



# Agenda

## Housing, Health & Community Committee

Monday, 19 June 2023 at 7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Brentwood Borough Council, Ingrave Road,  
Brentwood, Essex CM15 8AY

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### Membership (Quorum – 3 )

Cllrs Dr Barrett (Chair), Mrs Davies (Vice-Chair), Mrs Francois, Kendall, Mayo, Mrs Pound, Russell, Sankey and Slade

### Substitute Members

Cllrs Barrett, Naylor, Poppy, Reed and Rigby

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### Agenda

Item	Item	Wards(s) Affected	Page No
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### Live broadcast

[Live broadcast to start at 7pm and available for repeat viewing.](#)

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|----|---|--|---------|
| 1. | Apologies for absence   |  |         |
| 2. | Minutes of the Housing Committee held on 27th February 2023                               |  | 5 - 10  |
| 3. | Minutes of the Community, Environment & Enforcement Committee held on the 13th March 2023 |  | 11 - 14 |
| 4. | Chairs Report   |  | 15 - 20 |
| 5. | SHDP Tender Contracts   |  | 21 - 28 |

<b>6.</b>	<b>Strategic Housing Development Programme</b>	29 - 38
<b>7.</b>	<b>Cost of Living Report</b>	39 - 44
<b>8.</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	45 - 54
<b>9.</b>	<b>Policy Schedule</b>	55 - 62
<b>10.</b>	<b>Heat Billing Policy</b>	63 - 72
<b>11.</b>	<b>Garage sites options appraisal programme</b> To follow.	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Co-option of Tenants Representatives</b>	73 - 78
<b>13.</b>	<b>Repairs contract performance</b>	79 - 84
<b>14.</b>	<b>Quarterly Housing Compliance</b>	85 - 102
<b>15.</b>	<b>Local authority housing fund progress</b>	103 - 108
<b>16.</b>	<b>Urgent business</b>	



Jonathan Stephenson  
Chief Executive

Town Hall  
Brentwood, Essex  
09.06.2023

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### Information for Members

#### Substitutes

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The names of substitutes shall be announced at the start of the meeting by the Chair and the substitution shall cease at the end of the meeting.

Where substitution is permitted, substitutes for quasi judicial/regulatory committees must be drawn from Members who have received training in quasi- judicial/regulatory decision making. If a casual vacancy occurs on a quasi judicial/regulatory committee it will not be filled until the nominated member has been trained.

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#### Rights to Attend and Speak

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Any Members may attend any Committee to which these procedure rules apply.

A Member who is not a member of the Committee may speak at the meeting. The Member may speak at the Chair's discretion, it being the expectation that a Member will be allowed to speak on a ward matter.

Members requiring further information, or with specific questions, are asked to raise these with the appropriate officer at least two working days before the meeting.

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#### Point of Order/ Personal explanation/ Point of Information

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##### Point of Order

A member may raise a point of order at any time. The Mayor will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Procedure Rules or the law. The Member must indicate the rule or law and the way in which they consider it has been broken. The ruling of the Mayor on the point of order will be final.

##### Personal Explanation

A member may make a personal explanation at any time. A personal explanation must relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate, or outside of the meeting. The ruling of the Mayor on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

##### Point of Information or clarification

A point of information or clarification must relate to the matter being debated. If a Member wishes to raise a point of information, he/she must first seek the permission of the Mayor. The Member must specify the nature of the information he/she wishes to provide and its importance to the current debate. If the Mayor gives his/her permission, the Member will give the additional information succinctly. Points of Information or clarification should be used in exceptional circumstances and should not be used to interrupt other speakers or to make a further speech when he/she has already spoken during the debate. The ruling of the Mayor on the admissibility of a point of information or clarification will be final.

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### Information for Members of the Public

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Dates of the meetings are available at [www.brentwood.gov.uk](http://www.brentwood.gov.uk).

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#### Guidelines on filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings

The council welcomes the filming, photography, recording and use of social media at council and committee meetings as a means of reporting on its proceedings because it helps to make the council more transparent and accountable to its local communities.

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If you wish to record the proceedings of a meeting and have any special requirements or are intending to bring in large equipment then please contact the Communications Team before the meeting.

The use of flash photography or additional lighting may be allowed provided it has been discussed prior to the meeting and agreement reached to ensure that it will not disrupt proceedings.

The Chair of the meeting may terminate or suspend filming, photography, recording and use of social media if any of

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these activities, in their opinion, are disrupting proceedings at the meeting.

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 **Private Session**

Occasionally meetings will need to discuss some of its business in private. This can only happen on a limited range of issues, which are set by law. When a Committee does so, you will be asked to leave the meeting.

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  **Access**

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 **Evacuation Procedures**

Evacuate the building using the nearest available exit and congregate at the assembly point in the Car Park.



## Minutes

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### Housing Committee Monday, 27th February, 2023

#### Attendance

Cllr Mrs Pearson (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Hones
Cllr S Cloke	Cllr Kendall
Cllr Mrs N Cuthbert	Cllr Poppy
Cllr Mrs Davies	Cllr Slade

#### Apologies

Cllr White

#### Substitute Present

Cllr Hossack

#### Also Present

Cllr Barber

#### Officers Present

Angela Abbott	- Corporate Manager - Housing Needs and Independent Living
Nicola Marsh	- Corporate Manager - Housing Estates
Paulette McAllister	- Programme Lead - Strategic Housing Development Programme
Julian Higson	- Interim Director - Housing
Carol Burton	- Corporate Manager - Technical Services
Steve Summers	- Strategic Director
Claire Mayhew Monitoring Officer	- Corporate Manager (Democratic Services) and Deputy
Kellie Durey	- Community Investment Coordinator (AXIS)
Eamon O'Donnell	- Divisional Manager (AXIS)
Sarah Taylor	- Operations Manager (AXIS)

#### 345. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr White, with Cllr Hossack substituting. Cllr Pearson **MOVED** and Cllr Poppy **SECONDED** that after noting the Cllr

White's absence as Chair, Cllr Pearson should act as Chair and Cllr Hossack as Vice-Chair. This was agreed by all.

#### **346. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Cllr Kendall raised that on Item 314 of the previous minutes, it was not mentioned that the Liberal Democrats asked for a deferral on Ingleton House, to allow for more discussions with the NHS. Cllr Pearson requested a change to 318, Rent Setting Policy. The wording "This increase to rents is a welcomed one for residents..." should be changed to "This capped increase to rents is a welcomed one for residents...". Subject to these amendments, the minutes were agreed.

#### **347. Year in Review**

The report began on page 13 and highlighted all the work the Housing Department have done over the past year.

#### **348. Chairs Update**

The report began on page 29 and highlighted further work the team have done.

#### **349. AXIS community engagement**

Kellie Turner from Axis gave a presentation to committee members. Eamon O'Donnell and Sarah Taylor from Axis were also in attendance.

#### **350. Key Performance Indicators**

Key Performance indicators are collected across all services in the Housing Department and help monitor how we are performing across a set list of key areas.

This report presents these Key Performance Indicators to Members of the Housing Committee with a commentary for each one which details why we are under performing and noting where a high level of performance has been achieved.

Cllr Hossack asked that going forward, a column for sector benchmark was added and the team gave information on how good we are in the sector average.

This item was for information only and no voting was required.

#### **351. Policy Schedule**

This report was an update for members to note and presents the Policy Review Schedule to ensure that the Housing Department has the relevant

Strategies and Policies in place in order to provide a clear framework of its responsibilities.

This item was for information only and no voting was required.

### **352. Water Hygiene Policy**

The current policy, which was approved at Enforcement, Environment and Housing committee on 17th March 2020 (minute no.29) set out the proposals for a new Water Hygiene Policy to be implemented within the Housing Department.

The Policy has been reviewed and updated to ensure the Council meets all its statutory requirements. No legislative changes have been implemented since the last policy was approved in March 2020.

Following a full discussion, Cllr Pearson **MOVED** and Cllr Hossack **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

**Members were asked to:**

**Approve the Housing Water Hygiene Policy.**

#### Reasons for Recommendation

It is a statutory requirement for the Council to have a Water Hygiene Policy. Failure to have one will leave the Council in a vulnerable position should a legionella outbreak occur.

### **353. Active Asset Management**

Active Asset Management is ensuring that our homes are affordable and attractive to tenants and are financially viable in the medium to long term.

This item was for information only and no voting was required.

### **354. Update on innovative energy solutions**

This report set out the energy efficiency approach that is being adopted by Brentwood Council for its social housing assets and the measures being implemented.

This item was for information only and no voting was required.

### **355. Harewood Regeneration**

This report summarised progress since last reported to Committee on 12th December 2022 of the development of the new affordable homes at 'Harewood Regeneration' through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

owned sites. As a reminder, this site is within the Strategic Housing Delivery Programme (SHDP) which is made up of two distinct elements, 1) the regeneration of Brookfield Close and Courage Court, Hutton to develop 62 zero carbon homes alongside the Harewood Regeneration Project consisting of around 40 new zero carbon homes, and 2) the development of a range of smaller HRA sites to deliver a further 80 Zero Carbon homes on a further 8 council owned sites.

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes..."

It was requested that more oversight and detail on how much of the discretionary payments goes towards arrears was provided.

Following a full discussion, Cllr Pearson **MOVED** and Cllr Hossack **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

**Members were asked to:**

**Approve the 'Landlord Offer' to residents affected by the Council's housing regeneration activity attached as Appendix A to this report.**

**Approve the commencement of the decanting of residents at Harewood Regeneration under the terms specified in the 'Landlord Offer'.**

At 9:00pm in accordance with Rule 10.1 of the Council's procedural rules, Members **RESOLVED** to continue the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

### **356. Strategic Housing Delivery Plan (SHDP)**

This report summarised progress of the development of a pipeline of new affordable homes through the development and regeneration of various Housing Revenue Account (HRA) owned sites. As a reminder, this Strategic Housing Delivery Programme (SHDP) is made up of two distinct elements, 1) the regeneration of Brookfield Close and Courage Court, Hutton to develop 62 zero carbon homes alongside the Harewood Regeneration Project consisting of 40 new zero carbon homes, and 2) the development of a range of smaller HRA sites to deliver a further 80 Zero Carbon homes on a further 8 council owned sites.

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes..."



Following a full discussion, Cllr Pearson **MOVED** and Cllr Hossack **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY** that:

**Members were requested to:**

**To note continuing progress in the delivery of new Council homes through the SHDP.**

**357. Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business to discuss.

**358. Exclusion of the press and public**

Cllr Pearson **MOVED** and Cllr Hossack **SECONDED** that the public were excluded from Items 13 on the grounds that it may disclose exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. This was approved by committee members.

**359. Balcony Tender**

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

This item was for information only and no voting was required.

Cllr Kendall thanked Cllr Pearson, who is not standing at this year's election, for her hard work on Housing Committee over the years.

The meeting concluded at 21:17

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## Minutes

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### Community, Environment & Enforcement Committee Monday, 13th March, 2023

#### Attendance

Cllr Russell (Chair)	Cllr Laplain
Cllr Gelderbloem (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Naylor
Cllr Aspinell	Cllr Slade
Cllr Barber	Cllr Reed
Cllr Dr Barrett	

#### Apologies

#### Substitute Present

#### Also Present

#### Officers Present

Marcus Hotten	- Director - Environment
Kim Anderson	- Corporate Manager Communities, Leisure & Health
Jonathan Woodhams	- Corporate Manager, Community Safety
Claire Mayhew	- Corporate Manager (Democratic Services) and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Zoe Borman	- Governance and Member Support Officer

#### 389. Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

#### 390. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the last Community, Environment & Enforcement Committee were agreed as a true record.

Cllr Russell **MOVED** and Cllr Gelderbloem **SECONDED** a motion to vary the order of the agenda to hear Item 4, Axis Presentation, before Item 3. This was agreed by Members.

### **391. Axis Presentation**

Ms Kellie Turner and Mr Eamon O'Donnell attended the meeting on behalf of Axis. They presented to Members an overview of the community investment programme delivered in partnership with the Council over the past year, 2022-23. This summarised what had been achieved in areas such as Employment, Education and Training; Community Projects and Funding Support.

Members thanked Axis for the presentation.

### **392. Year in review**

This presentation provided Members the opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved by this Committee for the municipal year 2022-23. This is keeping in line with Council's Corporate Strategy 2021-2025.

The presentation was given by senior officers, Kim Anderson, Jonathan Woodhams and Marcus Hotten each highlighting their particular service areas.

Members thanked officers for their hard work.

Following discussion, and as suggested by the Chair, an appetite was shown by Members to visit King Georges Playing Fields and also to visit the newly renovated Control Room within the Town Hall.

### **393. Chairs Update**

Cllr Barber requested a delivery timetable for the EV charges in car parks in Shenfield and Ingatestone areas. Marcus Hotten advised he would provide the information outside of the meeting.

Following a full discussion Members noted the report.

### **394. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2023-2026**

Brentwood Borough Council's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures provides guidance and procedures that can support staff and elected Members on their legal obligations to safeguard children, young people and adults with care and

support needs. The purpose of the Council's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2023-26 is to provide guidance to employees, volunteers and elected Members of Brentwood Borough Council on their legal obligations to safeguard Children, Young People and Adults with Care and Support Needs and what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns.

Mrs Kim Anderson summarised the report.

Officers ensured further Safeguarding training was being offered to all Members later this year.

Following discussion, Cllr Russell **MOVED** and Cllr Laplain **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED** to:

**Agree to the revised Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2023-26 for Children, Young People and Adults with Care and Support Needs.**

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (Appendix A) has been reviewed and revised to take into account any new legislation and any emerging issues, so that the Council can meet its safeguarding obligations and ensures that all staff, members and the public are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, and that they can access appropriate support services if and when required.

#### **395. Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The Chair thanked Members for their attendance and support.

The meeting concluded at 21:00

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**COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health and Community Committee**

**DATE: 19 June 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Chairs Update
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Kim Anderson – Corporate Manager – Communities, Leisure & Health Angela Abbott – Corporate Manager – Housing Needs & Delivery Carol Burton – Corporate Manager – Technical Services (interim)

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report provides an update to Members in relation to the areas covered under the Terms of Reference of the Housing, Health and Community Committee.

### **Housing**

I am pleased to welcome our new Director of Housing, Lauren Stretch who has joined us today and look forward to working with her.

Two estates; Pilgrims Hatch and Hutton, have been selected as part of an estate management pilot project where officers across the different service areas responsible for maintaining our estates together with ward members complete an estate walk to identify the issues and agree a standard for our estates.

The first meeting (walk of the estates) was completed in May. An action plan has been produced for officers to work on and a further meeting with ward members scheduled for July to review progress.

### **Health**

#### **Brentwood Health and Wellbeing Board update**

Essex Wellbeing Service and weight management offers require more volunteers for weight management sessions at Merrymeade House which take place every Monday morning from 9.30 – 11.30am

Junior Parkrun, a weekly 2k event for juniors has started at Hutton Recreation every Sunday from 9am.

To promote Dementia Action week a Singing for the Brain concert took place at Merrymeade House on 17 May and a Dementia Concert took place at St Thomas Church on 19 May.

#### **Brentwood and Basildon Alliance**

Under the Brentwood and Basildon Alliance (which replace the Clinical Commissioning Group) there are six workstreams or domains:

- Start Well – Children and young people have the best start in life
- Feel Well – People experience good mental health and wellbeing
- Be Well – People are empowered to make health lifestyle choice
- Stay Well – Adults with health or care concerns are supported to maintain healthy, productive and fulfilling lives
- Age Well – People live safely and independently as they grow older
- Die Well – Individuals nearing end of life have choices around care

Each domain is working on an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) framework to ensure that partners utilise the same methodology and utilise the data provided to deliver the outcomes set out. A presentation by Brentwood and Basildon Alliance will come before Members at the September Committee.

### **Active Brentwood**

Active Brentwood are launching a Hardship fund that individuals can apply for up to £200 to support with their sport and up to £1500 for clubs to apply for to support club development.

