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| REPORT TO: | MARCH CABINET 2022 <i>Monday 21st March 2022, 18:30</i> |
| SUBJECT: | Update on the Housing Improvement Board, and the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan |
| LEAD OFFICER: | <i>David Padfield, Interim Corporate Director, Housing</i> <i>Yvonne Murray, Director of Housing- Resident Engagement & Allocations</i> <i>Stephen Tate, Director of Housing- Estates & Improvement</i> |
| CABINET MEMBER: | <i>Councillor Patricia Hay-Justice, Cabinet Member for Homes</i> |
| WARDS: | All |

COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2020-2024

The Croydon Housing Improvement Plan and Housing Improvement Board will allow the Council to improve the housing service, with particular regard to the Council's landlord responsibilities. Both the Plan and the Board will ensure the Council's improvement plans address the ARK investigation recommendations, reflect the views of tenants and leaseholders, and provide the best quality service the Council can afford in line with the priorities below:

- We will live within our means, balance the books and provide value for money for our residents.*
- We will focus on tackling ingrained inequality and poverty in the borough. We will follow the evidence to tackle the underlying causes of inequality and hardship, like structural racism, environmental injustice and economic injustice.*
- We will focus on providing the best quality core service we can afford. First and foremost, providing social care services that keep our most vulnerable residents safe and healthy. And to keep our streets clean and safe. To ensure we get full benefit from every pound we spend, other services in these areas will only be provided where they can be shown to have a direct benefit in keeping people safe and reducing demand.*

[Council's priorities](#)

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Approval of the recommendations would not have financial implications.

KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: Approval of the recommendations would not constitute a key decision.

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out below:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Cabinet is requested to note:

- I. The content of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan.
- II. The establishment of the Housing Improvement Board.
- III. The revised Terms of Reference of the Housing Improvement Board.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following the revelation of poor housing conditions at Regina Road, the Cabinet agreed to the establishment of an independently-chaired Housing Improvement Board to oversee the development and implementation of the Housing Improvement Plan in May 2021. The Cabinet agreed that the purpose of the Plan and Board would be to address the failings of the housing service highlighted in the ARK Consultancy Investigation into conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, South Norwood.
- 1.2 The Plan has been developed in response to the declared breach of the Home Standard and the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard by the Regulator for Social Housing. It will form a key part of the Council's voluntary undertaking of improvements to the housing service made to the Regulator. Achieving compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing standards will be a key output of the Plan.
- 1.3 The Plan has also been developed to reflect tenant and leaseholder views. The Housing Improvement Plan reflects the feedback received in the summer 2021 door-knocking survey of council tenants.
- 1.4 In July 2021 a report was made to the Streets, Homes and Environment Sub-Committee recommending the sub-committee to note the Council's progress in improving conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, approve the Terms of Reference of the Housing Improvement Board, and note the approach to the development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan. The sub-committee made a series of recommendations which have been largely incorporated into the Housing Improvement Plan and Terms of Reference for the Housing Improvement Board which are included in the Appendices to this report.
- 1.5 The Housing Improvement Plan has been considerably revised based on initial feedback from our external governance structures. In November 2021, the Council's Non-Statutory Review was highly critical of the draft Plan. In January and February 2022, further draft versions of the Plan were presented to the Housing Improvement Board for comment. Feedback from the Improvement & Assurance Panel and the Housing Improvement Board is also included in this report.
- 1.6 The Plan will inevitably continue to evolve over time to reflect further input from the Board, residents, Members and other stakeholders.

