory and practical work pre-engagement, this includes a full e-learning programme where candidates have to pass a induction check/test on different 9 different elements including asbestos awareness
- Although so far we have experienced a relatively mild winter there has been a significant increase in the repair demand which commenced in October 2018 this has been satisfactorily managed, during December first time fix rate dropped to 78.83% (Typically running at around 87%) however the focus was applied to those properties with no heat and or no hot water and this rate was typically maintained at circa 6-7 daily (Includes new repairs from previous day), with all these properties reported into SBC daily and all typically had an appointment to repair
- At 21st December as we moved into the Christmas holiday period we had only 3 properties with no and or no hot water all 3 of these properties had an appointment to repair on or before Christmas Eve 24th December and were ultimately left fully operational through the actual Christmas break
- Van stock review completed and new high value stock levels are with the repair engineering work force this too will improve the FTF rate
- Stocks of temporary heaters remain available reviewed daily and restocked to suit with engineers having direct access via supervisor/lead engineer should their personal stock on vehicles become exhausted
- Resource in terms of gas qualified operatives/engineers currently available on the ground to support servicing, repairs and reactive installation is currently at 13 which exceeds optimum numbers and includes 11 gas qualified engineers



- Overall the Liberty Contact centre has continued to improve month-on-month and during the period from 24th December – 2nd January all lines including day time & OOH's all calls being answered with an average speed of 51 seconds
- Within the call centre system there is also a call back facility for residents when there is just a service enquiry or a request to re-date a service appointment for example (Non-urgent enquiries) where we commit to call the customer back to close their enquiry – This call back is dealt with locally and responded to by the Stevenage dedicated administration team who typically call the customer back within 2hrs

### Complaints

Complaints have continued to fall most months and many are not upheld or only partially upheld.

#### **Outcomes of complaints January**

Upheld	Not upheld	Partially upheld	Total
7	8	3	<b>18</b>

#### **Outcomes of complaints December**

Upheld	Not upheld	Partially upheld	Total
7	5	4	<b>16</b>

We are also receiving a number of compliments about the engineers.

The contract is now well managed and responsive to our needs and the needs of our customers.

### Winter Plan

#### **Resource Plan**

During the winter season in the gas heating service delivery industry we will usually see an increase in call volumes to our contact centre as a result heating breakdowns in properties. This typically will occur through October to March; as a business Liberty has experienced many winter seasons and have an ongoing analysis of the results; learning lessons with a view to continuous improvement to facilitate consistency in our service delivery through the winter period. There will be three dedicated, including the Team Leader, administrators in support of the contract; also Liberty have a dedicated standalone contact centre based in Knowsley to support and ensure the calls from residents and the client are answered quickly and efficiently. All of these staff members have been involved in working with the SBC team through the summer period to date. They are all contract specifically trained; enabling them to deliver a service to an excellent standard as they are contractually

obliged to provide and of course at least achieve the expectations of our client/residents. With the anticipated increased demand in winter calls; Liberty's extended contact centre staff are also trained with a view to manage all. The Knowsley contact centre includes the out of hours team which of course is available 24hrs 7 days per week 365 days a year. There are currently 10x gas engineers, 1x plumber/wet worker and 1x electrician dedicated on contract. Liberty have also actively started to compress the servicing programme back into the summer period (This commenced over summer 2018) resulting in a reduction in volumes of annual servicing required through November-February releasing resource availability to support emergency breakdown & repairs on site.

On a daily basis Liberty will monitor weather reports to enable them to prepare for any adverse weather conditions effectively. The winter plan is to cope with all aspects of the season; Liberty Gas remain confident both the residents and clients will see consistency as we strive to achieve the excellent service we provide. All staff will be prepared for the winter season to ensure when required they can be available to work evenings/weekends in an effort to maintain consistency with our service delivery.

### **Emergency Contacts & Escalation**

John Fisher – Supervisor – In the field overseeing all aspects of the contract – 07469 150343

Dave Sandford - Contract Manager - Manages all aspects of the contract – 07880 034725

Ian Craig – Operations Director – 07780 034714

### **Temporary Heaters**

There will be 50 boxed oil heaters held at the local store; there will also be a stock of 100 heaters at the local store/SBC offices for re-stocking in the field when required. Heaters will also be on the Manager & Supervisor vehicles in support.