### **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure**

Essex County Council and their consultants WSP consultants plan to have a map of the to be ready for public consultation which officers are having a final say on this week for both walking and cycling route improvements. This concentrated on Brentwood and Shenfield areas only. Public consultation scheduled to launch at the end of June.

And will be between 4 weeks or 6 weeks consultation period. After this period the public comments will be taken into consideration for the final map with the priority routes.

In addition, Essex County Council are looking ECC are looking a County wide map to pick up the rural locations which is due to be completed this year.

### **Community**

#### **Cost of Living event**

On 19 April, at the Nightingale Centre, the Council along with partners held a Cost-of-Living event. The Morning session was with partners to look at the challenges and opportunities for partnership working and the afternoon was open to the public to attend to get more information. The Council is looking at delivering another event later in the year at a different location.

#### **Coronation Festival at King George's Plying Fields 8 May 2023**

The event was a huge success despite the weather forecast. Luckily the rain stayed away until after the event. It captured the spirit of the coronation with a particular



focus on volunteering and celebrating our volunteers that support the local community.

The Council secured £10,000 from the National Lottery to support the delivery of the event. It is estimated that over 7,000 people attended the event. There were over 20 community groups, 13 different sports clubs encouraging people to volunteer and to raise awareness of their local clubs.

Live music was provided throughout the event by the Imperial Youth Band, the mass choir of St Thomas' Church and Brentwood School Big Band with a final parade led by the Imperial Youth Band and representatives of the voluntary sector organisations attending the event.

### **Family Fun Days**

The Council supports low-cost summer activity programme over the summer holidays. With the Family Fun Days. Discounted wristbands are given out to those in receipt of Free School Meals. The Council works with a number of partners to provide

They will be at the following locations and from 10.30am – 3.30pm

- Friday 4 August – Warley Playing Fields
- Friday 11 August – Kelvedon Hatch Village Hall
- Friday 18 August – The Brentwood Centre
- Friday 25 August – Hutton Recreational Ground

### **UKSPF**

Our share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund has enabled the delivery of some fantastic community projects so far. These include contribution to the successful Coronation Festival on Monday 8 May, where we were able to offer funding to event infrastructure and a number of sports organisations to join the event and host 'come and try' sessions in a bid to boost participation. Additionally, artist Becky Vincer was commissioned to create some fabric banners with local communities as a legacy artwork for the coronation. The 4 banners are based on the 4 national flowers and contain promises for the future, such as 'plant more seeds' or 'be kind to others'. Participating groups included single mothers at the YMCA, the Endeavour Youth Group, local artists and members of the public at the Coronation Festival. The completed banners are currently on display at the Baytree Centre as part of the Brentwood Art Trail, which this year has 74 artists displaying at 65 venues and hosting 23 events until 25 June.

The Art trail successful launched on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June attracted 40+ people to a Guided Tour in Brentwood (including Cllr Gareth Barrett, Mayor of Brentwood), children's chalk painting in Crown Street, and a Ceramics Workshop. Sky Arts' Landscape Artist of the Year contestant **Lucia Hardy** is exhibiting on the Trail and

hosting four events for us.

Our Artful Baking workshop with **Aljona Rumme** (Malina Patisserie – new venue) and **James Hillery** (Brentwood resident and Great British Bake Off contestant) sold out in 48 hours.

Part of 2023/2024's UKSPF funding was allocated in a grant scheme, which saw over £48,000 awarded to local arts, culture, heritage and sports projects. Applicants were invited to apply for between £5,000 and £10,000 for projects that improve access to high quality and inclusive arts and sporting activities, provide opportunities for skills development, employment and growth, and increase local volunteering. Amongst the awardees were Brennan and Burch, who will be using the funding to support and develop 20 young creatives, and the Afghan and Central Asian Association, who will be providing weekly football sessions and tournaments to support local Afghan and Ukrainian girls.

Full list of awardees:

- Brennan and Burch Ltd – to work with the Essex County Council Youth Service to support future creatives by offering mentoring and support with portfolios, qualifications, shadowing and training, whilst offering business training, social and wellbeing support.
- Minus Cloud Nine – to support the development of a creative, therapeutic hub at King George's Playing Fields.
- Hutton and Shenfield Choral Society – to support a Christmas concert which brings together professional musicians with choirs, schools, and dancers.
- Volunteer It Yourself – to work with young people at risk, or not in employment, education or training, to develop vocational trade skills whilst volunteering to renovate a youth centre.
- Afghan and Central Asian Association – to hold weekly football sessions and tournaments for Afghan and Ukrainian girls.
- Tri Sport Essex – to host an introductory event to the triathlon this summer.
- Brentwood Eels Rugby League Football Club – to create and run a Wheelchair Rugby League.
- Brentwood Bowling Club – to improve disabled toilet facilities at the club.

## **Community Trailer dates**

The Community Connect trailer dates and location

- Wednesday 12 July – Hutton Community Centre
- Wednesday 19 July – Brentwood High Street
- Friday 4 August – Warley Playing Fields as part of Family Fun Days
- Friday 11 August – Kelvedon Hatch Village Hall – as part of Family Fun Days
- Friday 18 August – The Brentwood Centre – as part of Family Fun Days
- Friday 25 August – Hutton Recreational Ground – as part of Family Fun Days
- Thursday 7 September – St Peters Church, Cloughton Way, Hutton
- Wednesday 27 September – Brentwood Community Hospital

The trailer is normally there between the hours of 10am – 1.30pm.

### **Cost of Living**

There is a separate report providing an update on the Cost of Living before Members tonight.

### **Community Support Hubs**

The Community Support Hub network continues to meet virtually and provide updates on events going on in their communities or through their organisations. Brentwood Borough Council is supporting another Can in the Van initiative which took place outside of Sainsbury's on 9 June to collect food items. All donations were split between Brentwood Foodbank and Daily Bread Café.

A charity Football Tournament will take place at the at the Brentwood Centre on Saturday 15 July organised by Bennetts Funeral Directors. For more information contact [jane@bennettsfunerals.co.uk](mailto:jane@bennettsfunerals.co.uk)

**Try & Tri - 2<sup>nd</sup> July** event see raising money for Snap. Sign up page is <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tse-try-a-tri-tickets-600704893507>

**Next Free Dementia concert** -28<sup>th</sup> October St Thomas Church, Jo Cory will send out more info, please save the date.

### **Football Hub Development**

Work continues to progress on the Football Hub development at the Brentwood Centre. Further updates will be presented to the next Committee.

### **Brentwood Centre**

The following is the event programme at the Brentwood Centre. A presentation by Everyone Active will come to the September Committee.

#### June

- 25<sup>th</sup> – Gymrox Showcase

#### July

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Charity Boxing
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Ballroom Dancing
- 6<sup>th</sup> – Public Consultation
- 9<sup>th</sup> – Judo
- 22<sup>nd</sup> – Made In Tennessee
- 29<sup>th</sup> – Toy & Train Collectors Fair

#### August

- 4<sup>th</sup> – Show Me Love
- 5<sup>th</sup> – Show Me Soul
- 6<sup>th</sup> – Show Me Family Fun Day
- 8<sup>th</sup> – Essex County Council – Net Zero Conference
- 11<sup>th</sup> – Elton John Tribute
- 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> – Antiques Fair

### September

- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Professional Boxing
- 9<sup>th</sup> – Dog Show
- 16<sup>th</sup> – Semi Pro Boxing
- 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> – Judo
- 28<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October – Snooker

### **Homes for the Ukraine**

The Community Services Team, along with Housing and Environmental Health officers continues to support Ukrainian refugees in Brentwood. There are currently 264 Ukrainian guests staying with 95 sponsors, with 1 or 2 new guests as individuals or families arriving each week. Ongoing challenges remain in supporting guests to find suitable, alternative private accommodation. Guests are well supported within the community and there is a good network of help available from organisations such as Brentwood Cathedral, who continue to update the Council on community activity and liaise with us for advice and seek help where needed.



**COMMITTEE TITLE** Housing, Health & Community

**DATE** 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	SHDP Tender Contracts
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Steve Summers – SHDP Sponsor & Strategic Director

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

The Strategic Housing Delivery Programme (SHDP) is made up of two distinct elements, 1) the regeneration of Brookfield Close and Courage Court, Hutton, to develop 62 zero carbon homes alongside the Harewood Regeneration Project consisting of 40 new zero carbon homes, and 2) the development of a range of smaller HRA sites to deliver further affordable homes on council owned sites.

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes..."

Both Brookfield and Harewood Regeneration have extant Planning Permissions as resolved by members of Brentwood Borough Council's Planning Committee.

Committee approval is required to issue tenders for contracts in relation to these Regeneration sites as set out in this report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Members are requested to:**

**R1. Approve the issuing of a tender for the construction of new buildings and associated works at Brookfield Close and Courage Court.**

**R2. Approve the issuing of a tender for the demolition of vacant site and buildings at Brookfield Close and Courage Court.**

**R3. Approve the issuing of a tender for the demolition and construction of 40 units at the Harewood Regeneration Site**

**R4. Give delegated authority to the Strategic Director(s) and, Section 151 officer acting in consultation with the Chair of Housing, Health and Community Committee to seek the Council's approval to award the contracts for Brookfield Close, Demolition of Brookfield Close/Courage Court and Harewood Regeneration.**

## **SUPPORT ING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

As a public sector organisation, the Council's procurement activity is governed by legislation, namely Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR2015). These regulations require that all purchases with estimated values over certain thresholds must be subject to open competition.

The threshold for construction contracts is currently £5,336,937 including VAT (assuming VAT at 20% this is £4,269,549.60 net). As pre-tender estimates for both projects exceed this threshold the Council is required to follow the PCR2015 rules.

A framework is a pre-selected list of contractors which has been established according to the principles of PCR2015 with the intention that it should be available for other public sector bodies to use.

It is therefore a compliant and efficient route to procurement of contractors for these regeneration sites.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

One other option was considered, that of making a direct award to one contractor using a different Framework. This would have been compliant with PCR2015 as the contractor had previously been appointed by competition. This approach, would have removed the need for the Council's team to run a competition, but there were no indications it would have expedited a start date. It would also have meant there would be no opportunity to explore the market and evidence best value in terms of pricing and quality for these projects.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

A pre-contract tender consultation for Land at Brookfield Close and Harewood Regeneration has been undertaken as an early-market engagement exercise via the Crown Commercial Framework. This exercise shared with the 'Market' the estimated

values of the contracts to be let and the form of Contract, which is a JCT Design and Build 2016, with amendments.

An Indicative award-stage evaluation criteria was also shared and reported to be subject to change prior to the invitation to tender or direct award documentation. The SHDP is assembled to enter the market and seek contractors for these sites. The early market engagements will inform the exercise with a view to attracting as many bidders as possible

Both sites have differing complexities and are proposed as being 'let' as individual contracts, this does not however preclude the appointment of the same contractor achieving awards of both contracts.

As part of the Employers Requirements (ERs), continued resident support and community engagement via 'resident contractor liaison' will be established. An in-house SHDP education programme has also been launched for at Land at Brookfield Close (please refer to SHDP update report presented to this committee).

### **Land at Brookfield Close**

1. By way of background, planning permission was granted for this regeneration site on 29th June 2021 (Planning Application Reference 20/01912/FUL), a 'Regeneration Offer' associated with this development was approved by EE&H Committee on 5th July 2021.
2. Further to the adoption of the 'Regeneration Offer', site decants commenced through a Resident Support Programme in liaison with the Housing Team; the site being confirmed as fully decanted in March 2023; this site included buy backs of 6 privately owned properties. Post decant support remains in place with the Housing Team.
3. Post planning and in the duration of the decant period, necessary technical assessments were undertaken, including most recently the intrusive survey work in Courage Court which could not be taken whilst there remained occupancy.
4. The technical team are nearing completion of the Tender Packs for construction and an assumed Construction Programme accompanies this pack.
5. The Tender package will comprise a significant amount of both design information and performance specification criteria, suitable for the Two Stage Design and Build Procurement route to be adopted. The specifications reflect a positive intervention in the marketplace, targeted to deliver very good value for money in consideration of the technical specification expected the Net Zero Carbon in Use performance but also appreciating an overall cost envelope. The

designs champion, and exceed, policy and it is important that the Employers Requirements within the tender package accurately capture and reflect the redevelopments drivers.

6. It is important that the tender process involves contractors of a suitable size and only those that have demonstrable experience to deliver such a complex project. The preferred framework, Crown Commercial Services, has been selected due to the rigour associated with contractors becoming a framework contractor, together with the ongoing monitoring of those contractors by the Framework owners. It is proposed that the tender selection criteria will be based 50% on price, and 50% on 'quality', with quality meaning the quality of the bidder's response, specifically to our questions posed.
7. The Tender Package will include four or five questions which the Contractors must respond to, which equate to 50% of their overall score. The questions will be biased towards and probing into their experience of designing and delivering to a Fabric First standard, seeking an insight into their knowledge, their understanding of the main risks associated and how they plan to manage. We're also interested in the Contractors views on phasing of the works, how they plan to manage access and egress into the site and work with the local community and Willowbrook Primary School. One question will be 'pass/fail' which will ensure that only those who can demonstrate that they have successfully delivered a fabric first residential project are then considered further.
8. Overall the Tender Package will contain enough information to adequately relay the Council's aspirations for the project but allowing the successful Contractor to impart their knowledge and experience to the design development and Construction. The tender package shares the importance of cost and quality, ensuring that best value is achieved rather than just the lowest bidder.

### **Brookfield Close & Courage Court Demolition**

9. Specialist site security commenced at Brookfield Close and Courage Court in January 2023 this was in the interests of both existing residents and visitors living and accessing the hinterland of the development site, and in order to protect vacant buildings from ASB.



10. Since March 2023 the 'site' was fully under the ownership of the Council; in advance of letting the aforementioned construction contract, demolition and site clearance is recommended to advance progress of construction works and reduce current security costs.
11. The phasing of the demolition package is not confirmed given Courage Court requires an amendment in Planning Permission (due to be submitted at the time of authoring this report). The intrusive inspections undertaken in January and February 2023 highlighted a non-typical form of construction whereby the columns, floors, external walls and a number of internal walls were confirmed as solid concrete and structural, thus hindering a standard of internal quality anticipated.
12. The revision to the method of construction has been tested and the new build alternative reflects an enhancement against the original proposals in Zero Carbon, Embodied Carbon and Living Standards. For clarity, consideration regarding Embodied Carbon remains, as the frame is indicated to be used for crush on site.

## **Harewood Regeneration**

13. "Harewood Regeneration' was awarded Full Planning Permission by the Local Planning Authority on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022; this scheme will result in 29 of the Councils poorest quality and currently rented homes, mostly of a post-war 'prefabricated' construction with timber and felt roofs, being replaced with 40 new energy efficient homes using modern construction methods and a community room.
14. This scheme was developed through a process of Co-Design with the community through three stages of engagement; since Planning Permission was awarded, individual engagement with those residents directly impacted upon (i.e., those subject to home loss and decant) was carried out.
15. The 'Landlord Offer' was approved by members of the Housing Committee 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023, further to this, additional Resident Surveys for decant were commenced by the Delivery Team (SHDP). It is anticipated the site will be fully vacant by late Autumn 2023.
16. The Tender package will comprise a significant amount of both design information and performance specification criteria, suitable for the Two Stage Design and Build Procurement route to be adopted. The specifications reflect a positive intervention in the marketplace, targeted to deliver value for money in consideration of the technical specification expected, (the Net Zero Carbon in Use performance) but also appreciating an overall cost envelope. The designs champion, and exceed, policy and the Employers Requirements within

the tender package accurately capture and reflect the Development Principles of the SHDP.