2. CROYDON HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 2.1 The Croydon Housing Improvement Plan has been developed to improve the housing service, with particular regard to the Council's landlord responsibilities. The Plan addresses the following five areas of focus:
- Vision & Governance
 - Repairs & Safety
 - Improving Your Homes
 - Customer Service & Resident Engagement
 - Our Workforce
- 2.2 Each of the five areas has been assigned to project managers within the service who are responsible for delivering the activity, whilst a senior accountable officer (director or corporate director) is accountable for the delivery of the work. The delivery of the Plan will follow the Council's agreed programme management framework.
- 2.3 In response to issues raised in the ARK Consultancy Investigation, Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion will be embedded throughout each of the five work-streams. The Council's Equalities Manager has met with each project manager to ensure that the output of the improvement actions explicitly addresses concerns raised by tenants. Each project manager will be responsible for completing an Equalities Impact Assessment for the work-streams which will be regularly reviewed.
- 2.4 An internal workshop with directors, heads of service, and project managers was held in October 2021 to launch the Plan across the directorate. The workshop provided project managers and senior accountable officers with the opportunity to scrutinize the content of the Plan, and highlight the interdependencies between the work-streams.
- 2.5 Delivery of the Plan is being supported by the Council's Project Management Office. The delivery of the Plan is being overseen by the Housing Improvement Plan Working Group which currently meets fortnightly. The Working Group is chaired by the interim Corporate Director for Housing, and provides a forum for progress to be monitored and shared, and for risks to be mitigated or escalated. The Chair of the Working Group also acts as a direct link to the Corporate Management Team.
- 2.6 The draft Plan was shared with the Council's Non-Statutory Review who commented that the draft Plan was "weak", "poorly presented" and lacked "SMART targets". Section 3.4 of this report details how these comments have been addressed.
- 2.7 The draft Plan was also presented to the independently-chaired Housing Improvement Board in January and February 2022 to allow the Board to scrutinise and challenge the Council's improvement plans with regards to tenant experience and best practice demonstrated by other social landlords.

The Board commented that the draft requires simplification, 'what good looks like' is not clearly defined, and that the impact the Plan would have on tenants and leaseholders was unclear. The feedback from the Board has been incorporated into the finalised version of the Plan found in the appendices. The incorporation of further feedback into the Plan will be an iterative process as the plan develops over time.

- 2.8 Beyond the feedback provided by tenant and leaseholder representatives from the Housing Improvement Board, resident views will continue to shape the Plan. Whilst resident engagement is included within the Plan as a separate area of focus, engagement with our tenants and leaseholders will form a golden thread throughout the areas of focus. Feedback from the Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) which is commissioned by the council on a quarterly basis will also inform the focus of the Plan as it continues to evolve.

3. CROYDON HOUSING IMPROVEMENT BOARD

- 3.1 The establishment of the Housing Improvement Board was agreed by Cabinet in May 2021 with the purpose of providing independent scrutiny and challenge to the Council's improvement plans. The Board provides evidenced feedback to Cabinet, as and when it is required, examining whether the Housing Improvement Plan will deliver the recommendations made in the ARK Consultancy Investigation.

- 3.2 The Board is independent of both Council members and officers, and four of the eight board members are existing council tenants from across the borough. Board members also include representatives from London Councils, the Local Government Association, and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

- 3.3 The Board will initially focus on the following five themes:

- Conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, South Norwood
- Respect for Tenants & Effective Communication
- Data & Performance
- Member & Officer Governance
- Staff Capability Issues

- 3.4 Feedback from the Board on the extent to which the Housing Improvement Plan addresses the issues across the five themes above will be presented to Cabinet via the Chair of the Board alongside this report. The Board's assessment of the Council's plans will be supported by both tenant experience, and best practice from other social landlords. The Council has provided a series of performance data reports to the Board to support the Board's enquiries. In concurrence with comments in the Independent Non-Statutory Review, the Board has recommended that our improvement plans have measurable targets and outcomes. Each of our milestones in the Plan now have associated metrics, and officers will be working with the Tenant &

Leaseholder Panel to develop revised key performance indicators which will enable tenant and leaseholder scrutiny of the Council's improvement measures.

3.5 All of the Housing Improvement Board meetings are open to the public, and the Board is able to request both Officers and Members to be in attendance at the meetings. The inaugural meeting of the Housing Improvement Board was held on 7 December 2021 at Stanley Halls, South Norwood. The second Board meeting was held remotely on 20 January 2022 where the Housing Improvement Plan was reviewed by the Board. The third Housing Improvement Board meeting was held on 24 February 2022. Following the beginning of the next financial year, the frequency of the Board meetings will be reduced. All papers discussed at the Board are made available on the Council's website ahead of the meetings.

