

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

## Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **5 March 2024**

**Committee Room 2, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6SL**

### Membership:

Councillors James Halden (Chair), Sue Shinnick (Vice-Chair), Steve Liddiard, Maureen Pearce, Joycelyn Redsell and Neil Speight

Sue Hodgson, Tenant Housing Representative

### Substitutes:

Councillors Qaisar Abbas, Alex Anderson, John Cecil, Aaron Green and Lynn Worrall

### Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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<b>1 Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2 Minutes</b>	<b>5 - 10</b>
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 January 2024.	
<b>3 Urgent Items</b>	
To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. To agree any relevant briefing notes submitted to the Committee.	
<b>4 Declaration of Interests</b>	
<b>5 Portfolio Holder Report for Housing - to follow</b>	

<b>6</b>	<b>Findings of Stock Condition Survey of Housing Portfolio</b>	<b>11 - 22</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Update on Procurement of Strategic Delivery Partner for Housing Works</b>	<b>23 - 30</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Housing Revenue Account Review - to follow</b>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Teviot Avenue Nos - 158 - 228 (evens) - Demolition and Redevelopment - to follow</b>	
<b>10</b>	<b>Blackshots Redevelopment - Business Case - to follow</b>	
<b>11</b>	<b>Work Programme</b>	<b>31 - 34</b>

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Please contact Jenny Shade, Principal Democratic Services Officer by sending an email to [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)

Agenda published on: **26 February 2024**

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# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

## Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

## When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

**What is a Non-Pecuniary interest?** – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

### Pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

**Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:**

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

**If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps**

### Non-pecuniary

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



**You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.**

## Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
  - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
  - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
  - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together
  
2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
  - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
  - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
  - Fewer public buildings with better services
  
3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
  - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
  - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
  - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9 January 2024 at 7.00 pm

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**Present:** Councillors James Halden (Chair), Sue Shinnick (Vice-Chair), Steve Liddiard, Maureen Pearce, Joycelyn Redsell and Neil Speight

Sue Hodgson, Housing Tenant Representative

**In attendance:** Ewelina Sorbjan, Assistant Director Housing and Development  
Dulal Ahmed, Housing Enforcement Manager  
Mike Jones, Strategic Lead, Finance  
Lucy Tricker, Scrutiny Officer  
Jenny Shade, Principal Democratic Services Officer

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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being recorded, with the audio recording to be made available on the Council's website.

### **24. Minutes**

The Minutes of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 21 November 2023 were approved as a correct record.

### **25. Urgent Items**

Following concerns raised by Councillor Speight, it was agreed that officers would produce a briefing note in regard to the recent refit works on the Garrison Estate in Purfleet and for this be sent out to committee members.

#### **Action 16.**

#### **ACTION:**

Officers to produce briefing note.

### **26. Declaration of Interests**

No interests were declared.

### **27. Proposal to Designate Additional HMO Licensing Scheme**

The report presented outlined the need for the renewal of the Additional Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing scheme in Thurrock. The scheme, initiated in June 2019, had played a crucial role in improving housing conditions and management standards in smaller HMOs that fell outside the scope of Mandatory Licensing. The renewal proposal was based on comprehensive data and analysis, demonstrating the positive impact of the scheme on housing conditions, tenant safety, and community well-being.

The following points were raised:

- Member raised her concern on the increase in the number of HMOs and questioned whether there was a means, through the Planning Committee, of giving members advanced notice of any new HMOs.
- Members raised their concern on enforcement of non-licensing properties.
- Member referred to the scheme generating £432,912 and questioned whether this was net of all costs or income to which he was informed this was income. Member further asked the cost of running the scheme per year to which the officer agreed to provide. **Action 17**
- Member questioned where the monies would be allocated from the additional licensing that would be intended to cover smaller HMOs.
- Member referred to the charges to be implemented and whether this was a significant rise year on year and questioned the comparison figures from last year. **Action 18**
- Member stated it appeared to be unfair to be charging HMOs in only certain parts of the borough and questioned why.
- Member stated the process was complex and saw potential to generate further revenue and suggested there needed to be a financial plan on how the council was dealing with HMOs that could concentrate on staffing and fairness.
- Member stated his support as the benefits would be to protect residents and improve the service being offered by the council.
- The Chair noted the housing team had done a terrific job in generating significant revenue.
- The Chair noted that revenue coming into the housing team did not meet his typical complaints received from his constituents and questioned what work was being undertaken with other departments to ensure an increase rating in enforcement.
- The Chair commented that other departments within the council did not see any of the proceeds of HMOs and questioned why when some of the HMO complaints were linked to other departments.
- The Chair also questioned how the growth of complaints were being tracked for the unlicensed schemes.
- Member asked whether Housing Officers were reporting potential new HMOs back to the team.
- Member stated there needed to be a restriction on the number of HMOs in the borough and had concerns this was being encouraged as a money stream.
- Member stated he was in favour of single HMOs as there was a particular demand in his ward.
- The Chair summed up by stating the committee were in favour of the recommendations but had concerns on what enforcement would look like across the unlicensed properties and across different departments of the council.

