

AGENDA
HEALTH AND HOUSING POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PANEL

Date: Thursday, 22 September 2016

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

Members:

Councillor B Bayford (Chairman)

Councillor F Birkett (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Mrs M Brady
Mrs C Heneghan
S D Martin
Ms S Pankhurst
D L Steadman

Deputies:

Councillors Mrs C L A Hockley
Mrs K K Trott
C J Wood



1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel meeting held on 21 July 2016.

3. Chairman's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest and Disclosures of Advice or Directions

To receive any declarations of interest from members in accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct and disclosures of advice or directions received from Group Leaders or Political Groups, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

5. Deputations

To receive any deputations of which notice has been lodged.

6. Health Update

To receive a verbal report by the Chairman of the Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel on Local Strategic Health Issues.

7. Social & Affordable Housing Update

To receive a verbal update from the Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits on the Council's Social & Affordable Housing Programme.

8. Welfare Reform Update (Pages 9 - 18)

To receive an update from the Director of Operations on Welfare Reforms.

9. Vanguard Presentation and Report on Council Housing Repairs & Maintenance (Pages 19 - 24)

To receive a report on Council Housing Repairs & Maintenance, including a presentation outlining the changes that have been made as a result of the Vanguard intervention.

10. Tenancy Management Report (Pages 25 - 30)

To consider a report by the Director of Operations on Tenancy Management Performance.

11. Review of the Work Programme 2016/17 (Pages 31 - 34)

To consider a report by the Director of Operations, inviting the Panel to review the Work Programme for 2016/17.

P GRIMWOOD
Chief Executive Officer

Civic Offices
www.fareham.gov.uk
14 September 2016

**For further information please contact:
Democratic Services, Civic Offices, Fareham, PO16 7AZ
Tel:01329 236100
democraticservices@fareham.gov.uk**

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 21 July 2016

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillors: B Bayford (Chairman)

F Birkett (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs M Brady, Mrs C Heneghan, S D Martin, Ms S Pankhurst
and D L Steadman

**Also
Present:**



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

It was AGREED that the minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel held on 26 May 2016 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. HEALTH UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation from the Chairman to give new members an overview of the role of the Panel with regards to Health within the Borough.

The presentation outlined the NHS Services available to residents, which include:

- Fareham & Gosport Clinical Commissioning Group
- Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust
- University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust
- Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Care UK & St Mary's Treatment Centre
- South Central Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS England (South)

The Chairman also highlighted areas of concern, with members again voicing unease at the on-going management co-operation issues with the Fareham Community Hospital. The Chairman echoed this anxiety, re-assuring the Panel that the Task Group set up by Suella Fernandes MP is making good progress and undertaking to update members at future meetings on any developments.

It was AGREED that the Chairman be thanked for his presentation.

7. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The Panel received a brief presentation by the Senior Housing Officer (Options) and considered a report by the Director of Operations on the Annual Review of the Homelessness Strategy 2014-17.

The report and presentation gave details about the objectives within the Strategy and the progress being made. It also highlighted how the Vanguard intervention has changed the way that some areas of the service are being delivered and how this has affected the progress of some objectives.

Members enquired about the use of private landlords and raised concerns about the costs involved. The Senior Housing Officer (Options) advised the Panel that they have a good network of landlords that they work with closely so that fees and charges for tenants can be re-negotiated where necessary.

The Panel asked whether there are any empty properties across the Borough that could be re-invigorated for use. The Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits reported that this option is explored where properties are in areas that will meet customers' needs.

It was AGREED:-

- a) that the Senior Housing Officer (Options) be thanked for their very informative presentation; and
- b) that the Panel notes the content of the report.

8. SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Panel received a brief verbal update from The Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits on the Social and Affordable Housing Programme. The following updates were provided:

- Stevenson Court – which is due to be completed at the end of July and officers will shortly be working towards allocating customers into these properties.
- Sylvan Court – is on target to complete early in the New Year.

The Chairman requested that arrangements be made for Members to visit both Stevenson Court and Collingwood Court to see the success of both of these completed projects.

It was AGREED that the Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits be thanked for the verbal update.

9. NEW ALLOCATIONS POLICY PRESENTATION

The Panel received a presentation by the Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits on the New Allocations Policy.

The presentation detailed how the outcomes from the Vanguard interventions have resulted in the need to make changes to the New Allocations Policy.

Members were notified of the proposed timetable for drafting the new policy which gives an extended period of consultation to ensure that residents have the opportunity to put forward their views on the new policy.

It was AGREED that the Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits be thanked for their presentation.

10. REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Operations which reviewed the Panel's Work Programme for 2016/17.

The Director of Operations highlighted the revisions to the Work Programme which have been made in order to accommodate the drafting and consultation process of the New Allocations Policy and include an overview for Members of the Vanguard interventions when presenting the Council Housing Repairs & Maintenance Report.

It was AGREED that the Work Programme for 2016/17 be approved by the Panel.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.30 pm).

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Report to
Health and Housing Policy Development
and Review Panel**

Date: 22 September 2016
Report of: Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits
Subject: WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

SUMMARY

This paper provides Panel members with an update on the progress of the Government's reform of welfare, the implications for the Council and the impact on residents currently receiving assistance towards their rent and Council Tax.