3.6 The revised terms of reference for the Housing Improvement Board can be found in the appendices. The original terms of reference for the Board were approved by Cabinet in July 2021.

4. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Head of XXXXX comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance that xxxxxx

4.2 Approved by (name), Head of xxxxxx (Job title) on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer

5. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

5.1

5.2 (Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of Human Resources)

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

6.1

6.2 (Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of Equalities)

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.1

7.2 (Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of XX)

8. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

8.1

8.2 (Approved by: [A N. Other] on behalf of the Director of XX)

9. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 **WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?**

NO

9.2 **HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?**

NO

The subject of the report does not involve the processing of 'personal' data. There are therefore no data protection implications.

9.3 "The Director of XXX comments that...

(Approved by: [A. N. Other] on behalf of the Director of XXX)

CONTACT OFFICER: *David Padfield, interim Corporate Director, Housing*

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN (1)

REVISED HOUSING IMPROVEMENT BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE (2)

Housing Improvement Plan

March 2022

DRAFT REPORT

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1. Introduction

The independent ARK investigation in spring 2021 into living conditions at 1-87 Regina Road, South Norwood discovered a wide range of problems across the Council's housing service. The report concluded that there were a range of issues across the Council's operational teams and with the main repairs contractor. These issues led to a failure to deliver even basic core housing services effectively and were symptomatic of poor performance across the Council's housing service.

Specific issues identified include:

- A lack of capacity and competence
- A poor operating culture with a lack of respect and care for tenants
- Systemic problems in how the Council communicates and deals with tenants' concerns and complaints
- Weak performance management meaning senior managers did not have oversight of issues
- Poor use of data and intelligence by the Council and its contractors

In response, we have produced the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan to set out a clear set of objectives and actions that will address these problems and improve services across the new Housing Directorate. The Housing Improvement Plan addresses the seven recommendations for improvement listed in the ARK investigation:

1. Establish clear governance arrangements to provide strategic leadership to the service.
2. Undertake a forward-looking skills gap analysis.
3. Implement a development programme to ensure all staff consistently demonstrate the attitudinal and behavioural competences need to support the Council's values and shape its culture.
4. Strengthen the Council's capacity, competence and commitment to tenant involvement through training and development of staff and councillors.
5. Develop 'business intelligence' systems that allow the Council to collect and share real-time information on asset condition and performance (including from the contractor).
6. Conduct a fundamental review of performance management arrangements.
7. Make improvements to complaints handling in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2. What difference will this make?

In establishing this Improvement Plan, the Council is setting out a vision that enshrines learning lessons from the past and providing safe homes for our tenants and leaseholders.

We aim to provide residents with homes that are safe, warm and dry, and that they are proud to call home. In doing so, we will always aim to treat them with respect and dignity, and listen to their voices, irrespective of race, disability or any other protected characteristic. We will seek to ensure that our contractors do the same. We will aim to measure the things that are important to our residents. We will aim to provide services that offer good value for money.

In order to deliver on this commitment, we know that we need to change the culture of the organisation so that we become more focused on the needs of residents. We will need to put resident engagement at the heart of what we do. We will need to build organisational capacity and competence, and work in partnership with our contractors.

In doing this we will be guided by, and aim to be in compliance with, the four consumer standards set out by the Regulator of Social Housing:

- Home Standard
- Tenancy Standard
- Neighbourhood & Community Standard
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

This change cannot happen overnight, but progress must be demonstrable and visible. If we deliver the outcomes of this Plan successfully, residents will find it much easier to get the services they need from their landlord. These services should also be delivered in a timely manner and to a good standard - and we know that our responsive repairs service is a resident priority for improvement.

