



AGENDA FOR THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Housing Scrutiny Committee are summoned to Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on, **11 December 2017 at 7.30 pm.**

Yinka Owa
Director of Law and Governance

Enquiries to : Jonathan Moore
Tel : 020 7527 3308
E-mail : democracy@islington.gov.uk
Despatched : 1 December 2017

Membership

Councillor Michael O'Sullivan (Chair)
Councillor Marian Spall (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Alex Diner
Councillor Gary Doolan
Councillor Aysegul Erdogan
Councillor Troy Gallagher
Councillor Osh Gantly
Councillor Mouna Hamitouche MBE
Rose Marie McDonald (Resident Observer)
Dean Donaghey (Resident Observer)

Substitute Members

Councillor Satnam Gill OBE
Councillor Gary Heather
Councillor Jenny Kay
Councillor Una O'Halloran
Councillor Olly Parker
Councillor Angela Picknell
Councillor Dave Poyser
Councillor Nurullah Turan

Quorum: is 4 Councillors



A. Formal Matters	Page
--------------------------	-------------

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Apologies for Absence |
| 2. | Declaration of Substitute Members |
| 3. | Declarations of Interests |

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest*** in an item of business:

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
- you may **choose** to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.

In both the above cases, you **must** leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If you have a **personal** interest in an item of business **and** you intend to speak or vote on the item you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but you **may** participate in the discussion and vote on the item.

***(a)Employment, etc** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

(b) Sponsorship - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.

(c) Contracts - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.

(d) Land - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.

(e) Licences- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.

(f) Corporate tenancies - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.

(g) Securities - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to **all** members present at the meeting.

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-------|
| 4. | Minutes of Previous Meeting | 1 - 6 |
| 5. | Chair's Report | |
| 6. | Order of Business | |
| 7. | Public Questions | |

For members of the public to ask questions relating to any subject on the meeting agenda under Procedure Rule 70.5. Alternatively, the Chair may opt to accept questions from the public during the discussion on each agenda item.

B.	Items for Decision/Discussion	Page
1.	Fire Safety Scrutiny Review: Draft Recommendations	7 - 8
2.	The Council's New Build Programme Mini-Review: SID and Witness Evidence	9 - 10
3.	Responsive Repairs Scrutiny 2015/16 - 12 Month Report Back	11 - 16
4.	Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q2 2017/18) - To follow	
5.	Review of Work Plan	17 - 18

C. Urgent non-exempt items (if any)

Any non- exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgent by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

D. Exclusion of press and public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining items on the agenda, any of them are likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.

E.	Confidential/exempt items	Page
-----------	----------------------------------	-------------

F. Urgent exempt items (if any)

Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

The next meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee will be on 30 January 2018

This page is intentionally left blank

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4

London Borough of Islington

Housing Scrutiny Committee - 16 November 2017

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 16 November 2017 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** O'Sullivan, O'Halloran – substitute, Diner, Gantly,
Gallagher, Hamitouche

Resident Representatives: Dean Donaghy and Rose Marie MacDonald

Councillor Michael O'Sullivan in the Chair

311 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Councillors Doolan, Erdogan, Spall and Hamitouche for lateness

312 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

Councillor O'Halloran stated that she was substituting for Councillor Doolan

313 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Item 3)

None

314 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 October 2017 be confirmed and the Chair be authorised to sign them

315 CHAIR'S REPORT (Item 5)

The Chair stated that he had attended resident focus groups in relation to Fire Safety and a meeting of the London Scrutiny Network in relation to the Grenfell Fire, and the notes of the meetings had been circulated.

Members stated that they wished to place on record their appreciation to staff who had worked on the Grenfell tragedy and in looking into Fire Safety implications in Islington.