**Actions:**



Action 17 - Member further asked the cost of running the scheme per year to which officer agreed to provide.

Action 18 - Officers to provide charge comparison figures.

## **RESOLVED**

### **The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 1. Commented on the council's evidence to renew Additional Licensing covering the whole borough for five years.**
- 2. Commented on the other options available to the council to improve housing conditions and management standards in all HMOs.**
- 3. Commented on the public consultation with stakeholders likely to be affected by this decision to extend Additional Licensing and present those findings to Cabinet for a decision on renewing Additional Licensing.**

#### **28. Right to Buy receipts management/PHI Updated**

Members were provided with a verbal update in that the right to buy receipts were subject to ongoing conversations with the Treasury and Commissioners around the right to spend the right to buy receipts and invest them further. The process was currently ongoing with the Treasury and once a decision had been made by the Treasury a report would be presented to members.

#### **29. Housing Revenue Account - Rent Setting and Budgets 2024/25**

The report presented set out the base budget position for 2024/25 following the review and update of the 30-year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan. The Business Plan was a statutory requirement used to assess the ongoing financial viability of the HRA and its ability to deliver the Council's housing priorities.

The following points were raised:

- Member fundamentally stated his objection to the increase and would not be supporting the recommendation increase to 7.7%. Member stated this was an unfair increase.
- Member referred to table 6 of the report, tower block refurbishment, member assumed this would not include the three blocks at Blackshots, six blocks in Grays, which only left Chadwell and Tilbury and questioned what the plans were in spending £12.5 million pounds on those blocks.
- Member referred to the six blocks in Grays, questioned why the monies for the project had not been ringfenced and put to one side for the scheduled completion of the project. Member also questioned why money was still being banked for a project which should have been finished two years ago.

- Member referred to table 1 of the report, operational services, and table 8, management and strategy, stated he had looked at the breakdown of such costs but felt uncomfortable on the proposed increase in rents and questioned how the council compared with other local authorities.
- Member also questioned whether any best value inspections or benchmarking exercises had been undertaken by the council.
- Members requested a more detailed breakdown of management and strategy costs, officers agreed to share with all members as part of a further HRA report. **Action 19**
- Member referred to page 7, Blackshots decant officer and Blackshots health and safety, to which officers confirmed this was the external company used as independent advisor to provide advice and to guide residents through the process.
- Member referred to garages and stated that income taken for rents should be put back into the upkeep of garages.
- Member referred to table 2, utilities increase, and raised her concerns on what that covered.
- Member stated service charge notices should not be sent out to residents who do not pay for them.
- The Chair stated he was pleased the £1.5 million surplus was going into reserves.
- The Chair asked for reassures that across the authority, not just in housing, with concerns of the direction of inflation, that reserves would go in the confirmed direction of travel.
- Member questioned whether consideration had been given on the new legislation on damp and mould and any potential liability.
- Member stated her concerns that the increase was unfair and way over the top based on the cost-of-living crisis.
- Member referred to table 6, transforming homes, and asked for some clarification on the aims and targets for the coming year, as to what work was projected and expected completion times.
- Member referred to table 6, fire safety works, and asked for some clarification on the £1 million being spent, member stated he assumed this was to bring those properties to fire safety standard which seemed to be a lot of money.
- Member raised concern on how the increase would be managed next year and how difficult this would be for members to explain the increase to residents.
- Members noted the council had to manage the budget as best and as prudently as possible and thanked officers for all their explanations this evening.
- Member raised concern that not enough had been undertaken to reduce some of the figures within the report, the council needed to be more proactive and possibly cutting back on some items.
- The Chair summed up by noting as all the recommendations were for commenting, the minutes from this meeting should be forwarded to Cabinet for their information. Officer agreed to include a reference to these minutes in his cabinet report.

Actions:

**Action 19** - Housing finance team to produce a more detailed breakdown of the management and strategy costs within the HRA.

## **RESOLVED**

1. **The Committee commented on the proposed changes in the base budget for 2024/25 (as set out in Table 1).**
  2. **The Committee commented on the proposed increase in domestic rent charges of 7.7%, in line with the 30-year HRA business plan, to be implemented from 1 April 2024.**
  3. **The Committee commented on the proposed increase in service charges to reflect the cost of running each service in line with the budget estimate from 1 April 2024.**
  4. **The Committee commented on the proposed charges for garage rents (para 3.12) to be implemented from 1 April 2024.**
  5. **The Committee commented on the proposed increase in Travellers sites rent (para 3.13) to be implemented from 1 April 2024.**
- 30. Update on Procurement of Housing Contracts for Works Through a Partnership Model**

The report presented provided members with an update on progress to date for the procurement process.

The following points were raised:

- Member referred to the mobilisation period and questioned was this time enough due to the size of the project.
- The Chair raised his concern on the general market fragility, and what may need to be confronted in the next few years was the resilience of some of those organisations that the Council were undertaking business with.
- A discussion took place on the competitive dialogue procurement procedure that the council would be following.

## **RESOLVED**

**Members noted and commented on the contents of this report.**

### **31. Work Programme**

Members discussed the work programme and agreed the February extraordinary meeting should remain as part of the work programme.