All residents should feel that they have the opportunity to have their voices heard in the management of their homes. When we get things wrong, complaints must be dealt with in line with the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman, and we must act swiftly to put things right. We must also invest in resident homes to maintain and improve them - not only for our current occupants, but also for future generations.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

3. Work to date

Since spring 2021, considerable work has already taken place to lay the foundations for this Plan. As well as basing this Plan on the recommendations of the ARK report, we have listened to the voices of our tenants and leaseholders, councillors, staff, and the independent Housing Improvement Board.

At Regina Road, the worst affected households have either been moved, or approved for a move and are currently waiting for a suitable property to become vacant. An extensive programme of repairs, including fire safety works, has been carried out and further repairs are planned in the immediate future. Detailed surveys of all blocks have been undertaken and shared with residents. A resident reference group has been established to discuss longer term investment plans and the future of the estate.

Previously fragmented elements of the housing service have been brought together into a unified Housing Department and a Corporate Director for Housing has been appointed. A new top-level management structure is in place. Housing staff have run a major exercise of door-knocking and roadshows to gather the views of residents.

Performance reporting has been improved and regular reports are submitted to the Council's Cabinet. Performance in relation to compliance with health and safety requirements is prominent in this improvement. Improvements in governance and contract management have been put in place.

Drafts of this Plan have been widely discussed with stakeholders including the Council's Streets, Environment and Homes Scrutiny Sub Committee and the Housing Improvement Board. Their feedback has helped shape the Plan.

As a result of this feedback, we have organised the Plan into five clear Areas of Focus:

- Vision and Governance
- Customer Service and Resident Engagement
- Repairs and Safety
- Improving Your Homes
- Our Workforce

For each Area of Focus, we have set out our desired outcomes, the key milestones on the way to delivering those outcomes, and suggested metrics for measuring progress in that area.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

4. Resident engagement

In delivering the outcomes required by this Plan, resident engagement must be placed at the heart of our landlord service. This means that we must expand and improve our resident engagement structures and processes to enable tenants and leaseholders to set priorities, shape policies and co-design improvements to the service. Feedback from our satisfaction surveys will be central to assessing the progress of our services and the success of this Plan.

In order for this to be successful, we will need to significantly improve the way we provide information about services to our residents, via whichever channels work best for them.

In developing and delivering the Plan, we also need to build upon the excellent work already done by residents as part of the Tenant & Leaseholder Panel, Performance Monitoring Group, and Resident Scrutiny Panel, especially in relation to voids processes and developing a Residents Charter.

5. Equalities

The Council is committed to treating all of our residents with respect and dignity irrespective of race, disability or any other protected characteristic. This commitment needs to be reflected in the delivery of all aspects of this Plan.

Ensuring all council tenants and leaseholders are treated with respect and empathy must align with the council's statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. No council tenant or leaseholder should feel discriminated against on the basis of their race, religion, age or gender. The impact of the Plan on council tenants with protected characteristics will be scrutinised and regularly assessed to promote equality. The Housing service must be tailored to reflect the diverse community it serves.

Where compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation, this will mean looking at the outcomes of our services by protected characteristics. Where required, we will prepare Equality Impact Assessments in respect of major service changes.

6. Dependencies and interdependencies

The various areas of focus set out in this plan interact with other to a considerable extent and will only be effective in improving the housing service if they working together as a coherent, integrated set of processes and people working across the Housing service as one team. Furthermore, there are a number of key activities that sit outside of this Plan which will have a significant impact on the desired outcomes of the Plan:

Mayoral election - the move to an elected Mayor in May 2022 will be a key moment in the development of this Plan. The Mayor will no doubt wish to continue to shape the Housing directorate and the development of this Plan.

Croydon Renewal Plan - the Housing Improvement Plan must be read as an important element of the wider Croydon Renewal Plan.

ICT - the Plan references the move towards adopting the new NEC Housing IT System. This is a major project in its own right. As the Plan develops, we will also need to address the Housing aspects of an evolving Croydon Digital Strategy.

Recruitment - the recruitment and retention of key housing staff has been a significant challenge for the Council. If we are unable to recruit and retain housing staff in the future, this will constitute an obstacle to the delivery of the Plan.