RECOMMENDATION

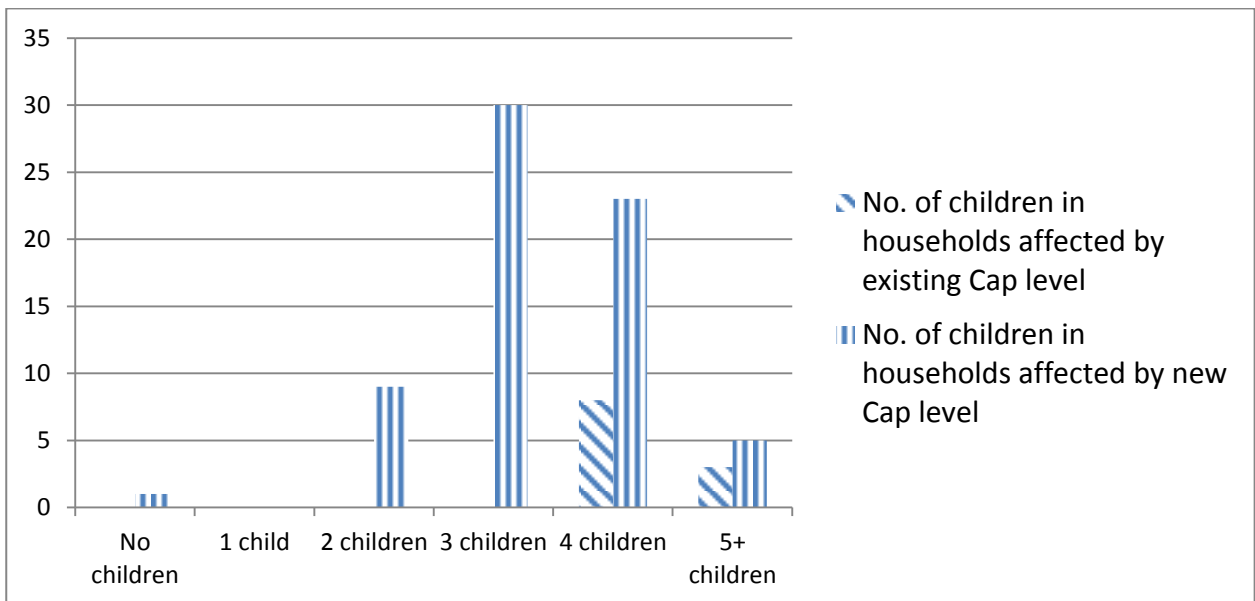
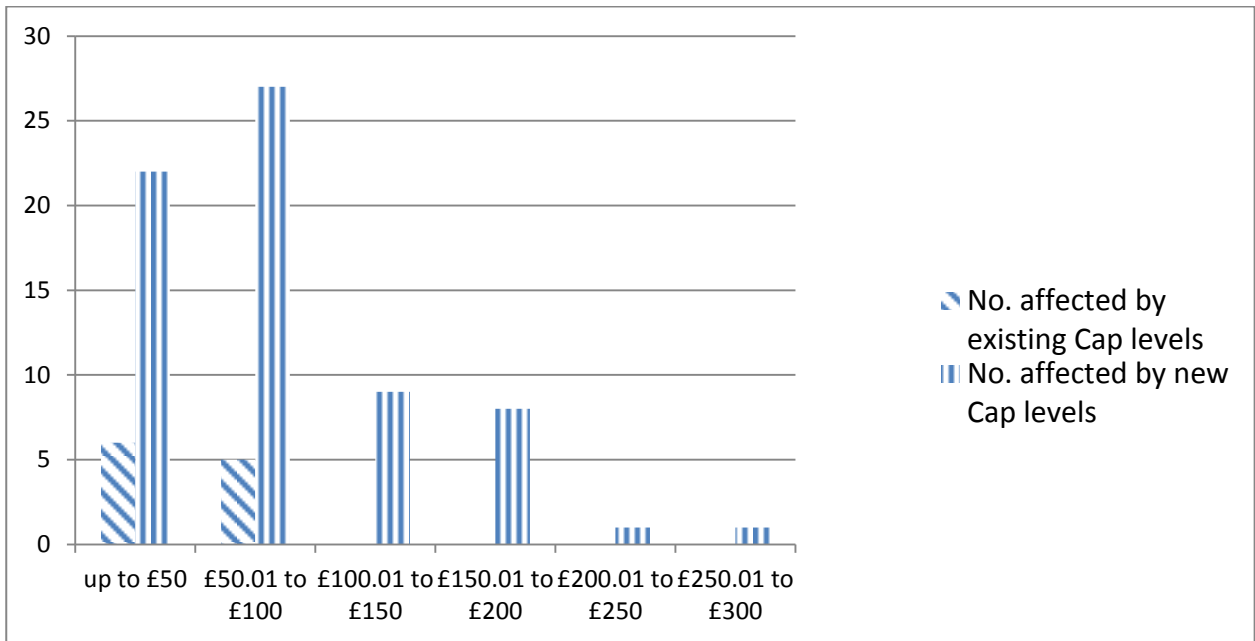
That the Panel notes the content of this report.

INTRODUCTION

1. Changes announced in the 2015 Summer and Autumn Budget Statements, which build upon those contained within the Welfare Reform Act 2012 mean that Fareham Borough Council and its residents who are on a low income will continue to be affected by the reforms. This paper provides Members with an overview of the reforms already in place and those due to be implemented over the coming years.

