

Housing Select Committee		
Title	Lewisham Homes Business and Delivery Plan 2015-19	
Wards	All wards (Except Brockley, Whitefoot and Downham)	
Contributor	Executive Director for Customer Services	Item 3
Class	Part 1 (open)	08 July 2015

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the members of Housing Select Committee with an opportunity to scrutinise Lewisham Homes Business and Delivery Plan for 2015-2019, before it is considered by Mayor and Cabinet in September 2015. It will be considered by Lewisham Homes Board on 28 July 2015.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Housing Select Committee:
- Note the contents of Lewisham Homes Business and Delivery Plan 2015-2019 and;
 - Make any relevant referrals to Mayor and Cabinet.

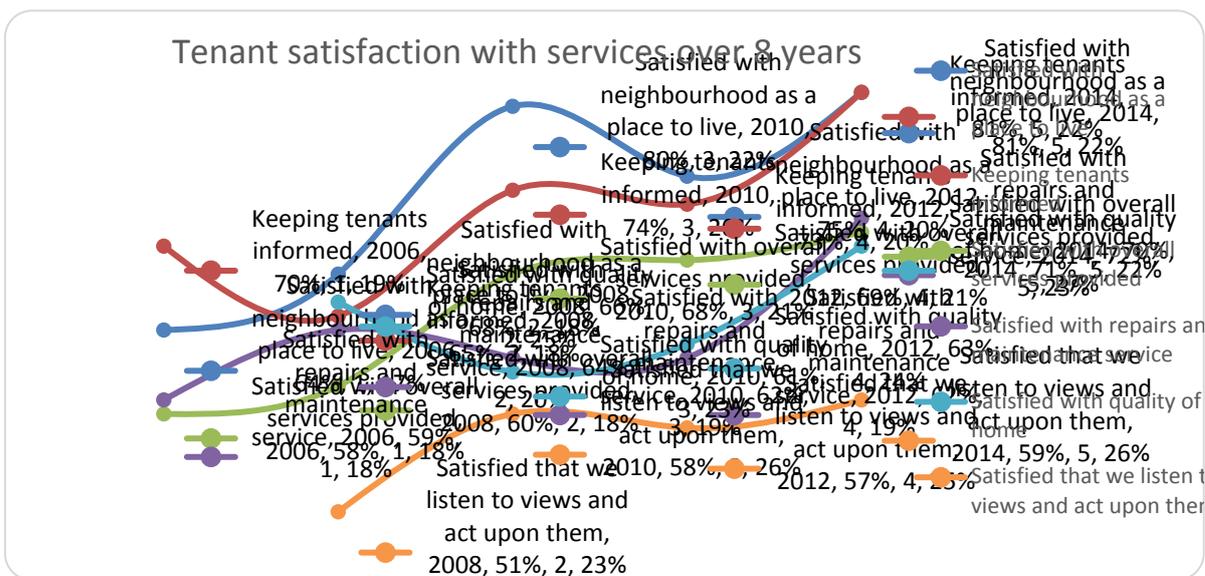
3 Policy context

- 3.1 Lewisham Council's Decent Homes Strategy outlines Lewisham's mixed investment approach including Lewisham Homes, the ALMO. The Management Agreement between the Council and Lewisham Homes requires Council approval for the Business and Delivery Plan.
- 3.2 Lewisham Homes Business and Delivery Plan fully supports Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020, which sets out a framework for improving the quality of life and life chances for all who live in the borough. Lewisham Homes, through its Plan, is contributing to the 'Clean green and liveable' priority, which aims to increase the supply and quality of housing to accommodate the diverse needs of the population.
- 3.3 The Council has outlined ten corporate priorities, which enable the delivery of the Sustainable Community strategy. The Lewisham Homes Delivery Plan addresses the corporate priorities to provide decent homes for all, to invest in social housing and affordable housing in order to increase the overall supply of new housing and to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation, tackle homelessness and address housing need and aspirations.
- 3.4 The Council now faces a significant challenges of homelessness arising from the increasing demand and lack of supply of housing. Lewisham Homes, as the Council's main housing partner, will be helping to meet these challenges by building homes, acquiring properties to help with homelessness challenge and investing in Lewisham's neighbourhoods.
- Background