**Action 22** - Minutes from the meeting and recommendations would be circulated to committee members before being circulated to Cabinet.

**Action 23** – Members noted that ‘to note’ reports should be removed from overview and scrutiny meetings as they did not add value.

A full recording of the meeting can be found from the following link:

[Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 9 January 2024, 7:00pm - Thurrock Council committee meeting webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

**The meeting finished at 9.02 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**

<b>5 March 2024</b>	<b>ITEM: 6</b>
<b>Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	
<b>Findings of Stock Condition Survey of Housing Portfolio</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Not Applicable
<b>Report of:</b> Alastair Wood – Head of Assets, Repairs and Compliance, Housing Adults, Housing & Health	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Ewelina Sorbjan Assistant Director, Housing and Development, Adults, Housing & Health	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Ian Wake, Executive Director of Adults, Housing and Health	
<b>This report is:</b> Public	
<b>Version:</b> Final	

## Executive Summary

This report seeks to provide the committee with an overview of the findings from a partial stock condition survey, the investment needs of the housing portfolio and how the Council will be utilising this information in the development of future programmes and projects.

### Commissioner Comment:

It is suggested no commissioners' comments are required for this report because it's for information only and contains information requested by the members of the Overview and Scrutiny. There are not financial implications for this report and no decision is sought.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

**Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to review, comment and challenge:**

- 1.1 The assets investment needs of the housing portfolio.**
- 1.2 Key priorities for investment of the housing asset.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 This report has been compiled to give the committee an overview of the findings of the partial stock condition survey completed by the Housing Service. Based on the findings of this exercise and combining this with the existing data relating to the housing asset we are able to provide an overview in respect to investment requirements of the housing assets.
- 2.2 The Housing Service recognises the importance of monitoring our housing assets to ensure that we continue to maintain the housing stock appropriately in order to provide safe and secure homes for our residents whilst also ensuring that we maintain accurate information to develop investment programmes to meet the current and emerging demands of our housing portfolio.
- 2.3 The Council's current approach to undertaking stock condition surveys is to undertake partial surveys on selected assets that give a borough wide representation of the assets from across the entire housing portfolio. This approach allows the Council to undertake more frequent stock condition surveys, with the last one being done in 2017.
- 2.4 The data captured in the most recent partial stock condition survey will supplement the data that was captured in 2017 in addition to the data of which is captured annually through the delivery of the repair, maintenance, and investment programmes. The properties that were surveyed in 2017/18 have been excluded from this exercise to ensure that we are capturing new data from other assets.
- 2.5 In February 2022, Thurrock Council entered into contract with MLCS3 to undertake a stock condition survey of circa 30% of existing housing stock equating to completing surveys to 2,952 properties in addition to a sample of blocks equating to 161 blocks across both general needs and sheltered schemes. On-site surveys commenced in late March 2022, following initial resident engagement.
- 2.6 Key data captured as part of this survey includes:
- 2.6.1 Recording the condition of the main internal and building components, the age of the component, estimated year of replacement and quantity to provide lifecycle costing for asset management purposes and assist with the development of future planned works.
- 2.6.2 HHSRS – (Housing health and safety rating system) and Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 assessment criteria.
- 2.6.3 EPC – an official Energy Performance Certificate was completed by the surveyor, all of whom are qualified Domestic Energy Assessors. EPCs and the data captured offer the opportunity to report on carbon output and EPC recommendations.
- 2.6.4 Backlog Repair – any “backlog” type of repairs that should be carried out in order to maintain the standard of the property including recording of any building defects that compromise the health and safety of residents/visitors, impact on security or potentially having a detrimental impact on other building components if not rectified. The works are recorded using an agreed schedule of rates and a quantity is recorded to provide a total cost to carry out the work.

### 3. Property Selection

- 3.1 This exercise involved surveys to 2939 individual homes and 161 communal blocks from across the housing portfolio.
- 3.2 To ensure the Council surveys relevant representation of the entire stock, the Housing service selected specific archetypes from all geographical areas of the Borough. Please note the total number of properties issued is greater than the number to be surveyed to allow for properties where access cannot be obtained. The following table provides a breakdown of the confirmed archetypes together with number of properties target and access to date.

