

Birmingham City Council



Report to Homes Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20 June 2024

Title:	IMPROVING STANDARDS OF RE-LET PROPERTIES INQUIRY
Lead Cabinet Portfolio:	Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness
Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:	Not Applicable
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Authorised by:	Dave Ashmore, Director of Housing Management, Wayne Davies, Director of Asset Management Housing Directorate
Is this a Key Decision?	No
If this is a Key Decision, is this decision listed on the Forward Plan?	Not Applicable
Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan:	Not Applicable
Is this a Late Report?	No
Reason(s) why Late:	Not Applicable
Is this decision eligible for 'call in?'	No

If not eligible, please provide reason(s):

Not Applicable

Wards:

All

Does this report contain exempt or confidential information?

No

Has this decision been included on the Notification of Intention to consider Matters in Private?

No

Reasons why not included on the Notification:

Not Applicable

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In line with the Terms of Reference, the O&S Committee Voids Inquiry Task and Finish Group has considered with City Housing where its work could best add value for improving the conditions of housing stock. As a result, it was agreed that the O&S Committee will focus how it can recommend service improvements in the Council's standards for re-letting void properties. The report and appendix provide a review of the evidence gathered including void standards, turnaround timescales, benchmarking and customer experience to outline the challenges and opportunities for improvement.

2 COMMISSIONERS' REVIEW

- 2.1 Improvements in voids management and the reletting process is a vital component of Housing's transformation programme. This will improve quality, standards and tenant satisfaction and deliver efficiencies by reducing relet times in short and long-term voids and ensuring that the housing stock is managed as efficiently as possible and available to tenants waiting to be rehoused.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 3.1 Note the contents of the report and appendices and consider if there are any further issues for scrutiny to address in relation to voids.

4 KEY INFORMATION

Context

- 4.1 Responds to the Terms of Reference that have been provided as part of the inquiry.
- 4.2 Provides an overview of the position of void standards and performance within Birmingham.
- 4.3 Outlines the transformation plan for voids and its objectives, including what the transformation involves, the progress that has been made to date and impact, future activities and challenges faced.

IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

Finance

There are no implications from this report itself, which is an update to O&S Committee. However, the work being done around Void process improvements is aimed at improving turnaround time, improving the efficiency of the decency investment programme and reducing the reactive repairs requirement, all three of which are creating a positive impact on the HRAs financial position over the

coming years from less rent loss and council tax commitment, and less capital and revenue spend on repairs and maintenance.

Legal

- 4.4 There are no legal implications directly relating to this report which is an update to O&S Committee.

Equalities

- 4.5 There are no equalities implications directly relating to this report.

People Services

- 4.6 There are no staffing implications directly relating to this report which is an update to O&S Committee. However, Housing Management is currently engaging with staff on proposals for a service redesign and whilst there are no implications for voids management it would see the responsibility for new lettings support transfer to a generic Housing Officer role.

Corporate Parenting

- 4.7 There are no corporate parenting implications directly relating to this report.

5 APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix A - Voids O and S Final Report.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 Terms of Reference.