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COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday, 28 November 2024

Time: 6.00pm,

Location: Council Chamber - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Alex Marsh (01438) 242587

committees@stevenage.gov.uk

Members: Councillors: S Mead (Chair), J Ashley-Wren (Vice-Chair), S Booth, L Brady, K Choudhury, A Elekolusi, A Gordon, L Guy, M Humberstone and J Woods

AGENDA

PART 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES - 4 NOVEMBER 2024

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Community Select Committee held on 4 November 2024.

3 – 10

3. HOUSING DAMP & MOULD UPDATE

To receive an update on damp and mould cases in the Council's housing stock. The Chair has asked for an update from Officers regarding current case load and has asked CSC Members to bring evidence from their wards regarding damp and mould.

11 – 20

4. HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT

To receive an update on the Council's Housing Asset Management programme from Housing Investment Team.

21 – 34

5. HOUSING ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

To receive a policy development discussion item on new Tenant and Leaseholder Antisocial Behaviour Policy.

35 – 44

6. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

To consider any Part I business accepted by the Chair as urgent

7. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To consider the following motions:

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

8. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Monday, 4 November 2024

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Council Chamber - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Present: Councillors: Sarah Mead (Chair), Stephen Booth, Leanne Brady, Alistair Gordon, Lynda Guy, Mason Humberstone and Jade Woods

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 7.30pm

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

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Kamal Choudhury and Akin Elekolusi.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 9 SEPTEMBER 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Select Committee held on 9 September 2024 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **PERFORMANCE OF THE NEW LEISURE CONTRACT**

The Chair welcomed the guest speakers to the meeting. Cllr Lorraine Rossati (Portfolio Holder - Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing), Ryan Ansell (Health and Sport Strategy Manager), Geoff Caine (Culture, Wellbeing and Leisure Services Manager), Alan Prescott (Everyone Active – Contract Manager) and Chris Williams (Everyone Active – Area Contract Manager).

The Portfolio Holder (Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing) introduced the discussion, expressing their appreciation for the progress achieved in the first year of Everyone Active's contract. The Committee heard that the contractor had exceeded initial expectations, particularly in terms of performance, adaptability, and collaborative spirit, which aligned with the Council's vision for a dynamic and transformative leisure partner.

The Portfolio Holder (Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing) highlighted Everyone Active's expanded influence as a national entity managing various facilities in the region, including theatres such as Gordon Craig. This broader network enhanced their sustainability and booking capacity, bringing high-profile acts to the area. They

praised the inclusive atmosphere of the Everyone Active gym, where people of all backgrounds and abilities felt welcomed.

The Portfolio Holder (Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing) acknowledged the considerable investments made by Everyone Active and the Council in upgrading local leisure facilities. They concluded by reinforcing the Council's commitment to supporting leisure and wellbeing, emphasising the importance of promoting both physical and mental health in the community.

The Culture, Wellbeing, and Leisure Services Manager presented a comprehensive overview of the transformation in leisure services since the transition to the Everyone Active contract. The Committee heard of the origins of the prior leisure contract, which was established to address Council spending thresholds but offered limited contractual rigor and flexibility.

The Committee were advised that the renewal process for the contract involved extensive public consultations, a sports summit, and an in-depth appraisal to define the desired standards and expectations. The Council also instituted a Programme Board to oversee this process, which evaluated bids based on a balanced scorecard of finance, quality, and social value. This new focus on social value allowed the Council to assess the economic and community benefits provided by bidders, an aspect that was independently verified.

The Culture, Wellbeing, and Leisure Services Manager confirmed that after a thorough two-stage procurement process, Everyone Active emerged as the top bidder, while the previous contractor, SLL, was unsuccessful, ultimately going into liquidation after losing multiple contracts. The Culture, Wellbeing, and Leisure Services Manager highlighted that Everyone Active's contract had significantly reduced Council expenditure, with savings driven by reductions in management fees and utilities costs. Furthermore, they praised the seamless transfer of services, including the addition of the Ridling's Athletic Stadium and the "Active Communities" initiative, which aimed to engage residents outside of traditional leisure centres.

The Portfolio Holder (Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing) added that Everyone Active's branding and marketing efforts had noticeably revitalised the facilities, attracting new members and creating an energetic and inclusive environment. The Culture, Wellbeing, and Leisure Services Manager concurred, noting a £1 million investment in facility upgrades, particularly in media displays, signage, and building repairs. They commended Everyone Active's proactive approach to managing staff and facilities, as well as their expertise in building and maintaining leisure infrastructure.

In closing, the Culture, Wellbeing, and Leisure Services Manager described the working relationship with Everyone Active as "a breath of fresh air," with shared goals, collaborative problem-solving, and active community sponsorship. However, The Portfolio Holder (Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing) reassured the committee that the Council maintained oversight and accountability measures, with issues being addressed promptly by Everyone Active.

At this juncture, the Chair invited Members to ask questions.

Members asked questions related to the booking system.

The Area Contract Manager, Everyone Active, clarified that bookings could be made up to five days in advance for non-members and up to 14 days for members, via phone, app, or online, with real-time availability visible on the app. The Culture, Wellbeing, and Leisure Services Manager added that high demand, especially for popular sessions like Aquacise, often exceeded capacity, and that a planned new leisure facility would increase capacity. He also advised the Committee that the booking system, despite occasional limitations, was an improvement over the former first-come-first-served approach.