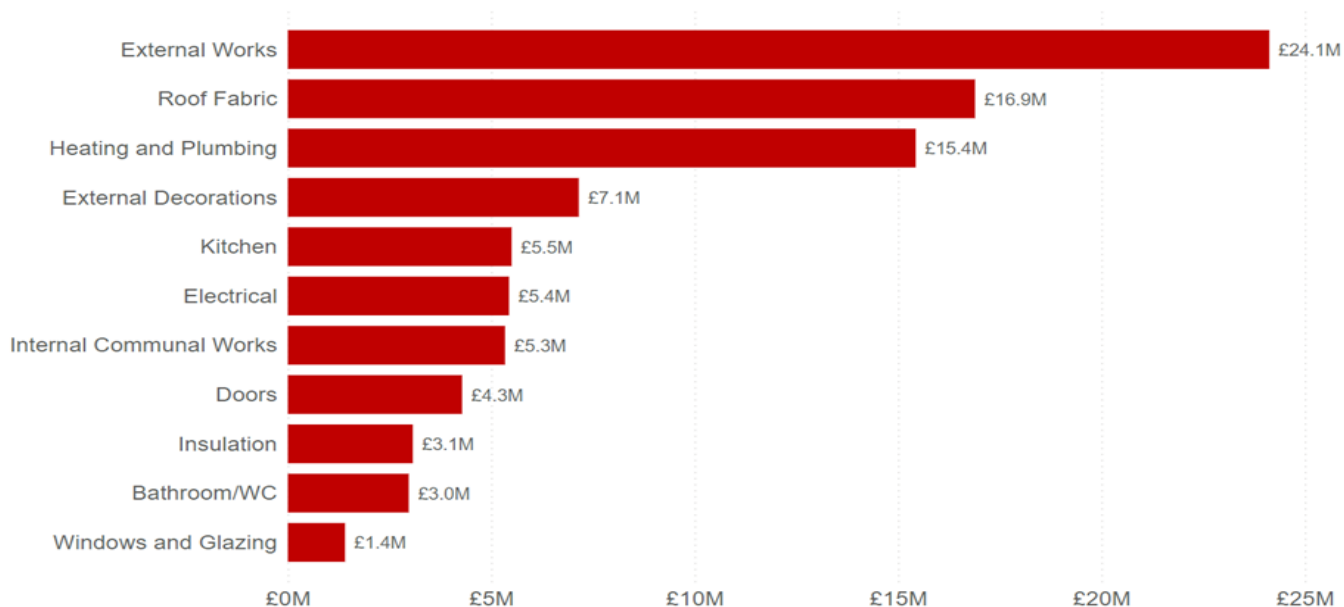
Archetype	Included in Sample	Surveyed	Access %
Bedsit - End Terraced	27	17	62.96%
Bedsit - High Rise	67	25	37.31%
Bedsit - Low Rise	79	24	30.38%
Bedsit - Mid Terraced	1	1	100.00%
Bedsit - Semi Detached	3	1	33.33%
Bungalow 1 to 2 Bed - Detached	6	6	100.00%
Bungalow 1 to 2 Bed - End Terraced	78	58	74.36%
Bungalow 1 to 2 Bed - Mid Terraced	77	51	66.23%
Bungalow 1 to 2 Bed - Semi Detached	46	32	69.57%
Bungalow 3 Bed+ - End Terraced	3	2	66.67%
Bungalow 3 Bed+ - Mid Terraced	8	4	50.00%
Bungalow 3 Bed+ - Semi Detached	4	2	50.00%
Flat/Maisonette 1 to 2 Bed - High Rise	524	206	39.31%
Flat/Maisonette 1 to 2 Bed - Low Rise	1494	902	60.37%
Flat/Maisonette 1 to 2 Bed - Upper Floor	39	17	43.59%
Flat/Maisonette 3 Bed+ - Ground Floor	54	35	64.81%
Flat/Maisonette 3 Bed+ - High Rise	27	15	55.56%
Flat/Maisonette 3 Bed+ - Low Rise	97	50	51.55%
Flat/Maisonette 3 Bed+ - Upper Floor	142	75	52.82%
House 1 to 2 Bed - End Terraced	93	53	56.99%
House 1 to 2 Bed - Mid Terraced	249	149	59.84%
House 1 to 2 Bed - Semi Detached	99	66	66.67%
House 3 Bed - Detached	1	1	100.00%
House 3 Bed - End Terraced	407	265	65.11%
House 3 Bed - Mid Terraced	641	386	60.22%
House 3 Bed - Semi Detached	653	409	62.63%
House 4 Bed+ - Detached	3	1	33.33%
House 4 Bed+ - End Terraced	20	15	75.00%
House 4 Bed+ - Mid Terraced	58	34	58.62%
House 4 Bed+ - Semi Detached	48	37	77.08%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5048</b>	<b>2939</b>	<b>58.22%</b>