BENEFITS CAP

2. The Benefits Cap is a key part of the Government's welfare reforms and was originally introduced in 2013 with the intention of increasing incentives to work and promoting fairness by ensuring that those on benefits do not have an income higher than those in work.
3. The cap is set at what is considered to be the average net earned income of working households and is currently £350 per week for a single adult with no children and £500 per week for a couple or lone parent, regardless of the number of children they have. When the total weekly income from certain benefits exceeds the applicable Benefits Cap amount, the claimant's Housing Benefit is reduced to bring the total benefits received down to the cap level.
4. Households who receive Working Tax Credit are exempt from the cap and to protect the most vulnerable, those in receipt of certain benefits such as Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance and War/War Widows Pensions are also exempt.
5. The cap levels will be lowered to £257.69 per week and £384.62 per week respectively from the autumn. The change will start to be implemented from 7 November 2016 and will be managed over a number of weeks. The exemption rules are being extended to include households which include anyone entitled to Guardian's Allowance or Carer's Allowance.
6. Whilst the exact implementation approach is yet to be determined by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), it is likely to follow a similar pattern to that when the Benefits Cap was originally introduced in 2013. DWP's aim is to ensure that wherever possible, claimants who will be affected by the lower cap level are notified early and take up the support being made available to them via local Jobcentres to adjust their circumstances, including moving into or increasing employment if they can.
7. The table below sets out the current impact on Housing Benefit claimants in Fareham and the projected impact based on the information provided to date by DWP:



8. Currently there are 11 households affected by the cap; based on current predictions this number will rise significantly as will the financial impact on those families. All claimants who might be affected by the changes were contacted by the DWP between May and June 2016 to offer additional employment assistance to those who are not already fully supported in looking for work. Housing and Benefit Officers have commenced a programme of work with individuals to provide housing and budgeting advice.

REMOVAL OF THE SPARE ROOM SUBSIDY

9. From April 2013 changes were made to the way Housing Benefit is calculated for working age claimants living in social housing. If a claimant is assessed as having more bedrooms in their home than is necessary, they will be considered to be under-occupying that property and a percentage reduction will be applied to their Housing Benefit; a 14% reduction for those deemed to have one spare bedroom and a 25% reduction for those with two or more spare bedrooms.

10. A bedroom is allocated for each of the following:

- A couple, and
- A person aged 16 and over, and
- Two children of the same sex aged under 16 years, and
- Two children regardless of sex who are under 10 years, and
- Any other child under 16 years, and

Additional bedroom for:

- A child with severe disabilities who is unable to share a room, and
- A foster child living with an approved foster carer, or approved foster carers pending placements
- A non-resident overnight carer, and
- A member of the armed forces who is away on operations

11. The number of tenants affected by these rules has reduced over the last three years – this will be as a result of them moving to smaller accommodation or coming off Housing Benefit all together. There are currently 106 tenants whose Housing Benefit is reduced due to the under-occupancy rules; 94 tenants are under-occupying by one bedroom and 12 by two bedrooms. The Tenancy Services team closely monitor the rent accounts of those who are affected and where applicable provide financial support through the Discretionary Housing Payment scheme.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

12. Universal Credit (UC) was first introduced in 2013 and is available to people who are on a low income or are out of work. It aims to make the welfare system simpler by replacing six benefits and tax credits with a single monthly payment. It includes support for the costs of housing, children and childcare, as well as support for disabled people and carers.

13. UC claimants are expected to apply and manage their claim digitally. Whilst the vast majority of claimants are able to do this, there are some who need support; Local Authorities are required to provide this support through a Delivery Partnership Agreement with the local Jobcentre. This provision also extends to supporting those claimants who need assistance managing the financial changes which UC brings;

namely the single monthly household payment and the housing support costs paid directly to the claimant.

14. UC 'rolled out' in Fareham in March 2016 for new single Job Seekers Allowance claimants only and where required, our Housing Benefit officers assist claimants to make their claims online and make referrals to Citizens Advice Fareham who provide the budgeting support on our behalf. We also provide specialist housing benefit advice to the UC Service Centres.
15. The impact of the introduction of UC in Fareham is currently very low however recent research into rent arrears and hardship as a result of UC nationally is worrying. The key factor leading to tenants falling into arrears is due to the six week delay before they receive their first UC payment and many claimants not having sufficient savings to get through this period. Additionally, most social tenants currently have their Housing Benefit paid directly to their landlord however under UC, support for housing costs will be paid directly to the tenant. There is an existing safety measure which enables the housing cost element of UC to be paid to the landlord where the tenant has fallen into arrears of 8 weeks or more but the DWP have now recognised that there is a need for social landlords to identify vulnerable tenants to prevent rent arrears accruing in the first place. They are working on a number of schemes including a trial where social landlords can apply to be awarded 'trusted partner status' so they can have vulnerable tenant's housing support paid directly to them before they fall into arrears.
16. Approximately 9 million claimants will eventually transfer to UC by 2022 and throughout this time, local authorities will see a gradual reduction in their HB caseloads. The Government have recently announced that they will not begin the incorporation of HB for pensioners into Pension Credit until the completion of the UC migration timetable therefore local authorities will be delivering HB for pensioners beyond 2020.
17. Findings from the trials and further updates on the roll out of UC in Fareham will be provided to Members as required.

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

18. Following the abolition of Council Tax Benefit, the Government devolved the responsibility to design a Council Tax Support scheme for working age claimants to local billing authorities from April 2013. Fareham Borough Council has implemented its own schemes for each year from 2013/14 and work is currently under way to design the scheme that will run from April 2017.
19. Currently 4527 claimants receive Council Tax Support. The funding for Council Tax Support is contained within an element of the Revenue Support Grant each year rather than reimbursement of actual expenditure as was the case under the previous Council Tax Benefit regime. The scheme for pension age claimants (56% of our total caseload) is prescribed by Central Government therefore to reduce the financial impact on FBC and our precepting authorities, the cost of supporting working age claimants must come from the funding left over after the cost of the pension age scheme has been met.

20. The current scheme contains the following elements:

- Every working age claimant pays the first 20% of their Council Tax bill
- For those claimants living in larger homes, the amount of Council Tax Support they receive is not higher than that given for smaller properties (band C)
- Where claimants have other adults living with them who are not dependent upon them (for example grown up children), this non-dependant adult is expected to contribute a minimum rate of £3.77 per week towards the household council tax bill
- As well as pensioners, the most vulnerable working age claimants are exempt from the reductions above.