### **Customer Care**

Due to the increase of breakdowns we are likely to experience an increase in complaints/queries for compensation. Liberty's Enfield administration team in conjunction with Liberty Gas Supervisor are now consolidated and prepared for the upturn in resident contact. Liberty Gas now produce a daily "no heat & no hot water" report looking at yesterday's events and prioritising those properties for attention. As such Liberty Gas will endeavour to attend all properties with no heating & hot water the next day with a view to achieving full customer satisfaction with this major occurrence.

Liberty Gas has provided SBC with a link to the Liberty Group web site with a view to SBC applying to their own site. This link will take our customers direct to the “winter boiler problems” page; within that is suggestions to “soft fixes” that can be safely applied by the customer and may fix a problem quickly thus avoiding the customer have to wait for an engineer visit – Link detailed below

<http://www.liberty-group.co.uk/reporting-winter-boiler-problems>

Should there be a catastrophic failure in the Enfield office and with systems; there is a fall back contingency and administration support will be diverted to an alternative centre or where required/appropriate incoming calls will divert through to mobile phones placed in the office.

Contractors to provide provision to supply hot water and central heating to residents

There is no provision to supply temporary means of hot water, only to get residents systems working as soon as possible with efficient use of van stock. In the event a part is not immediately available from van stock then the repair engineer will be briefed with a view to making an appointment to return within 48hrs directly with the resident whilst the engineer is on site. Should this event occur during an Out of Hours visit the parts will be ordered the following morning, resident contacted by phone, an appointment made, and an engineer to return within the time frame referred to above. All engineers are briefed with a view to immediately escalating to a supervisor/manager; in any event when a boiler is turned off/disconnected for any reason. This process is applied at all times of the year, the supervisor/manager oversee the progress of the repair to ensure the property have services reinstated quickly & efficiently. In the event of any delay, the resident & client will be immediately informed and both supplied with an anticipated target completion date.

### **Training Requirements**

The Office Manager, Contract Manager and all relevant administrators are fully conversant with Liberty Evo operating system, the dedicated administrators have a working overview of individual administrator roles, as well as their specific day-to-day role as such; can lend support if required. In addition non-contract responsible administrators also have a working overview and will be used as contingency in the event additional administration support maybe required. The entire engineering group have the continued benefit of regular tool-box-talk sessions including briefings relating to operational contract specific requirements; this includes technical on site coaching where it is deemed appropriate.

### **Adverse Weather**

Through continuous monitoring and in the event that adverse weather reports are declared Liberty will endeavour to make reactive and appropriate adjustments with a

view to maintaining acceptable service delivery levels. We will be apprised of any anticipated negative impacts to the service delivery. During adverse weather events Liberty will prioritise breakdowns in terms of resident vulnerability; this may result in the delay of non-essential works; affected residents will be supplied with a non-urgent target completion date. It is not the intention of Liberty to cancel any planned maintenance work but in the event this becomes necessary it will be to ensure the any breakdowns are prioritised with a view to achieving minimal disruption to service delivery during these periods. In an event regular maintenance work is to be postponed the resident will be contacted and alternative appointments confirmed. All vehicles will be furnished with the winter packs to include de-icer, locked-icer, night before de-icer, screen wash, squeegee & sponge scraper, demister. In anticipation of extended periods of snow and ice road conditions it is proposed that a number of "snow socks" for vehicles will be available at local offices (Enfield) to be issued for use on vehicle as selectively required (grip is achieved through friction, coupled with specially developed high tech textiles. Snow socks are quick and easy to fit and remove - no special training is required). In really extreme periods of extended adverse weather the Liberty business has access to a suppliers nationally who will hold and make available 4x4 vehicles to Liberty, these vehicles can be requisitioned on demand by the business and will underpin the ability for Liberty to maintain a urgent emergency service during these extended periods of inaccessible areas due to restrictions caused by adverse ice & snow conditions.

