

**REPORT FOR: TENANTS'
LEASEHOLDERS' and
RESIDENTS'
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

Date of Meeting: 17 July 2012

Subject: INFORMATION REPORT – Asset Management Update

Responsible Officer: Lynne Pennington – Divisional Director of Housing Services

Exempt: No

Enclosures: Yes

- Draft 12/13 Capital Investment Plan
- Draft 5 year External Decorations Programme
- The Repairs Charter – CIOH
- Staffing update

Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out to update the forum on progress made in the Asset Management Team on the repairs procurement exercise, client side restructure, the repairs charter Chartered Institute of Housing version, performance, leaseholder improvement group, satisfaction surveys and the draft future investment plans.

For Information

Section 2 – Report

Procurement update

2.1

In March 2012 the Cabinet approved the awarding of the response repairs contracts to the following contractors:

- Harrow East – Linbrook Services Limited
- Harrow Central – Slade (London) Limited
- Harrow West – Linbrook Services Limited

In April 2012 the Cabinet awarded the 3 star gas maintenance contracts to the following contractors:

- Harrow Rented Housing – Quality Heating Systems Limited
- Harrow Corporate / Communal / Sheltered – T Brown Group Limited.

Both the new contracts will come in to place from the 1st July 2012. Detailed mobilisation plans have been put in to place to ensure the effective transfer of the service from the current supplier to the new suppliers, which has allowed for the new contractors to start partial service delivery during June. An official launch of the new contracts will take place at Brookside Close on the 2 July 2012.

2.2

A small group of tenants, leaseholders and residents have played a key role in the customer service and service quality aspects of the contractor selection process for both the responsive repairs and the framework contracts.

2.3

The procurement of the framework contracts to deliver the planned investment works, such as kitchen and bathroom renewals is near completion and it will be submitted to the Cabinet in July 2012 for approval.

2.4

It is important we have robust plans in place ASAP to monitor and appraise the contractors' performance and a scoping session will be held in the near future to examine how this can best be done.

2.5

The procurement of the new repairs contracts has been a very complex task which has been led by Paul Mullins as an Interim Project Manger. As the project has come to an end Paul has left the council from the 13 July 2012. I am sure the TLRCF would like to thank Paul for the sterling work he has undertaken.

Client Side update

2.6

As previously reported to the TLRCF with the change of contractors the council is required to strengthen the client side so we can carry out a number of functions formally done by Kier Services and to better manage the contracts, which customers have told us is a priority.

2.7

The Asset Management Team (AMT) is to grow from 27 to 34 roles and the new structure has been agreed and staff consulted. There have been several delays in trying to move the project forward but finally we have started the recruitment. A number of roles have been filled by existing staff and the remainder have been advertised internally in the council. We hope internal recruitment will be complete in July and any unfilled posts can then be advertised externally. A staffing list with the recruited details is enclosed.

The Repairs Charter – Chartered Institute of Housing

2.8

The TLRCF have previously been consulted on the proposed Repairs Charter for Harrow Council, which has been implemented from the 1st July 2012.

2.9

Nationally the Chartered Institute of Housing has been working on a campaign to improve repairs services for all tenants and leaseholders of social landlords and at the recent annual conference launch a repairs charter which sets out 6 core requirements. A copy of their charter is enclosed. If organisations support the aims and meet the core requirements they can formally sign up to the charter. The new repairs service will meet all the requirements and the TLRCF are asked for their views on whether the council should formally sign up and join the campaign.

Performance

2.10

Responsive Repairs

The performance scorecard for Asset Management shows at the end of March 2012 that the overall satisfaction with works carried out in their homes was 90% and above the 88% target.

The number of repairs complete on the first visit was 88.05% against a target of 82% but the number of job recalls had increased from 10.63% to 12.96% still above the target of 5%

2.11

Gas Safety

Health and Safety of the council's tenants is a top priority and gas safety is a key element of this obligation. The council has a target of 100% of all properties with a gas supply to have a current gas safety certificate (CP 12). At the end of May 2012 99.30% had the required certificate. 26 properties have not had a certificate for longer than a month and are actively being pursued via the no access policy.