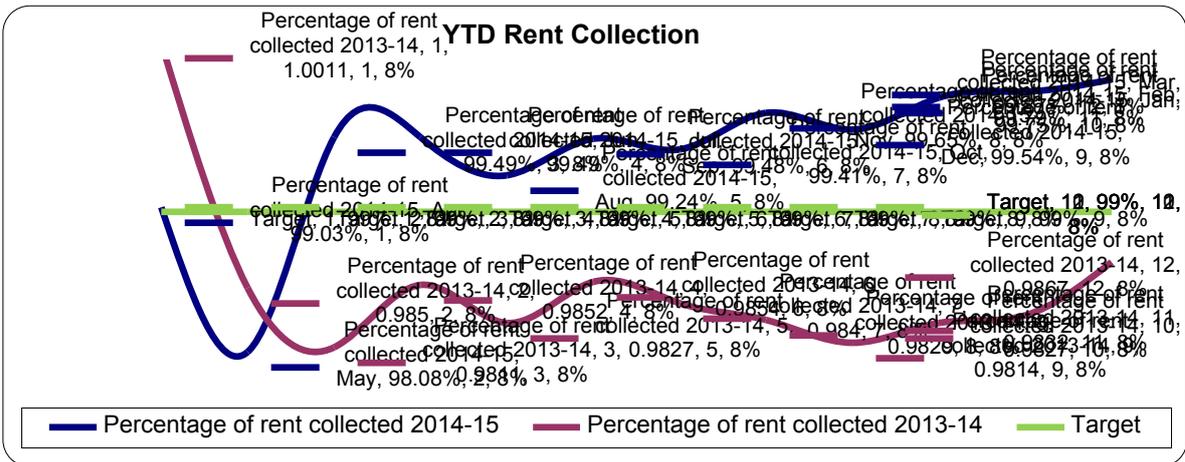
- 3.5 The Business & Delivery Plan contains the organisation's key targets and activities and it forms the start of the performance cascade and performance reporting. It sets out how Lewisham Homes plans to deliver excellent services to all the homes it manages.
- 3.6 The Plan holds Lewisham Homes accountable for delivering specific improvements in the service and performing against set targets as part of the Management Agreement. The Plan includes a task list and targets for key performance indicators which are reviewed by the Housing Select Committee on a regular basis.
- 3.7 The performance of Lewisham Homes impacts on the Council's Housing Revenue Account and, therefore, the Council's ability to meet its housing priorities. The HRA self-financing regime has enabled the Council to develop a 30 year financial model, which informs the annual allocation made to Lewisham Homes. The plan reflects the Council's priorities and assumptions made in its financial plan.

4 Review of performance in 2014/15

- 4.1 Tenant satisfaction with overall services has increased to 71%, up 11% over the past six years. Satisfaction with our Repairs Service is up by 10% in two years.



- 4.2 Rent income collection was an area of significant success for Lewisham Homes in light of welfare reform changes, collecting 99.9% of the debit against a target of 99%. This was an improvement on 98.7% for the previous year, representing an extra £860,000 in income for the HRA. Rent arrears reduced to 3.8% compared to 4.7% in March 2014, a reduction of £530,000.



4.3 Void performance continues to improve year on year with void loss reaching 0.61% for the year against a target of 0.8%, this represents a saving of £140,000 for the HRA compared to the target. Lewisham Homes let general needs properties in an average of 40 days compared to 71 days the year before.