The Chair invited Everyone Active to present to the Committee.

The Contract Manager (Everyone Active), provided a comprehensive presentation that highlighted the accomplishments and challenges encountered during the initial phase of their contract with Stevenage.

The Committee heard that the contract with Everyone Active began on 1st April 2023 and required extensive mobilisation which commenced just after the award of contract in January 2023. This period involved significant staff adjustments, including new uniforms, revised HR processes, and re-certifications.

The transition included the implementation of new booking and purchasing systems, which, despite providing benefits, initially presented challenges for both staff and members. However, Everyone Active received robust support from staff across other sites, smoothing this complex transition.

Addressing staff development and recognition the Contract Manager (Everyone Active) underscored the value placed on Stevenage's local staff noting that talents had been recognised and deployed across broader roles within the company. The Committee heard of Everyone Active's commitment to recognising and nurturing talent had translated into broader opportunities and enhanced roles for Stevenage employees. Examples included, the theatre manager initially managing only the Gordon Craig Theatre, who now oversaw additional sites, while the former Stevenage site golf manager, was now working at multiple centres in a regional management capacity.

The Contract Manager (Everyone Active) advised the Committee of investment into various facilities has been substantial. This included:

- Trackman Technology (an interactive golf play system installed in the driving range) at The Golf & Conference Centre, enhancing visitor experience to include families, young people and boosting activity.
- Upgraded Fitness Studios and Gym Equipment: £45,000 invested in new kit for studios, alongside a £400,000 upgrade of gym facilities, restoring membership numbers to pre-Covid levels.
- Community Focus Initiatives: Programmes like the Health Action Day had engaged local groups and partners, promoting wellness through activities that reached beyond traditional fitness.
- Growth in Pickleball Popularity: This new sport had surged in interest,

creating a high demand for courts.

The Contract Manager (Everyone Active) informed the Committee of renovations in the café bar area of the Gordon Craig that had led to a revenue boost and an improved experience for visitors, and that the theatre team had expanded production capabilities, such as building sets, thereby creating a new revenue stream. The theatre's increased ticket sales also indicated a rise in community engagement.

Discussing challenges faced with ageing infrastructure, the Contract Manager (Everyone Active) informed the Committee that despite partial refurbishments, the age of buildings like the swimming centre and the theatre posed challenges. Essential maintenance of outdated equipment continued, with Everyone Active relying on the Council's support for boiler and lighting replacements. They emphasised that additional future investment was needed to maintain those ageing assets although the swimming centre had been refreshed with to the changing rooms/toilets and energy-efficient improvements, like pool covers and boiler upgrades. Swim school enrolment had increased, with over 1,500 children participating alongside regular school-based programs with up to 3,000 children attending per week.

The Committee heard that the Active Community Programme had exceeded expectations by successfully integrating health and wellness initiatives aimed at underserved populations. Collaborations with the Integrated Care Board and local GPs had further strengthened referrals and engagement with residents needing specialised fitness programmes.

The Committee were informed that Everyone Active now managed the Fairland's Valley Splash Park and Ridlings Athletics Stadium and had actively promoted community programs such as the NHS Rainbow Run. A dedicated community team focused on enhancing health and sports initiatives for residents, while partnerships with the council and other agencies had enabled the creation of targeted programs in areas like atrial fibrillation and blood pressure monitoring.

The Committee were advised that Everyone Active sponsored Stevenage's men's and women's football teams and valued community feedback through a robust system for complaints and compliments, with an average 17-hour response time. The organisation's priorities were fitness memberships, swim lessons, golf participation, and casual sports usage, with a core commitment to commercial growth, colleague development, community wellness, and environmental goals (carbon net zero).

The Contract Manager (Everyone Active) concluded their presentation by providing information regarding targeted health initiatives that focused on reducing obesity, mental health support, dementia, and healthy lifestyle promotion, Everyone Active had recently secured funding for a 300-space weight management programme, which integrated physical activity and GP referrals. Future ambitions included encouraging healthier children's programmes and fostering local partnerships through various community spaces and resources.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions.

Responding to questions related to improving communication with the public, Everyone Active acknowledged that their app was fitness-centric, not ideally tailored for local event listings. Everyone Active advised the Committee that they used a Facebook page for events in Stevenage. Members suggested that Everyone Active could increase visibility and accessibility of events by including a broader social media use beyond Facebook, targeting younger audiences through Tik-Tok and Instagram.

In response to a question regarding the provision of more detailed year-on-year participation data to monitor improvements and assess service impact, Everyone Active cited challenges in direct comparison due to different reporting methods from the previous operator but assured Members that they would provide year-end data to establish a baseline for future reporting.