21. Council Tax collection rates have remained largely unchanged since the reduction in support available to working age claimants. There has been a significant increase in the level of recovery activity carried out by the Council Tax team to ensure our collection rates remain high. Financial assistance is available for those severe hardship and applicants are required to engage with our dedicated budgeting officer (funded by FBC and employed by Citizens Advice Fareham)

OTHER CHANGES

Freeze on working age benefits – April 2016

22. A freeze on working age benefits was announced in the Summer Budget 2015 and means that for four years commencing April 2016 there will be no increase in the benefit rates for people of working age who previously received a small increase in their benefits each year to take into account the rise in living costs. This affects Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, Child Tax Credits, Working Tax Credits and Child Benefit. The rates freeze will not apply to disability benefits such as Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or carers and pensioner benefits and statutory maternity and sickness payments.

Limiting backdating in Housing Benefit – April 2016

23. New arrangements came into force on 1 April 2016 which reduces the maximum period for which Housing Benefit claims may be backdated for working age claimants from six months to one month. Consideration for claims to be backdated relies upon the claimant to demonstrate they have good cause for not applying at an earlier date and these provisions have not changed, however the reduction in the maximum backdating period makes it all the more important that claims are made promptly.

Removal of the Family Premium within Housing Benefit – May 2016

24. When assessing entitlement to Housing Benefit, the claimants income is compared to their applicable amount (or 'needs allowance') for their particular circumstances. The applicable amount is made up of personal allowances and premiums that are set within legislation. The premium awarded to families will not be included in the applicable amount for new entitlements on or after 1 May 2016 or for any existing claimants who have a child or become responsible for a child for the first time after 30 April 2016.

FORTHCOMING CHANGES

Restrictions in support for children – April 2017

25. It was announced in the Summer Budget 2015 that, as part of the welfare budget savings, the maximum entitlement to tax credits and Housing Benefit will be restricted to the ‘two child limit’ for new claims to these benefits from families with three or more children.

Local Housing Allowance rules to be extended to the social rented sector – April 2018

26. The rate of Housing Benefit in the social sector will be capped at the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate, thereby aligning the rules to that of the private sector. This will apply to tenancies signed after 1 April 2016, with Housing Benefit entitlement changing from 1 April 2018 onwards. It will include the ‘shared accommodation rate’ of LHA that applies to single people in the private rented sector who are under 35 and do not have dependent children.
27. Similarly to the previously announced 12 month exemption from the 1% reduction on social housing rents for all supported accommodation, the Government have committed to a year-long exemption from the LHA cap to all tenants of supported accommodation whilst the outcomes of various research projects are known.

RISK ASSESSMENT

28. Any financial and reputational risks to the Council as a result of the Government’s key welfare reforms continue to be monitored and mitigated against as detailed below:

The Benefits Cap

Issues	Possible Consequences	Mitigation
Families move as home is no longer affordable, no alternative accommodation available	LA to fund temporary or B&B accommodation	Early communication of changes to affected households Provision of money advice Identification of alternative cheaper accommodation
Families move to smaller/shared accommodation locally	Overcrowding	Identification of families at risk of displacement early and where possible work with them to identify suitable alternative accommodation in same locality
Families move to a	Children having longer	Identification of families at risk of displacement early

cheaper locality	<p>journey to school</p> <p>Longer travelling distances to find work</p> <p>Displacement of families support networks</p>	<p>and where possible work with them to identify suitable alternative accommodation in same locality</p> <p>Work with receiving councils to minimize disruption to education and to identify suitable permanent accommodation</p>
------------------	---	---

Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy

Issues	Possible Consequences	Mitigation
Tenant unable to meet the shortfall between their rent and HB entitlement & falls into arrears	<p>Additional collection costs for social landlords.</p> <p>Increased arrears and arrears maintenance work for social landlords</p>	<p>Early communication of changes to tenants.</p> <p>Encouraging tenants to downsize</p> <p>Provision of money advice</p> <p>Discretionary Housing Payments</p>
Shortage of smaller properties	Tenants unable to move from no longer affordable properties	<p>Provision of money advice</p> <p>Discretionary Housing Payments</p> <p>Continue to review downsizing policies and wider Housing Strategy</p>

Merger of HB into Universal Credit

Issues	Possible Consequences	Mitigation
Rundown of Council Benefits Service	<p>Possible redundancy costs</p> <p>Possible TUPE issues</p>	Undertake early planning to reduce staff as much as possible through re-deployment or natural wastage whilst taking into account possible need to continue service beyond 2022 due to project delays

		& uncertainty over HB delivery for pensioners.
Increase in housing rent arrears	Cost of collecting arrears Cash flow challenges	Early publication by benefits service to housing providers of changes to HB, to enable them to identify tenants who may need budgeting support and/or direct payments

Council Tax Support

Issues	Possible Consequences	Mitigation
Further reductions in budget with protection for pensioners maintained	Working poor disproportionately affected	Administration of the Hardship Fund
Increase in council tax arrears	Unplanned reduction in income for the council	Continue our work with the CAB, making referrals where necessary and advising on the Hardship Fund.
Increase in collection costs	Increased financial pressures on the council	Continue to work with our customers and the CAB to ensure payment arrangements are manageable.

CONCLUSION

29. The impact of the Government's Welfare Reform agenda continues to affect the Council, our partners, local communities and individuals. We remain committed to mitigate the impacts as much as possible. The continual delays in the implementation of UC mean that there is still considerable uncertainty around funding, demand and how services will need to be delivered in the future.

