

DRAFT

Template Scoping Document

Community Select Committee	
Scrutiny Review Title:	Repairs Review
Background issues to review – rationale for scrutinising this issue:	When Members considered their work programme for the 2023-24 Municipal Year at its meeting on 9 March 2023 it was agreed to include a review item on the Repairs process, and this was endorsed on 27 June 2023 CSC meeting.
Is this issue covered by Corporate Plans?	Yes, it is one of the Council's Key Performance Indicators in its Corporate Performance suite.
Focus of the review: (State what the review focus will be)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Look at the current repairs standards</u> – consider the policy on 'emergency', 'urgent' and 'routine' repair works, and the scope of works currently undertaken, (e.g. fencing and other renewals) which Housing consultant Ridge are currently reviewing for the Council.• <u>Contractor focus</u> - Provide a presentation from the SBC housing contractor focusing on some key stats including the breakdown on the volumes of works e.g. emergency, urgent etc, % of first time fix, staffing overview, some examples of what's working well and where the challenges are.• <u>Client focus</u> - Provide insight from the Council's housing consultant with an overview from the 'client' in terms of the work of Ridge, how the refreshed asset strategy will hopefully increase the proactive / planned maintenance programmes and also look at the need to review the Stevenage Standard i.e. the fencing policy.• <u>Look at the current process officers use regarding receiving, logging and carry out repairs to see if it is fit for purpose</u> as Members are "concerned that the current processes do not appear to be straightforward or be running well"• <u>Identify ways to improve the current service including, where possible, streamlining the process to have one point of contact for tenants from the point they register a repair request</u> this would help to co-ordinate all repairs in the property, especially important in cases where there are multiple repairs needed in the same property.• <u>Improve Communications</u> (The context is to avoid cases where "the current process

	<p>requires too many steps with too many operatives and subcontractors to get a repair resolved”) Members are concerned that “Tenants are being told a repair will happen, then it doesn't and there doesn't appear to be any process for letting the tenant know what is going on and why,” “Communication about repairs is poor or non-existent leading to anger and frustration for tenants”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Early identification of cases that could be described as in the “too difficult box”</u> – (The context is a Member quoted a case where “there has been a flooding issue that has been going on for multiple years, and it appears that no one can get to the root cause of the problem, so it falls into the ‘too difficult box’” • <u>Make better use of technology</u> – (For instance, tenants can send a photo of the problem, such as a blown down fence, that perhaps doesn’t need an officer to inspect before materials are ordered and repair booked etc. if the photo shows the extent of the repair)
<p><u>Timing issues:</u> Are there any timing constraints to when the review can be carried out?</p>	<p>None that the Scrutiny Officer is aware of, other than there are 4 formal Committee meetings in the calendar of meetings earmarked for this work. Other work may need to be carried out informally and reported back to the Committee.</p>
<p>The Committee will meet on (provide <u>dates</u> if known):</p>	<p>Dates: Day/Month/Time/Venue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 July 2023 – CSC consider a draft scoping document and receive an officer presentation from Dean Stevens, SBC Housing Maintenance Manager on the current Repairs service. • Thurs 19 Oct 2023 - Scope signed off by Committee and interview witnesses for evidence gathering • Tue 14 Nov continue to interview witnesses for evidence gathering • Mon 8 Jan 2024 - Early recommendations and outline draft report to Select Committee • Wed 31 Jan 2024 - Final recommendations & report
<p><u>SBC Leads</u> (list the Executive Portfolio Holders and SD’s Heads of Service who should appear as witnesses):</p>	<p><i>Officers have suggested the following people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Executive Portfolio Holder(s) for Housing and Housing Investment</i> • <i>New Assistant Director Building Safety, Denise Lewis</i> • <i>Operations Director, Housing Investment & Communities & Neighbourhoods, Rob</i>

	<p><i>Gregory</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assistant Director, Stevenage Direct Services, Steve Dupoy</i> • <i>Housing Maintenance Manager, Dean Stevens</i> • <i>Housing Repairs Manager/Officers</i>
Any other witnesses (external persons/critical friend)?:	To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. <i>Possible options identified by officers:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To be advised by the Assistant Director, Building Safety if it is possible meet with tenants/prospective tenants to discuss their views</i>
<p>Allocation of lead Members on specific individual issues/questions:</p> <p>Any other Questions Members wish to cover:</p>	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting.</p> <p>Members will undertake their own desktop and fact-finding research and ask questions on the following areas (list the issues to address during the interviews):</p> <p><i>To be identified</i></p>
Site visits and evidence gathering in the Community	To be advised if this is possible to arrange for a repairs home visit? This may be less straight forward to arrange as it was for the Voids review, so it may be considered in this instance to not be appropriate as the properties will not be vacant.
<p>Equalities and Diversity issues: The review will consider what the relevant equalities and diversity issues are regarding the Scrutiny subject that is being scrutinised</p>	<p>It was agreed that the review would address equalities and diversity issues directly in the review.</p> <p><u>Equalities & Diversity Issues</u> – Are there any E&D issues to consider in this review? –</p> <p>The review should consider what equality and diversity issues Housing Repairs should encompass such as, fair access to bids for those in digital poverty?</p>
Constraints (Issues that have been highlighted at the scoping stage but are too broad/detailed to be covered by the review):	<i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting on 11 October 2022 (These issues can be captured and dealt with via other means – Briefings/email/officer action etc)</i>
Background Documents/data that can be provided to the review	<p><i>As identified by the Committee at the draft scoping meeting July and October 2023:</i></p> <p>Evidence requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Agreed Milestones and review sign

off -To be agreed by Members and officers

*Formal response from Executive Portfolio Holder (Executives have a Statutory requirement to respond to Scrutiny review recommendations two months after receiving a final report and recommendations of a review: **Date Executive Portfolio responses are expected** (dependent on the final report & executive portfolio response template publishing date): **DD MM YY***

Date for monitoring implementation of recommendations – final sign off (typically one year from completion of the review): **DD MM YY* (Close to this date the Select Committee will receive a report at a Committee meeting to agree the final sign off of the review recommendations)*