17. It is important the tender process involves contractors of a suitable size and only those that have demonstrable experience to deliver this complex project.
18. The preferred framework, Crown Commercial Services, has been selected due to the rigour associated with contractors becoming a framework contractor, together with the ongoing monitoring of those contractors by the Framework owners. It is proposed that the tender selection criteria will be based 50% on price, and 50% on 'quality', with quality meaning the quality of the bidder's response, specifically to our questions posed.
19. The Tender Package will include four or five questions which the Contractors must respond to, which equate to 50% of their overall score. The questions will be biased towards and probing into their experience of designing and delivering to a Fabric First standard, seeking an insight into their knowledge, their understanding of the main risks associated and how they plan to manage.
20. The planning approved design was one established via a co-design approach with the existing residents; these aspects of the design will be retained throughout. We expect that the Contractor works closely, and openly, with the adjacent residents and will to explore their proposals in this regard. One question will be 'pass/fail' which will ensure that only those who can demonstrate that they have successfully delivered a fabric first residential project are then considered further.
21. Overall the Tender Package will contain enough information to adequately relay the Council's aspirations for the project but allowing the successful Contractor to impart their knowledge and experience to the design development and Construction. The tender package shares the importance of cost and quality, ensuring that best value is achieved rather than just the lowest bidder.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / [tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk](mailto:tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk)**

The Housing Revenue Account has the available budget provision to award the contract to the successful bidder following the procurement process.

The award of the contract will be reported back to the Housing Committee at the appropriate time.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Joint Acting Director of People and Governance**

Legal implications are within the report.

Once the tender is awarded all an Instruction will be sent to the Legal Team who will liaise with the winning contractor to ensure all contract terms are agreed and the contract is signed by both parties

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / [Claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk)**

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

Included within the Housing Development Strategy.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

SHDP Risk Log for development programme in review.

individual scheme risk registers updated.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

This is set out in detail within each SHDP scheme.

## 9.0 Economic Implications

**Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director - Place**

**Tel/Email: 01277 312610/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Council's Housing Strategy provides further detail to the Corporate Plan and the recently adopted Local Plan. The Strategic Housing Development Plan adds specific detail on a programme of sites that utilise council owned land to deliver new affordable homes with environmentally led innovations. Housing delivery plays a vital role in the local economy, both in terms of short-term related construction benefits (i.e., technical preparatory work, on-site jobs and supply chains), and longer-term accommodation provision for people who can contribute to the local economy in a range of ways. This helps to ensure the borough remains an attractive place to live, work and visit.

## 10.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

**Name/Title: Kim Anderson, Partnerships, Leisure & Funding Manager**

**Tel/Email: 01277 312634/kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising for this report

### REPORT AUTHOR:

**Name:** Paulette McAllister

**Title:** Programme Director SHDP

**Phone:** 01277312500

**Email:** [paulette.mcallister@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:paulette.mcallister@brentwood.gov.uk)

### APPENDICES

None

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

### SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
None	



**COMMITTEE TITLE** Housing, Health & Community

**DATE** 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Strategic Housing Delivery Plan (SHDP)
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Steve Summers (SHDP Programme Sponsor)

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report summarises progress of the development of a pipeline of new affordable homes through the development and regeneration of various Housing Revenue Account (HRA) owned sites. As a reminder, this Strategic Housing Delivery Programme (SHDP) is made up of two distinct elements, 1) the regeneration of Brookfield Close and Courage Court, Hutton to develop 62 zero carbon homes alongside the Harewood Regeneration Project consisting of 40 new zero carbon homes, and 2) the development of a range of smaller HRA sites to deliver further Zero Carbon affordable homes on further council owned sites.

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes...".

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Members are requested to:**

- R1. To note continuing progress in the delivery of new Council homes through the SHDP.**
  
- R2. Resolve to submit a Planning Application for Affordable Homes at Highwood Close.**

## **SUPPORT ING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **2.0 Brookfield Close and Courage Court Regeneration Update**

The decanting of the Council's tenants at this first regeneration site is completed. All leaseholds now under the ownership of the HRA. At the time of the last Housing Committee two properties were in the period of exchange to completion.

The secure hoarding erected across the northern perimeter of the development zone and active patrolled security measures remain in place across the entire site and its hinterland, this is planned to continue until the site transfers to an appointed contractor, permission to 'tender' this scheme is presented to this committee under a separate report for decision.

The Council's appointed technical advisors, Hamson Barron Smith (HBS) (part of the Norse Group) completed Intrusive Surveys to further complete the tender pack for construction, this is in parallel to finalising the strategy for the procurement of the main contractor, given the specialist zero carbon 'in use' nature of the specification this will require 'pre-qualification' to ensure delivery capability.

Members of this committee are requested to note an alteration in the nature of the previously assumed construction for the new units at Courage Court. The build assumptions originally sought to retain the skeletal core of the building frame and adopt an EnerPhit model. This concept was adopted by the project team in September 2020 but was conditional on the findings of a more intrusive investigation of the buildings frame, build methodology and sub-structure.

The intrusive investigations could only be undertaken at a time when the decant of Courage Court had reached its conclusion; these were undertaken in January and February 2023. Findings have highlighted a non-typical form of construction whereby the columns, floors, external walls and a number of internal walls are solid concrete and structural. Consequently, the planned alternations to the building to create a more modern and liveable space would be compromised by structural supports, beams and localised frame reinforcement.

The alternative for construction of the new units at Courage Court preserves the original project aspirations of creating innovative, standard defining living accommodation for future residents. The opportunistic benefit of Embodied Carbon reduction remains as the frame may be used for crush on site.

As a matter of procedure, a revised submission reflecting this amendment in construction will be submitted to the LPA (expected June 2023). This does not affect the quantum or mix as already approved. Preapplication engagement has been carried out with the Planning Team in advance and the units remains as Zero Carbon (in use) Affordable Homes.

### **3.0 Harewood Regeneration Update**

This scheme was unanimously approved by Brentwood Borough Councils Planning Committee in December 2023, it will result in 29 of the Councils poorest quality and currently rented homes, mostly of a post-war 'pre-fabricated' construction with timber and felt roofs, being replaced with 40 new energy efficient homes using modern construction methods. Most affected homes are currently rented or void and therefore no 'buy-back' of homes is required to facilitate the regeneration.

This scheme was developed through a process of Co-Design with the community through three stages of engagement; since Planning Permission was awarded, individual engagement with those residents directly impacted upon (i.e., those subject to home loss and decant) was carried out.

The 'Landlord Offer' was approved by members of the Housing Committee 27th February 2023, further to this, additional Resident Surveys for decant were commenced by the Delivery Team (SHDP). It is anticipated the site will be fully vacant by late Autumn 2023.

A Local Lettings Policy for this new development will be brought to a future Housing, Health & Community Committee.

The Council's appointed technical advisors, Hamson Barron Smith (HBS) (part of the NPS Group) are completing RIBA Stage 4 technical detail in conjunction with the SHDP Team in preparation of the procurement of the main contractor, this is the subject of a separate report to this committee for Decision this evening.

### **4.0 Small Sites Programme Update**

#### **Willingale Close, Hutton**

The scheme offers the provision for 3 x 3 Bed Zero Carbon (in use) Council Homes. Members are reminded this development was expected to be included within the Tender Pack for Brookfield Close, however given the complexities of the Construction at Brookfield Close, its delivery is proposed through a separate competitive tender. A scheme review of the technical elements of the units is currently in progress, an update.

#### **Ingleton House, Stock Lane, Ingatestone**

Further to the RIBA Stage 1 site feasibility being undertaken to examine the 'red line' of the development area and site constraints. The SHDP and Housing Estates Team are reviewing opportunities for a hybrid scheme comprising new development and decarbonisation. Prior to a detailed design stage an engagement programme and consultation will be programmed, Members of this committee will be updated along with Ward Members and Parish Council representatives.

### **Highwood Close**

The site at Highwood Close is within the SHDP portfolio and consists of undeveloped land allocated for Housing in the previous LDP (2005). A structured approach to the site arrangement through community and Ward Member engagement, has seen the layout, mix and density adapt over a period of design development.

Initial Community Engagement bespoke to this site, was carried out in Autumn 2022, further to the outputs and feedback from this engagement, 121s with residents impacted by way of development and in properties contiguous to the south of the site have been carried out by the SHDP team. This includes the owner occupier of one of the HRA garages.

A preapplication meeting was held with the LPA on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023, formal feedback from the LPA and consultees have raised no in principle concerns and more detailed studies and reports were advised to be undertaken.

The Statement of Community Involvement will shortly be finalised and those who registered to 'keep in touch' will be notified in advance of the planning application, this is alongside the LPA's duty to consult and advertise the application once validated.

It was expected a detailed planning submission would be made in late May 2023; however, the SHDP team requested further ecological reports from the technical team (Pelling's LLP) in advance of any submission following advice from the Council's Ecology and Landscape Consultee.

Members are asked to note this scheme does not have direct impact upon tenants in terms of housing decants or housing buy backs, this is part garage site and part vacant undeveloped land. No Landlord Offer is required.

### **Sir Francis Way**



In April 2022 as part of the Small Sites by technical partner Pelling's LLP, a planning submission was made to the LPA which proposed 'Demolition of existing garages and construction of 4 x 3no bedroom, 3 storey houses with associated car parking along with alterations to existing car parking and bin stores'.

This application (reference 22/00572/BBC) was heard at a March Planning Committee and resolved for Approval.

Members are asked to note this scheme does not have direct impact upon tenants in terms of housing decants or housing buy backs, this is a HRA garage site. No Landlord Offer is required.

The next stage technical brief is currently being reviewed by the SHDP Team in parallel with viability assumptions and SHDP delivery milestones.

### **Four Oaks**

Community engagement bespoke to this site was due to commence late September 2022, this was reordered in order to efficiently resource the delivery of the two major regeneration sites within the SHDP. A review of the programme for this site remains underway in parallel with viability assumptions and SHDP delivery milestones.

In advance of consultation Ward Members will be notified and issued with the consultation methodology and programme by the delivery team, in addition Ward members will be invited to any consultation sessions planned.

### **School Education Programme**

As part of the scheme 'Land at Brookfield Close', the SHDP team have engaged with two local primary schools to involve them in the ongoing project. The two local primary schools are 'Willowbrook' and 'St Joseph the Worker'. Both schools are located in a close proximity to the redevelopment location, and it is likely that the pupils walk past the site on their way to school.

Engagement in this type of project is vital, not only for directly affected residents but also those young people who are in close vicinity of SHDP schemes; messaging around Sustainability and Healthy Homes and Communities are at the heart of the parallel engagement programme.

For Land at Brookfield Close, initial engagement is an art project with the schools producing various types of artworks that will be used on the large hoardings erected around the site once demolition commences.

An initial meeting with the school staff was undertaken prior to both schools affording a 'whole school assembly' where the SHDP team provided background information on why and where we were building the new houses and the importance of community and protecting the environment.

The artwork will be produced in the summer term and displayed on the hoarding towards the end of the year. The chair of this committee will be updated on progress and school engagement events and initiatives.

### **References to the Corporate Plan**

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes...". The SHDP and specific proposals in this report contribute to all of these strategic objectives.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

The Strategic Housing Delivery Plan is expected to spend £60million over 5-7 years. This is currently reflected in the HRA 30-year business plan. The 30-year Business plan is updated to reflect the timeline of development to help ensure the business plan remains relevant and affordable going forward.

The SHDP requires revenue and capital resources from the HRA to deliver this programme. The finance structuring on each scheme is dependent on whether Homes England Grant Funding is applicable, whether any Section 106 is available and if Retained Right to Buy Capital Receipts can be utilised. Any difference requires borrowing which incurs financing costs that are to be borne by the HRA.

## **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew – Joint Acting Director of People and Governance & Monitoring Officer**

Tel & Email 01277 312741 / [claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk)

The Council must follow the statutory process when looking to develop or regenerate areas. This includes serving the statutory notices and holding consultations. The Council in following the process is mitigating the risks of challenge as the programme moves forward.

## **7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

Included within the Housing Development Strategy.

## **8.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

SHDP Risk Log for development programme in review.

Individual scheme risk registers updated by technical teams.

## **9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

This is set out in detail within each SHDP scheme.

## **10.0 ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director -Place**

**Tel/Email: 01277 312500 [philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk)**

The Council's Housing Strategy provides further detail to the Corporate Plan and the recently adopted Local Plan. The Strategic Housing Development Plan adds specific detail on a programme of sites that utilise council owned land to deliver new affordable homes with environmentally led innovations. Housing delivery plays a vital role in the local economy, both in terms of short-term related construction benefits (i.e., technical preparatory work, on-site jobs and supply chains), and longer-term accommodation provision for people who can contribute to the local economy in a range of ways. This helps to ensure the borough remains an attractive place to live, work and visit.

## **8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

None

## **9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic.

**REPORT AUTHOR:**                   **Name:** Paulette McAllister  
**Title:** Programme Director Strategic Housing  
Development Programme  
**Phone:** 01277312500  
**Email:** [paulette.mcallister@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:paulette.mcallister@brentwood.gov.uk)

**APPENDICES**

None

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Housing Committee</b>	<b>27<sup>th</sup> February 2023</b>

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**COMMITTEE TITLE:** Housing Health and Community Committee

**DATE:** 19 June 2023

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Cost of Living
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Tracey Lilley, Director of Community and Health

## REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an update to Members on the work undertaken by officers to respond to the Cost-of-Living crisis and ensure that we are supporting our residents, businesses and staff. The council's function is to facilitate, co-ordinate and signpost individuals and organisations to where support is provided. It is important that this is communicated to as wide an audience as possible so that people can access the right help and support as soon as possible.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

For Members to note the report

## SUPPORT ING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Brentwood Borough Council has focused on 6 key themes to support residents, staff and businesses in the response to the Cost-of-Living crisis by utilising a number of communication methods. The 6 key themes are set out below:

- Support with Bills and money
- Support with food and essentials
- Support with wellbeing
- Support to Go Green
- Support for businesses
- Support with work

1.1 The Council's **website** ([www.brentwood.gov.uk/cost-of-living](http://www.brentwood.gov.uk/cost-of-living)) provides a huge amount of information on each of the themes set out above that can support residents, businesses and staff. The website is updated weekly so that information is up to date with the current advice and support that is available.

There is a link from this webpage to the warm hubs that are available throughout the Borough, with their location, hours of operation and the activities that are available there.

- 1.2 A **collaborative working group** is widely attended by key partners. This working group will help to understand and draw together the support that is currently available across the Borough. It will also identify any opportunities for further collaboration, and any additional resources required in order to provide targeted support for residents and businesses. This group and other key partners were in attendance at the Cost-of-Living Roadshow which took place on 19 April at the Nightingale Centre to look at ways in which it can overcome some of the challenges and work more collaboratively. The afternoon session was open to the public to enable them to get information, support and guidance. It is proposed that that another roadshow will take place at a different location later this year.
- 1.3 The development of a **dashboard** is considered essential to support our work alongside our partners in addressing the challenges ahead. The dashboard will be presented alongside this report to show the impact of the Cost-of-Living. The Dashboard will also help to identify emerging support needs of our residents, businesses and staff, any funding gaps and resource issues that need addressing for our partner agencies who are already seeing pressures on their services. The dashboard will be presented tonight to Members.
- 1.4 The **digital campaign** with a strapline of **#ByYourSide** has been effective in that all partner agencies are using the branding to not only raise awareness of services available but to also assist with addressing the stigma associated with some of issues, that for many find themselves suffering hardship for the first time and not knowing where to go or what support is available for them.
- 1.5 Whilst the campaign is digital, officers are fully aware that not all residents, businesses or staff have access to the internet or who are comfortable online, as mentioned above. This is being reflected in the campaign and material will be available in **printed** form. The aim is to reach as many residents and businesses as possible through all available channels, social media, online, face to face, press, partners, and the communities themselves.
- 1.7 **Business Cards** were printed for partners to hand out to residents which has the QR code to the Council's website along with telephone and email contact details
- 1.8 Officers have also developed an **action plan** which looks at a whole system approach to support, residents, businesses and staff to respond to the Cost-of-Living issues and enables an individual and collective support, through a suite of preventative and personalised measures. The Action Plan is a live document and will be informed not only from any governmental changes but also a number



of sources., such as health colleagues, Housing, Revs and Bens, DWP, CAB and VCSE organisations that are on the front-line providing services to residents.