Housing Revenue Account – Money has been set aside in the 22/23 HRA budget to fund compliance with the Building Safety Bill. The delivery of the other objectives of the Plan must either be achieved within existing resources or become a draw on HRA Reserves. The Housing Improvement Board will be kept advised as to any spending over and above existing resources.

Procurement – The Plan will involve significant procurement work and the results of this will obviously be influenced by the condition of the market.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

7. Area of Focus: Vision & Governance

In order to deliver a high standard of service to our tenants and leaseholders, it is essential that we have a clear vision that is understood by all our staff. We also need strong governance arrangements that align with the Council's wider governance requirements and link to other key stakeholder such as tenants and leaseholders, and the Regulator for Social Housing.

Our governance must be supported by accurate performance management information that fulfils a dual purpose.

- 1) It measures how we run our business in line with the targets and objectives we set for ourselves; and,
- 2) It also captures how, as a landlord, we meet expectations of our tenants and leaseholders. Likewise, financial reporting needs to be comprehensive, accurate and sufficiently transparent to allow tenant and leaseholder scrutiny.

Outcomes

- A comprehensive vision to guide staff
- Strong governance around everything we do
- A trusted performance management system which provides assurance
- Transparent and accurate financial reporting

Milestones and metrics

| A comprehensive vision to guide staff | |
|---|--------------|
| Initial statement of values made to the Regulator of Social Housing and communicated to staff | March 2022 |
| Delivery of strategy and service plan for the Department, which sets out the way forward | April 2022 |
| New operating model approved by Cabinet | January 2023 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> Staff understand the objectives of the Council and their role in delivering them – as measured through annual staff survey | |

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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| Strong governance around everything we do | |
| Internal governance statement that captures relevant controls and stakeholder involvement | March 2022 |
| Housing Improvement Plan finalised and approved | March 2022 |
| Regulator of Social Housing determination of compliance with Tenancy and Homes Standards | Mid-2023 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> None. Compliance will be set out in an annual governance statement submitted to Internal Audit | |
| A trusted performance management system which provides assurance | |
| Policy & Performance Team established to lead work | May 2022 |
| Refreshed set of indicators agreed with Tenant & Leaseholder Panel | September 2022 |
| Accuracy of data and systems used for performance indicators audited | March 2023 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> None. Success to be determined by sign-off of management information reports by Tenant & Leaseholder Panel | |
| Transparent and accurate financial reporting | |
| Refreshed Housing Revenue Account Business Plan approved by Cabinet | March 2022 |
| Review of Tenant Service Charges to establish accuracy and transparency | October 2022 |
| Regular financial reports made accessible to all tenants and leaseholders for scrutiny | November 2022 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> None. Success to be determined by sign-off of financial reports by Tenant & Leaseholder Panel. | |

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

8. Area of Focus: Customer Service & Resident Engagement

The overarching aim of the Housing Improvement Plan is to improve the Council's landlord services for our tenants and leaseholders. We have devised a work stream which will improve our customer services and engage tenants and leaseholders in our improvement plans.

Tenant and leaseholder satisfaction with the Council's housing services will enable the Council to assess whether the Improvement Plan has been effective. Improvements to our 'front-door' and engaging residents to co-design these improvements will be crucial.

Outcomes

- Residents find it easy to contact us
- Resident engagement is at the heart of all we do
- All residents are provided with the information they need
- Compliance with complaints handling requirements and best practice

Milestones and metrics

| Residents find it easy to contact us | |
|--|--------------|
| Revised policy on telephony contact developed and implemented | October 2022 |
| Revised access and support offer for vulnerable tenants developed and implemented | October 2022 |
| Clear policy on digital contact and transactions developed and implemented | April 2023 |
| <i>Associated metrics:</i> STAR tenant satisfaction survey ("how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that the housing service is easy to deal with?") | |