Members also made comments related to:

- Gym Anxiety - particularly in weightlifting areas that can be dominated by male participants. A Member proposed women-only or introductory classes to make the gym more accessible to women interested in strength training. Everyone Active already offered small introductory sessions in different gym areas, but these were not exclusively women-only. There was agreement that a female-focused class could be beneficial, and the Portfolio Holder (Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing) suggested following up on this idea with Everyone Active.
- The Affordability of Swimming Lessons - concerns about the high cost of swim lessons, particularly for families with multiple children. Currently, Everyone Active did not have a discount system for families with multiple children enrolled. They did, however, offer alternatives such as crash courses and top-up swimming lessons through schools. Everyone Active noted that capacity issues in the swimming programme also limited the feasibility of such discounts.
- Health and Socio-Economic Barriers - linking the town's socio-economic factors to poor health outcomes, highlighting the importance of accessible exercise options, such as outdoor gyms. Whether the council could use existing benefit data to target support toward families who might struggle to afford facilities. The Portfolio Holder (Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing) discussed collaborative efforts with public health services and noted that Stevenage was securing funding for a new multi-use games facility in King George V Park, aimed to improve accessibility, especially in underserved areas. Everyone Active advised that they did conduct some low-cost community sessions, although they were limited in scale.
- Community and Seasonal Initiatives – The Culture, Wellbeing, and Leisure Services Manager mentioned the community allotment and mobile Healthy Hub as innovative health and social initiatives. They emphasised the dynamic development of community-focused projects and mentioned that outdoor activities would continue to evolve, depending on seasonal suitability.

- Venue Access for Local Theatre Groups – Members highlighted that while Stevenage benefited from a vibrant amateur theatre scene, groups like the Lytton Players faced prohibitive costs for using the Gordon Craig Theatre, which seated 500. Historically, there was a discounted rate for community groups, but this option was no longer available, making it difficult for groups to afford the space, especially when they typically played to smaller audiences. Everyone Active acknowledged the concern, indicating they could investigate options with the theatre’s manager, as the schedule was often full. Meanwhile, the Culture, Wellbeing, and Leisure Services Manager clarified that there were some free community lets under the theatre's contract, used by events like the Stevenage Festival, which included the Lytton Players. They also noted that the Gordon Craig Theatre’s large capacity made it challenging for groups like the Lytton Players to sell enough tickets to make their productions financially viable in such a large venue. As an alternative, the group had been offered Event Island for outdoor productions. The Chair voiced concerns about a lack of public knowledge about diabetes and pre-diabetes and appealed for Everyone Active to launch an initiative focussed on diabetes education and prevention to address the significant prevalence of diabetes in Stevenage. The Portfolio Holder (Culture, Leisure and Wellbeing) pointed out the importance of tailored communication for high-risk groups, including ethnic minorities and women. She suggested integrating these efforts with the ICB, local GPs, and community health initiatives to address Stevenage’s lower health outcomes.

At this juncture, the Chair highlighted the council’s achievements in health and well-being, congratulating the team for winning the “Best Health and Wellbeing Initiative” award. Special recognition was given to the Health & Sport Strategy Manager, who had grown from a Leisure Apprentice into a key figure in the Council’s health and well-being initiatives. The Chair praised Health & Sport Strategy Manager for his consistent commitment, presence, and positive impact on the community, noting that his efforts had been instrumental to the programme’s success.

4 URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

There was none.

At this juncture the Chair addressed a longstanding issue of damp and mould in Council properties, emphasising the council's commitment to the issue and outlining plans for intensified action.

The Chair highlighted that the Committee has prioritised addressing damp and mould concerns for over a decade, preceding recent national interest. The committee has historically held the council to account to improve services and successfully secured a significant investment for the department handling these issues. She expressed satisfaction with prior progress reports on the matter.

The Chair informed Members that a recent case brought to their attention suggested

potential ongoing issues, raising concerns that, if substantiated, would contradict the reported improvements. This had prompted the Chair to initiate an item for discussion at an upcoming committee meeting. The Chair encouraged members to investigate further cases of damp and mould within their wards to gather information that could support an impactful discussion at the next meeting.

The Chair emphasised the importance of members acting as advocates for residents, particularly when it came to uncovering any issues that may have been overlooked or concealed and stressed that the Committee's role was to represent the community and act as a crucial channel for residents' concerns.

The Chair expressed frustration about changes in personnel within the Council, noting that this could hinder continuity in addressing long-term issues. The Chair concluded by highlighting the importance of consistency and accountability in the council's response to damp and mould cases.

5 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Not required.

6 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

There was none.

CHAIR

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Damp and Mould Scrutiny Update

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Denise Lewis - Assistant Director Building Safety and
Housing Property Services

John Sheeran - Disrepair and Damp and Mould
Manager

Performance

- Current Performance Overview: Q2 2024/25

Month Work Order (WO) completed	July	Aug	Sept	Q2
WO completed within target	61	60	37	158
WO completed outside of target	31	7	4	42
Total completed WO	92	67	41	200
% completed within target	66.3%	89.6%	90.2%	79%

Performance

- Work Order Targets: We have established a target of 20 days for all building work order requests.
- Key Performance Indicator (KPI): For November, our work order KPI performance stands at 83.64%.
- Open Work Orders: Currently, we have 114 active work orders related to D&M.
- Average Cost: The average cost per job is approximately £1,735.
- Overdue Work Orders: Any overdue work orders are primarily linked to roofing issues or instances where access has not been granted.