During June the responsibility for this key service has been transferring from Kier to Quality Heating Services.

Future Investment Plans

2.12

Capital Investment Plans 12/13

Enclosed is the draft plan for 12/13 and the TLRCF are asked to review and comment on the programme. The total programme is just over £9 M but £3.2M is work carried forward / already on site. A further £1 M relates to the major scheme at Francis Road. The AMT is hoping to produce a 3 year investment programme by December 2012 to cover the period 2013 – 16 and the TLRCF will be consulted.

2.13

External Decorations 5 year programme

A 5 year External Decorations programme was produced over 5 years ago, but for a range of reasons the work plan was never delivered as planned. Consequently a new 5 year plan has been produced and TLRCF are asked to review the proposal and comment on the priorities.

Consultation events for both programmes were held in Churchill Place on the 27 June and 4 July 2012.

Leaseholders and Asset Management

2.14

Sub Group

In a number of forums including the TLRCF leaseholder representatives have made it clear they are unhappy with a number of issues relating to the services they receive from Harrow Council. In an effort to raise the quality of the service a sub group has been created from the HLSG to consider the issues. The group is serviced by the Head of Asset Management and held its first meeting on the 30 May 2012.

A number of points were raised, but when we clustered them in to groups the fundamental issues surrounded communications, charging and billing and service delivery by caretakers and contractors. As a result of the sub group an action plan has been agreed and will be monitored bi monthly. The group

asked the TLRCF be made aware of the position and receive further update reports at each meeting.

2.15

Milmans Close

At the May meeting the TLRCF were updated on the current position at Milmans Close. The Head of Asset Management undertook a further site visit on the 15 June 2102 and some progress is being made. However the issue of the trees remains outstanding. Councillor Currie has made representation to the council's Chief Executive. The current position is there are no plans to prune the trees at the rear. We have asked for prices to put leaf grills over the gutters to help prevent blockages. A verbal update will be given at the meeting.

Customer Satisfaction

2.16

Under the Kier contract the tenant satisfaction surveys were carried out by a company called Viewpoint and they submitted monthly reports based on approx 100 telephone surveys. With the change of contracts this service will need to be procured by the council. Discussions are underway with Access Harrow and other suppliers to see how best we can complete this important work.

2.17

It is proposed to change the format and questions slightly so we can get better feedback on the service which will help drive forward service improvements. Instead of simply asking if customers were satisfied with the service they will be asked to score the service between 0 – 10 (10 being excellent). For a score between 0-6 will be treated as service failure and we will ring back to discuss how we failed and what lessons we can learn. At the end of each survey the customer will be asked "what one thing can the council do to improve the repairs service". This will help us understand needs more and what customers value.

Financial Implications

3.1

The report has highlighted the following financial implications:

- The procurement of the new repairs and gas contracts and the AMT restructure, which have Cabinet and project board approval
- The repairs charter (Harrow and the CIOH) will mean greater investment in the council's stock which will be funded via reduced costs of the new contracts and extra resources made available following HRA reform

- 12/13 investment plans and external decorations programme have been produced within the guidelines given for the annual budgets
- There will be an extra cost of procuring the satisfaction surveys post Kier. The cost is likely to be £12,000 pa.

Equalities implications

4.1

Equality Impact Assessments have been carried out for the repairs procurement and the Asset Management Team restructure.

Corporate Priorities

5.1

Please identify which Corporate Priority the report incorporates and how:

- Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe: The repairs charter and the new repairs contracts
- United and involved communities: A council that listens and leads: Tenants, Leaseholders and Residents being part of the new contractor selection.
- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need: The repairs charter and investment plans
- Supporting our town centre, our local shopping centres and businesses: Appointment of local contractors and use of local suppliers for parts.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name Roger Hampson

on behalf of the
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 27/6/12

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact: Derek Stewart – Head of Asset Management
0208 424 1075 or 07919 697637**

Background Papers: none