4.4 Lewisham Homes made over 2,130 properties decent in 2014/15 meeting its target of having 80% of homes meet the Decent Homes standard by March 2015 and leading to 81% of tenants being satisfied with their neighbourhood and:

- tenant satisfaction with the quality of their home has increased to 70%, up 7 percentage points from two years ago;
- tenant satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service is up to 72%, up 10 percentage points from 2 years ago; and
- 92% of tenants were satisfied with internal Decent Homes work done to their homes.

4.5 Lewisham Homes built the first six of 500 new social rent homes in partnership with Lewisham Council.

4.6 Lewisham Homes responded to 91% of complaints on time compared to a 90% target and 83% the previous year.

4.7 Lewisham Homes continues to invest in training and development opportunities for its staff and the community. Thirty nine apprenticeship opportunities were provided within Lewisham Homes and with key partners in the last year and Lewisham Homes invested £237k in community initiatives.

5 Lewisham Homes Business & Delivery Plan 2015-19

5.1 The Business & Delivery Plan and its appendices is attached to this report at Appendix 1.

5.2 Lewisham Homes now has four strategic objectives:

5.3 Excellent Services

5.3.1 Increasing resident satisfaction across the board is a key objective of the business plan. Progress has been good in improving tenant satisfaction but leasehold satisfaction has shown a decrease since the last survey and will be a key area of focus for this plan.

- 5.3.2 A core element of delivering higher resident satisfaction is a whole organisation customer services training programme attended by every member of staff from the Chief Executive and management team, back office staff and including our Repairs operatives and caretakers. Through this programme we aim to embed a sharp customer services ethos in Lewisham Homes that is understood and shared by all and delivered by every single member of staff.
- 5.3.3 To reinforce this approach we will be starting a “Big Conversation” with our residents. This will involve every single manager in Lewisham Homes carrying out telephone satisfaction surveys with our residents. From this we will capture satisfaction data but more importantly those areas where residents feel we do well and those areas where we need to improve. From this every single manager in Lewisham Homes will have first-hand experience of residents views and what we are doing well and what needs to improve.
- 5.3.4 Key targets - 85% tenant satisfaction and 60% leaseholder satisfaction by 2019.
- Invest in an improved contact centre
 - Improve grounds maintenance
 - Customer care training for all staff
 - More responsive approach to tackling antisocial behaviour
 - Engaging with leaseholders and improving services to leaseholders
 - Provide more services on line.

5.4 Thriving Neighbourhoods

- 5.4.1 Our homes and neighbourhoods are a key foundation for people’s lives. Ensuring that we are able to provide a decent home in a thriving neighbourhood is a key objective of Lewisham Homes and one of the areas where we will be working very closely in partnership with Lewisham Council over the next 4 years.
- 5.4.2 We will aim to build stronger communities through reviewing the whole of our housing stock with the Council. This review will identify those areas where our stock is fit for purpose and would benefit from maintenance and investment programmes that enable it to continue to serve as good housing. The review will also identify those areas where properties are of lower quality and require substantial investment and where there may be alternative options to provide better housing whilst also increasing overall housing supply.
- 5.4.3 Over the life of this plan we will ensure that all our homes meet the Decent Homes standard, and that we move away from our current Decent Homes investment approach to an estate based approach that allows better resident engagement and local solutions.
- 5.4.4 Under this objective we also aim to maximise the potential for investment in our communities building on the 86 training and apprenticeship opportunities delivered with our Major Works contractors to date. We will ensure we maximise training and development opportunities for our Local communities both within our directly employed workforce and with our partners.
- 5.4.5 We will also be developing a new partnership with the Albany in Deptford that will provide a range of support to our residents including grant initiatives targeted at local areas which we will support with direct grant

funding from Lewisham Homes.

5.4.6 Key targets - to build 500 homes and achieve 85% satisfaction with quality of home by 2018/19.

- Grow our repairs service to do more and use contractors less
- Improve the look, feel and quality of our neighbourhoods
- Build new homes
- Diversify resident engagement and work with partners
- Internal refurbishment works
- Set out 30 year plan for investment
- Provide opportunities for people through training and employment programmes.