Action Progress update

1. A review of the Council's damp & condensation policy.
2. Stock condition survey programme.
3. Adoption of a case management approach

Action Progress update con

4. Developing the IT system for case management
5. Planning further projects such as air quality monitors, use of technology and alternative wall finishes
6. Improving reporting and feedback mechanisms

Post Works Care

- 100% Pre inspections carried out by inhouse surveyors
- 100% Post inspections carried out by inhouse surveyors
- 3 & 6 month follow on inspections to make sure works have been effective.
- completion packs for each property with before and after pictures.

Improvement Plan Update - Resources

- Review of staffing resources completed May 2024
- Disrepair and Damp and Mould teams combined merged into a single team located within the Repairs service
- Recruitment in progress to make permanent appointments to new and agency filled roles
- Procurement of support contractors in progress

Improvement Plan Update - Working Together

- Raising repair work and conducting inspections.
- Collaboration with the Customer Contact Centre (CSC)
- Updates to tenant contact data.
- Striving for “right first time” communication with tenants.
- Sharing best practices within our knowledge management system and improving data sharing processes

Improvement Plan Update - Working Together

- **Collaboration with the Housing Asset Management team**

- Better coordination of major works programmes
- Improved understanding of works planned under the Decent Homes Programme and defect liability periods
- Establishing a mutually agreed process for addressing and managing D&M issues when they arise
- Review how kitchen refurbishments are managed to avoid issues with D & M arising

Any Questions?



Maintaining Good Quality Homes: A good quality tenancy, housing maintenance, repairs and homelessness service is provided to residents.

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT

Andrew Garside – Head of Housing Asset Management

Key Areas:

HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT

- Asset Management Strategy/Delivery, stock condition, programming and investment decisions
- Decent Homes Standard
- Decarbonisation and energy efficiency
- Capital Programme (£26m 2024/25)
- Future investment in the existing stock
- Voids (Client role)
- Asset Review and Options Appraisals
- Other areas including Aids & Adaptations etc.



Asset Management Strategy/Delivery, stock condition, programming and investment decisions

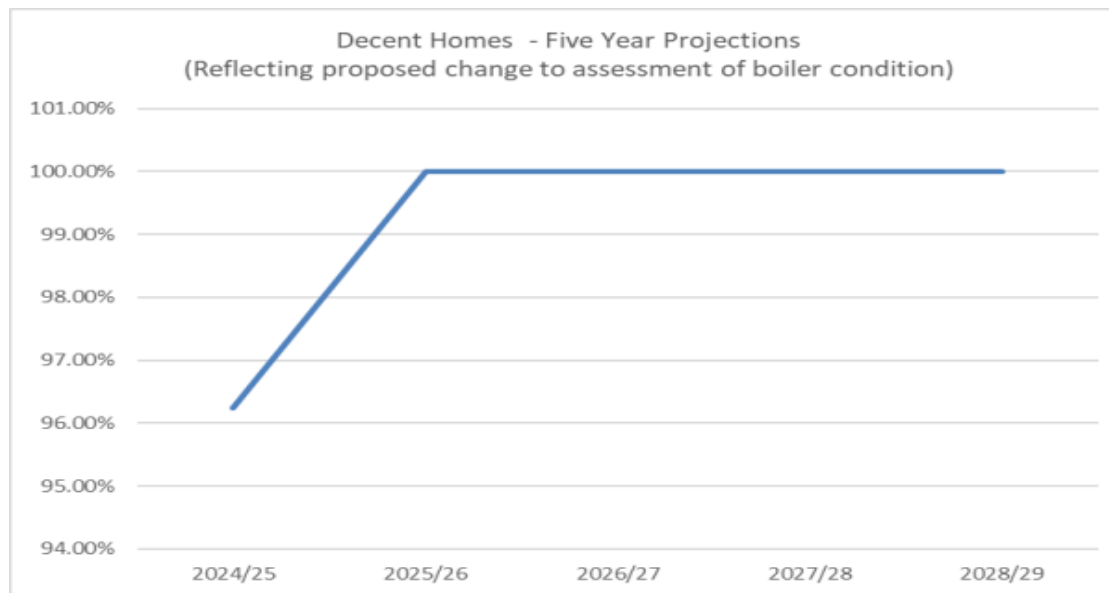
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- The Housing Asset Management Team develop all programmes using the stock intelligence gathered in consultation with and/or the involvement of other key internal and external stakeholders including:
 - Residents
 - Finance, Procurement and Legal
 - Housing Management
- Ongoing programme of stock condition surveys to inform the Asset Management Strategy & Business Plan.
- Stock data and intelligence supporting Investment decisions a key requirement of the Social Housing regulators new consumer standards

Surveys completed in the last 5 years	Surveys planned to July 2025 (all properties surveyed within the last 5 years)
3556	3899

Stock surveyed (excluding blocks)	Individual homes surveyed in the last 5 years	Flat Blocks surveyed in the last 5 years	Individual homes with partial survey updates in the last 5 years
94.78%	44.72%	100%	98%

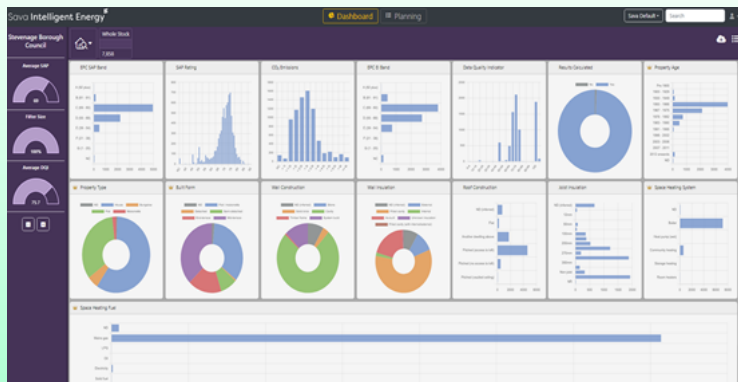
Decent Homes



- Decent Homes compliance is a key requirement of the Regulator for Social Housing Consumer Standard: Safety & Quality.
- Continued investment in the existing stock is key to meeting and maintaining compliance with the standard.
- Decent Homes 2 to be consulted on and any changes are likely to require additional investment and change our compliance levels.