The Chair added that in relation to the Fire Safety witness evidence from the London Hazards Centre, they were not able to attend that evening and he stated that he would contact them with a view to obtaining written witness evidence

316 ORDER OF BUSINESS (Item 6)

The Chair stated that the order of business would be as per the agenda

317 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item 7)

The Chair outlined the procedure for Public questions and filming and recording of meetings

318 FIRE SAFETY SCRUTINY REVIEW: WITNESS EVIDENCE (Item 2)

The notes of the meetings of the sessions attended by the Chair and the briefing note on re-homing residents in the event of the fire were noted by the Committee

The Chair added that he hoped that the Government would provide funding for the necessary works and that the latest advice is that sprinklers are more effective in individual flats, rather than communal areas

319 HOUSING COMMUNICATIONS SCRUTINY REVIEW: WITNESS EVIDENCE (Item 1)

Jo Murphy, Service Director Homes and Communities, Housing and Adult Social Services, made a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which is interleaved.

During consideration of the presentation the following main points were made –

- The remit as a landlord is to 26000 households and 9000 tenants, however there is a greater emphasis on supporting a positive and safe home life beyond (but including) the terms of the tenancy
- Home and Communities have also been joined by the Voluntary and Community Sector team which extends the reach through partners and there is a focus on greater promotion of confidence, independence and resilience
- The areas of focus will be belonging to a community where you enjoy living and can make a contribution, health and wellbeing which enables residents to stay healthy, happy and independent, jobs and money which assists residents to manage money and find work and enforcement where residents and Council's interests are protected
- For staff this means new ways of working, new development opportunities, potential to improve processes, and a key innovation is the new team of Service Ambassadors – front line staff who have come forward to champion resident need, improve links with other Council departments and encourage more joined up working and improved processes
- This will mean more emphasis on partnership working with trusted professional relationships to enable early, supportive and challenging conversations, better placed to support wider Council initiatives, such as channel shift, making every contact count, promotion of early intervention, resilience and prevention. In addition, shared efficiencies through better targeting of scarce resources
- What this means for residents – More emphasis on co-designed services, based on understanding of residents, improved skills/jobs, financial stability, health and social security outcomes, greater sense of belonging, confidence, empowerment and resilience built into all interactions, better use of digital transactions where appropriate, and better experience for residents
- It was noted that the effect of the introduction of Universal Credit, if the results of the pilot in Croydon, are replicated in Islington, will lead to an increase in rent arrears

and work to assist residents to manage their finance and assist in finding work is important and will be a key focus

- Discussion took place as to caretakers and that there is an increased focus on how they could improve the situation of residents. It was stated that there is now good relations between caretakers and management and that ongoing discussions were taking place
- In relation to siting of satellite dishes reference was made to the fact that the installation of a communal sky dish on estates was now not cost effective, however the issue of free view boxes could be investigated
- It was noted that when a repairs operative could not gain access for an appointment a card was left for the tenant advising them that they had called
- In response to a question it was stated that 200 families were known to the Council that would be adversely affected by Universal Credit, however there were many more households who would be adversely affected. The Council would be trying to get messages across that they were there to assist if households required this. Reference was made to the fact that a communications strategy was being developed with some key messages and effective ways of delivering these messages to households
- It was stated that the new model for Housing Operations that was envisaged would be fully implemented for 12 months as work needed to be undertaken with staff and skills in improving letter writing and behaviours were key to improving trust with residents. This will be a learning process and evolve over time, It is also intended to build links with GP's and the Police with a view to sharing information
- Reference was made to the fact that Partners also had to ensure their tenants were aware of the implications of Universal Credit and that it would be useful if the Council did a presentation to Partners on the implications of Universal Credit and the information and assistance that could be given to tenants
- In respect of making Every Contact Count, it was felt that Housing had a key role in spotting early warning signs in cases of vulnerable tenants
- Work is also taking place with VCS organisations and Help on Your Doorstep in identifying vulnerable residents
- Reference was made to the different computer data bases used by Housing and that these should be integrated. It was stated that this is problematic but is being looked at

The Chair thanked Jo Murphy for her presentation

Christine Short, Head of Capital Programme Delivery then made a presentation to Members, a copy of which is interleaved,