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Caroline Newman. (Ext 4645)

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel

Date **22 September 2016**

Report of: **Director of Operations**

Subject: **COUNCIL HOUSING REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE REPORT**

SUMMARY

This report sets out a summary of the performance for Building Services covering all aspects of the service delivered to the residents for the first quarter of 2016/17.

RECOMMENDATION

That the panel notes and scrutinises the information contained in the report.

INTRODUCTION

1. This report sets out performance information for the responsive repairs service and an update on the delivery of the planned maintenance works by the Property Services team.
2. In addition to the performance information, assurance statements relating to the significant health and safety risks associated with the housing stock are also provided.

RESPONSIVE REPAIRS SERVICE

3. The Housing Repairs service has applied the 'system thinking' approach across all of the Council housing stock. From 1st April 2015 this system operated in 100% of the Borough. The service is primarily delivered with directly employed operatives; supporting contractors work for the Council where necessary to allow for the mobilisation of the Direct Service Organisation (DSO) and the new system of work.
4. A van stock system and materials delivery service has been introduced to enable efficiency in the delivery of repairs. This has been working successfully and data is being collected on materials used on repairs to continuously improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the service.
5. The new approach to the work has enabled the delivery of five key steps that are of value to the customer when they need a repair to their home. These are:
 - i. Collect "Clean information" – Name, address, contact number, brief detail of the problem, date and time when it is convenient for us to attend
 - ii. Allocate the work – at the right time, allocate the job to an operative with the right skills
 - iii. Access – attend at the right time, be polite, courteous and presentable
 - iv. Diagnose – identify the root cause of the problem, understand the individual needs of the customer and tailor a solution that is necessary and proportionate
 - v. Repair – use the right skills and have access to the right materials to fix the problem
6. The performance of the new system is demonstrated by measures that reflect what matters to our customers:
 - (a) Did we turn up when we said we would (at the time convenient to the customer)?
 - (b) Did we get the operative with the right skills to visit the customer first time?

- (c) Did we do the right repair?
- (d) How long did we take?

7. A measure to understand how long a job takes to be completed is taken from when a trade operative arrives on the agreed date to when it is finally completed. The average 'end to end' time for a job to be completed from the convenient appointment date is approximately 4 days; based on data collected since 1 April 2016, which is slightly higher since last quarter.
8. 97% of appointments were attended at the time convenient with the customer; based on data collected since 1 April 2016, which has slightly improved since last quarter.
9. A new software system is being developed which will help the repairs officers deliver the service more efficiently. It will also provide improved data collection which will make it simpler and provide more accurate performance measures to manage the service.
10. The responsive repairs service is currently attending an average of 50 appointments per day. Approximately 20% of these are undertaken by supporting and specialist contractors.

PLANNED MAINTENANCE SERVICE

11. The current planned maintenance projects are being progressed, generally by tender opportunities or utilising existing long term agreements. Detailed below are both the current and proposed projects:-
 - a) Kitchen and bathroom modernisation continue to be undertaken using an existing contract arrangement with MITIE Property Services and a new arrangement with JPC Contractors with works being identified via the responsive repairs service or customer requests.
 - b) Replacement gas boilers and central heating systems are being provided through an existing arrangement with TSG Building Services.
 - c) A programme for electrical Inspections to dwellings and common areas is currently continuing using a combination of directly employed electrical engineers and electrical contractors.
 - d) Additional off-road parking has now been provided at Thorni Avenue, Nashe Way, Marks Road, Nelson Court, Minden House and resurfacing of the drying areas at Trafalgar Court has now been completed.
 - e) Disabled Adaptions continue to be provided on the recommendation of the Hampshire County Council Occupational Therapy service. These works are currently being delivered by external contractors.
 - f) A number of blocks of flats around the Borough have been identified with failed cavity wall insulation. Currently remedial works are being arranged on an 'as required' basis. Further works is required to develop a programme of cavity wall insulation replacements.

- g) External redecorations have now been completed at Hunts Pond Road. A review of all external redecoration of the housing stock is required to develop a new programme.
- h) Works are nearing completion to replace the fascia, soffit and rainwater goods and roofing repairs at Downing Court.

ASSURANCE STATEMENTS

12. The following statements outline the current implemented arrangements for specific health and safety matters related to the management of the housing stock:-

(a) Asbestos Management

In accordance with legislation, all communal areas of the housing stock have an asbestos register detailing all elements where asbestos containing materials are located. In addition, a typical 30% of the housing stock has been surveyed, records held in a database and relevant residents informed.

All asbestos containing materials which were recommended for removal have been completed. Remaining ACMs are to be managed and resurveyed on a periodic basis.

The asbestos register information is passed to contractors who are employed to work on the housing stock with instructions to report any suspicious material immediately to the relevant contract administrator.

(b) Legionella Management

In accordance with the relevant Health and Safety Executive approved code of practice (L8), all communal water services have been independently risk assessed by specialists and managed by in-house employees and a specialist contractor.

New Risk assessments are currently being renewed and will be subject to a formal review 2 years after. The risk assessment identifies remedial works (where necessary) and outlines a site specific management plan to prevent the growth and proliferation of the harmful legionella bacteria.

In-house staff, such as sheltered housing officers, are designated specific weekly and monthly tasks to ensure the water systems do not become stagnant and that temperatures are maintained within certain tolerances.

In addition, a specialist external contractor has been commissioned to undertake higher level tasks such as chlorinating shower heads, hot and cold water storage tank checks and water clarity inspections. Clearwater carry out water sampling from applicable calorifiers once a year and there have been no issues identified in recent years.

(c) **Fire Precautions and Risk Assessments**

Fire risk assessments are held for communal areas of all housing sites, identifying remedial works to improve the safety of residents in the event of a fire.