1.9 **Fridge Magnets** have been produced with Axis, which has a QR code which takes tenants directly to the Council's website.

1.10 **Food Support** - There are a number of organisations that are providing food support such as Foodbank at Doddinghurst Road Church, The Daily Bread Café at St Peter's Church in Hutton, and Manna Meals from Bishop's Hall. The Council organised a 'Can in the Van' on Friday 9 June, outside Sainsbury for people to donate food items. All items were distributed between Brentwood Foodbank and the Daily Bred Café.

1.11 **Warm welcome Hubs** were established across the borough with ongoing activities being delivered. A full list of the warm welcome hubs are on the Council's Cost-of-Living webpage.

1.12 Everyone Active, the operators at the Brentwood Centre are supporting the Essex wide campaign '**Ask for Tommy**' whereby members of the public who may be struggling with utility costs can access a hot shower at the leisure Centre.

1.13 Members of the public can also provide support by volunteering and the Council would direct them to Brentwood CVS to register their interest.

#### 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

At the 3 October 2021 Policy Resources and Economic Development Committee, members approved to fund a part-time Community Engagement Officer, in order to support Brentwood residents, businesses and communities to be managed by the revenues and benefits partnership. This post would assist and address one of the key actions arising from the cost-of-living crisis action plan.

All other costs are within existing budgets

Consideration will need to be given for any additional financial support that is provided. Any central Government grants may need to be applied for and will need to be allocated accordingly.

#### 5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Joint Acting of Director People & Governance & Monitoring Officer**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / [claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk](mailto:claire.mayhew@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk)**

Any work undertaken by the Council, either by itself or in partnership will be in line with statutory legal guidance.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

See under financial implications

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

Action plan is regularly updated and risk and mitigations added.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

Through the partners of the collaborative working group.

#### **9.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 [kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk)**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic and provide support and guidance for residents, businesses and staff.

#### **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / [phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk](mailto:phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk)**

There are no direct economic or environmental implications beyond those noted within the content of the report.

None identified

**REPORT AUTHOR:**                   **Name: Kim Anderson**  
**Title: Corporate Manager, Community, Leisure and Health**  
**Phone: 01277 312500**  
**Email: kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

**APPENDICES**

None

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Community, Environment and Enforcement Committee</b>	<b>19 December 2022</b>

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**COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health and Community**

**DATE: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Julian Higson – Interim Director Housing

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

Key Performance indicators are collected across all services in the Housing Department and help monitor how we are performing across a set list of key areas.

This report presents these Key Performance Indicators to Members of the Housing Committee with a commentary for each one which details why we are under performing and noting where a high level of performance has been achieved.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Housing collects a large range of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) each month, however, in order to provide a balanced overview of the department's services, we will present a dashboard of 28 key performance indicators.

The performance measures presented are compiled through direct information that we gather as an authority as well as information provided to us by our Repairs and Maintenance contractor, Axis.

They are a mix of outcome based and perception based.

The KPI's that are reported on, were agreed by Members in December 2022 at the Housing Committee.


The table attached at Appendix A shows our current performance across the 28 selected KPI's and the last 3 months performance for comparison.

Some of these KPI's are new and came into force in April 2023 when we began collecting them ready to report to the Regulator of Social Housing from April 2024.

We will collect these throughout 2023/2024 through our external partners Tenant Leadership Factor.

As we begin to collect these, we will present them to future committees.

The key below details how we track progress of each KPI against its target.

Key	
	Current performance is below target
	Current performance is below target but is improving
	Current target has been met or exceeded.
	No target.
NMTP	Not measured this period.
	Performance for the quarter or year to date is improving (up) or deteriorating (down) compared to previous quarter or across the year.

## 2.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no direct financial implications. However, there are indirect implications such as reporting high level rent arrears as these will impact on the Housing Revenue Account regarding the bad debt provision and arrear write offs.

## 3.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew – Joint Acting Director of People and Governance Director & Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312741 /claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk**

Monitoring performance assists the Council in contract management and monitoring its statutory compliance.

#### **4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

None

#### **5.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

We report on KPI's in order that any risks are identified at the earliest stage possible to allow mitigations to be put into place.

#### **6.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

Key Performance Indicators are reported to the Corporate Leadership Team monthly.

They are also reported quarterly to our Tenant Talkback group and will soon be reported to the newly developed resident led focus panels.

#### **7.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

## 8.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title:** Phil Drane, Director - Place

**Tel & Email** 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk

There are no direct economic implications. It is important that the council monitor outputs across all services to maintain and improve performance, which can be linked to wider economic benefits for the borough and more specific economic related key performance indicators.

### REPORT AUTHOR:

**Name:** Nicola Marsh

**Title:** Corporate Manager Housing Estates

**Phone:** 01277 312 981

**Email:** nicola.marsh@brentwood.gov.uk

### APPENDICES



Appendix A: Key Performance Indicators



### BACKGROUND PAPERS





### SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)





Council Meeting	Date
Taken to each Housing Committee as agreed in December 2022	






	Key Performance Indicator	Target	Janunary	February	March	Comment	Progress against previous quarter
HO1	Percentage rent collected from current tenants as a percentage of rent due	100%	99.66%	99.67%	98.42%	This figure does fluctuate throughout the financial year due to factors like direct debits. Universal Credit are now in the process of migrating legacy benefits onto universal credit, so this figure is likely to go down for a while whilst the change is taking place. officers have been briefed and letters sent to all those we believe will be affected	
HO2	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	2.00%	6.52%	6.50%	6.42%	This reflects how hard the Officers have been working to negotitate affordable payment plans in such difficult times	
HO3	Rent arrears of former tenants as a percentage of rent due	0	0	0	0	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO4	Discretionary Housing Payments Made £	0	£0	£0	£0	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A

HO5	Average re-let times for homes (DAYS)	10	63	52	39	This figure is improving as we hold fewer properties for decants for development and work with Axis and Estates officers to turnaround properties quicker. We have however seen an increase in the numbers of properties becoming void which has impacted the figures.	
HO6	Dwellings let	0	14	16	5	This is reflective of how fast we can turn properties around and that some are being held for possible decants for those affected by development. It fluctuates month on month	
HO7	Number of customers registered to access services online	0	0	0	0	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO8	% of tenants satisfied with landlord service in month	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO9	% of tenants satisfied with opportunities to be involved	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO10	% of Scheduled Tenant Visits carried out	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A

HO11	% of Estates Meetings Required at standard inspection	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO12	Satisfaction with repairs	94.00%	89.50%	89.10%	93.40%	This KPI is generally provided by our contractors, however, for the purposes of accuracy, we will be procuring an external contract to collect this KPI independantly from April 2023.	N/A
HO13	Number of Non Emergency Repairs completed within the month (gas)	N/A	178	123	131	The number of emergency repairs increased slightly when compared to the same quarter the previous year	
HO14	% of repairs completed within target timescale (gas)	99.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	All gas repairs completed. This exceeds the target. 366 jobs in January , 257 in February and 249 in March	
HO15	Net Cost of Temporary Accomodation	0	0	0	0	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO16	Number of Moved in to Permenant social housing	0	6	0	2		
HO17	Number of moves into permanent private accomodation	0	0	2	2		

HO18	<b>Total No of households living in temporary accommodation</b>	25	30	31	28	Temporary accommdation has reduced slightly however we continue to receive more complex cases that do not have LC to our housing register.	
HO19	<b>Number of Households living in B&amp;B in excess of 6 weeks</b>	0	0	0	0	We have ensured as per government guidance that no families are to remain in B&B for more than 6 weeks.	
HO20	<b>% of Successful Homeless preventions</b>	0	58.00%	36.00%	0.00%		
HO21	<b>Number of Homes EPC D and below</b>	0	0	0	0	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO22	<b>% Home with a Gas safety certificate</b>	100.00%	98.95%	100.00%	100.00%	Target has been achieved and maintained in this quarter. All properties that are due to have an annual gas service have been completed.	
HO23	<b>Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them</b>	0	0	0	0	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO24	<b>Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling of complaints</b>	0	0	0	0	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A

HO25	Number of formal complaints received within the month	0	4	4	4	This figure fluctuates across the year and depending on customer experience.	
HO26	% of Annual Planned investment Programme Delivered	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	This KPI will be collected from April 2023	N/A
HO27	Leasehold Service Charge arrears	0	£63,820.32	£53,153.14	£36,883.22	This figure gradually decreases throughout the year and officers are working hard to ensure they can improve direct debit or standing order payments as these are more likely to be kept by the Leaseholder and will reduce the end arrears figure	
HO28	Number of New Council homes completed	0	0	0	0	None completed this quarter	





**COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health and Community**

**DATE: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Policy Schedule
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Julian Higson – Interim Director of Housing

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report is an update for members to note and presents the Policy Review Schedule to ensure that the Housing Department has the relevant Strategies and Policies in place in order to provide a clear framework of its responsibilities.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In 2021 the Housing Service undertook a full review of its current Statutory and Local Strategy and Policies that were in place and to identify additional Policy documents that were required.

Following this internal review, a full schedule of Strategy and Policy documents was drafted for implementation of various policies between 2021 – 2023.

Since 2021, we have been implementing additional Policy documents to ensure that we can demonstrate a clear and transparent framework that the housing department work to across all of the services.

During the Municipal year 2023 to 2024 we intend to bring a total of 13 Policies to committee for approval. These are detailed in Appendix A.

Following the One Team implementation, several Policies have been delayed pending the Housing service review to enable officers to review the Policies to ensure they are standardised across Brentwood Borough Council and Rochford District Council. Where this is required, it is detailed within the Policy overview at Appendix A.

### **2.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **3.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew – Joint Acting Up Director for People and Governance and Monitoring Officer**

**Tel & Email 01277 312741/ claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Council is required to have in place appropriate policies in order to deliver its Housing Services in accordance with relevant legislation.

### **4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

None

### **5.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

None

### **6.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

None

### **7.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful.
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.



## 8.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no direct economic implications arising from this report.

**REPORT AUTHOR:**

**Name: Angela Abbott**

**Title: Corporate Manager – Housing Needs & Independent**

**Living**

**Phone: 01277 312 500 ext 2568**

**Email: angela.abbott@brentwood.gov.uk**

### APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Policy Schedule

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

### SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Housing Committee	27.02.23

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# Strategic Development

# Policy & Strategy Information Table

Updated June 2023

Policy or Strategy	Document Date	Last Reviewed / Approval Date	Next Review Due Date	Revised Due date	Comments
<b>Housing Services</b>					
Housing Strategy	2021-2026	Mar 21	Mar 26	NA	
7 year affordable housing delivery	2012 - 2028	Jul 21	Jul 27	NA	
Resident Engagement Strategy	2022 - 2027	Mar 22	Mar 27	NA	
Service Standard	2022-2027	Mar 22	Mar 27	NA	
Asset Management Strategy	New Strategy	Jul 22		Sep 23	2023 Municipal year, being reviewed.
Community Cohesion & Resilience Strategy	New Strategy	n/a	Jul 22	Sep 23	Out for comments with officers
Training Plan/Matrix	Ongoing	n/a	Jun 24	NA	Working Document
Billing Policy	New Policy	n/a	Jul 22	Jun 23	For approval 19th June 2023 committee
<b>Managing Tenancies</b>					
Tenancy Strategy	2021-2026	Jun 21	Jun 26	NA	
Tenancy Agreement	2014			Dec 23	Under review
Leasehold/Tenant Handbook	New Document	n/a	Mar 23	Dec 23	To be reviewed in line with the Tenancy Agreement
End of Fixed term tenancy policy	2021-2026	Jul 21	Jul 26	NA	
Rent Setting Policy	2022-2024	Dec 21	Dec 24	NA	
Pets Policy	2021-2024	Dec 21	Dec 24	NA	
Recharge Policy	2015-2018	Sep 15	Sep 22	Sep 23	Delayed to go hand in hand with the income management policy
Income Management Policy	2014	Apr 14	Apr 19	Sep 23	Delayed as we work with Mobyssoft on best practice
Mobility Scooter Policy	2022-2025	Mar 22	Mar 25	NA	
Tenancy Sustainment Policy	New Policy	Mar 22	Jun 23	Sep 23	
Hoarding Policy	New Policy	Jul 22	Jun 23	Sep 23	
<b>Repairs and Compliance</b>					
Electrical Policy	2021 - 2023	Jun 21	Jul 23	Sep 23	
Lift Policy	2022-2025	Sep 22	Sep 25	NA	
Fire Policy	2022-2025	Sep 22	Sep 25	NA	
Asbestos Policy	2022-2025	Dec 22	Dec 25	NA	
Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy	2022-2025	Jun 22	Jun 25	NA	
Gas Safety Policy	2022-2025	Mar 21	Mar 24	NA	
Water Hygiene Policy	2023 - 2025	Feb 23	Feb 25	NA	
Aids and Adaptions Policy	2022-2025	Sep 22	Sep 25	NA	
Solid Fuel Policy	2022-2025	Dec 22	Dec 25	NA	
Repairs Policy	New document	n/a	Dec 23		
<b>Housing Needs and Options</b>					
Allocations Policy	2021-2026	Mar 21	Mar 26	NA	
Discharge of Duty Policy	2021-2026	Jul 21	Jul 26	NA	
Meanwhile Offer	2021-2024	Sep 21	Sep 24	NA	
Decant Policy	2022-2026	Sep 21	Sep 26	NA	
Downsizing Scheme	New Policy		Mar 23	Mar 24	
Tenancy Changes Policy	New Policy	n/a	Mar 23	Sep 23	
Succession Policy	2022-2026	Sep 22	Sep 26	NA	
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy and Delviery Plan	2020-2025	Mar 22	Mar 25	NA	
Placement Policy	2020-2024	Jan 20	Jan 24	NA	
Management Move Policy	2022-2025	Jun 22	Jun 25	NA	
<b>Home Ownership</b>					
Leasehold Payment Options Policy	2022-2025	Mar-22	Mar 25	NA	