During discussion the following main points were made –

- The Capital Programme involves major works to the fabric of buildings, specialist works such as communal boiler replacement, lift overhauls and replacements, mechanical and electrical projects, such as door entry systems, communal lighting CCTV, estate lighting, communal watertank removals, fire protection and kitchen and bathroom renewals
- Cyclical maintenance works are carried out every 7 years
- Most contracts are Partnering contracts – contractors are appointed early in the process so that the Council can work with them in designing schemes and using their expertise

Housing Scrutiny Committee - 16 November 2017

- The aim is to ensure that communications with residents is properly joined up with contractors and is consistent
- Communication with residents is mainly via written documentation – general advisory letters, invites to meetings or letters requiring access, newsletters, legal documentation, but also face to face contact, such as residents meetings, drop in sessions, or specific meetings with individual residents to resolve issues or problems
- Projects have 2 distinct phases – Design stage, and onsite stage. During the design stage of the project the Council staff are more prominent at meetings and initiate communication and they organise an early consultation meeting with all residents
- Leaseholders are invited to Section 20 meetings to discuss costs associated with the works and our best estimate of likely costs
- Once works start on site a shift takes place and contractors take greater responsibility for communications – issuing newsletters, presence on site with staff hut
- Contractors are contractually bound to employ services of resident liaison officers to communicate directly with the Public. Any complaints generated as a result of the work are initially dealt with by the resident liaison officers
- Over the last three to four years there has been an enormous amount of work to improve communications through an improved consultation document, improved financial information for leaseholders, developed document on roles of professional staff, and organised written communications course for all staff
- Areas for improvement recommended by the Service Review Group include – residents wanting more meaningful information around timetabling of works, when to expect works on their block, how long scaffolding will be in place etc.
- In addition, tenants want more information on costs, have more information provided on fire protection works that are being carried out and to have provided executive summaries on letters that are more detailed and complex
- A Member expressed concern at works that had been carried out previously at St.Lukes Estate in 2014 and that this was sub-standard but still no remedial action had been taken by the contractor and in addition Members were of the view that areas of work sub-contracted had little accountability for the standard of work carried out. The Head of Capital Programme Delivery stated that she would investigate and respond to Members thereon in respect of St.Lukes Estate
- Members felt that the booklets that had been circulated in relation to improvement works were good and should be continued and that both leaseholders and tenants, as both paid for improvement works should be informed of the costs of works. The view was expressed that a booklet should be produced on the work pre and post improvement works and the Head of Capital Programme Delivery stated that she would investigate the possibility of this
- A Member expressed the view that Housing Associations appeared to get better quality improvement works than the Council
- In response to a question it was stated that if an independent person was appointed to oversee the quality of contractors work this could also be contentious and add to the costs of the scheme. In addition, the Council Clerk of Works is responsible for assessing the quality of work carried out
- Reference was made to the length of time scaffolding was often in place and this was a safety issue and be a burglary risk and tenants should be informed if this is the case The Head of Capital Programme Delivery stated that occasionally scaffolding was left up longer than intended, however this was avoided wherever possible

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Head of Capital Programme Delivery investigate the issues raised above with poor quality of work at St.Lukes Estate, any remedial action that has been taken and if not, the reasons therefore
- (b) That consideration be given to producing a booklet, post completion, of works showing the work required prior to works starting and the works post completion

The Chair thanked Christine Short for attending

320 WORK PROGRAMME (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

321 CAPITAL PROGRAMME SCRUTINY 2015/16 - 12 MONTH UPDATE (Item 3)

Christine Short, Head of Capital Programme Delivery, Housing and Adult Social Services outlined the report.