No significant works are outstanding.

A service agreement is held with a local company for the annual service requirements and breakdown attendance for fire detection and alarm installations, where installed.

(d) **Electrical Safety**

Electrical inspections to Council homes and common areas will continue working to a 5 year cyclical programme. As part of this programme the electrical engineer will assess the condition of the installation and provide a date on when it should be re-tested, which may extend to 10 years if deemed reasonable.

These inspections are undertaken using a combination of directly employed electrical engineers and electrical contractors.

Any work that is recommended within the inspection reports are carried out by the inspecting engineer, within a proportionate timescale.

(e) **Gas Servicing**

In accordance with legislation, the Council has a statutory obligation to ensure all gas heating appliances are inspected and have an annual Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR). The current aim is to service all gas heating appliances every 10 months, allowing for any access difficulties. TSG Building Services Ltd is currently appointed as our gas heating servicing and repairs contractor.

The current compliance figure is 99.95% with current position as shown below.

Properties with a current LGSR	1820
Properties capped at the gas meter	4
Properties without a LGSR - expired within 0 to3 months	1
Properties without a LGSR - expired within 3 to6 months	0
Properties without a LGSR - expired within 6 to12 months	0
Properties without a LGSR - expired over 12 months	0

The Council has a robust procedure for dealing with hard-to-access homes resulting in isolating gas supply if feasible, forced-entry or legal proceedings if necessary.

CONCLUSION

13. This report has provided members with an update on performance monitoring and project delivery information relating to Building Services which panel members are asked to note.

Background Papers:

None

Reference Papers:

None

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Shaun Barnett. (Ext 4825)

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Report to
Health and Housing Policy Development
and Review Panel**

Date **22 September 2016**

Report of: **Director of Operations**

Subject: **TENANCY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

SUMMARY

This report provides Panel members with an update on performance in regard to current tenant rent arrears, management of empty homes, anti-social behaviour, estate services and tenant involvement

RECOMMENDATION

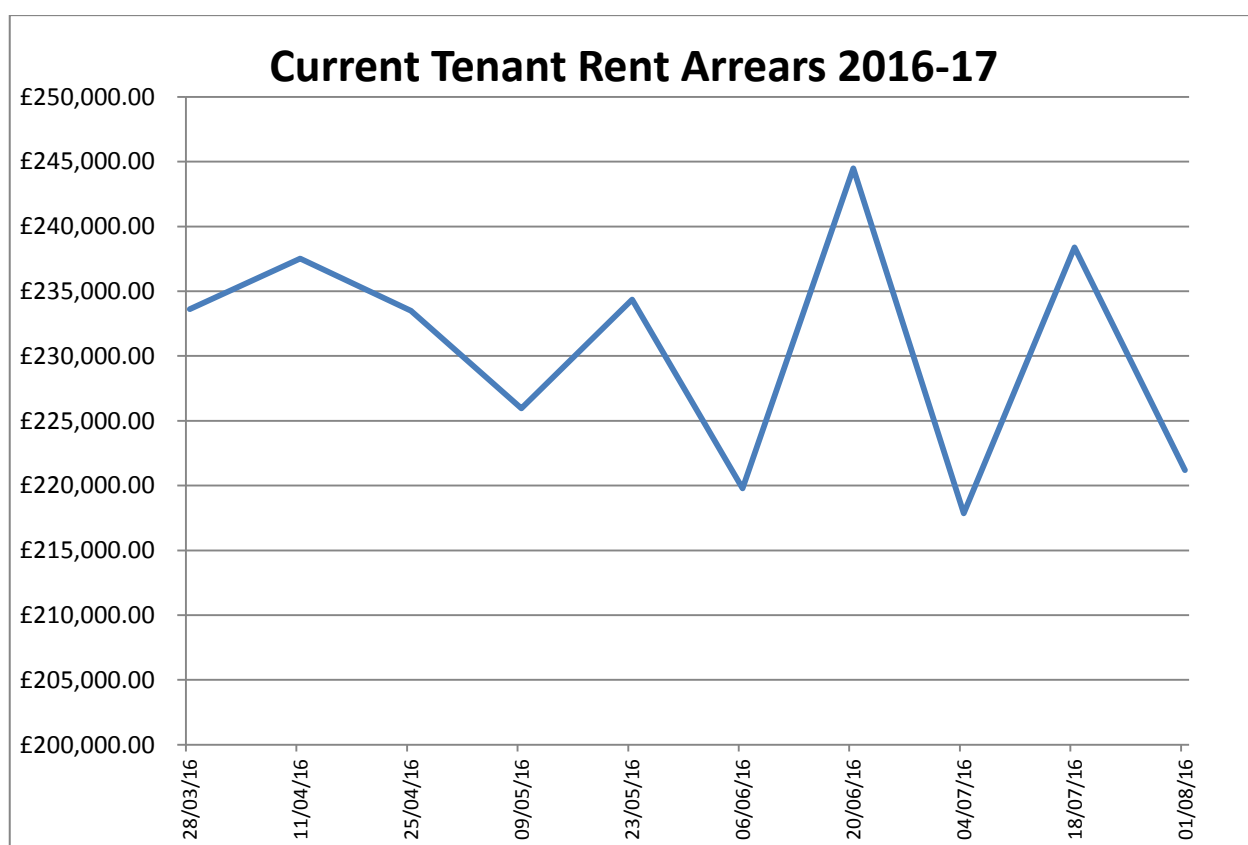
That the Panel notes the information contained within the report.

INTRODUCTION

1. Tenancy Management covers a range of housing service functions which include rent collection and arrears recovery, managing empty homes, dealing with anti-social behaviour, housing estate management and tenant involvement.
2. This report provides panel members with an update on performance and highlights any key service issues officers are dealing with.