# No. of Strategies/Policy Reviews for Committee Approval 2024-2027

9

**June 23**

Billing Policy

**September 23**

Asset Management Strategy

Recharge Policy

Electrical Policy

Income Management Policy

Tenancy Sustainment Policy

Hoarding Policy

Tenancy Changes Policy

Community Cohesion and Resilience Strategy

**December 23**

Repairs Policy

6

**JANUARY 24**

Placement Policy

**MARCH 24**

Gas Safety Policy

Downsizing Scheme

**SEPTEMBER 24**

Meanwhile Offer

**DECEMBER 24**

Rent Setting Policy

Pets Policy

1

**MARCH 25**

Homeless & Rough Sleeping Strategy and Delivery

Leasehold Payment Options Policy

Mobility Scooter Policy

**JUNE 25**

Management move Policy

Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy

**SEPTEMBER 25**

Aids and Adaptions Policy

Lift Policy

Fire Safety Policy

**DECEMBER 25**

Asbestos Policy

Solid Fuel Policy

7

**MARCH 26**

Housing Strategy

Allocations Policy

**June 26**

Tenancy Strategy

**JULY 26**

Discharge of Duty to Private Sector

End of Fixed Term Tenancy Policy

**SEPTEMBER 26**

Decant Policy

Succession Policy

3

**MARCH 27**

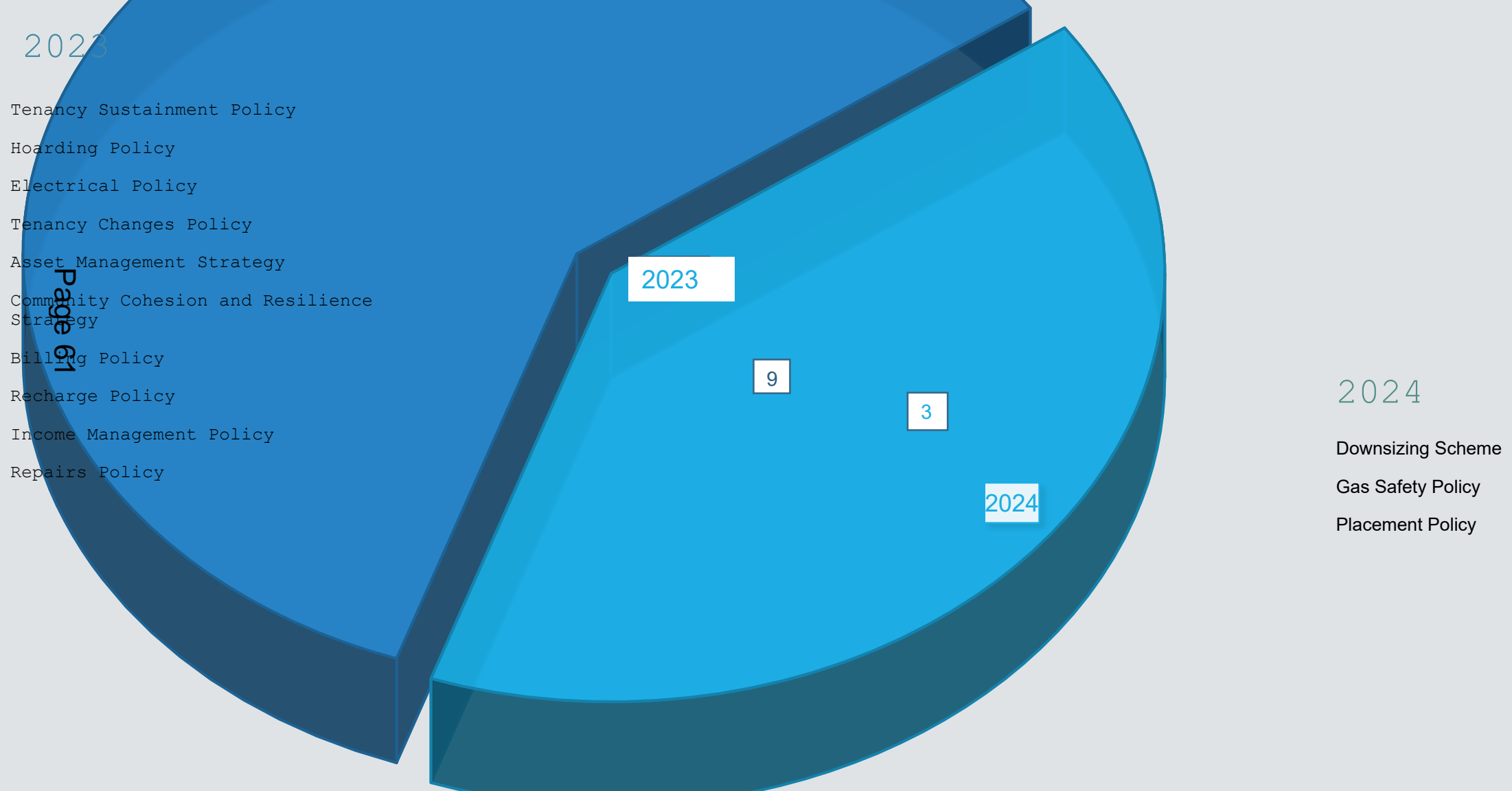
Resident Engagement Strategy

Service Standards

**July 27**

Seven Year Affordable Housing Delivery

# No. of Strategies/Policies Pending Committee Approval for Municipal Year April 2023 – March 2024



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**COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health and Community**

**DATE: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Heat Billing Policy
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Julian Higson – Interim Director of Housing

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This policy sets out the way charges are raised for tenants and leaseholders from communal heating and hot water systems provided to a single building or several buildings (i.e. heat networks) in new and existing homes.

The policy also explains what the Council's approach will be when introducing individually metered supplies in existing homes.

Under the Heat Networks (Metering & Billing) Regulations, that was introduced in 2014 with amendments made in December 2015 and November 2020, we now have a legal duty to introduce heat meters on estates where it is cost effective to do so. In other words, the saving experienced by residents in the long run is greater than the initial cost of installing heat meters.

The Housing team have a number of capital projects which involves the replacement of communal heating systems which at present serves Victoria Court (27 units), Oldfields (19 units), St Georges (57 units) and we also have an existing site at Drake House (44 units). There are other sites that in the future would need upgrading or replacement. The Heat Interface Units (HIU) fitted are designed to be able to be individually metered which complies with the Heat Networks (Metering & Billing) Regulations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To approve a Heat Billing Policy which covers our legal requirements in line with current legislation which outlines our legal duties to meter communal heating systems.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council has a legal duty to individually bill tenants for what they use.

The resident would have flexible control of their actual heat usage and payments.

It would reduce our gas usage thus being more energy efficient and reducing our carbon footprint.

Currently our communal boilers are working 24/7 to supply unlimited heating and hot water of which most of it is wasted energy as there are no monitored systems in place.

With these benefits it can be measured by monitoring the current usage over a 5 to 10-year period.

Pay as you go billing systems can work in unison with the new future proof heat interface units that have been fitted to several of our blocks, as part of the communal boiler replacement programme. It has a number of flexible payment methods, minimal maintenance and a 24/7 service that covers all our billing needs.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The only approach would be to carry on as we are which doesn't comply with current regulations and may lead to the Council receiving a financial penalty for not complying with the Regulations. To install a metering system with a monthly paper-based billing system would involve debt recovery issues for non-payment and increase administrative duties.

We are not able to provide a variable tariff as we are locked in a fixed tariff with Gazprom for our gas supply. However, this contract ends on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022. Our procurement team are currently exploring options for new contracts.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

To comply with legislation the Council must implement heat (hot water and heating) individual gas metering and billing for communal heating systems as stipulated in the Heat Network (Metering and Billing) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 so that heat networks can be operated to optimum performance.

The systems which will be installed in each property are heat interface units that can be metered and billed per household. Currently, the Council is receiving a communal bill that is split between the number of flats as part of their rent. This is not effective or efficient and does not comply to with the Heat Network Regulations.

It will also assist the Council in reducing any wastage of gas in these blocks, enabling residents to pay for what they require thus being more efficient and cost effective. We will be able to monitor the usage and provide reports on usage and billing as part of the data required for the regulator.

Until April 2016, these regulations were enforced by the National Measurement and Regulation Office which is now part of the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS). For communal systems in operation on or before 31 December 2015, landlords had to inform the OPSS before 31 December 2015 about their buildings' communal heating, cooling and hot water systems.

Going forward, this information must be supplied to the OPSS at least every four years.

We have agreed a contract with a heat billing agent, Switch2, for this purpose.

Before the Council moves from a communally metered supply to an individually metered, the tenants and leaseholders will be consulted on the proposed change and the metering and supply service we propose to introduce.



#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

Costs to install individual billing meters and equipment have been met from existing budgets.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew – Joint Acting Director of People and Governance and Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312741/ claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Council must ensure it complies with legislation. Under the Heat Networks (Metering & Billing) Regulations that was introduced in 2014 with amendments made in December 2015 and November 2020, we now have a legal duty to introduce heat meters across our housing assets.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

The project objectives will be delivered via an all-encompassing billing delivery company who has been appointed in accordance with our procurement rules. This company will work closely with the Housing teams.

Full consultation will be completed with tenants and leaseholders.

Due to the sensitive nature of metering and billing individuals, especially in sheltered accommodation, this will require the joint efforts of all teams to support and deliver.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

Tenants or leaseholders not accepting the process for heat metering and billing in their property to monitor their gas usage especially in current times of fuel poverty which could delay the implementation of the scheme

Difficulty in gaining access to all properties.

Tenants not being able to pay for their fuel. There will be clear processes in place for vulnerable cases.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

The Council will provide clear information about the heating arrangements before the start of the tenancy or lease and again if this changes.

Provide residents with information on their rights and obligations and the cost of the heating service.

The heat billing provider will have a set onboarding process to deliver heat billing services.

## 9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic and consultation will be had with tenants to provide guidance.

## 10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

In providing heat metering installations this would reduce our gas usage and provide a more energy efficient system thus reducing the carbon footprint and current energy loss.

### REPORT AUTHOR:

**Name:** Julian Atkin

**Title:** Repairs Contract Manager

**Phone:** 01277 312 586

**Email:** julian.atkin@brentwood.gov.uk

### APPENDICES:

Appendix A - Heat Billing Policy

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

### SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
N/A	

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## **Brentwood Borough Council**

### **Heat Billing Policy**

**April 2023**

#### **Introduction**

This policy covers the way that charges are raised for tenants and leaseholders from communal heating and hot water systems provided to a single building or several buildings (i.e. heat networks) in new and existing homes.

The policy also covers the way charges are raised and what the Council's approach will be when introducing individually metered supplies in existing homes.

Under the Heat Networks (Metering & Billing) Regulations that was introduced in 2014 with amendments made in December 2015 and November 2020, we now have a legal duty to introduce heat meters on estates where it is cost effective to do so. In other words, the saving experienced by residents in the long run is greater than the initial cost of installing heat meters.

What do the Regulations say?

The Regulations impose certain duties upon heat network operators (like the Council), such as:

- The duty to install heat meters and temperature control devices (in certain circumstances)
- The duty to ensure installed heat meters are working properly
- The duty to bill customers based upon actual consumption and to provide suitable billing information at regular intervals (at least annually)

The benefits to tenants of having heat measuring devices and controls installed includes:

- improved energy efficiency usage
- fairer charging
- carbon savings and reduced bills
- greater convenience with heating controls.
- improved heat network efficiency
- improved response times when dealing with heating issues.
- isolation within individual properties
- improved local air quality and reduced carbon emissions

On the billing side of the regulations, the Council wants to keep the system as simple as possible.

#### **Scope**

This policy covers heating and hot water systems that have metered supplies to individual properties and where a meter is in place for the block's communal supply.

#### **Communal Metered Supplies**

Where a property is connected to a communal or district heating system with a communal meter, the Council will include the cost of heating and hot water in the service charge.

Heating and hot water charges are pooled across properties supplied by the communal system and residents are charged a proportion based on the gas bill which is equally divided by the number of properties in the block and charged in each residents monthly surcharge.

Where a communally metered supply is in place the Council will provide Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs) in the property to enable residents to control the temperature in the property.

### **Individual Metered Supplies**

Where possible, individual meters will be installed in properties to measure exactly how much heating and hot water is used by an individual flat.

Where it is currently not feasible or cost effective to install an individual meter, a block meter is in place which measures how much heating and hot water is used by the block and is used to recharge tenants and leaseholders.

The Council will install individual meters where possible as part of planned major works upgrades to communal heating and hot water systems.

Where individually metered supplies are in place, information will be provided on the Council's website on the Heat Interface Units (HIUs) and metering system in place.

### **Consultation on the introduction of Individually Metered Supplies**

Before the Council moves from a communally metered supply to an individually metered, the tenants and leaseholders will be consulted on the proposed change and the metering and supply service that is proposed to be introduced.

Brentwood Borough Council entered into a meter, billing, district heating framework via ProcurePublic who offered a direct selection method in which they have tendered for the best facilitator to meet our needs. This was vetted and audited via our internal procurement team. Switch2 have been instigated to supply 'pay as you go' heat meter billing systems in our properties.

Where new buildings are built with individually metered supplies in place, there is no requirement for consultation with tenants and leaseholders.

### **Metering Installation**

The Council will install meters in existing buildings (i.e. to measure the supply of heat, cooling or hot water to each occupier in multi-occupancy buildings) unless it would either not be technically feasible or cost-effective to do so.

There are threshold tests to be met to consider whether it is technically feasible or cost-effective. It may be deemed cost-effective to install suitable meters where the net present value of the projected energy savings, as a result of the meter installation (over the first 10 years of installation) exceeds the net present value of installing them.

There are also ongoing obligations to ensure meters are continuously operated, properly maintained and periodically checked for errors.

The Council will make reference to the lease and tenancy agreement in place to ensure that there is a right of access to install a meter.

In new buildings with Heat Networks, metering will be installed at the outset as required under the regulations.

### **Billing for Individual Meters**

The scheme, comprising of a number of properties, are all being supplied with heating and hot water through a centralised communal energy plant. The heating and hot water is distributed through the primary network to a heat interface unit (HIU) located in each property. The HIU separates the primary network from the secondary property network, and is generally deemed to be the demarcation point with regards to responsibility between the network provider and the consumer.

Where meters or heat cost allocators are installed, the Council will enter into agreements to ensure that billing is accurate and based on actual meter readings. The council would pay for the entire fuel usage to power the communal heating system in place via our tendered energy provider and Switch2 would then charge each property for their individual usage via a pay as you go meter which in turn is paid back to Brentwood Borough Council.

The Council will provide tenants and leaseholders with billing information where it is technically possible and economically justified.

Under the regulations, the Council will ~~may~~ pass on the reasonable costs of billing where it is carried out by an agent. (there is an annual fee for administration).

**Switch2 offers a selection of ways you customers can top-up your meter.**

- Add credit anytime to the unit as a one off payment
- Set up payments to be taken from their bank account automatically, when it reaches a set amount of the customer’s choosing
- Set payments to be taken from the customer’s bank account on a set date, either weekly or monthly
- Pay with the app
- Pay online, by phone or in person

**Meter Maintenance**

Switch2 supply domestic energy meters in which all parts and labour for identified faults are fully covered. When an issue is reported Switch2 engineers will attend site within the client’s service level agreement. Issues include:

- Fault on unit
- Lack of understanding of unit/meter
- Payment queries

The Service Level Agreement is as follows:

Category	Description	Response time
'A'	Emergency is in relation to the Energy Infrastructure	Within 8 hours
'A'	Energy Service is interrupted in Heating Season	Within 24 hours
'A'	Energy Service is interrupted for registered Vulnerable Residents	Within 12 hours
'B'	Energy Service is interrupted out of Heating Season	Within 48 hours
'C'	Energy Service is not interrupted and a technical fault with a Meter and/or AMR	Within 7 days

**Debt Management**

Switch2 debt recovery team will always aim to be sympathetic to a customer’s circumstances, and will attempt to achieve a solution which works for all parties.

They understand that different customers will respond to different approaches. Their team will tailor their approach to what we believe will be the best way to achieve a good outcome for all parties. This could be more time to clear a balance in full, signposting to seek debt advice, or a payment plan over an agreed period.

Disconnection is an absolute last resort, with 60% of scheduled disconnections cancelled upon receipt of a payment and agreement of a payment plan.

### **Information Provided to Tenants and Leaseholders**

The Council will provide the following information to residents on the heating and hot water systems in place:

- Provide clear information about the heating arrangements before the start of the tenancy or lease and again if this changes.
- Provide residents with information on their rights and obligations and the cost of the heating service.

### **Service Delivery**

The Council will have in place the following actions to reduce the risk of heating and hot water supplies being interrupted:

- The Council will have contingency plans in place for interruptions in supply. For example, access to sufficient temporary heaters.
- The Council will ensure that contracts with providers and maintenance companies are robust, including break clauses and penalties in contracts.
- The Council will monitor the performance of providers and maintenance companies and take action to enforce the terms of the contract if necessary.
- The Council will ensure that residents know how to complain and are signposted to the appropriate Ombudsman.
- The Council will keep abreast of evolving policy regarding heat networks, including consumer rights, and ensure they meet best practice.

### **Notification**

Until April 2016, these regulations were enforced by the National Measurement and Regulation Office which is now part of the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS). For communal systems in operation on or before 31 December 2015, landlords had to inform the OPSS before 31 December 2015 about their buildings' communal heating, cooling and hot water systems.

Going forward, this information must be supplied to the OPSS at least every four years.

### **Review of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless there is a change in the legislation covering communal heating and hot water systems.





**COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing Health and Community**

**DATE: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Co-option of Tenants Representatives
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Julian Higson – Interim Director of Housing

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

The report sets out proposals to co-opt representatives of Tenants Talkback into the Housing, Health and Community Committee for housing related items, in accordance with the Council constitution.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Members are asked to:**

- R1. Approve that Tenant Talkback be invited to send two representatives to each meeting of the Housing Committee where public housing items are to be discussed.**
  
- R2. Approve that the representatives of Tenants Talkback be co-opted onto the committee for the duration of the consideration of these items, and have the right to speak, but not vote.**
  
- R3. Request that the Corporate Manager (Estates) arrange appropriate training of the representatives.**

## **SUPPORT ING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

To ensure that the Housing Department provides effective and transparent representation of local people's views.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

It has been considered that no representatives from Tenant Talkback attend committee however, this would mean they have no say on matters affecting housing on behalf of the residents of the Borough.