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- Recommendation 1 - It was stated that there should be an annual report to the Committee on the main contractors performance that work for the Council
- Recommendation 2 – Information should be provided on any monies held back on contracts, as a result of contractors poor performance in the previous 2 years
- Recommendation 4 – There should be scrutiny of works sub contracted and sub-contractors also sub- contracting work to ensure accountability for works
- Recommendation 5 – The view was expressed that the benchmarking exercise should be done through the London Scrutiny Network and that the use of smaller contractors should be looked at
- Recommendation 8 – It was stated that there needed to be transparency and resident engagement in any proposals
- Recommendation 9 – It was stated that in future booklets of capital works prior to work taking place and following completion should be produced for residents and leaseholders
- Recommendation 10 – Residents and leaseholders should be provided, where possible, of information relation to tenders and the costs of works
- Recommendation 13 – Members were of the view that an in house capability should be explored to carry out a proportion of planned maintenance and major works. It was stated that discussions were taking place in this regard

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the above comments, the report be noted

The meeting ended at 10.00 PM

CHAIR

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REVIEW OF FIRE SAFETY 2017/18

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Islington Council should follow all relevant recommendations for local authorities and social landlords arising from the Grenfell Tower inquiry and the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, and any fire safety guidance issued by the Local Government Association.
2. Following the conclusion of the Grenfell Tower inquiry and the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, a report should be submitted to the Housing Scrutiny Committee detailing what actions the council will be taking in response to the recommendations.
3. The Housing Scrutiny Committee notes the London Fire Brigade's continued support of the 'Stay Put' policy. Islington Council should clearly communicate the London Fire Brigade's advice to tenants and leaseholders, and promote understanding of when residents should 'Stay Put' and when they should evacuate. Guidance on this should be available in a range of languages and should be displayed in prominent areas.
4. The council should maintain the dedicated email address for residents to report fire safety concerns to the council. This should be displayed in prominent locations and promoted regularly. This information should also be provided to new tenants in a welcome pack.
5. Islington Council should work with vulnerable and disabled tenants and leaseholders to co-produce personalised emergency evacuation plans. These must be realistic and achievable. Any remedial works or adaptations that are required to facilitate safe evacuation should be carried out as soon as possible.
6. Islington Council should encourage Partners for Improvement in Islington, TMOs and Housing Associations operating in the area to co-produce personalised emergency evacuation plans for their disabled and vulnerable residents, and carry out remedial works or adaptations as necessary.
7. Islington Council should maintain an up-to-date list of vulnerable council tenants and leaseholders who may need assistance to evacuate and make this available to the London Fire Brigade and Emergency Planning service. This should detail their flat number and floor, and the assistance they require. This information should be kept in a secure information box at the premises.
8. Islington Council should encourage Partners for Improvement in Islington, TMOs and Housing Associations operating in the area to make information available to the London Fire Brigade and Emergency Planning service on the location and assistance needs of vulnerable residents.

9. Islington Council and the London Fire Brigade should explore the feasibility of developing a secure electronic solution to accessing the location and assistance needs of disabled and vulnerable residents in an evacuation.
10. Islington Council should consider retrofitting sprinkler systems in all high rise housing blocks. The council should review the feasibility of installing sprinklers, the anticipated cost of the works, and model the financial impact of the works on other aspects of the housing service.
11. Islington Council should make representations to the government that the cost of retrofitting sprinkler systems and carrying out any necessary fire safety works in local authority housing should be met by central government, given that no additional funds have been allocated to date.
12. The Housing Scrutiny Committee supports the zero tolerance approach to keeping items in communal areas adopted by Islington Council and Partners for Improvement in Islington. The Committee would support more targeted communications being issued to residents where problems persist.
13. Islington Council should consider if a suitably qualified and experienced fire engineer is needed to supplement the risk assessment work carried out by the council's in-house fire safety officers. This may provide additional reassurance that fire risks are being managed effectively.
14. The council should consider consulting a suitably qualified and experienced fire engineer at the design stage of new build projects. This would help to ensure that properties are designed to the highest possible safety standards.
15. Given that hoarding can be a fire hazard, the council should further promote the services available to help hoarders, and consider installing mobile sprinkler systems in the homes of vulnerable people who are known to hoard.
16. Housing Services should work further with the Season Health Intervention Network (SHINE) to target interventions at vulnerable residents who are known to light their homes through candles rather than electricity.
17. The council should routinely monitor if communal area fire doors and front entrance fire doors are working correctly.
18. To allow the fire safety features of properties to be easily monitored, the housing asset management plan should be revised to detail the fire safety features of components.
19. Dry risers in the council's housing blocks should be checked for damage regularly. Staff on estates should be encouraged to report any visible damage or vandalism which would affect their functioning.
20. Housing services should maintain a register of fires in council housing. It is suggested that this register is backdated for ten years. Recording the cause, extent, and other details of fires may help to inform the council's fire prevention work.

SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID) – DRAFT
Title: The Council's New Build Programme (Mini-Review)
Scrutiny Review Committee: Housing Scrutiny Committee
Director leading the review: Sean McLaughlin, Corporate Director of Housing and Adult Social Services
Lead officer: Stephen Nash and David Ronan, New Homes and Development Programme Managers
Overall aim: To review the progress of the council's new build programme in comparison to other boroughs.
<p>Objectives of the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the principles underpinning the council's new build programme. • To review the design, build, and environmental standards of the council's new build housing. • To assess the obstacles to developing more council housing in Islington. • To evaluate the decision making process for how new council developments are identified and progressed. • To assess the level of resident involvement in the new build process. • To consider how new build properties are allocated. • To evaluate the performance of the New Build team. • To compare the council's approach to new build to another London borough.
<p>How is the review to be carried out:</p> <p><u>Scope of the review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principles of the new build programme; including what type of properties are developed, and what proportion of properties are for social housing, shared rent, and private ownership. • The design, build and environmental standards the new build programme must meet, and how these are achieved. • The obstacles to development, including financial and planning constraints and land availability. • Decision-making processes, and how the new build programme is managed and funded. • Resident engagement in the new build programme. • How the council's new build properties are allocated, including social, shared-ownership and private housing. • Performance against corporate targets. • How the council's new build programme compares to that of another London borough. <p><u>Types of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from officers in the New Build team. • Evidence on another London borough's new build programme. • Potential visit to new build properties.

Additional information:

Building new council homes is a key priority of the council. The Corporate Plan 2015-19 identifies 'Building more council housing and supporting private renters' as a priority, setting a target of 500 new council homes over the period.

In carrying out the review the committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.

Programme

Key output:	To be submitted to Committee on:
1. Scrutiny Initiation Document	11 December 2017
2. Recommendations & Report	13 March 2018

Agenda Item 3



ISLINGTON

Housing and Adult Social Services
7 Newington Barrow Way, London N7 7EP

Report of: Service Director - Housing Property Services

Meeting of:	Date	Ward(s)
Housing Scrutiny Committee		All

Delete as appropriate	Exempt	Non-exempt
-----------------------	-------------------	------------

Report Title: Repairs Update for Housing Scrutiny Panel

1. Synopsis

- 1.1** In September 2016 the Executive received a report from the Housing Scrutiny Committee regarding the Responsive Repairs Service. The report provided recommendations to further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the service as well as improving the experience of residents.
- Subsequently, on 19th January 2017 the Executive agreed its response to the recommendations set out in the scrutiny report to further improve the effective and efficient delivery of this service for the benefit of all Council residents (tenants and leaseholders). This report updates the Housing Scrutiny Committee on progress with the recommendations agreed by the Executive.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** To note the progress made against the recommendations, as set out in section 4 of this report.

3. Background

- 3.1** Between January and May 2016 the Housing Scrutiny Committee collected evidence to review the Housing Repairs Service. The aim of the scrutiny was to consider the experience of residents.

- 3.2** Witnesses included:
- Service Managers
 - Residents on the Repairs Reference Group
 - KWest Research
 - Affinity Sutton
 - One Housing Group
 - Camden Council.