5.5 Sustainable Future

- 5.5.1 Delivering a sustainable future for our community, our residents and our organisation means working closely with the Council to ensure we are focussing on the right priorities and being as efficient and effective as possible in delivering them.
- 5.5.2 We have a good track record of reducing costs and investing in priorities such as improving the quality of people's homes. We will continue this work over the life of the plan. This approach has enabled us to keep our service charge costs amongst the lowest in London and ensuring that we focus in providing services that are affordable to our residents.
- 5.5.3 We are working in partnership with the Council to provide good quality temporary accommodation to the Council at lower cost than is currently available. To support this we have agreed a £20m loan facility with the Council which will be topped up by £2m of Lewisham Homes own resources.
- 5.5.4 We will also be expanding our own service provision in the areas of repairs and grounds maintenance. We will develop our capacity to provide services directly where we feel we can offer value for money, better customer service and support more sustainable communities by ensuring all staff receive the London living wage as a minimum.
- 5.5.5 Key targets are to purchase 80 units of temporary housing and increase the repairs service turnover by £3m
- Do more with less
 - Purchase homes to provide temporary housing for Lewisham Homes
 - Prioritise resources to deliver services efficiently
 - Invest savings in better homes and service improvements
 - Improve technology and systems
 - Good systems of governance.

5.6 Employer of Choice

- 5.6.1 Everything we achieve as an organisation is achieved by the people that work for us. We will strive to be an excellent employer. We will look to recruit excellent staff and provide opportunities for those with the passion and desire to serve their community.
- 5.6.2 We will provide opportunities through apprenticeships and training programmes for our community to gain training and employment and to succeed.
- 5.6.3 We will ensure we provide excellent training and development opportunities for our staff and will recognise and celebrate the achievements of our staff.
- 5.6.4 We aim to build a team that has passion for Lewisham and the skills and commitment to deliver great housing services for thriving neighbourhoods.
- 5.6.5 Key target is to achieve Investors in People gold standard in 2015/16
- Recruit, develop and retain excellent staff
 - Graduate and trainee programmes
 - Internal development opportunities
 - Recognise and reward excellence

- Health, wellbeing and social initiatives
- Raise our profile to attract good candidates.

6 Legal implications

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications pertaining to this report; save for noting, that the provisions of the 2010 Equality Act will be relevant to the implementation of the Lewisham Homes Business and Delivery Plan 2015-19.
- 6.2 The 2010 Equality Act, includes a public sector equality duty covering the nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.3 In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.4 The “have regard duty”, and the weight to be attached to it is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.
- 6.5 The Equality and Human Rights Commission issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty England in 2013.
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publication/technical-guidance-public-sector-equality-duty-england>
- 6.6 This guidance included determinations from the Court of Appeal that the general equality duty not only applies to general formulation of policy but also applies to: decisions made in applying policy in individual cases; and, the carrying out of any function of a public authority. This means that the general equality duty will apply to decisions made by the employees or agents of bodies subject to the duty in their day to day activities.

7 Financial implications

- 7.1 There no specific financial implications arising from this report.

8 Crime and disorder implications

- 8.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report but Lewisham Homes will continue to take a proactive approach in dealing with anti-social behaviour.

9 Environmental implications

- 9.1 Currently 20% of Lewisham Homes’ stock is non-decent. Lewisham Homes has by the end of March 2015, received £94.5m in Decent Homes Backlog funding. No more funding will be available and the rest of the homes will be

made decent from HRA funding.

10 Equality implications

- 10.1 Many of the tasks and targets in Lewisham Homes' Business and Delivery Plan 2014-15 have an impact on promoting equality and diversity, particularly regarding their priority to deliver excellent services that meet residents' needs.

Background documents and report author

If you require further information on this report please contact Michael Westbrook, Housing Policy & Partnerships Manager on 020 8314 6346.