Decarbonisation & Energy Efficiency

Current Position



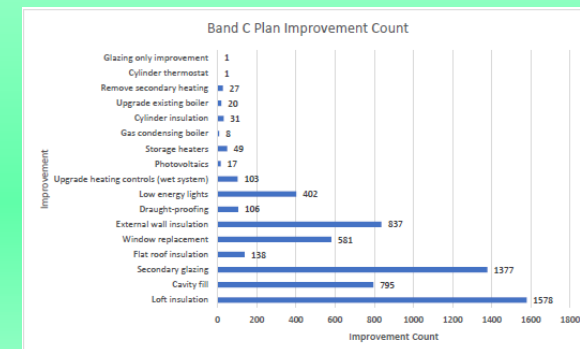
EPC SAP Band	Number of homes
B (81 -91)	112
C (69 -80)	4948
D (55 – 68)	2295
E (39-54)	490
F (21-38)	2
G (1-20)	1

As outlined in the table above, there are currently 2684 properties still requiring work to meet the minimum Band C target.

EPC C by 2030	Net Zero by 2050
PtZC report	PtZC report
£20,097,929	£168,895,978 (including off setting)

Next steps

- Secured over £5 million funding
- Submitting a Warm Homes (SHF) bid for 550 homes.
- SBC match funding will deliver



Capital Programme - Current

- MRC – Major Refurbishment Contract
- Decent Homes – Completion of previous contract and procurement of replacement contracts
- SHDF Wave 2 – Delivery of Energy Efficiency Measures to flat blocks & Street Properties.
- High Rise – Replacement Fire Doors (Flats & Communal)
- Fencing programme - Planned programme of over £1million this year.

Capital Programme - Planned

- Shortly awarding contracts to deliver the following works to support Decent Homes compliance.

Heating & Renewables Units			Window & Door Units			Kitchen & Bathroom Units		
	Budget	Properties		Budget	Properties		Budget	Properties
24/25	£1,300,000	581	24/25	£1,394,155	162	25/26	£1,900,000	422
25/26	£3,500,000	1,563	25/26	£2,000,000	233	26/27	£3,000,000	667
26/27	£3,500,000	1,563	26/27	£2,000,000	233	27/28	£3,000,000	667
27/28	£3,500,000	1,563	27/28	£2,500,000	291	28/29	£3,000,000	667
28/29	£3,500,000	1,563	28/29	£2,500,000	291	Total	£10,900,000	2,423
Total	£15,300,000	6,834	Total	£10,394,155	1,210			

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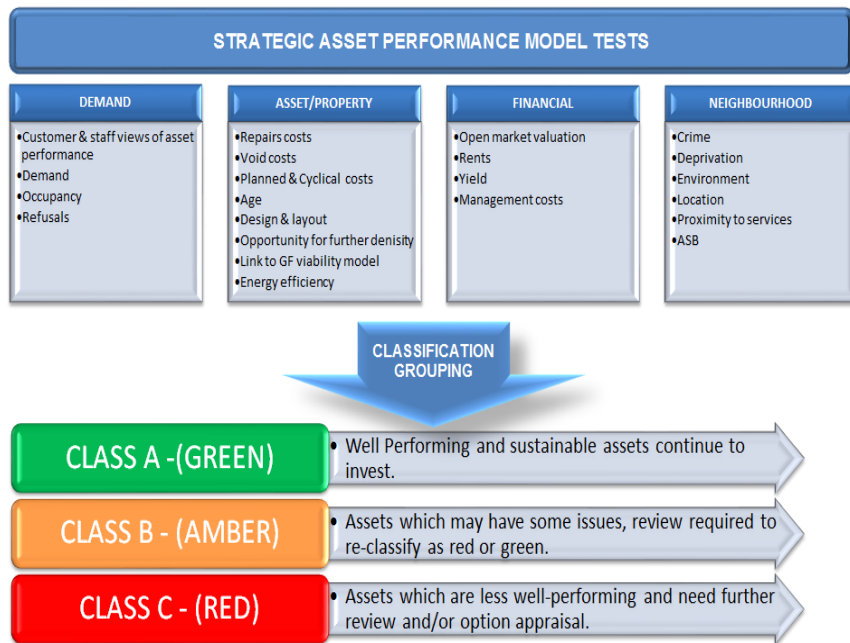
- High Rise Refurbishment Works – Consultation due to start in December on the high-level proposals works will include roofing, windows, heating, communal area decoration and re-modelling, Decent Homes etc..
- Decarbonisation - Subject to being successful next wave of improvement works including Air Source Heat Pumps
- Overall, the Investment in our existing stock over the next 5 years totals £110 million.