CURRENT TENANT ARREARS

3. Current tenant arrears as at 31 July 2016 stood at £221,180. This equates to 1.66% of the projected annual rent debit which is an improvement to the previous report in March 2016 (2.16%) and for the same period last year (2.02%).
4. The graph shown below helps to illustrate performance for the year to date.

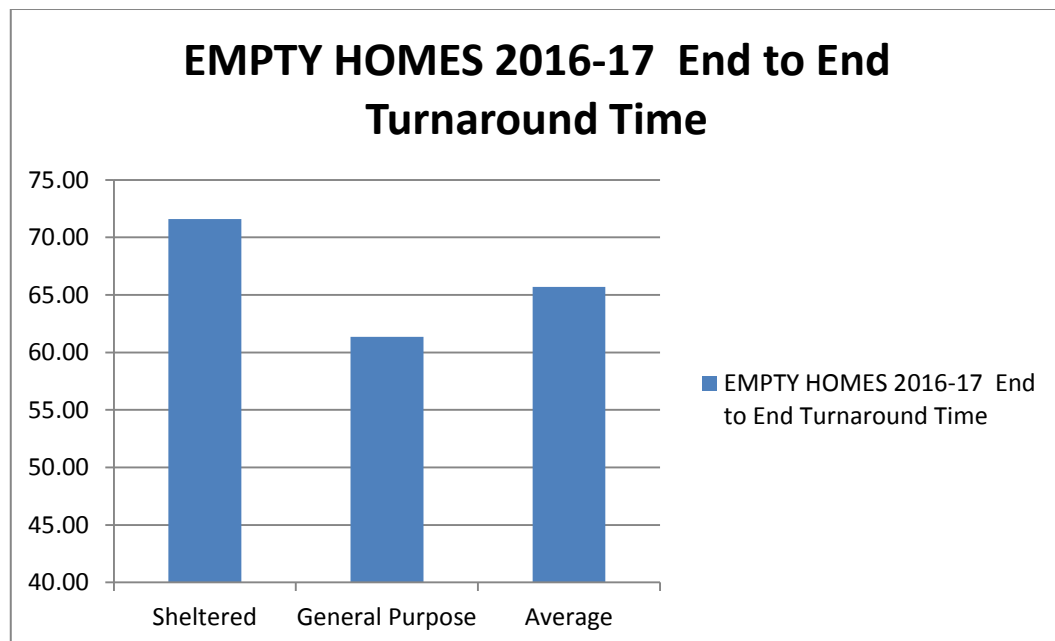


5. As part of the arrears recovery process it is necessary to refer some cases to the County Court. Since the last report, for the period March 2016 to July 2016, there have been 13 hearings in court.
6. In the majority of court hearings the case was either adjourned for further information or a court order was granted on payment terms. Three homes have been repossessed in the past 6 months despite much effort from officers to engage and support the tenants facing eviction. The accommodation repossessed included 2 family-sized homes.
7. A Vanguard Intervention started recently which is looking at rent arrears and trying to identify any areas where changes can be made to improve on current practice. Having visited a random sample of tenants, it became evident in a large number of cases that we were not offering people a method of payment which they would have chosen –

namely, flexibility when using direct debits to pay their rent. We only offer direct debits on the 1st of each month which clearly does not suit everyone as many tenants receive their wages or benefits on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Due to changes taking place in the very near future direct debits can be set up to take money from an account on any day of the week and for any frequency. The advantages of this are that tenants paying by this method have money taken automatically and do not have to remember to make a payment. There is also the added bonus that if a direct debit fails, the bank notifies the Council within a few days so that a discussion can take place with the tenant quickly to try and resolve the issue.

MANAGEMENT OF EMPTY HOMES

8. The way in which empty homes are managed has changed with emphasis on matching the right person to the right property and carrying out works to empty homes that have been identified and agreed with the new tenant rather than reinstating the property to a prescribed standard.
9. In a number of cases it has been necessary to carry out kitchen/bathroom modernisation work, electrical rewiring and adaptations to meet the needs of a disabled tenant or member of their household. This in turn has increased the time taken to relet the property and the loss in rental income.
10. In terms of performance we measure the total void period. The start of the void period is the date when the keys are returned by the outgoing tenant and the end of the period is the date when the incoming tenant's tenancy begins.
11. The chart below shows the average turnaround time for general needs and sheltered properties for the period April 2016 to the end of July 2016. In the period, a total of 80 homes were relet; 46 general purpose and 34 sheltered lettings.



12. Average turnaround time has increased by 13 calendar days since April 2016. This is largely due to letting a number of long term empty homes. A number of these remained empty because they were difficult to let, whilst others required extensive works.

13. In terms of void rent loss; at the end of July 2016 this totalled £69,002 which is 1.81% of the total rent due in the financial year to date. This is an increase on that for similar period in the previous year and is largely attributed to the long term empty homes.
14. Whilst acknowledging the increase in void rent loss, evidence from a comparison of 30 randomly selected voids both pre and post Vanguard intervention continues to show a reduction in the demand for responsive repairs after allocation.

DEALING WITH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

15. The table below provides information of reported incidents of Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) where officers took some form of action against the perpetrators. This action could have been anything from sending a letter to carrying out visits with Community Safety and Police. Currently there are 3 tenants on Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. One secure tenant has been served Notice due to on-going ASB problems and possession proceedings are now being considered.

Period	Reported incidents	Serious cases
Apr – July 2016	5	2

16. Although there has been a reduction in the total number of ASB cases during the past 6 months the number of serious cases has increased. The knock on effect being that housing officers are spending more time attending multi-agency meetings with Community Safety, Legal Services, Police and other support agencies to help resolve ASB issues.