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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| Resident engagement is at the heart of all we do | |
| Programme developed of resident engagement to ensure that we create opportunities for all tenants to tell us about and shape their experience of the housing service | October 2022 |
| Resident engagement strategy developed around building safety in high-rise blocks | October 2022 |
| Prepare for implementation of the Charter for Social Housing Residents (Social Housing White Paper) | March 2023 |
| <i>Associated metric:</i> STAR tenant satisfaction survey | |
| Provide all our residents with the information they need | |
| Key information is advertised locally via estate and block noticeboards | April 2022 |
| Comprehensive service information is available to residents on the Council's website | October 2022 |
| Comprehensive service information is available via telephone, correspondence or in-person | October 2022 |
| <i>Associated metric:</i> Audit of information through the Housing Scrutiny Panel | |
| Compliance with complaints handling requirements and best practice | |
| Full range of service standards co-created and co-produced with tenants and leaseholders | June 2022 |
| Quality of responses to complaints is audited and analysed | July 2022 |
| Learning from complaints is systematically used to improve services | October 2022 |
| <i>Associated metric:</i> Number of complaints received and resident satisfaction with complaints handling | |

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

9. Area of Focus: Repairs & Safety

The Council's failings at Regina Road and the subsequent criticism set out in the ARK report were, first and foremost, the consequence of failings of our repairs processes. It is essential that the Council has a responsive repairs system that residents find easy to use and can deliver the required repairs on time and to a high standard.

This must be achieved within the context of forthcoming post-Grenfell building safety legislation that places considerable new statutory responsibilities on landlords. We also have to address the challenge of making the best use of our housing stock by turning around empty homes as quickly as possible.

Outcomes

- A system that makes reporting a repair easy
- Repairs done on time and right first time
- Full compliance with the Building Safety Act
- Quick turnaround of voids

Milestones and metrics

| A system that makes reporting a repair easy | |
|---|----------------|
| Additional tenant and leaseholder engagement on repair contact | July 2022 |
| Redesigned repairs reporting process | September 2022 |
| NEC ¹ Housing management solution implemented | November 2022 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> 'Get through on first time' satisfaction rating and overall satisfaction rating with repairs | |

¹ NEC is a housing management system provided by NEC Software Solutions.

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

| Repairs done on time and right first time | |
|---|----------------|
| Improvement plan with current contractor agreed and implemented | July 2022 |
| Re-procurement of new tenant and leaseholder focused repairs contractor | June 2023 |
| Start of new repairs contract | August 2023 |
| <i>Associated Metrics:</i> Repairs completed first time and overall satisfaction with repairs | |
| Full compliance with existing and upcoming safety regulations | |
| Additional resource joins the building safety and compliance team | September 2022 |
| Demonstrable satisfactory compliance within existing regulatory frameworks | March 2023 |
| Demonstrable compliance with Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Act upon enactment ensured | May 2023 |
| <i>Associated Metrics:</i> "Big six" main compliance indicators | |
| Quick turnaround of voids | |
| Complete benchmarking review to establish best practice | September 2022 |
| Completed business process re-engineering review of void management building upon resident task and finish and scrutiny recommendations | December 2022 |
| NEC Housing Reports available to support decision making | December 2022 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> Key-to-key turnaround in calendar days | |

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

10. Area of Focus: Improving Your Homes

Over the next 30 years, the Council expects to invest almost £750m in its housing stock. It is essential that the Council is able to prioritise and direct this investment as efficiently as possible and obtain good value for money. As part of this process, it is important that the Council develops and implements business systems that enable collection and sharing of real-time information on asset condition and performance, in order to improve the management of repairs and drive better investment decisions. We must utilise all available data to develop a cost-effective plan for improving the housing stock to ensure homes are safe, warm and dry.