\*Please note the above table exclude the surveyed blocks

## 4. Asset investment needs

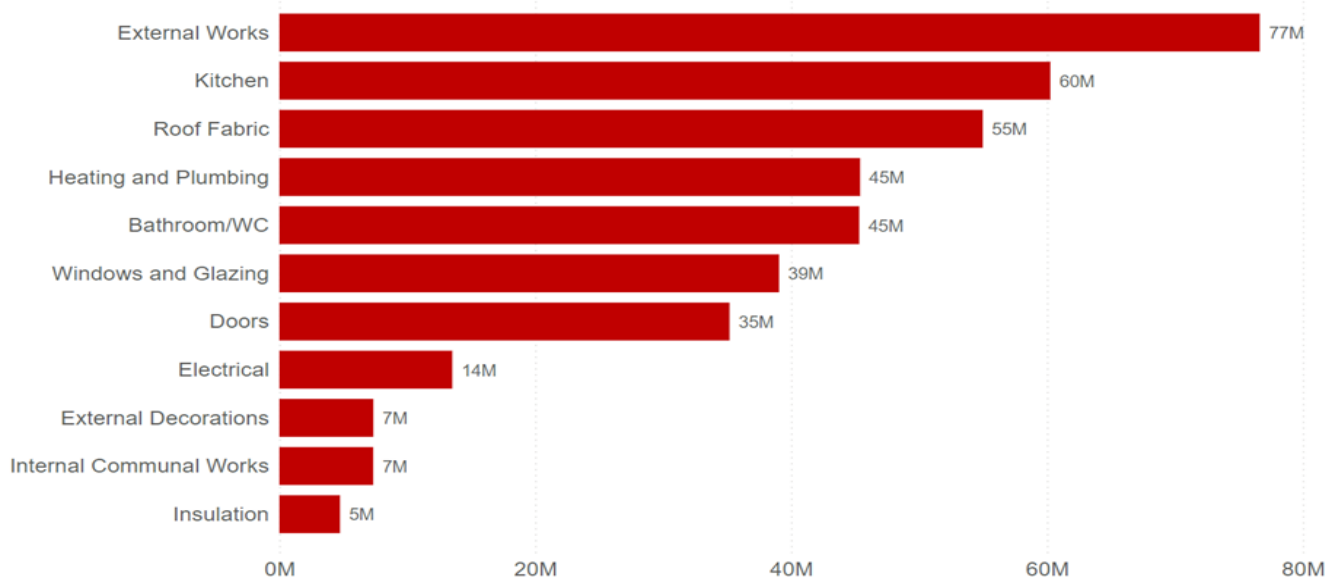
- 4.1 Following receipt of the information captured in the stock condition survey, the Council has combined these data with the other data held regarding the asset from different sources. This includes the previous stock condition survey and data gathered through the delivery of our planned and investment programmes and projects.
- 4.2 This section of the report provides the committee with an overview of required level of investment needed in the housing assets over the next 5 and 30-year periods. This information is now be utilised to inform the update to the 30-year business plan for the Housing Revenue Account. The figures and heading below encompass many individual aspects that can be filtered down into specific workstreams. Furthermore, it is important it identify that in line with industry practices where there are incomplete data sets related to the asset for different elements of works a cloning exercise is undertaken to provide a cost allowance for specific works based on relevant neighbouring building archetypes.
- 4.3 These data will be essential to allow the Council and its future partners to effectively plan and target investment into the stock based on actual need. However, year on year there will be individual home surveys to selected properties that will inform the required scope of works for specific homes based on age and condition and these will be costs in line with the applicable contracted rates at that time. Therefore, costs outlined below are broad parameters but will be subject to variance based on actual work volumes, applicable contract rates and preliminaries.
- 4.4 The following graphs give a visual representation and cost requirement for the work type activity for the housing assets based on the Council's existing data set of which has been combined with the information captured in the recent stock condition survey.

### 5 Year Distribution of Works





## 30 Year Distribution of Works



4.5 These findings broadly align to our understanding of the required level of investment needed across the assets in the short to medium term.

## 5. HHSRS (The Housing Health and Safety Rating System) and Fitness for Human Habitation.

5.1 As part of the survey the consultants are assessing the dwelling based against both above mention acts.

5.1.1 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a risk-based assessment to identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. It was introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and applies to residential properties in England and Wales. The assessment comprises of 29 “risks”. Full guidance regarding HHSRS can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-guidance-for-landlords-and-property-related-professionals>

5.1.2 The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 came into law on 20th March 2019, which is applicable to Social Landlords, to ensure that rented houses and flats are ‘fit for human habitation’ which means that they are safe, healthy and free from issues that could cause serious harm. The Homes Act considers the risks identified as part of the HHSRS assessment along with additional factors to consider. Further details can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homes-fitness-for-human-habitation-act-2018/guide-for-tenants-homes-fitness-for-human-habitation-act-2018>

5.2 Under both of these criteria based on all 2939 properties surveyed, six properties were identified to have a severe risk under this criterion and these properties were referred to us immediately so the necessary repairs work could be implemented. Other than these six cases, there were two predominant themes identified under these assessment criterions which related to fire and damp and mould.

- 5.3 The aspect of fire relates largely to individual detectors being missing or damaged or kitchen doors being removed or missing door closers. All of these findings are being reviewed and actioned accordingly.
- 5.4 Ensuring all of our properties have fire detection systems in place is something the Council places the utmost importance in. Therefore, there are a number of workstreams whereby we check, test and upgrade the detection system in our housing portfolio. Over the last two years we have been enhancing the detection system across our high-rise blocks to install detectors in all habitual rooms throughout the flats and this approach is now being rolled out across our sheltered housing portfolio. Furthermore, testing and replacing missing or defective detection systems are requirements under our gas servicing programme and our ongoing cyclical electrical testing programmes. This is in addition to repairs and replacements that are reported through our responsive repairs contract.
- 5.5 The identification of damp and mould is something the Housing service anticipated. Therefore, when starting this stock condition survey specific properties were purposely selected where based on asset data, we knew had a higher prevalence of damp and mould on a reoccurring basis.
- 5.6 This report is not specifically for reporting damp and mould in the housing portfolio and properties that were identified as having mould growth were transferred back to the council for treating under our responsive repairs contract. The committee was provided with a report specifically regarding damp and mould in September 2023.  
<http://democracy.thurrock.gov.uk/documents/s40750/Housing%20Ombudsman%20Report%20Spotlight%20on%20Damp%20and%20Mould%20-%20Thurrock%20Councils%20Response.pdf>
- 5.7 To give the committee an overview of actual finding within this survey regarding damp and mould, the following table provides a breakdown in archetypes of surveyed properties where damp and or mould was identified.