HOUSING ESTATE MANAGEMENT

17. The cleaning of housing blocks forms part of a corporate cleaning contract. The current contract lasts for 5 years and commenced in April 2016. The contractor is Hi-Spec cleaning services.
18. The communal areas of the Council's blocks of flats and maisonettes are cleaned on a weekly basis. Windows to the communal areas and individual units within sheltered housing blocks are cleaned on a 3-6 monthly basis. Feedback is obtained from tenant and leaseholder representatives and housing staff and is collated to give an overall satisfaction rate.
19. The satisfaction level for Block Cleaning for the period April 2016 to July 2016 inclusive stood at 83%. This is slightly down on that for the previous year.
20. Quarterly Performance meetings are held with the service provider. The last meeting was held on 26 July 2016. The main issues discussed were cleaning of stairwells at a number of maisonette blocks and window cleaning.
21. The external areas around housing blocks and general needs areas, including garage service areas, are maintained by the Council's Streetscene team. This includes grass-cutting, weed treatment, litter-picking and sweeping of hard surfaces. Feed-back is again obtained from tenant and leaseholder representatives and housing staff and is collated to give an overall % satisfaction rate.

22. The satisfaction level for Grounds Maintenance for the period April 2016 to July 2016 inclusive stood at 98%.
23. Quarterly meetings are held with officers from the Council's Streetscene team and the last meeting was held on 8 June 2016. No issues or concerns were identified.
24. Estate inspections are carried out in areas which have been highlighted by either tenants or officers as having problems. For the period 1 April 2016 to 31 July 2016, 7 inspections have taken place where any problems were noted and action has been taken to rectify any issues.
25. The main issues arising from the recent inspections were the dumping of fly-tipped waste to communal areas of flats and maisonette blocks and overgrown grass verges. At the time of writing this report these issues have been addressed to the satisfaction of all concerned.

TENANT INVOLVEMENT

26. Since the last Performance Monitoring Report in March 2016, tenants and leaseholders have been involved in the following events:
- **Editorial Panel Meeting** (Tenants and officers meet to discuss articles for inclusion in tenant and leaseholder newsletters);
 - **Tenant and Leaseholder Forum** (An open forum for tenant/leaseholder representatives who meet to discuss housing issues of interest with council officers);
 - **South Coast Training** (Up to 10 tenants/leaseholders attend a training event held twice a year which helps improve knowledge and understanding across a range of housing issues);
 - **Estate Monitors Meeting** (A twice-yearly event for tenant and leaseholder volunteers who help monitor block cleaning and grounds maintenance work);
 - **TSG Quarterly Review Meeting** (To discuss and review the Gas service provided to tenants).

RISK ASSESSMENT

27. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report

CONCLUSION

28. This report has provided panel members with an update on performance across a range of housing management services.

Background Papers: None

Reference Papers: None

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Jane Cresdee. (Ext 4483)

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Report to
Health and Housing Policy Development
and Review Panel**

Date **22 September 2016**
Report of: **Director of Operations**
Subject: **REVIEW OF WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

SUMMARY

The Work Programme for the year was reviewed by the Panel at its meeting on 21 July 2016 and is attached as Appendix A.

Members are now invited to further review this Work Programme for the year 2016/17

RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel reviews and agree the draft Work Programme for the year 2016/17.

INTRODUCTION

1. At the last meeting of the Panel on 21 July 2016, members agreed a revised Work Programme for 2016/17

REVISIONS TO CURRENT WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

2. Members are asked to note the following amendments to the 2016/17 Work Programme:
 - i. The presentation from Hampshire County Council on Hampshire's Joint Strategy Needs Assessment be deferred to the 19 January meeting.
 - ii. Following the establishment of a Member Working Group to review the Council's overall housing strategy, a decision has been made by the Chairman of the Health & Housing Policy Development Review Panel to remove the related housing allocations from the panel's work plan for the time being. The panel will be consulted on the policy when the Working Group as considered the issue in the context of the new strategy, at a date yet to be determined.

RISK ASSESSMENT

3. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report

CONCLUSION

The Panel is invited to review and agree the Work Programme for 2016/17 and, as appropriate, add to the programme any additional items agreed by the Panel.

Appendix A – Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel's Work Programme for 2016/17.

Background Papers:

None

Reference Papers:

Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel – 21 July 2016 – Minutes

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Paul Doran. (Ext 4572)

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2016/17

<u>MEETING DATES FOR 2016/17*</u>	<u>ITEMS</u>
26 May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Work Programme 2016/17 • Health Update • Introduction to the Panel, achievements, priorities & challenges • Annual Review of Discretionary Housing Payments • Social & Affordable Housing Update
21 July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Work Programme 2016/17 • Health Update • Annual review of Homelessness Strategy • Social & Affordable Housing Update • Presentation on the New Allocations Policy
22 September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Update • Social & Affordable Housing Update • Welfare Reform Update • Vanguard Presentation and Report on Council Housing Repairs & Maintenance • Tenancy Management Report • Review of Work Programme 2016/17
17 November 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Update • Review of FareLets • New Homelessness & Housing Options Strategy (draft) • Presentation from Fareham and Gosport Clinical Commissioning Group – Local Health Priorities. • Review of Work Programme 2016/17
19 January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Update • Council Housing Repairs and Maintenance Report • Preliminary Review of Work Programme 2016/17 and Draft 2017/18 • Presentation on Hampshire's JSNA (Joint Strategy Needs Assessment)
09 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Update • Tenancy Management Report • Final Review of Work Programme 2016/17 and 2017/18

Unallocated items:

- New Allocations Policy (draft)
- New Allocations Policy – consultation results