This does not align with our Resident Engagement Strategy and had therefore been discounted as an option.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Members will be aware that Tenant Talkback is the group of Council Tenants and Leaseholders who meet regularly with Housing staff and Councillors to discuss various subjects that affect them. This is made up of Tenants and Leaseholders from different estates and areas in the Borough.

Talkback remains our main consultative panel, gaining feedback from Tenants and Leaseholders on all policies, procedures, and projects that the Housing department are working on. We also have 3 sub panels which discuss more specific issues relating to repairs, estates and policy.

Residents have recently re-launched resident engagement and are actively seeking to increase membership of the group and their voice across the borough.

The Tenant Participation Contact includes the following paragraph:

*Two representatives from the Talkback Group are invited to attend the Housing Committee in a non-voting role. They are able to speak on housing-related items at the Chair's discretion.*

In the previous operation of the Housing Committee this arrangement operated on an informal basis.

In order to maintain the commitment of the Tenant Participation Compact, it is recommended that Tenant Talkback be invited to send two representatives to each meeting of the Housing Committee where public housing-related items are to be discussed. The representatives will be able to speak but not vote. It is recommended that their right to speak be on similar basis of other members of the committee.

Representatives will not be able to participate when the committee goes into a closed session.

It is important that Talkback Representatives receive a similar level of training to other committee members to ensure they are confident in the process of the operation of the committee.

It is anticipated that Tenant Talkback will send the same individuals to each meeting, which will be helpful to ensure consistent understanding of the Committee process. However, it is also acknowledged that substitute representatives may also need to be sent.

Consequently, it is recommended that the Corporate Manager Housing Estates arrange appropriate training for a number of Tenant Talkback representatives to ensure both the regular delegates and any substitutes have had the benefit of appropriate training.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no financial implications of the recommendations.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew – Joint Acting Director of People and Governance & Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312741/claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk**

There are no direct legal implications.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

None

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

None

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

Consultations have taken place with Tenant Talkback who agreed with the report. However, members consider that representatives should have the right to speak at the Committee and sent a copy of the agenda prior to the meeting.

#### **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic and the Tenant representatives are able to provide additional feedback to the Council.

**10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title:** Phil Drane, Director - Place  
**Tel & Email** 01277 312500 / [phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk](mailto:phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk)

None

**REPORT AUTHOR:**                      **Name:** Nicola Marsh  
**Title:** Corporate Manager Housing Estates  
**Phone:** 01277 312 981  
**Email:** Nicola.marsh@brentwood.gov.uk

**APPENDICES**

None

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

Council Meeting	Date
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<b>Annual report to Housing Committee</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Council meeting of the year.</b>
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**COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health and Community**

**DATE: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Repairs contract performance
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Julian Higson, Interim Director of Housing

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

The Council entered into a long-term partnership contract with Axis Europe Limited in June 2019 for the delivery of repairs, gas servicing and maintenance and planned works services to its social housing properties.

Performance of the contract is monitored closely and most areas of performance; gas servicing and breakdowns and planned works are exceeding contractual targets, however, several issues have been identified in the repairs service around service delivery and communication which have caused concern about the performance of the repairs service delivered by Axis Europe Limited in recent months.

This report explains the identified issues and actions being taken by the Council to improve the service to our tenants and leaseholders.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To note that actions being taken by the Housing team to improve the repairs service.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Performance of the repairs contract is monitored on a regular basis through various operational and strategic meetings. Generally performance is good with areas such as the gas servicing and breakdown meeting or exceeding contractual performance targets. Customer satisfaction levels for the planned works programmes have also been positive.

Nevertheless, several issues have been identified which caused the Council concern about the performance of the repairs service. There was a number of different factors which include;

- Performance of the repairs element of the contract (emergency and routine repairs, appointments kept and repairs completed first time),
- An increase in enquiries and observations raised by members about the quality of service and ability for residents to get through to the repairs call centre,
- A visible increase in the number of residents contacting Brentwood Council to raise a general enquiry about poor communication and services from Axis,
- Feedback from both residents and staff about the length of time it was taking to get through to the Repairs call centre and frustration of tenants when trying to resolve the repair issues in their home.

As a result of these concerns, in November 2022, the interim Director of Housing and interim Corporate Manager – Technical Services met with Axis senior management to discuss the issues and agree a way forward to improve the service for our residents.

Axis confirmed a number of improvements that were due to be implemented on the contract;

- 1) A new telephony system, where residents can request a 'call back' when the next agent was available rather than staying on the call until someone was available was being rolled out across all contracts and due to go live at Brentwood late November/early December 2022.
- 2) They were also introducing a new IT system at the end of November which would give Axis the ability to provide more digital enhancements in the future such as portals where residents and staff could report and track progress of reported repairs.
- 3) A new customer service process review and training programme was being undertaken by their Head of Customer Services, who has extensive experience in local government and had recently joined the company. This would be rolled out across the company in 2023.

It was also agreed the partnership would look at complaints to see if any learning could be identified and improvement to services implemented.

The interim Director of Housing acknowledged the significant impact the EU exit, the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine had upon the construction industry particularly in relation to the cost and availability of labour and materials.

The contract performance continued to be monitored closely by the Council to ensure there was an improvement in service delivery and outcomes. Further meetings were held with Axis in April 2023 as performance had not improved to an acceptable level. It was agreed additional resources would be brought in by Axis to help the team address some of the issues. This was implemented in late April and has assisted in catch up on enquiries and administrative tasks.

Customer satisfaction for the repairs service is currently collected through Axis. The Council has engaged the services of a company to conduct an independent



satisfaction survey which will include the repairs services. The first round of surveys will commence in July 2023.

This will assist in monitoring the quality of the service and enables us to obtain residents views and opinions of the repairs service.

In addition to this, a Customer Focus Group, facilitated by our Partnering Advisor, Echelon, will be held in July 2023 to gain feedback from residents who have used the repair service in the last 12 months. Any learning from the feedback will be developed into an action plan and implemented. This will be monitored through the Strategic Core Group, which comprises of the senior managers from the Council and Axis Europe.

As part of the new Resident Engagement Strategy, a dedicated Repairs Panel which comprises of tenants and leaseholders, has been established to review performance of the repairs contract with officers. The first meeting was held in May 2023, the group will meet on a quarterly basis.

Progress review meetings will continue with the Operations Director at Axis to ensure any areas of concern are dealt with quickly.

## **2.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no direct financial implications from this report. However, if performance does not meet the minimum level of acceptable performance (MLAP) the council could incur additional costs.

## **3.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew – Joint Acting Up Director of People and Governance & Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312741 / claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Council has statutory obligations within an existing legal framework for the management of its housing assets.

## **4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

Resources for the delivery of the repairs service and management of the contract are met from within existing budgets.

## **5.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

If performance of the repairs contract is not improved there could be an increase in the number of complaints about dissatisfaction of the repair service.

There are performance targets for the delivery of the services including repairs set out in the contract. Each key performance indicator has a target and minimum level of acceptable performance (MLAP). Performance is formally reviewed by the Council each month.

There is also an escalation process set out within the contract to resolve issues.

## **6.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

A number of consultation events have been arranged which include a new independent customer satisfaction survey of the repairs service, a customer focus group.

The tenants and leaseholders of the Repairs Panel will also help to monitor performance of the repairs contract

## **7.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on anybody with a protected characteristic and will provide more opportunities to feedback.

## **8.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no economic implications. Some climate sustainability related measures are included as performance management for the contract and should reflect the council's Environment Strategy.

**REPORT AUTHOR:**           **Name:** Carol Burton  
   **Title:** Corporate Manager – Technical Services (interim)  
   **Phone:** 01277 312 533  
   **Email:** carol.burton@brentwood.gov.uk

**APPENDICES**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Housing Committee	19/12/2023

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**COMMITTEE TITLE: Housing, Health & Community**

**DATE: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Quarterly Housing Compliance
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Julian Higson Director of Housing (interim)

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report sets out the progress made in the last quarter (January – March 2023) in Housing within the areas of compliance; gas safety, electrical safety, asbestos management, water hygiene, fire safety and lift maintenance. It also includes information on the emergency alarm equipment in our sheltered schemes, emergency lighting and building safety regulations.

## **SUPPORT ING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council has a duty as a responsible landlord to ensure the social housing assets it is responsible for are maintained in accordance with building safety regulations and other applicable legislation, our tenants and leaseholder feel safe in their home and immediate environment.

This report sets out in detail, progress made in all areas of compliance in the period 1 January – 31 March 2023.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Council as a landlord has a duty to comply with building safety regulations and all other relevant legislation to ensure it effectively manages the homes and communal areas of the blocks it is responsible for.

The first compliance report was presented to the Housing Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023 (minute no.350 – Key Performance Indicators) which include the requirements of each area of compliance and the legislation it relates to.

This report provides an update on the progress made by the Housing team in all areas of compliance in quarter 4 (January – March 2023).

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / [tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk](mailto:tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk)**

Delivery of these services are all being met within existing resources.

### **4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew – Joint Acting Director for People and Governance and Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312741 / [claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk)**

Monitoring performance assists the Council in contract management and monitoring its statutory compliance.

### **5.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

The resources are met from within existing budgets and staff structures.

### **6.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

Policies for all areas of compliance are in place.

Regular monthly meetings are held to monitor delivering of all areas of compliance with the partnering contractor.

Regular meetings are in place to monitor spend against agreed budgets

The four high rise blocks that qualify under the Building Safety Regulations have been registered with the Building Safety Regulator.

### **7.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

Tenant Talkback are consulted on any policies due for renewal as part of the Council's resident engagement strategy.

### **8.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312500 [kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk](mailto:kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk)**

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful.
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that ‘marriage and civil partnership’ is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

## 9.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

**Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place**  
**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

There are no direct economic implications arising from this report.

**REPORT AUTHOR:**                      **Name:** Carol Burton  
**Title:** Corporate Manager – Technical Services (interim)  
**Phone:** 01277 312 533  
**Email:** carol.burton@brentwood.gov.uk

## APPENDICES

Appendix A - Housing Compliance Report

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

### SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Housing Committee	27 <sup>th</sup> February 2023

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# Housing Compliance Report

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## Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction

Gas Compliance

Electrical Compliance

Asbestos Compliance

Water Hygiene

Fire Safety

Lifts and Lifting

Equipment Tunstall

Emergency Lighting

Closing Comments

31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

## Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide senior management and members with a quarterly update of the compliance within the Housing Department. This report covers quarter four (1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023).

This document breaks down each compliance area within then reports on the progress of their respective areas accordingly.

### Positives

- Only 65 EICR tests are outstanding at 31 March 2023.
- All communal electrical testing has been 100% completed
- No asbestos related immediately dangerous risk actions outstanding
- All fire risk assessments for 2022/23 financial year are completed
- Domestic Gas Servicing remains 100% compliant at 31 March 2023.

### Neutral

- Planned Asbestos surveys continue at same levels as previous quarter.
- Water Hygiene Survey programme has reduced to 215 risk assessment to be completed since the last quarterly report.

### Negatives

- None

# 1. Gas Compliance

## Commentary

Brentwood Council adheres to the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR) Approved Code of Practice and guidance which came into force on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

Social Landlords also capture their statutory gas compliancy information through a national housing indicator/benchmark (Housemark) however, some organisations do not include non-access in their compliancy performance, whilst Brentwood Council does to show transparency. The data is captured and submitted monthly for the previous month.

Our responsibility as a Social Landlord is to ensure an annual gas safety record (LGSR) is completed in each property we own to fulfil our legal obligation. Properties the Council manages on behalf of an external agent are also our responsibility to ensure this annual safety check is completed. Council residents will receive a copy of the LGSR in the post 28 calendar days after it has been completed, subject to postal schedules.

Gas compliancy is split into two categories; domestic which covers individual flats/houses and commercial/communal which relates to a block of flats connected through a central heating system. When a resident moves out, before reletting a subsequent LGSR is completed as part of the change of tenancy.

### *DOMESTIC*

A weekly gas domestic compliance spreadsheet is supplied by Axis which notes which addresses will be past the last annual service date and therefore classified as overdue.

### *COMMERCIAL/COMMUNAL*

The Council have a total stock of 6 commercial plantrooms which are located at

1. The Gables
2. Chichester House
3. Drake House
4. St Georges Court
5. Four Oaks
6. Victoria Court

Each plant room has a valid gas safety certificate. These records are held on our asset management system, Keystone.

## Key Performance Indicators

<b>As at 31/03/2023</b>	<b>No. contract on</b>	<b>No. Overdue</b>	<b>As % of contract</b>	<b>Contractual Compliance %</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,092</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Position statement as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023; we are 99.95% compliant with one property overdue. This was completed in May 2023.**

## 2. Electrical Compliance

### Commentary

Our responsibility as a Social Landlord is to ensure an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) is completed every five years and retested on the anniversary year. When a resident moves out, before reletting a property, a subsequent EICR is completed as part of the change of tenancy.

### Key Performance Indicators

As at 31/03/2023	Total Number Required	Total Number Completed	Outstanding
EICRs (Communal)	122	122	0
EICRs (Dwellings)	2399	2334	65

**Position statement as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023; there are no communal EICR's outstanding, and there are 62 EICR dwellings outstanding to be completed.**

In 2019, the Council committed to delivering a completed EICR testing programme within 5 years. From the figures in the table above, taken directly from the asset management system, we have exceeded this timescale and almost completed the programme within 2 ½ years. This ensures the Council has accurate and up to date electrical testing records.

## 3. Asbestos Compliance

### Commentary

As part of the partnering contract, Axis is responsible for the removal of all non-licensed asbestos.

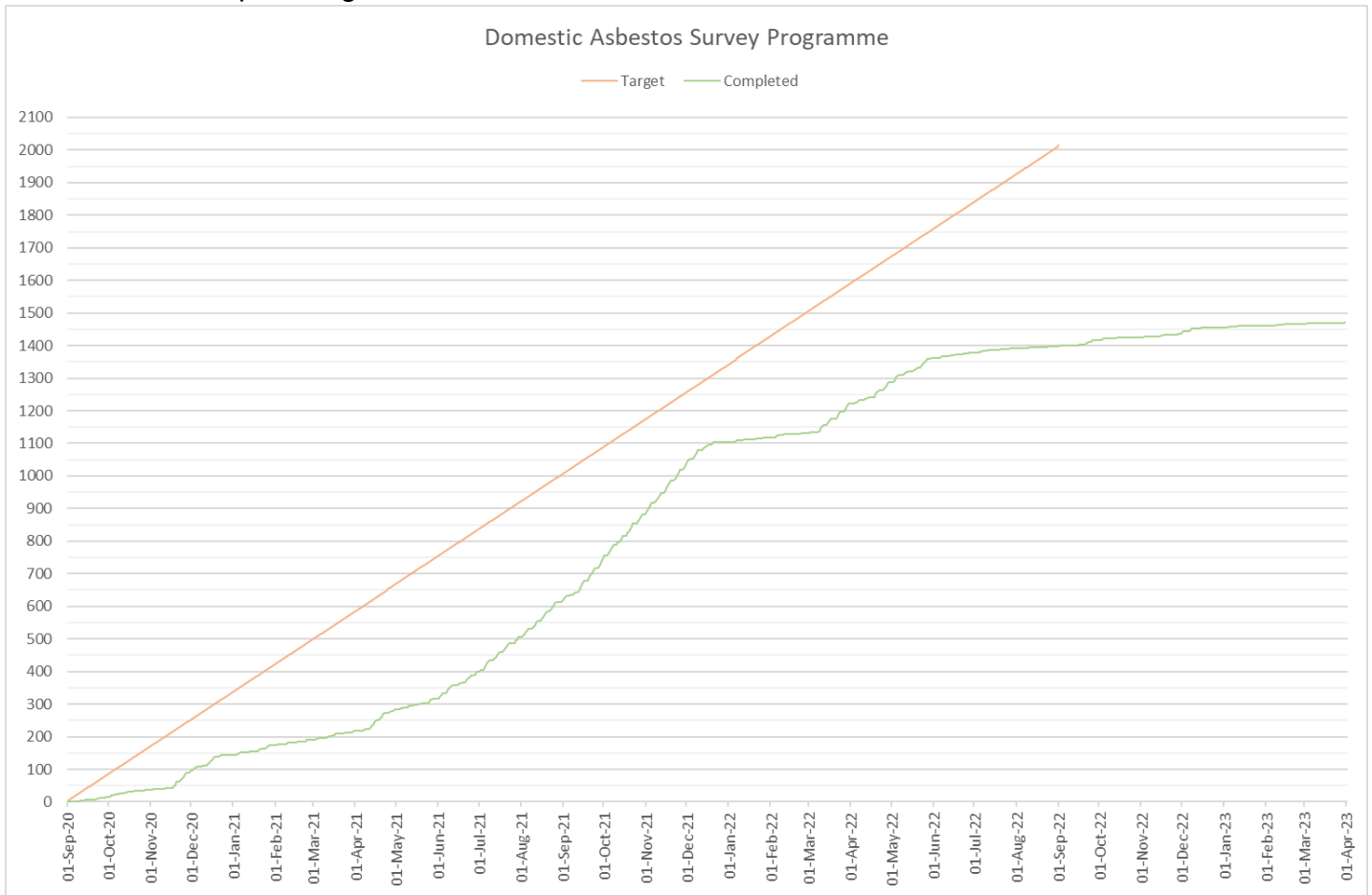
The Council employs two contractors, in addition to the partnering contractor, to undertake asbestos surveys and asbestos removal in our social housing assets. The asbestos register holds all asbestos survey data in central location.