Voids (Client Role)

- Implementing recommendations of external/CSC review
 - New Lettable Standard and Voids Policy
 - Pre void inspections
 - Increased reporting and KPI's
 - Procurement of interim (short term) and (longer term) support contractors as we move to a hybrid delivery model as agreed by Cabinet in October 2024
 - Revised staffing structure
- All scoping of works and surveying to be carried out by Housing Asset Management including:
 - Stock Condition Survey including HHSRS, EPC
 - Decent Homes assessment and any future major works requirements
 - Viability assessment of any high-cost works
 - All works signed off by internal Surveyor

Asset Review & Investment Decisions

STRATEGIC ASSET PERFORMANCE MODEL



- Planned refresh of the Asset Review to highlight any poorly performing assets.
- Various measures included in the modelling such as income, demand, future investment costs etc.
- Classified into grouping with a further focus on those which are poorly performing.

Other Areas:

- Adaptations
- One off Major Works Projects
- Permissions and mutual exchanges
- Stevenage Works & Social Value
- Procurement
- Establishing Client role for Repairs and Maintenance

Challenges

- Increased costs for construction works
- Funding gap for Decarbonisation
- Increased regulation
- Potential changes to legislation including Decent Homes
- Asset viability and sustainability
- Access and refusals for works
- Void property performance



Priorities

- Revise and implement Policies and Procedures in-line with the new RSH Consumer Standards.
- Deliver the Voids Improvement Plan.
- Deliver the Decent Homes Programme to achieve 100% of housing stock meeting national standards.
- Compliance with the Consumer Standards
- Refresh of the Asset Review
- Housing IT and use of technology
- Stock Data and Intelligence
- Procurement to support delivery of Capital & Revenue programmes

Questions

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Tenant and Leaseholder ASB Policy Briefing Note – 15 November 2024 by Karen Long, Amanda Rogers and Jessica Warren

Introduction

The purpose of this briefing is to inform members on how ASB and Hate Crime is managed within the Housing Management Department, to highlight key areas of the draft Tenants and Leaseholders ASB policy (that was approved by the Executive Housing Working Group), to identify what roles and resources are available to assist with this process and to detail the main legislation that is used when enforcement procedures are necessary.

Legal and Regulatory responsibilities for the Council

The Regulator for Social Housing's Neighbourhood and Community Standard requires registered Housing Providers to have clear policies and procedures in relation to Anti-social behaviour and hate incidents. They need to detail how they work with relevant organisations to deter and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing. Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they deter and tackle hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing and enable ASB and hate incidents to be reported easily and keep tenants informed about the progress of their case.

Registered providers must provide prompt and appropriate action in response to ASB and hate incidents, having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available to them. They must support tenants who are affected by ASB and hate incidents, including by signposting them to agencies who can give them appropriate support and assistance.

Registered providers must work in partnership with appropriate local authority departments, the police and other relevant organisations to deter and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate incidents in the neighbourhoods where they provide social housing.

The Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Anti-Social behaviour Act 2003, Section 12) and the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 requires the local authority to publish a Statement of Policy and Procedures in relation to anti-social behaviour.

Section 12 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 expects all social landlords to publish an Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Statement.

As part of the Tenancy Agreement each tenant is issued with a set of tenancy conditions by which they must abide. Leaseholders are issued with a lease agreement. These conditions were updated in 2020.

Introductory Tenants have far less rights than Secure Tenants and if the council take possession proceedings for ASB, the possession action is mandatory and provided the council has followed the law and its own policies, the court does not have the power to do anything, other than grant possession of the property back to the council. The action taken by the council does however have to pass the test of proportionality and reasonableness in its actions.

What is ASB and Hate Crime?

SBC has adopted the definition from the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 to define ASB. The definition means:

(a) conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,

(b) conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or

(c) conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person

The definition of anti-social behaviour may take many forms and SBC take reports about noise, abusive behaviour, late night or frequent visitors, vandalism, graffiti, vehicle nuisance, nuisance pets, drugs, prostitution, alcohol abuse, illegal encampments, travellers fly-tipping and criminal behaviour very seriously.

Hate Crime is a criminal offence. It is defined as subjecting a person to harassment, victimisation, intimidation, or abuse because of their: race or ethnicity, disability (including mental illness and learning difficulties) religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identity, age.

Different levels of ASB

A (High level) Criminal behaviour and, employee crime violence incident referral, hate related incidents, domestic abuse, physical violence, verbal/harassment/intimidation/threats, cuckooing, county lines drug dealing.

B (Medium level) Vandalism and damage to property, illegal encampments, nuisance from vehicles, alcohol, or drug related

C (Low level) Bins on boundaries, Dog fouling, fly posting, fly tipping, garden nuisance, misuse of communal areas or loitering, noise,

The grouping reflects the urgency with which staff will respond and the types of remedies that are likely to be considered:

- Category A and will be responded to within one working day.
- Category B cases will be responded to within 2 working days and
- Category C cases will be responded to within 5 working days.

