

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING AND HOMES O&S COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING

1400 hours on Tuesday 23 January 2018, Committee Rooms 3&4

Present:

Councillor Victoria Quinn (Chair)

Councillors Matthew Gregson, Mohammed Idrees, Mary Locke, Ron Storer and Margaret Waddington

Also Present:

Paul Bingham, Project Director, Keepmoat

Chris Caffrey, Operations Director, Fortem

Rob James, Service Director, Housing

John Jamieson, Head of Asset Management

Jacqui Kennedy, Corporate Director, Place

Stewart Reid, Regional Director, Wates Living Space

Jayne Power, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chairman advised the meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.birminghamnewsroom.com) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Gurdial Singh Atwal, Penny Holbrook and Gary Sambrook.

3. ACTION NOTES – 12 DECEMBER 2017

(See document No 1)

The Chair updated Members on the outstanding actions.

- The notes were agreed.

4. HOUSING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS

(See document No 2)

Rob James (Service Director, Housing), John Jamieson (Head of Asset Management), Paul Bingham (Project Director, Keepmoat), Chris Caffrey (Operations Director, Fortem) and Stewart Reid (Regional Director, Wates Living Space) attended for this item.

With reference to the presentation which had been circulated with the papers and in response to questions from Members, the following were among the main points raised:

- With regard to the service delivery headlines and the number of responsive repairs completed, Members were advised that with 62,000 properties in total this equated to an average of 2-3 repairs per property per year;
- The KPIs included under 'Performance Review' are the KPIs used in the contracts and many of these have more detailed breakdowns;
- Members requested to see the figures for performance against all targets, including voids, clarification around where the KPIs sit and performance against the KPIs broken down per contractor;
- Members also said it would be useful to know what the common threads were in complaints;
- All three contractors told Members that they are striving to increase customer satisfaction and reduce the number of complaints;
- Members asked about the use of sub-contractors and were advised that part of the dialogue around tendering was the requirement for a multi-skilled workforce; sub-contractors are used for some repairs and gas maintenance but the contractor has full responsibility;
- Contractors are paid a set amount per property per year and the risk is theirs to complete repairs as quickly as possible;
- Members were advised that the responsive repairs and maintenance budget will not be fully spent on current projections – where performance against KPIs is red or amber this impacts on the amount paid to the contractors;
- Any underspend in the budget is re-invested into the service because it is a ring-fenced account and the decision on where to spend money is taken when the HRA report goes to Cabinet in February;
- There is robust monitoring of performance in place with performance information going out to local HLBs and a city-wide group which receives monthly performance reports and there is an opportunity for all tenants, and elected Members, to be involved in monitoring;
- In response to questions about added social value, the contractors told Members that they invest heavily in social value, including training around safeguarding, helping people into employment and, where vulnerability is identified, sign-posting to relevant advice and services.

RESOLVED:-

- That the following information be forwarded to Members:
 - (i) Figures for performance against all targets, including voids;

- (ii) Clarification around where the KPIs sit, to help Members identify the challenges and scrutinise performance;
- (iii) Figures to be provided for performance against KPIs broken down per contractor;
- (iv) Common threads in complaints;
- That the HRA report be circulated to members of the Committee in February.

5. WASTE UPDATE

Jacqui Kennedy (Corporate Director, Place) attended to give Members a verbal update on the Waste Management Service, including a reflection of Christmas and New Year, the implementation of the new model and governance around service improvement.

The following were among the main points raised:

- Members were advised that communication with residents could have been better and that Rob James had done a piece of work reflecting on the issues around Christmas and New Year;
- The contingency plan has been refreshed and business continuity plans are being reviewed;
- There had been a report to EMT earlier in the day and a Service Improvement Board had been established, to be chaired by Angela Probert, and there will be a TU rep on the board;
- The Chair referred to the practice in Scotland of naming refuse trucks and residents being able to track crews and Jacqui Kennedy told Members she would take this idea back to the workforce for their views;
- In response to a question around the use of technology in refuse trucks, Members were told that all staff are being re-trained and that the Team Leader Driver is required to report when a route is completed – either on paper or using the technology;
- All Service Managers are being asked to email ward councillors to highlight any problems which occur;
- In terms of the best method for Members to use to report problems, use of the councillor enquiry line was encouraged as this is then entered onto the system and provides important data;
- Members referred to the size of the paper pods being restrictive and were told that this was being reviewed;
- In response to a question about clothing recycling bins on the public highway, Members were advised that the Council has authority to issue notices for these to be removed if they are causing a problem.

RESOLVED:-

- The update was noted.

6. WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18

(See document No 3)

Members discussed the work programme. The following points were raised:

- Allocations - With regard to a report back to Committee on the analysis of those not re-registered on the housing list, Rob James advised Members that he had now received the analysis and would report back on the findings in due course.
- The Chair advised Members that the Community Safety Partnership Annual Report would not be ready to come to Scrutiny until June and that this item, and the attendance of the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equality, would therefore be re-scheduled for early in the new municipal year;
- The Chair went on to suggest bringing the March meeting forward to the 6th and using that session for an inquiry on 'Working with HMOs';

RESOLVED:-

- Findings from the analysis of those not re-registered on the housing list to be forwarded to Members;
- Email to be sent to members of the Committee to confirm the Chair's suggestions with regard to the March meeting;
- The Work Programme was noted.

7. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

None.

8. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Noted.

10. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

Agreed.

The meeting ended at 1606 hours.