### Key Performance Indicators

*PLANNED ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT SURVEYS*

Our asbestos surveying contractor, Thames Labs, were originally provided with 2064 addresses to undertake a management survey. The list has now reduced to 2016 which is due to properties being sold and decanted properties ready for refurbishment.

The Council asked Thames Labs to undertake the asbestos management surveys within one year, from the date of mobilisation (September 2020), to ensure the Council had a complete register of its asbestos risks.

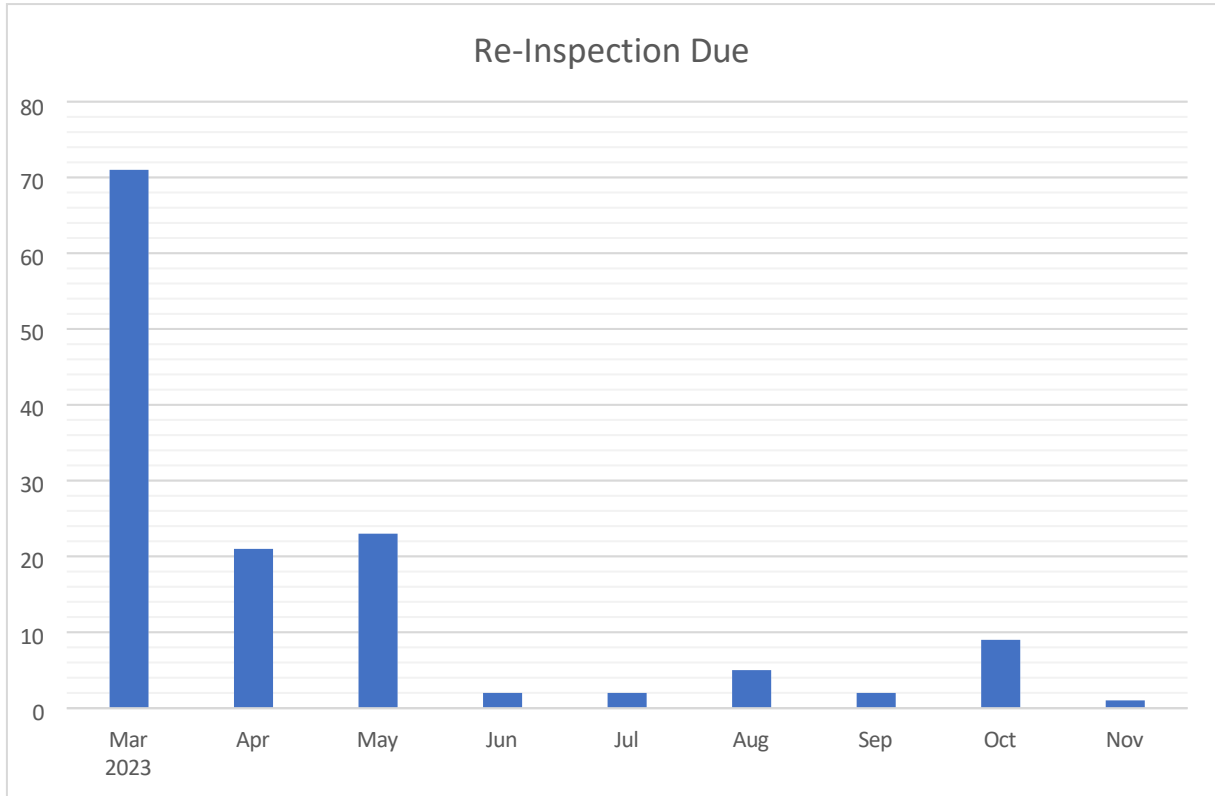


The chart above shows the current position of the inspection programme. Starting this programme during the national lock down proved very challenging and was met with a lot of resistance from tenants. Unfortunately, Covid-19 and the fear of contracting it has never gone away and there is still resistance from tenants to allow access.

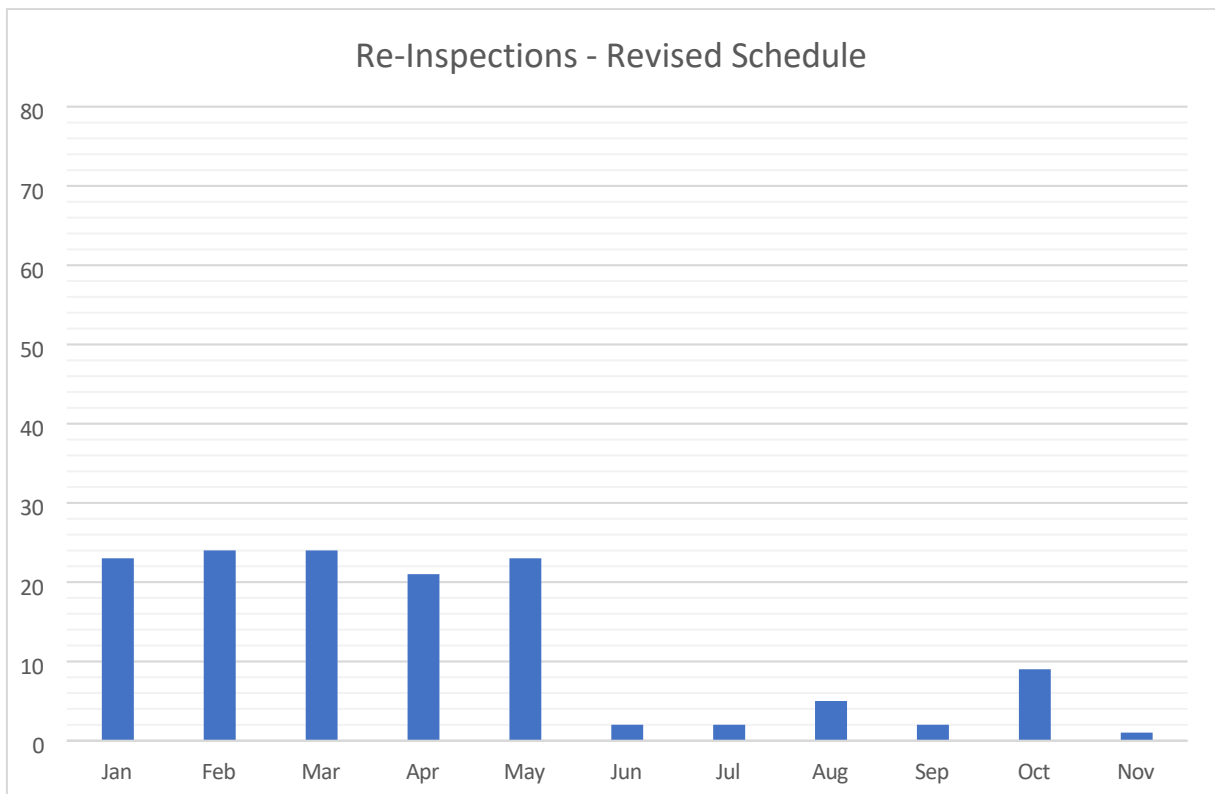
Despite surveying 1476 properties which is 73% of the overall programme, access is still required to 540 properties or 27% to complete the entire programme. This is a slight reduction on the previous quarter. The compliance team are working closely with the Estates and Sheltered Housing teams to gain access to these properties.

**COMMUNAL RE-INSPECTION SURVEYS**

The Council have a duty of care to ensure all communal areas are re-inspected annually to make certain all risks are captured as communal areas have most foot traffic.



Most re-inspections fall within the month of March due to when the previous survey was undertaken. The compliance team have worked with our contractor to produce a revised programme spreading the surveys over the year which ensures a manageable programme.



The table above sets out the revised programme of re-inspection surveys for 2023. None of the surveys will fall outside of the target completion date.

**Position statement as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023:**

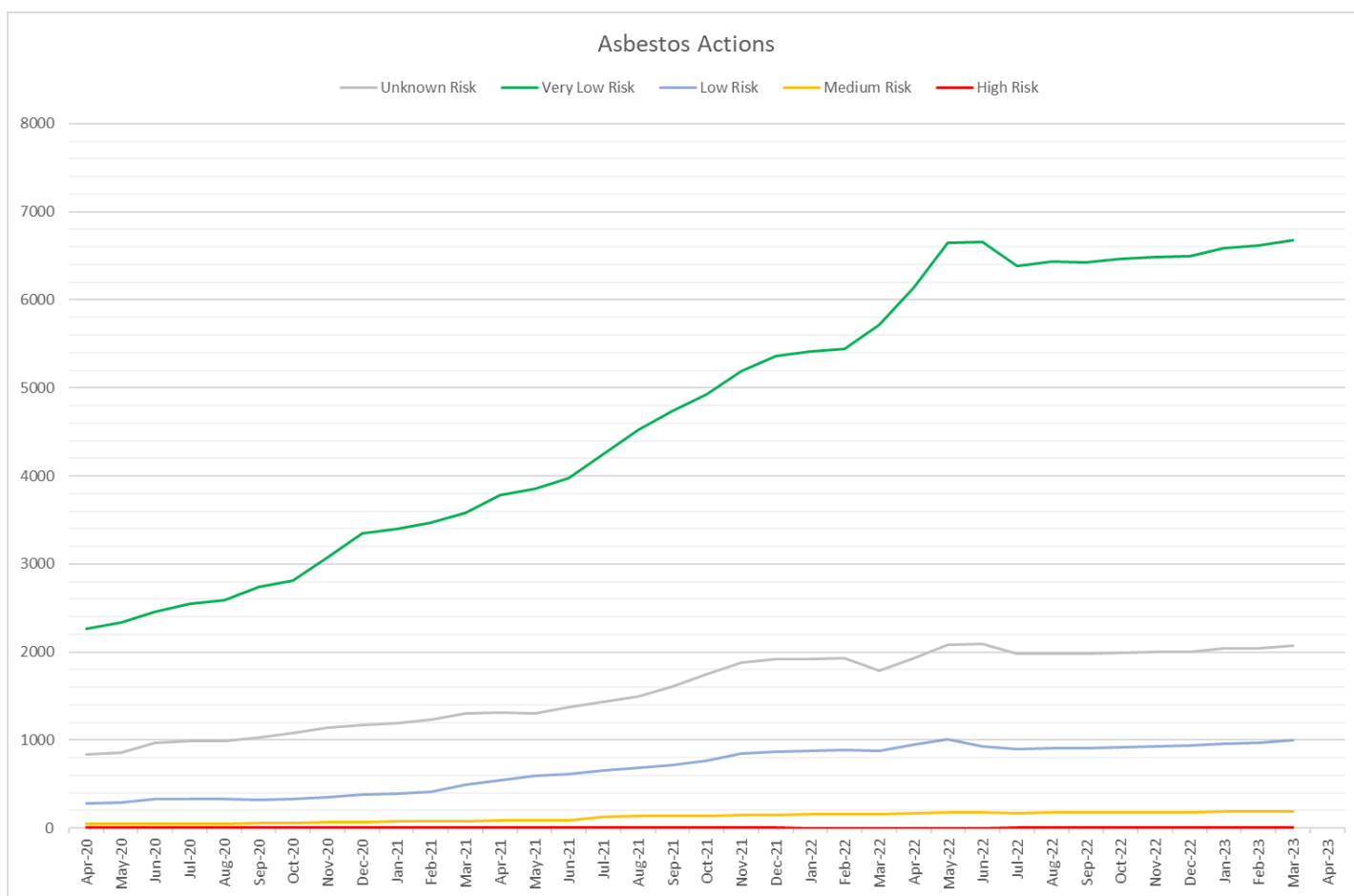
**71 re-inspections were completed between January - March 2023**

**21 re-inspections were completed by the end of April 2023**

**34 re-inspections are due to be completed throughout the remainder of the calendar year.**

*ACTIONS FOLLOWING SURVEYS*

The chart below provides the latest progress update for the actions required following an asbestos survey. These results include both management surveys and refurbishment & demolition (R&D) surveys.



Taking the above chart and breaking each one down further, the below chart shows where each action is.

Below is a table showing the compliance data at the end of March 2023.

<b>Unknown Risk</b>	<b>2044</b>
Manage	0
Inspection Required	2044
Remove	0
No Recommendation	0
Encapsulate / Repair	0
<b>Very Low Risk</b>	<b>6616</b>
Manage	6035
Inspection Required	25
Remove	243
No Recommendation	24
Encapsulate / Repair	289
<b>Low Risk</b>	<b>969</b>
Manage	691
Inspection Required	25
Remove	78
No Recommendation	1
Encapsulate / Repair	174

<b>Medium Risk</b>	<b>187</b>
Manage	48
Inspection Required	4
Remove	55
No Recommendation	0
Encapsulate / Repair	80
<b>High Risk</b>	<b>0</b>
Manage	
Inspection Required	
Remove	
No Recommendation	
Encapsulate / Repair	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9820</b>

There is an increase in the number of recommendations when compared to the previous quarter. This is due to the ongoing programme of asbestos surveys.

From the information set out above, there are no high-risk actions outstanding. A high-risk item is mainly amosite which can be found in thermal insulation. An example of this is unsealed lagging and sprayed on insulation.

The medium risks are currently being reviewed and cross referenced with capital planned projects to ensure these works are captured at the same time. The rest of the medium actions will then be actioned on a risk-based approach. A medium risk item is a mixture of chrysotile and crocidolite. An example of this is unsealed asbestos insulation board, asbestos cement, and vinyl floor tiles.

A low-risk item can be a range of either amosite, crocidolite, or chrysotile as it depends on what the item is made from. An example of this is ropes and woven textiles, thermal insulation, and undamaged asbestos insulation board.

A very low risk item can be a range of either amosite, crocidolite, or chrysotile as it depends on what the item is made from. An example of this is composite materials containing asbestos, decorative finishes and vinyl floor tiles which require to be managed and monitored for deterioration.

There is no set legislative criteria to undertake a re-inspection in a dwelling. This will only be undertaken once the actions have been completed which provides a holistic approach and safe way of ensuring no action has been missed.

## 4. Water Hygiene



## Key Performance Indicators

### *RISK ASSESSMENTS*

There is no set legislative guidance to undertake water hygiene risk assessments to individual dwelling. However, it is best practice to undertake individual dwelling risk assessments, as well as blocks. This is the approach Brentwood Council has adopted.