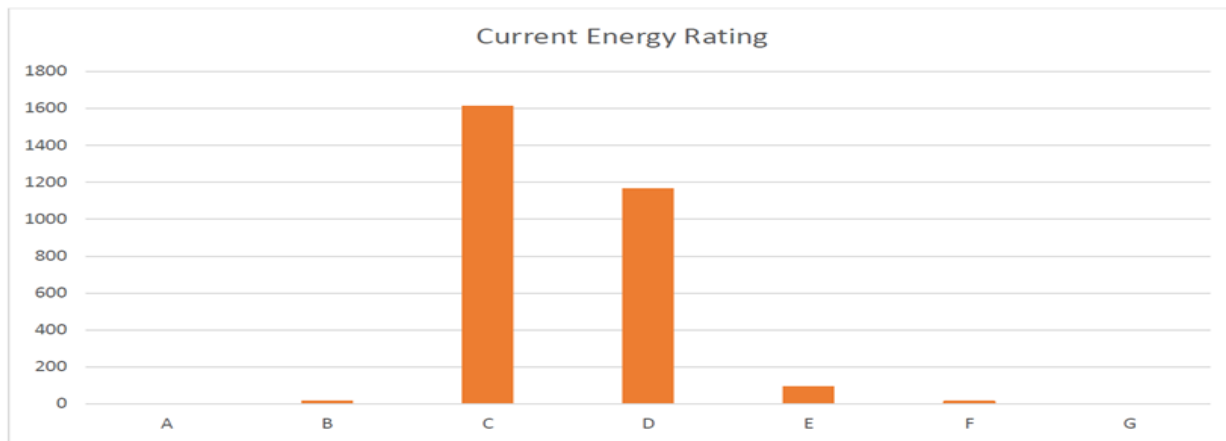
Archetype	Surveyed	Slight Risk	Moderate Risk	Severe Risk	Total Risks	% Risk
Bedsit - End Terraced	17		1	0	1	5.88%
Bedsit - High Rise	25	1	1	0	2	8.00%
Bedsit - Low Rise	24	4	1	0	5	20.83%
Bedsit - Mid Terraced	1			0	0	0.00%
Bedsit - Semi Detached	1			0	0	0.00%
Bungalow 1 to 2 Bed - Detached	6	1		0	1	16.67%
Bungalow 1 to 2 Bed - End Terraced	58	6	1	0	7	12.07%
Bungalow 1 to 2 Bed - Mid Terraced	51	3		0	3	5.88%
Bungalow 1 to 2 Bed - Semi Detached	32	3	3	0	6	18.75%
Bungalow 3 Bed+ - End Terraced	2	1		0	1	50.00%
Bungalow 3 Bed+ - Mid Terraced	4			0	0	0.00%
Bungalow 3 Bed+ - Semi Detached	2		1	0	1	50.00%
Flat/Maisonette 1 to 2 Bed - High Rise	206	14	4	0	18	8.74%
Flat/Maisonette 1 to 2 Bed - Low Rise	902	58	22	0	80	8.87%
Flat/Maisonette 1 to 2 Bed - Upper Floor	17			0	0	0.00%
Flat/Maisonette 3 Bed+ - Ground Floor	35	7		0	7	20.00%
Flat/Maisonette 3 Bed+ - High Rise	15	1		0	1	6.67%
Flat/Maisonette 3 Bed+ - Low Rise	50	5	3	0	8	16.00%
Flat/Maisonette 3 Bed+ - Upper Floor	75	2		0	2	2.67%
House 1 to 2 Bed - End Terraced	53	9		0	9	16.98%
House 1 to 2 Bed - Mid Terraced	149	17	3	0	20	13.42%
House 1 to 2 Bed - Semi Detached	66	3		0	3	4.55%
House 3 Bed - Detached	1			0	0	0.00%
House 3 Bed - End Terraced	265	33	9	0	42	15.85%
House 3 Bed - Mid Terraced	386	32	11	0	43	11.14%
House 3 Bed - Semi Detached	409	48	13	0	61	14.91%
House 4 Bed+ - Detached	1		1	0	1	100.00%
House 4 Bed+ - End Terraced	15	1	1	0	2	13.33%
House 4 Bed+ - Mid Terraced	34	3	1	0	4	11.76%
House 4 Bed+ - Semi Detached	37	4	2	0	6	16.22%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2939</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>11.36%</b>

5.8 These data are key to us looking at high prevalence in certain construction types to ensure that we can target and develop projects and programmes accordingly. Furthermore, off the back of these findings the Council commissioned MSCL3 to undertake addition surveys on specific properties to fully establish the causation of damp and or mould so this could fully inform our approach to remediation and gain to establish any trends in specific archetypes.