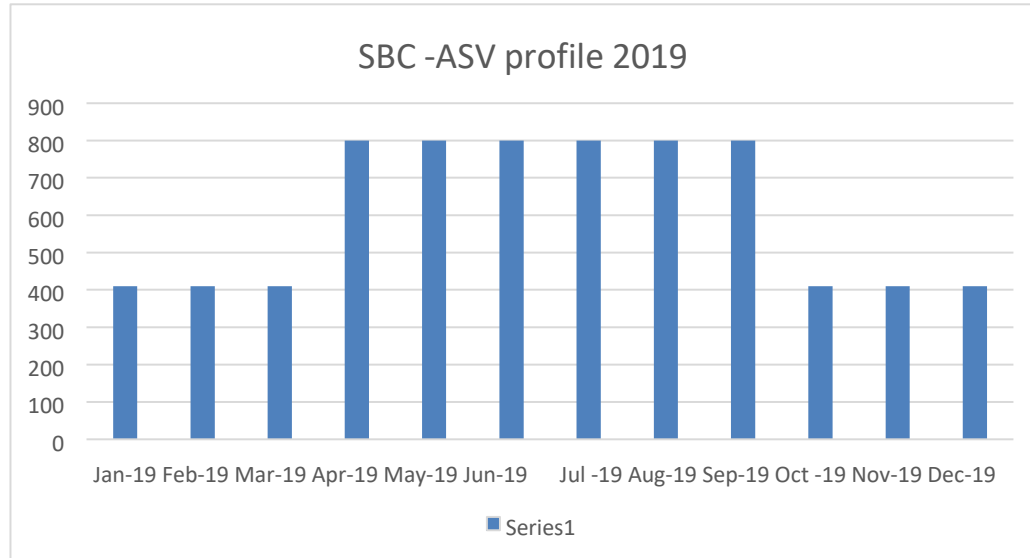
### **Parts & Boiler Supplies**

Liberty's parts suppliers will increase stock levels in their outlet to reflect the increased volume of potential work during the winter season. The Liberty Gas parts usage is carefully reviewed as an ongoing process throughout the year to ensure we have sufficient and correct levels for the stock that are maintained. The suppliers will increase the ordering time lines available to Liberty; thus ensuring there is minimal delay for the delivery of spares to engineers, this should keep disruption to residents at a minimum. Liberty Gas will have available at the head office location a significant/appropriate level of spare parts stock, this can be drawn upon in the event of planned closure during the festive period for example; or in the event our supplier has an unplanned closure due to adverse weather.

This with a view to maintaining an acceptable service delivery ensuring wherever possible any resident is not compromised through waiting for parts, thus maintaining services relating to heating and hot water supply.

One combination boiler & one system boiler will also be held at the Liberty Gas office. The Contract Manager & Supervisor have access to the Liberty Gas office if engineers require parts.

Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct -19	No v -19	Dec-19
410	410	410	800	800	800	800	800	800	410	410	410



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### Housing All Under One Roof (HAUOR) Update

#### Housing Management Advisory Board - 14 March 2019

##### **Phase 1 on the HAUOR programme**

- Tier 4 restructure completed
- Tier 5 restructure due for completion by end of March
- Business vision agreed
- Staff cohesion continues through newsletters annual away days and quarterly sessions
- Health checks on Northgate completed
- Housing Advice, Key details and task manager modules implemented
- Housing Options and Housing supply team in place
- Mobile working for supported housing in place

##### **Phase 2 projects are agreed – Jan 19 – March 20**

17 projects are identified at the moment.

Summary of phase 2 projects:

##### **Live:**

Transformation of Housing Advice Services, Staff Cohesion, Electronic Document Management System, 5th Tier Management Restructure, Northgate Customer Service Module, Improved DTI Letters, Website phase 2\*, System Admin Team Review \*

##### **Summary of phase 2 projects:**

##### **Live:**

Transformation of Housing Advice Services, Staff Cohesion, Electronic Document Management System, 5th Tier Management Restructure, Northgate Customer Service Module, Improved DTI Letters, Website phase 2\*, System Admin Team Review \*

##### **Summary of phase 2 projects:**

##### **Live:**

Transformation of Housing Advice Services, Staff Cohesion, Electronic Document Management System, 5th Tier Management Restructure, Northgate Customer Service Module, Improved DTI Letters, Website phase 2\*, System Admin Team Review \*

## Agenda Item 6

- Transformation of housing advice including HCLiC returns to Government
- Electronic document management system goes live in March
- Northgate self-serve for customers
- Improved DTI letters
- Website Phase 2
- Systems Admin team review
- Start of tier 6 restructure including area focussed approach to delivering services to customers linked into CNM and SDS.
- Continued maximisation of the task manager functionality
- Review of the Homeless reduction act 1 year on
- Housing Older persons strategy
- Delivery of the Major Refurbishment Contract
- Contribution to the corporate post project
- Implementation of the Customer service module
- Northgate/Keystone interface
- Re write of the property purchase module
- Service charge review
- Estate management offer in conjunction with colleagues in SDS and CNM

Presentations to all staff on 20 March (4 sessions during the day that HMAB members are welcome to come along to) where we will be updating staff on the progress of the transformation project.

We will also be able to update staff on the outcome of the tier 5 management structure.