Our partnering contractor, Axis, was provided with an address list of 100 blocks of our social housing assets, and prioritised sheltered schemes first due to residents in these schemes being the most vulnerable. Once the sheltered housing schemes were completed, they moved on to general needs blocks, then 1095 individual dwellings that have a hot or cold or both stored water tank.

#### **Progress to date**

100 block risk assessments have been completed.

880 individual dwelling risk assessments have been completed.

215 individual dwelling risk assessments have not been completed due to non-access.

This is a reduction in the number of properties where access cannot to be gained to complete the risk assessment when compared to the previous quarter. As with other areas of compliance, the team are working closely with the Housing Estates team to gain access to these properties.

### *ACTIONS FOLLOWING SURVEYS*

The tables below show the number of actions following the completed risk assessment.

Note: the term PCAF means Priority Corrective Action Form. This form is issued if an anomaly is identified after monthly samples are taken.

Below is a table showing the compliance data at the end of March 2023.

Level of Action	Rolling Number of Actions	Number of Completed Actions	Number of Actions to be completed (not overdue)
PCAF	87	87	0
High	3276	2841	435
Medium	4914	2832	2082
Low	1735	951	784

The number of actions in the table have increased when compared to the previous quarter due to an additional 69 risk assessments being completed in this period.

An example of the level of actions are:

PCAF – following a monthly sample, the action can be to replace a cold-water storage tank because the tank is corroded, or the tank requires a clean and disinfection because there is sludge/sediment in the bottom of the tank.

High – small used outlets are not working and require replacement i.e. outside tap, the hot water has failed to reach 50°C which is usually a result of hot water immersions being turned down or, non-WRAS (water regulations advisory scheme which is a certification mark that demonstrates the item complies with the high standards set out by water regulations) approved flexible hoses has been fitted which either require being replace with a WRAS approved flexi hose or changed to copper pipping.

Medium – cold water storage tank outlet pipework not coded or labelled, there is inadequate lighting within the tank room area, shower head and/or hose can be immersed in water, or no backflow protection is present.

Low – a filling loop left attached to both lengths of pipework which requires removal to prevent any backflow issues.

The table below shows the timescale of when these actions are due to be completed.

Level of Action	Number of Actions	Timescale to complete
PCAF	0	2 months
High	435	3 months
Medium	2082	6 months
Low	784	12 months

## 5. Fire Safety

This section shows the Council's progress in relation to fire risk assessments and actions over the last 3 years.

All fire risk assessments have been completed and are up to date. The actions from risk assessments form a rolling programme of remedial and planned improvements. Due to the nature of some of the work required, some actions may have longer target dates for completion.

### Key Performance Indicators

**Sheltered Housing** risk assessments are carried out annually due to their high-risk nature.

Current overall total no. of actions – 44

Current overall total no. closed actions – 3

Number of actions from 2020 risk assessment: 9 actions

Number of actions from 2021 risk assessment: 37 actions

Number of actions from 2022 risk assessment: 49 actions

Number of actions from 2023 risk assessment: 44 actions

The term used by the Fire & Rescue Service is **High Rise** which takes in to account the Council's high-rise blocks which are over 18 metres. These assets are Gibraltar House, Drake House, Masefield Court, and Mayflower House. Risk assessments for these 4 blocks are undertaken every year.

Overall total no. of actions – 28

Over total no. closed actions - 2

Number of actions from 2020 risk assessment: 0 actions

Number of actions from 2021 risk assessment: 0 actions

Number of actions from 2022 risk assessment: 43 actions

Number of actions from 2023 risk assessment: 28 actions

**General needs** assets are classed as the rest of the Council's communal blocks within the housing stock that requires a risk assessment with enclosed stairwells. The risk assessments are undertaken every two years because the risk is lower.

Overall total no. of actions – 127

Over total no. closed actions - 9

Number of actions from 2020 risk assessment: 35 actions

Number of actions from 2021 risk assessment: 115 actions  
 Number of actions from 2022 risk assessment: 15 actions  
 Number of actions from 2023 risk assessment: 127 actions

This table shows the open actions split into 3 categories.

Open Actions - Priority					
Buildings		High	Medium	Low	Total Open
Sheltered	15	13	28	0	41
High Rise	4	15	13	0	28
General Needs	78	1	126	0	127
Total	97	29	167	0	196

All actions are within current target timeframes and are included in current planned projects.

## 6. Lifts and Lifting Equipment

### Key Performance Indicators

This is split into two areas;

1. Lifting equipment - which relate to stair lifts, hoists, scissor lifts or through lifts which are mainly in residents' homes
2. Lifts – which relate to passenger lifts in residential blocks of flats

January 2023 – March 2023

Area of Compliance	Total number of stock	Complete	Outstanding	% Complete
Lifting Equipment	39	31	8	79.49%
Lifts	12	12	0	100.00%

The 8 outstanding individual dwellings are due to non-access and have been referred to the Housing Officer for assistance.

### Position statement as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023:

Lifting equipment – 90%

Lifts – 100%

## 7. Tunstall

Tunstall provide a warden control service to 25 sites and communal fire alarms and

communal boiler CO alarms in the plantroom (to Chichester House, the Gables, St Georges Court, and Victoria Court, Juniper Court is all electric) maintenance service to 5 of our sheltered blocks to Chichester House, the Gables, St Georges Court, Victoria Court, and Juniper Court.

The communal fire alarms and CO alarms are inspected every 6 months and any defects noted on the engineer’s report for remedial action.

Each of the 25 sites were installed at different dates:

- 1 in 2000
- 19 in 2013
- 5 in 2014

### Key Performance Indicators

<b>Area of compliance</b>	<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Total number of stock</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>% Complete</b>
<b>Communal Fire Alarm Systems</b>	<b>Tunstall</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## 8. Emergency lighting

### Commentary

Through our partnering arrangements, Axis provide a maintenance and repair service to the 116 Council owned housing blocks in the borough.

The testing regime includes a monthly operational test and an annual drain down where the lights at each block are turned on for a period of 2.5 – 3 hours to monitor the performance of the backup battery and lights for this duration.

### Key Performance Indicators

Below is a table showing the annual compliance position at the end of March 2023.

<b>Area of compliance</b>	<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Total number of stock</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>% Complete</b>
Emergency Lighting	Axis	115	115	0	100%

**Position statement as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023; 100% compliant.**

## 9. The Building Safety Act 2022

The Building Safety Act 2022 came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and introduces new duties for the management of fire and building safety in high rise residential buildings. As a landlord, Brentwood Council has a legal duty to register all high-rise residential buildings 18 metres tall or higher or at least 7 storeys tall with 2 or more residential units by the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

The registration of these buildings is in two parts;

- 1) the first part of the application is for general information on the block such as number of floors, height of the residential block in metres, number of residential units, year it was built and it's address.
- 2) the second part is more detailed and requires key building information. This includes building use, structure, roof, number of staircases, external wall system, external features and attachments to the buildings, energy supply to and within the building, fire evacuation strategy, list of fire and smoke control equipment, number of fire doors, their fire rating and certain building works carried out on the original building.

The first part of the application for registration of our high-rise residential buildings has been completed. We were one of the first landlords to complete this and was selected to provide feedback to Building Safety Regulator on the initial registration process.

## 10. Closing Comments

### Commentary

Overall compliancy has continued to improve over the last quarter. It is very important as a responsible landlord that our tenants and leaseholders can be confident they are safe in their home and immediate environment.

We continue to review our policies and procedures to ensure they comply with legislation and are clear and concise.



**COMMITTEE TITLE:** Health Housing and Community Committee

**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Local Authority Housing Fund update
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Julian Higson, Housing Director

## **REPORT SUMMARY**

This report provides an update to Members on progress delivering the Council's commitments under the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Community Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) scheme.

Under the scheme Brentwood Council has committed to providing nine homes in total. These are to be used initially to provide housing for Afghan and Ukrainian refugee households.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1.0 In December 2022 the Government announced a new nationwide housing fund to provide homes for Afghan and Ukrainian refugees. The LAHF scheme made £500 million available to local authorities in the form of capital grants
- 1.1 Unlike other DLUHC grant programmes, the LAHF is not a bidding round. Councils were allocated funds to provide a specific number of homes according to government assessed need. Councils were asked to give a commitment to procuring the housing. Brentwood was asked to deliver nine homes in total, to be comprised of eight homes under what is known as the "main element" of the scheme, and one four-bedroom (or larger) home under the "bridging element" of the scheme. The bridging element is specifically aimed at refugee families currently occupying bridging hotels.
- 1.2 The Council's grant allocation in total is £1,671,953. DLUHC assesses this as covering 40% of the total cost of main element homes and 50% of the cost of bridging element homes, plus an additional £20,000 per home to cover any refurbishment expenses. The Council is expected to meet the residual cost of the homes. In Brentwood's case we intend to do this via borrowing within the Housing Revenue Account.

- 1.3 Once purchased the homes are to be matched to qualifying refugee households. These can either be households already known to the Council (ie through Housing Options or Community Services), or alternatively via referrals from the County Council or Home Office Regional Hubs. DLUHC requirements are for rents to be below market rates, although the Department is flexible about what rent product each Council wishes to charge.
- 1.4 The properties will be owned by the Council. DLUHC expects initial (and potentially some subsequent) lettings to be to refugee households. In the longer term, once no longer required for the specific refugee cohorts Councils will be able to use the properties as they see fit, providing rent remains below market rates. This could include social housing, temporary accommodation or affordable move-on housing.
- 1.5 DLUHC has allowed flexibility in how the LAHF homes are delivered. Options include Council new build, new build through a registered provider, purchase of existing market homes, purchase of market new build homes, or provision of modular homes. Brentwood Council is opting to procure all nine homes in our LAHF allocation through market purchases, either of existing or new build homes. This is mainly due to the short deadline imposed by DLUHC for completion (November 2023), but also so that it does not complicate or disrupt the Councils existing SHDP new build programme.
- 1.6 The Council undertook due diligence prior to agreeing to deliver its LAHF allocation. This included detailed viability assessments through ARK. These show that over a standard 40-year assessment period the new homes will deliver an overall return to the HRA, as measured by Net Present Value (NPV). This is projected to be £623,700 after 40 years. An assessment of HRA borrowing capacity for the LAHF was conducted by Housing Finance Associates. This found that the borrowing could be accommodated within existing HRA capacity and will make a small improvement to HRA peak debt projections and to interest cover performance.
- 1.7 Approval to submit a detailed expression of interest and subsequent Memorandum of Understanding to DLUHC was obtained from the Leader of the Council and Housing Committee Chair (due to tight government deadlines submission dates fell outside Housing Committee meeting dates). A signed MoU was received by DLUHC on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The first tranche of capital funding was given to the Council on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
- 1.8 The Council has set up a small team to deliver the LAHF homes, sponsored by the Housing Director and reporting to the SHDP Programme Board so as not to duplicate governance structures. The delivery team comprises officers from Housing Regeneration, Housing Needs, Asset Management, and Legal Services.



1.9 As of the time of writing this report, the Council has made one successful offer on a four-bedroom house and is conducting viewings on several other properties. All are within the Borough. The Council is optimistic that all nine LAHF homes can be successful procured, renovated (where necessary), and occupied.

1.10 Through the MoU that Council has agreed to providing regular monitoring and spend information to DLUHC. To date, all monitoring target dates have been met to the satisfaction of the Department.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

2.1 Consideration was given to not submitting an expression of interest to DLUHC and therefore not participating in the LAHF programme. The Council's Corporate Leadership Team and Housing Committee Chair felt that the LAHF helped the Council to enhance its role in helping with the refugee crisis. Given that the scheme is financially viable, it was decided to pursue an LAHF submission.

## **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

3.1 Full details of the Government's LAHF scheme can be found at [Local Authority Housing Fund - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

## **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Tim Willis, Director – Resources & Section 151 Officer**  
**Tel & Email : 01277 312500 / tim.willis@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

4.1 The Council's Finance Team reviewed all viability assessments and borrowing implications prior to submission for the formal Memorandum of Understanding with the Government. The Council's LAHF programme offers long term value for money and should provide a positive NPV after the standard 40 year period.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Claire Mayhew, Joint Director of People and Governance & Monitoring Officer**  
**Tel & Email: 01277 312741 /claire.mayhew@brentwood.gov.uk**

5.1 The legal implications were reviewed and agreed by Andrew Hunkin former Director, prior to submission to DLUHC. The MoU offers flexibility on both sides. The Council has agreed to provide data to DLUHC on an ongoing basis, which it is complying with.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

6.1 There are no additional resource implications in delivery of the LAHF programme.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 There is a risk of non-delivery of the total programme which would result in the Council returning unspent grant to the government. However, the Council would be allowed to keep any sums already spent on completed homes. The risk is being actively mitigated through the programme governance arrangements that are in place.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 None required or possible due to the nature of the programme.

## **9.0 EQUALITY & HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager - Communities, Leisure and Health**

**Tel & Email : 01277 312500 / kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk**

9.1 The LAHF programme will help the Council to achieve its Equalities Act commitments. Providing good quality settled homes is proven to have positive health impacts for households that have been living in poor quality and/or overcrowded homes.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director - Place**

**Tel & Email 01277 312500 / phil.drane@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

10.1 None

### **REPORT AUTHOR:**

**Name: Julian Higson**

**Title: Housing Director**

**Phone: 01277312500**

**Email : julian.higson@brentwood.rochford.gov.uk**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
None	

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## **Members Interests**

Members of the Council must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and the nature of the interest at the beginning of an agenda item and that, on declaring a pecuniary interest, they are required to leave the Chamber.

- **What are pecuniary interests?**

A person's pecuniary interests are their business interests (for example their employment trade, profession, contracts, or any company with which they are associated) and wider financial interests they might have (for example trust funds, investments, and asset including land and property).

- **Do I have any disclosable pecuniary interests?**

You have a disclosable pecuniary interest if you, your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner have a disclosable pecuniary interest set out in the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

- **What does having a disclosable pecuniary interest stop me doing?**

If you are present at a meeting of your council or authority, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of your authority, and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to any business that is or will be considered at the meeting, you must not :

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, of if you become aware of your disclosable pecuniary interest during the meeting participate further in any discussion of the business or,
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

- **Other Pecuniary Interests**

Other Pecuniary Interests are also set out in the Members' Code of Conduct and apply only to you as a Member.

If you have an Other Pecuniary Interest in an item of business on the agenda then you must disclose that interest and withdraw from the room while that business is being considered

- **Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Non –pecuniary interests are set out in the Council's Code of Conduct and apply to you as a Member and also to relevant persons where the decision might reasonably be regarded as affecting their wellbeing.

A 'relevant person' is your spouse or civil partner, or a person you are living with as a spouse or civil partner

If you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority and you are present at a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest whether or not such interest is registered on your Register of Interests or for which you have made a pending notification.

## **Housing, Health & Community Committee**

The functions within the remit of the Housing, Health & Community are set out below:

1. Community and Localism Initiatives including Assets of Community Value
2. The Voluntary Sector and community partnerships
3. Leisure and cultural initiatives
4. Parish Council Liaison
5. Health and Wellbeing
6. Grants to organisations/voluntary organisations.
7. Parks, open spaces, countryside, allotments
8. Affordable housing
9. Housing strategy and investment programme where the Finance, Assets, Investment & Recovery Committee does not decide to exercise such functions as the superior Committee.
10. The Housing Revenue Account Business Plan where the Finance, Assets, Investment & Recovery Committee does not decide to exercise such functions as the superior Committee
11. Housing standards, homelessness, homelessness prevention and advice
12. Housing needs assessment
13. Housing benefit - welfare aspects (was this going to (Finance, Assets, Investment & Recovery Committee)
14. Private sector housing and administration of housing grants
15. Tenancy Management and landlord functions

16. To make recommendations to Finance, Assets, Investment & Recovery Committee on the setting of rents for Council homes.

17. Food safety

18. Health & Safety

19. To take the lead on community leadership and consultation with stakeholders.

20. To implement working parties as required.