Current Service Delivery

- Resident Services and the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, in partnership with the Police, tackle ASB issues and cases relating to tenants and leaseholders.
- Low level ASB is managed by housing officers and specialist support officers, linking in with Police, and use the Shared Legal Services Team, with a specialist in Housing law and Barristers for complex cases involving ASB such as Boundary disputes.
- Medium to high level ASB cases are referred to the ASB Officers. They meet every month with the Police to discuss current cases and exchange relevant information. There are regular professionals' meetings for the ASB cases with Resident Services, Income, Police, Social Care, Community Mental Health, children's schools and families and any other agencies working with the family/person. This enables the team to complete a comprehensive joined up approach for tackling ASB.
- Joint visits are carried out with the police to tackle a wide range of areas. There is an agreed protocol in place for sharing information so cases can be managed effectively and reduces the risk of ASB and protects the community. This can include street meets to areas where there are reports of ASB but not enough evidence, this also helps us get a better understanding of who is impacted by the ASB being caused.

- MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement) meet monthly with Police, Health, Probation, housing, HCC and Mental Health. They look at high risk offenders and managing complex cases.
- Every report is subject to a risk assessment matrix. It is used to identify when a new complaint of ASB comes in to help assess how vulnerable someone is. It asks 14 questions based around the key factors of harm, and which are scored to give a total out of 34. The higher the number, the more vulnerable someone could be. This ensures the right support is put in place. This risk assessment is reviewed throughout the life of a case to ensure that the risk is reducing.
- Hate crime can take many forms including physical attacks, threats of attack, verbal abuse, or insults. A victim does not have to be a member of the group at which the hostility is targeted. In fact, anyone could be a victim of a hate crime.
- Hate crimes and incidents can be confusing and frightening for individuals and can have an impact on entire communities. SBC encourages reporting as this may prevent these incidents from happening to someone else. An incident can be reported at one of the third-party reporting centres. Stevenage Borough Council is a third-party reporting centre and has several officers that are trained to deal with reports of hate crime. SBC work in partnership with Hertfordshire Beacon victim care centre who have specially trained staff that are able to offer help and emotional support. Stevenage police have a dedicated Hate Crime Officer that investigates reports of Hate Crime and attends events with SBC Officers.
- ASB and Hate crime cases can be very complex as the people involved may have mental health problems, personality disorders or they suffer from drug and alcohol related issues, and it is important that officers and councillors remain neutral when involved in any ASB or Hate Crime case.

All information relating to ASB cases is recorded on the REACT computer system which is secure and with access restricted to certain officers in specific roles. An ASB marker is placed on the NEC housing management system and if other teams need to visit, this will be flagged, and they can get more information from the ASB team as to whether this will affect their visit, or any measures need to be taken before visiting. If it is two people to attend this will be clearly flagged on the housing record.

A full information sharing protocol is in place with the police, so any criminal activity that takes place at a property can be used in evidence to support any action the council may wish to take for breach of tenancy conditions.

There are a number of key performance indicators relating to ASB and there are tenant satisfaction measures that we have to report so accurate reporting of and effectively dealing with ASB and Hate Crimes is really important. We measure satisfaction on both perpetrators and complainants to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect. We also complete interim satisfaction surveys throughout the life of the case to see where we can improve on our services.

Examples of what the Council are doing around ASB

- The ASB officers have weekly contact with victims, offer personal alarms, have given out ring doorbells and refer them to Beacon for additional support. SBC have also moved fences and installed gates to help reduce the ASB tenants have experienced, installations of CCTV, have made referrals to give them additional security in the homes, and made referrals to children/adult care service, Single Point of Access, and the Community Mental Health Team. SBC support victims of Cuckooing/victims of crime that flee to and from another authority alongside Police.
- The ASB team are helping to deter ASB by having mobile CCTV cameras that can be moved to hotspot locations to help identify individuals causing ASB; this also acts as a deterrent for the

ASB to continue. SBC has put up CCTV signs to attempt to deter ASB behaviour and requests Police to have targeted patrols in hotspot areas; Neighbourhood Wardens also patrol in these areas. We look at environmental changes, such as removing benches if needed, installing bollards, installing fencing and lighting and work alongside garages and environmental health.

- The ASB Team always look at enforcement as a last resort to cases and will attempt to engage with perpetrator to resolve the ASB before taking formal action against them. This can include offers of mediation with victims where appropriate, as well as referrals to support services such as CMHT and Substance misuse services. If the ASB is not resolved after support is offered/put into place it is at this stage that formal action is considered, and this will start in the form of written warnings against both a person and/or their tenancy and voluntary agreements. Possession is always a last resort so will only be sought after in the cases where all other avenues have been explored.
- There has been a relaunch the ASB forum where people who have been through the ASB service attend and can give feedback on the service or get involved in service improvements or give their opinion on the service standards, for example. The first meeting will be held on 22nd November where they will discuss terms of reference and conduct of the group and consult on the draft ASB policy.
- The ASB team also hold regular professional's meetings with external and internal agencies to ensure that action is targeted and proportionate for what is being reported. Actions from these meetings are followed up and these can include conducting street meets in the local area with Police colleagues to see if anyone is impacted by the ASB and ensure they receive support.
- The ASB Team work closely with partners to visit individuals who are sleeping in tents and have been reported as an illegal encampment. Officers will conduct joint visits alongside the Rough Sleeper Team to ensure that they are offered support and guidance as well as being moved on from the location. Other services such as the No More Service is offered for those experiencing drug and alcohol misuse as well as offering food parcels to those who need it.
- The ASB team also attend Operation Urban once a quarter. This is an operation that involves ASB Officers, Police, the No More Service, and the Rough Sleeper Team. The aim of the operation is walk around hotspot locations across the Town Centre and Old Town to identify those individuals who are rough sleeping and attempt to engage with them and offer them the support services they may not be aware of.
- The ASB Team is currently involved in an SBC wide Graffiti Action Plan. This looks at what work we can do to stop graffiti being committed on our assets and how we bring enforcement action to those perpetrators who commit this offence. The ASB team is proactively working with the Police on this front and attempting to gain access to schools to educate young people on the impact that this has on the wider community.