Outcomes

- Confidence in our stock data and our ability to utilise it
- A robust Asset Management Strategy
- Fit-for-purpose vehicles for delivering investment
- Robust arrangements for managing capital delivery contractors to drive satisfaction and value for money

Milestones and metrics

| Confidence in our stock data and our ability to utilise it | |
|---|---------------|
| Capacity within the team to analyse and audit data | June 2022 |
| NEC Housing System go-live | November 2022 |
| Receive next tranche of stock condition data | January 2023 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> Number of non-decent homes as per statutory return | |

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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| A robust Asset Management Strategy | |
| Draft Asset Management Strategy available for resident consultation | October 2022 |
| Resident consultation complete | December 2022 |
| Strategy approved by Full Council | January 2023 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> None | |

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| Fit-for-purpose vehicles for delivering investment | |
| Completed review of existing capital delivery vehicles | June 2023 |
| Agreement as to future procurement needs and strategy | September 2023 |
| Additional procurement complete | September 2024 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> Resident satisfaction with major repairs to their homes | |

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| Robust arrangements for managing capital delivery contractors to drive resident satisfaction and value for money | |
| Complete review of Housing contract management processes | July 2022 |
| Review external contract support arrangements | October 2022 |
| Revised contract management process and structure in place | TBC |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> Resident satisfaction with major repairs to their homes | |

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

11. Area of Focus: Our Workforce

Everything we do will be determined by the quality and motivation of our workforce. We need to ensure that we recruit and retain the best possible staff, and we want to ensure that the composition of our workforce- at all levels of the organisation- reflects that of the community we serve. The ARK report was highly critical of the culture within the housing service and this must be addressed.

We want our staff to be highly motivated and have the right tools to do the jobs being asked of them. And this can only be achieved if we have good quality leaders and managers who can give staff the support they need and model the behaviours required by the organisation.

Outcomes

- A resident-focused and performance-oriented service
- Housing staff have the right skills, capacity, capability and tools to effectively perform their role
- Accountable and resilient leadership and management
- A diverse and talented workforce reflective of the community it serves

Milestones and metrics

| A resident-focussed and performance-oriented service | |
|---|----------------|
| Values-based, customer service focused behavioural framework developed and implemented | September 2022 |
| Staff survey culture recommendations for housing directorate implemented | April 2023 |
| Refreshed performance management framework, appraisals and 1-2-1s implemented and monitored | October 2022 |
| <i>Associated Metrics:</i> Tenant and leaseholder satisfaction with staff interaction – as measured through STAR survey. Staff survey questions on organisational culture | |

LBC HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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| Housing staff have the right skills, capability and tools to effectively perform their role | |
| Staff skills audit completed | June 2022 |
| Comprehensive learning & development programme developed and delivered | February 2023 |
| Impact of learning & development interventions programme measured | June 2023 |
| <i>Associated Metrics:</i> Staff feel equipped to do the jobs required of them – as measured through annual staff survey | |
| Accountable and resilient leadership and management | |
| Leadership and management behaviours and skills audit completed | July 2022 |
| Capability interventions to equip all levels of management with skills, tools and behavioural frameworks to effectively lead their teams are implemented | December 2022 |
| Compliance with new behavioural frameworks is measured | April 2023 |
| <i>Associated Metrics:</i> Staff understand the objectives of the Council and feel supported by their managers to deliver them | |
| A diverse and talented workforce reflective of the community it serves | |
| Comprehensive data on workforce composition and gap analysis is collected | May 2022 |
| Workforce Plan to address recruitment and retention challenges is updated | October 2022 |
| Systems developed and implemented where housing staff can share their views and regularly be heard | October 2022 |
| <i>Associated Metric:</i> Our workforce data – reporting format still to be confirmed. | |

DRAFT REPORT

**CROYDON HOUSING IMPROVEMENT BOARD
TERMS OF REFERENCE & MEMBERSHIP**

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| NAME | Croydon Housing Improvement Board |
| DATE | January 2022 |
| CHAIR | Martin Wheatley |
| FREQUENCY | Frequency to be determined by the Chair, in consultation with Board Members. |
| MEMBERS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Chair (Martin Wheatley) • Tenant representative (Les Parry) • Tenant representative (Ishia Beckford) • Regina Road representative (Fahad Eisa) • Chair of Tenants & Leaseholder Panel (Yaw Boateng) • Croydon Improvement Panel Representative (Phil Brookes) • London Council representative (Eloise Shepherd) • Representative of voluntary & community sector in the area(s) of family support &/or, housing experience &/or equality and diversity |
| IN ATTENDANCE | <p>Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Homes Opposition Cabinet Member for Homes Interim Corporate Director, Housing</p> <p>Other invitees as required at the Chair's discretion.</p> |