## 6. Energy Performance

6.1 As part of the survey programme, Energy Assessments were undertaken and an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) was produced. This is being done to update our records and to allow the surveyors to identify potential improvement measures so these can be factored into the future investment programmes.

6.2 The below graph identified that all properties surveyed have an energy rating between Band A and Band G. The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) 2018 have identified that energy ratings of F and below are seen as sub-standard. Although these standards do not apply to social landlords, they do provide a benchmark to measure energy performance. Properties with an Energy Rating of F are intended to be prioritised for improvement.



- 6.3 These findings concur with our wider understanding of the housing asset portfolio. However, the identification of some of the worst performing assets is essential for us as a landlord so we are able to deliver improvements to support our residents and to provide better performing properties in respect to energy efficiency.
- 6.4 These findings also provide the Council with an up-to-date representation with regards to the energy performance of our stock and will help develop the Council's long-term plan with regard to how we can try and access funding to supplement our budgets and programmes to enhance the energy performance of the housing assets. This aspect is key in directly tackling fuel poverty, improving the quality of homes and preventing mould growth. This will create a stable environment in the home for residents to reside comfortably and give them the opportunity to effectively heat their home which will in turn improve health and wellbeing.

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The findings of this exercise are going to be very important as the Council moves forward with planning for future works and investment based on actual asset needs. The landscape of social housing continues to evolve at pace with the needs and the wellbeing of residents at its heart and Thurrock Council must rise to this challenge.
- 7.2 It would be remiss of this report to not allude to the point relating to how the Housing service plans to evolve its delivery of the assets service to meet the demands of the housing sector, regulatory landscape, and wider industry challenges.
- 7.3 In line with the item 201 of the Cabinet meeting of the 8th November 2023, <https://thurrockintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s41220/Procurement%20of%20Housing%20Contracts%20Partnership%20Model.pdf>.  
The Council will be seeking to deliver its housing assets service under a new model moving forward. This aspect is intrinsically linked to the stock condition and the data that we hold because this will be keys to providing our future delivery partner essential information during the tendering stage.
- 7.4 Furthermore, given the proposal starting in the 24/25 financial year and moving forward the Council will be working in partnership with a single service provider that will deliver repairs, planned maintenance and capital investment. As part of the future contract the with the delivery partner there will be an initial and ongoing requirement to enhance our understanding of asset condition and need to ensure that there is effective and efficient investment planning. This will also encompass a sustainability study of the entire asset within the first twelve months

of the new contractual arrangement to allow the Council to develop and publish a road to achieving the net carbon zero target for decarbonisation of the housing portfolio.

- 7.5 The data relating to the condition of the asset largely reflects the departments understanding of the stock and clearly there are several challenges that the council need to face in the coming years to effectively maintain and improve our assets. However, it is vital to identify that at present and moving forward the investment into the portfolio will be subject to an assessment of both age and condition at that time. Therefore, whilst the investment demand contained within this report gives a good broad understanding and allows the council to effectively target areas for investment moving forward based on asset data, the actual required work level and investment need will be determined by further individual home surveys in year. Therefore, utilisation of the actual figure of investment needed in specific periods moving forward needs to be used in the right context.
- 7.6 The overall asset condition of the housing portfolio is broadly in good condition and the Council are on a sound footing to take the asset forward and face the future challenges of the sector and the industry. Proposed developments and replacement of certain assets that require significant investment will be vital if the Council are going to be able to effectively balance its investment across the asset in the coming years. Clearly there are significant investment needs needed in in the portfolio which is real challenge all asset managers and landlords face. However, it must be noted that these findings do not reflect component or element failure.
- 7.7 The findings of this exercise and the combining of data is now being utilised to inform a new 30-year investment plan for the housing portfolio. Furthermore, provisions are being made under the new proposed contractual arrangement for a continual ongoing review of this to give all stakeholders clear viability of asset performance and ultimately to improve the homes and lives of the residents living in Thurrock Council's housing portfolio.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**  
**Assistant Director – Corporate Finance**

The findings of the stock condition survey partly inform the 30-year HRA business plan as it serves as a baseline of the potential budget required for annual repairs and maintenance and for the medium to long-term major works and housing improvement programme.

The 30-year HRA business plan (subject to approval) has £83.777m earmarked against major works and capital improvements over the next five financial years. This appears sufficient to cover the indicative costs identified in stock condition survey.

The baseline costs derived from the stock condition survey will help in setting a realistic contract price for the repairs, maintenance, and major works & improvement delivery partner tender.

## 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Godwin Mangse**  
**Interim Principal Lawyer Housing & Litigation – Legal Services**

The Council's implied repairing obligations under section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (LTA 1985) as amended by the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 (HFHHA 2018), requires that residential rented accommodation in England is provided and maintained in a state of fitness for human habitation.