Summary of the draft Policy

The aim of the policy is to set out the Council's commitment and intent in dealing with ASB and Hate Crime cases. It seeks to resolve all issues of ASB as quickly as possible, to the satisfaction of all parties. Enforcement of tenancy conditions is not always the most appropriate route to take, and eviction proceedings will always be seen as a last resort when all other avenues have been explored.

That said, where appropriate, SBC will act under the relevant Housing Acts and will also use the powers and tools available through the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 to deal with and resolve ASB. The Council operates an Introductory Tenancy scheme, which enables us to act against new tenants that are in breach of the tenancy agreement.

The draft policy sets out:

- our approach to ASB and that we consider a number of aspects from prevention to rehabilitation.
- How we will protect and support victims, witnesses, and their families
- How we will work in partnership with the Police and other agencies to ensure we are effective in dealing with ASB complaints
- That we take a victim centred approach to Hate Crime and will act promptly and decisively to protect the person/s making the complaint.
- How we will involve the community in resolving ASB
- That we will advertise the ASB service and publicise the work we are doing in tackling ASB and Hate Crime
- The support provided to victims and perpetrators and that we will make referrals to specialist teams and agencies
- How we will involve victims and perpetrators, listen and act on feedback
- The consequences for perpetrators of ASB from warnings to notice of seeking possession.

Appendix A – Draft Tenant and Leaseholder ASB Policy 2024

Appendix B – Tenancy agreement

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Tenancy Agreement for Secure and Introductory Tenants

Tenancy start date

Tenancy number

Date tenancy could become secure

Subject to terms and conditions

This is a Tenancy Agreement between The Stevenage Borough Council of Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 1HN and:

Title

Home phone

Attach picture

First name

Mobile phone

Surname

Work phone

Date of birth

National Insurance number

Title

Home phone

Attach picture

First name

Mobile phone

Surname

Work phone

Date of birth

National Insurance number

Other people occupying the home

Title

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Property details

Property address

Description

Floor level

Maximum occupancy

Number of bedrooms

Store number and address (if applicable)

The following fittings are your responsibility

Rent and service charges

The total rent you must pay each week at the start of the tenancy is

£

Plus a weekly service charge of

£

Total charge you must pay each week is

£

Who should we contact in an emergency?

Title

First name

Surname

Property address

Home phone

Mobile phone

Work phone

Email address

Relationship to you

Declaration

The information I/we gave in our housing application is true and our circumstances have not changed since then. I/we know that I/we may be liable to prosecution and/or possession proceedings if I/we have knowingly or recklessly given information that is false or if I/we have withheld information that the Council needs to ensure proper allocation of its homes. I/we have read and understood the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenancy Conditions and I/we agree to comply with them. I/we agree that the information in this agreement and on my/our tenancy file (which may be updated from time to time) may be disclosed to other parts of the Council and agents of it, for housing management purposes.

This agreement includes and is subject to tenancy conditions that are contact in the attached separate document. I/we declare that I/we have read or had the tenancy conditions explained to me/us before I/we signed this document.

Title

First name

Surname

Signature (Tenant 1)

Date

Title

First name

Surname

Signature (Tenant 2)

Date

Office use only

Signature of authorised officer

Full name and designation in CAPITALS

Date

Tenancy Agreement for Secure and Introductory Tenants

Tenancy start date

Tenancy number

Date tenancy could become secure

Subject to terms and conditions

This is a Tenancy Agreement between The Stevenage Borough Council of Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 1HN and:

Title

Home phone

Attach picture

First name

Mobile phone

Surname

Work phone

Date of birth

National Insurance number

Title

Home phone

Attach picture

First name

Mobile phone

Surname

Work phone

Date of birth

National Insurance number

Other people occupying the home

Title

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Title

First name

Surname

Date of birth

Relationship to tenant

Property details

Property address

Description

Floor level

Maximum occupancy

Number of bedrooms

Store number and address (if applicable)

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Plus a weekly service charge of

£

Total charge you must pay each week is

£

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Title

First name

Surname

Property address

Home phone

Mobile phone

Work phone

Email address

Relationship to you

Declaration

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This agreement includes and is subject to tenancy conditions that are contact in the attached separate document. I/we declare that I/we have read or had the tenancy conditions explained to me/us before I/we signed this document.

Title

First name

Surname

Signature (Tenant 1)

Date

Title

First name

Surname

Signature (Tenant 2)

Date

Office use only

Signature of authorised officer

Full name and designation in CAPITALS

Date