In addition, the committee considered the following written evidence:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introductory report • Details of Call Centre Accreditation <p>The committee concluded that the experience of residents was varied and further work was required to develop the service.</p>
4.	Recommendations and Service Update
4.1	<p>In this section each of the recommendations (Bold) and <i>responses</i> (italics) from the Scrutiny are listed followed by the update from the service</p> <p>1. The service prioritise increasing the number of “first time fixes” in order to improve efficiency and tenant satisfaction. To achieve this, it is suggested that officers further investigate the feasibility of a “ring and bring” service, to enable parts to be delivered to a repair without the operative leaving the property, and continue to invest in the multi-skilling of staff. The council should aspire for all operatives to be skilled in multiple trades as part of a “first time fix culture”.</p> <p><i>The service is very focused on optimising first time fix rates. This year will see the introduction of additional materials delivery services as a result of our contract negotiations with Travis Perkins.</i></p> <p>The “ring and bring” pilot is still running. However early indications are it is a success. More developed detailed ring and bring proposals have been written into the new repairs materials tender which is currently out to tender.</p> <p><i>In April 2016 the service negotiated a change to all operatives being multi-skilled and is now commencing a two-year training programme, evaluating and training staff in all required skills using the training facility.</i></p> <p>Multi skill training is rolling out and other services such as Estate Maintenance and Non-Housing are adding their staff to the waiting list. 1st Batch operatives are still undergoing some shadowing to build confidence in their new abilities.</p> <p><i>Multi-trading (as opposed to multi-skilling) is a harder objective to achieve as the amount of van stock and level of training required is prohibitive. Where operatives want to develop new trades this will be investigated and a cost/benefit judgement made.</i></p> <p>Operatives are currently exploring using the Apprenticeship Levy and Fuse Project to train as gas fitters and electricians. There have also been considerable improvements in workforce development allowing operatives the opportunity to gain management roles. We have supported this through the structure of the service, training courses and mentoring.</p>
4.2	<p>2. The Committee welcomed the improvements of the new ICT system for repairs and was keen to see the system fully utilised by the service. The recommendation is for scripts to be developed to act as aid memoires for operatives to ensure they complete repairs correctly.</p> <p><i>The service will investigate if scripting can be added for operatives and seek if possible to develop such a function.</i></p> <p>The Oneserve Repairs and Synthesys systems were deployed in August 2017 and has resulted in several improvements including:- Better scheduling of operatives, allowing operatives to book follow on appointments on site, allowing operatives to conduct surveys on site.</p> <p>Scripting for operatives is not currently possible with this system. However, the stages progressed by the operative through their PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) device do offer some guidance. For instance, the job cannot be completed without a photo bring taken or risk assessment completed.</p> <p>Phase two of the implementation of the new systems is underway which will offer improvements to the</p>