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| PURPOSE | <p>The Croydon Housing Improvement Board is an independently chaired body which reports and makes recommendations to Cabinet. Feedback from the Board will shape the development and implementation of the Housing Improvement Plan. The Board oversee the delivery of the CHIP by reviewing performance against a plan of action approved by Cabinet.</p> <p>Through their regular meetings the Board will support and challenge the implementation of the CHIP which aims to deliver an improved housing service for local residents, with strengthened governance and management controls, improved tenancy engagement and robust asset management plans, measured by key performance indicators, to ensure council housing across the borough is safe, warm and decent for our residents.</p> |
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| | <p>The Board will provide challenge and external oversight that ensures council officers deliver the outcomes of the CHIP. The Board will pay particular attention to the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH)'s standards and make recommendations to Cabinet to assist the Council to ensure it resolves the current breach and regains the confidence of both the Regulator and council tenants.</p> <p>The Board will review the impact of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan through the use of data, showing progress against clear, measurable objectives within the plan. The Board will receive reports as to progress.</p> |
| ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR | <p>The Board will nominate and agree a vice-chair from its membership who can deputise in the absence of the chair.</p> |
| ROLE OF BOARD | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influencing development of the Croydon Housing Improvement Plan (CHIP) and recommending it to Cabinet for approval. 2. The Board will make recommendations to Cabinet on actions to consider to ensure the delivery of the CHIP and achievement of sustainable improvement within the agreed timescales and cost. 3. Provide challenge and opportunities to ensure that actions taken meet the improvement outcomes that are required of the Council. 4. Ensure that the Council hears, understands, and responds to lived experience of residents housed within the borough. 5. Ensure the Council is constantly seeking to learn from best practice elsewhere and builds a learning methodology into its improvement work. The Board to invite external advice where relevant. 6. Report at a minimum of annually to Cabinet on its work. |
| ACCOUNTABILITY & REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS TO OTHER BODIES | <p>The Board will report to Cabinet.</p> <p>The membership of the Board are able to invite members of another relevant body or board to attend a meeting to inform the discussion on an agenda item.</p> <p>The Board will provide a layer of independent engagement and accountability for the Council in relation to the development and implementation of measures to</p> |

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| | improve its housing service. It does not preclude or prevent Scrutiny & Overview or GPAC from fulfilling the duties as described in the Council Constitution. The Chairs of both committees will be invited to attend the Board. |
| REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC | <p>The Board will be able to receive representations from members of the public and have question and answer sessions.</p> <p>Questions or representations which relate to a current planning or licensing matter or any matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment shall not be permitted. In addition, questions/representations shall not be received or responded to where they pertain to anticipated or ongoing litigation, conciliation or mediation or any employment or personnel related issues or disputes. A named member of staff shall not be the subject of a question/representation.</p> |
| MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD | Recommendations for changes to membership of the Board can come from the Board or the council and will be proposed to the Cabinet Member for Housing for decision. |
| BOARD MEETINGS | Frequency to be determined by the Chair, in consultation with Board Members and the Council. Meetings will be held in public and will be up to two hours in duration. |
| STANDARD AGENDA ITEMS | Agenda to be set by the Chair as they see fit. |
| SUPPORT TO BOARD | The Corporate Director, Housing, will provide appropriate officer support for the Board. |
| REVIEW & AMENDMENTS TO TERMS OF REFERENCE | The Board will conduct an annual review of its progress to ensure it is meeting its aims and adding value to the improvement work of the housing directorate presented to Cabinet. Changes to the Terms of Reference may be proposed by the Board or Council at any time. Any changes will be subject to Cabinet approval. |
| DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | All members of the Board will be expected to abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles) and any interests declared by Board Members will be recorded in the minutes. |