	<p>online offer, better reporting on how the service is operating and improvements across the system. This project is one of Shared Digital's top priorities and is due to complete winter 2019.</p>
4.3	<p>3. The Committee recognized that communication is a key element of the service and recommended that texts are sent to residents updating them on their repair.</p> <p><i>As part of the new IT system due in April 2017 the service will seek to improve communications by introducing text communications with residents. Initially the service will launch with improved outbound messages and we will further investigate development of two-way text communication, where residents should be able to respond to the service by text to give feedback and adjust appointments.</i></p> <p>The new system sends text message reminders to the resident to confirm when a job is raised. There is also the ability to have two-way text conversations. The service is developing the ability to send a text satisfaction survey at the end of a repair.</p>
4.4	<p>4. Operatives should be empowered and supported to make decisions on the front line to increase the speed of repairs. Operatives should complete additional repairs as part of a first time fix culture.</p> <p><i>The service has already removed many of the authorisation structures used when repairs were delivered by a contractor, giving operatives more freedom to judge what work is needed. The service is investigating training and process changes to deliver this recommendation. It is expected that the service change should be in place within the 2017-2018 financial year.</i></p> <p>Operatives are empowered to undertake works and collect information as part of their job. For instance, completing asbestos surveys on site rather than requiring a further visit. Training on customer care, which has already been rolled out, and the Multi Skill training which is now in progress, will further add to the success in this area.</p>
4.5	<p>5. The committee recommends there is a clear escalation process developed for when repairs fall under the capital programme team.</p> <p><i>Over the next six months' staff from Repairs and Capital Programme Delivery will review current procedures, including pro-formas to be used.</i></p> <p>Following a review of the processes for High Value Repairs and Insurance works the Capital and Repairs teams continue to work closely together deciding jointly how to deal with high scale emergency works as they occur.</p>
4.6	<p>6. The committee recognise the role of estate coordinators and caretakers in assisting with communications with residents.</p> <p><i>The repairs team meets quarterly with its corresponding Area Housing Office teams to review contacts and make optimum use of estate services staff knowledge.</i></p> <p>Over 2017-2018 the Repairs service reviewed the "no access" process and communication procedure for estate-wide repairs (such as water or power failure) to ensure that use of local assets is maximised. The Repairs Policy has recently been updated and work to review the No Access Process has started and is due to complete in Spring 2018. The Repairs team has also increased its store of torches and water for use in emergencies.</p>
4.7	<p>7. The operatives should take before and after pictures of all repairs and conduct repairs to other damaged assets or report them if outside of their trade. The service should analyse the repairs it received and feed this information in to the capital programme.</p> <p><i>Operatives are required to take before and after photographs of all works, however the current system requires supervisors to manually check every job which is inefficient.</i></p>

	<p><i>The new IT system will assist the service in ensuring photographs are always taken. The development of the QlikView data management system will also enable improved data analysis to identify the most frequent repairs and the service will produce “heat maps” showing the most common estates for its top five / ten repairs each year. The service will investigate the feasibility of conducting repairs to additional damaged assets or reporting of them by operatives and seek if possible to develop this capability.</i></p> <p>These recommendations are in place with the exception of the dashboards which are in development. Shared Digital are currently deciding on the corporate dashboard solution. This has delayed delivery of dashboard functionality for repairs.</p>
4.8	<p>8. The Committee would like to see an expansion of the repairs successful engagement programmes and apprenticeship schemes.</p> <p><i>The service has taken on eleven apprentices in the year 2016-2017. This is a sizable financial commitment for up to four years. The service will require further intakes of apprentices to meet diversity aims and to ensure suitable trained staff are in place when the aging workforce retire. The service will review the cost and success of the current cohort of eleven apprentices in September 2017 to decide on the capacity and feasibility of taking on another cohort in September 2018.</i></p> <p>Currently the service is on target to complete eight apprenticeships in 2019 and work has begun selecting a cohort of six new apprentices. In addition, two surveying apprenticeships are underway using apprenticeship levy funding for their training.</p>
4.9	<p>9. The committee recommended Islington and Camden explore the scope for joint working and sharing of best practice.</p> <p><i>Islington and Camden meet regularly to share best practice. In addition, both boroughs are actively trying to set up a London-wide direct works meeting to benchmark and share information between as many comparable local authority repairs services as possible. The service will formally explore several areas including fleet and materials provision to see what opportunities are available for joint working.</i></p> <p>Opportunities to joint work are limited by differing service standards and operational practices between Islington and Camden. Considerable service redesign would be required to align the services to make many cross working opportunities viable. However, we are currently exploring the opportunity to jointly manage out of hours works and remain in talks about possible joint working on materials and fleet. Camden and Islington continue to share best practice on a range of service areas.</p>
4.10	<p>10. The committee is keen to see the development of the online repairs system and recommends additional resident feedback as it is developed further.</p> <p><i>The repairs online system is a considerable success in terms of user acceptance and functionality. There is a programme over the next three years to increase functionality including rebooking appointments, booking TMO repairs and communal repairs. Many of these will be facilitated by the new IT system. As each element is improved it will be shared with user groups including but not limited to the Repairs Reference Group. The success of the online system is limited by the free access to the repairs call line Housing Direct and for the savings predicted from this development to be realised assertive channel shift will need to be considered. This may include reducing call centre operating hours, increasing waiting times, offering priority appointments to online bookings and reducing access to the Freephone number.</i></p> <p>The functionality of online repairs continues to be developed. Uptake and usage remains low as there are other access channels preferred by residents. The maintenance of the system has been problematic but the service is seeking to improve matters working in conjunction with Shared Digital.</p>

5.	Implications
5.1	<p>Financial Implications: Recommendations 1-7 & 9-10 are designed to improve the service provision whilst at the same time drive efficiencies into the repairs processes.</p> <p>IT development is ongoing in relation to recommendation 7 (Qlik view data management) and costs to date in terms of recommendation 10 repairs online are not significant and have been accommodated within the HRA.</p> <p>Recommendation 1 includes the use of the apprenticeship levy & fuse project to fund relevant training.</p> <p>The above recommendations 1-7 & 9-10 are not anticipated to generate significant increased costs.</p> <p>Recommendation 8 – Apprentices – the 11 apprentices currently employed cost £250k.</p> <p>There would clearly be staffing costs associated with extending this scheme and any decision to do so would need to be considered in the context of the resources available within the wider HRA.</p>
5.2	Legal Implications:
	There are no specific legal implications on this report. Where required, legal advice and support will be provided to Housing Services in respect of the implementation of the recommendations.
5.3	Resident Impact Assessment:
	<p>The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The Council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.</p> <p>No adverse impacts are anticipated linked to this update report</p>
5.4	Environmental Impact Assessment:
	No applicable to this update report

6. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

6.1 The Committee is asked to note progress made with implementation of the recommendations.

Background papers: None

Appendices: None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:

Simon Kwong

Service Director - Housing Property Services

Date:

Report Author: Matt West Head of Repairs and Maintenance
Tel: 020 7527 6372
Email: matt.west@islington.gov.uk

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

20 JUNE 2017

1. Urgent Item: Fire Safety following the Grenfell Tower Fire
2. Membership, Terms of Reference and Dates of Meetings
3. Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q4 2016/17)
4. Housing Services for Vulnerable People: Final Report
5. Scrutiny Topics and Work Plan 2017/18

17 JULY 2017

1. Fire Safety Scrutiny Review: SID and Witness Evidence
2. Housing Communications Scrutiny Review: SID and Introductory Presentation

4 SEPTEMBER 2017

1. Fire Safety Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence
2. Housing Communications Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence
3. Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q1 2017/18)

3 OCTOBER 2017

1. Fire Safety Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence
2. Housing Communications Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence

16 NOVEMBER 2017

1. Housing Communications Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence
2. Fire Safety Scrutiny Review: Witness Evidence
3. Capital Programme Scrutiny 2015/16 – 12 Month Report Back

11 DECEMBER 2017

1. Fire Safety Scrutiny Review: Draft Recommendations
2. The Council's New Build Programme Mini-Review: SID and Witness Evidence
3. Responsive Repairs Scrutiny 2015/16 – 12 Month Report Back
4. Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q2 2017/18)

30 JANUARY 2018

1. RSL Scrutiny (*Guinness Partnership TBC*)
2. Fire Safety Scrutiny Review: Final Report
3. Housing Communications Scrutiny Review: Draft Recommendations
4. The Council's New Build Programme Mini-Review: Witness Evidence and Conclusions

FEBRUARY 2018 – TBC

1. Scrutiny of Partners for Improvement in Islington

13 MARCH 2018

1. [The Council's New Build Programme Mini-Review: Final Report](#)
2. [Housing Communications Scrutiny Review: Final Report](#)
3. How Islington Council works with Housing Associations
4. Quarterly Review of Housing Performance (Q3 2017/18) & Annual Executive Member Presentation