The Council's obligations as landlord to repair and maintain Council properties are set out in the tenancy agreement. Failure to comply with the Council's repairing obligation may result to aggrieved tenant commencing legal action in the Courts against the Council to seek remedy for breach of the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreement.

In addition, section 11 of the LTA 1985 sets out statutory obligations to ensure that the structure and exterior of Council properties are repaired, and that the repairs are carried out within a reasonable time once the Council is put on notice by the tenant.

As this report is an update report and the nature of the recommendation to the Committee, there are no direct legal implications.

## 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**  
**Head of Community Development, Community Development Team**

A full community equality impact assessment has been undertaken of the implementation of the Housing delivery of the investment programmes.

Thurrock Council must continue to maintain its housing stock appropriately to ensure we are able to deliver the housing service. Effective asset management can only happen if the Council maintains an accurate record of the portfolio from works and surveys of this nature.

The need to maintain and improve our housing assets is more essential than ever; many residents are experiencing high levels of fuel poverty. Fuel poverty has many negative impacts on physical and mental health. Fuel poverty creates a harsh choice for our residents to choose between a warm home or food. The provision of tailored advice and the introduction of further energy efficiency measures and heating systems are designed to address this financial exclusion.

## 7.4 Risks

There are no risks identified based on this report because it's for information only.

7.5 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children

None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

N/A

9. **Appendices to the report**

None

**Report Author:**

Alastair Wood

Head of Assets, Repairs and Compliance (Housing)

Adults, Housing and Health

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<b>5 March 2024</b>	<b>ITEM: 7</b>
<b>Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	
<b>Update on Procurement of Strategic Delivery Partner for Housing Works</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> No
<b>Report of:</b> Mohammed Saheed Ullah – Housing Repairs and Planned Maintenance Manager, Assets Repairs & Compliance	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Ewelina Sorbjan, Assistant Director of Housing and Development	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Ian Wake, Executive Director of Adults, Housing and Health	
<b>This report is</b> Public	
<b>Version:</b> Final	

## Executive Summary

On 8th November 2023 Cabinet approved the procurement of a single Delivery Partner to consolidate all housing works contracts through a Partnership Delivery Model. This in turn enabled the publication of the formal Contract Notice on the Government Tenders portal on Friday 15th December.

An update report to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet was provided in January 2024 addressing details of the Contract Notice, the term and potential monetary value of the contract. A further update report was provided to Cabinet on 15th February 2024 which provided details of the feedback from the market engagement exercise and the subsequent evolution of the Partnering Model.

Following the issuing of the corrigendum and the Tender Briefing detailed in the February update report to Cabinet the timeline for the submission of the selection questionnaire was restarted with the new deadline for submission being Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

Cabinet is requested to note that the Council received five submissions for the Selection Questionnaire from the market. The evaluation of the submissions will conclude on 7<sup>th</sup> March. The bidders shortlisted to proceed to the next stage of the process will be invited to Submit Outline Solutions (ISOS) on 20<sup>th</sup> March. The deadline for these submissions is 24<sup>th</sup> April.

Monthly updates to Cabinet on this procurement exercise will continue. Other than the update provided in the Executive Summary the contents of this report remain the same as the February update report to Cabinet.

Version Control (delete as appropriate)

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## **Commissioner Comment:**

n/a

### **1. Recommendation(s)**

**1.1 Members are requested to note on the contents of this report.**

### **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024 a briefing session was held with interested bidders on the tender documents released with the Selection Questionnaire issued on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023. The briefing session was in keeping with the procurement protocols for this type of competitive dialogue process. At the briefing session a number of issues were raised by the prospective bidders.
- 2.2 The issuing of the Selection Questionnaire on 15<sup>th</sup> December generated significant interest from the market with over 30 expressions of interest. This in turn stimulated several issues and clarification queries from prospective bidders.
- 2.3. Section 3 provides further detail as to the issues raised from this briefing session with the prospective bidders and the response from Thurrock.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 Following the issuing of the Selection Questionnaire on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023 prospective bidders were afforded the opportunity to highlight and discuss any issues directly with Thurrock at a briefing session on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Six prospective bidders accepted this opportunity to attend the briefing session. This briefing session was an opportunity for open and transparent engagement with the market early in the procurement process to address any issues in a timely and constructive manner.
- 3.2 The key issues raised by the prospective bidders on the Partnership Model were in the main on the risk profile and apportionment, Thurrock's clienting capacity; contract governance structures to support the partnership model particularly around the parameters of the allocated revenue and capital budgets; Pensions and TUPE implications. The full list of queries is below:
- Some of the bidders raised questions on the financial model and the revenue and capital expenditure splits and how this would meet current and future service demands.
  - There were queries on the capital budget and the level of capital investment required on Thurrock's stock over the contract term given Thurrock's restricted borrowing capacity and whether the capital budget would be sufficient to meet the investment requirements.
  - There was a query whether the level of capital budget was sufficient to meet compliance requirements and the increasing regulation of social housing.
  - There were queries over the risk profile and if the current risk apportionment was proportionate and reflected current and future market conditions.

Version Control (delete as appropriate)

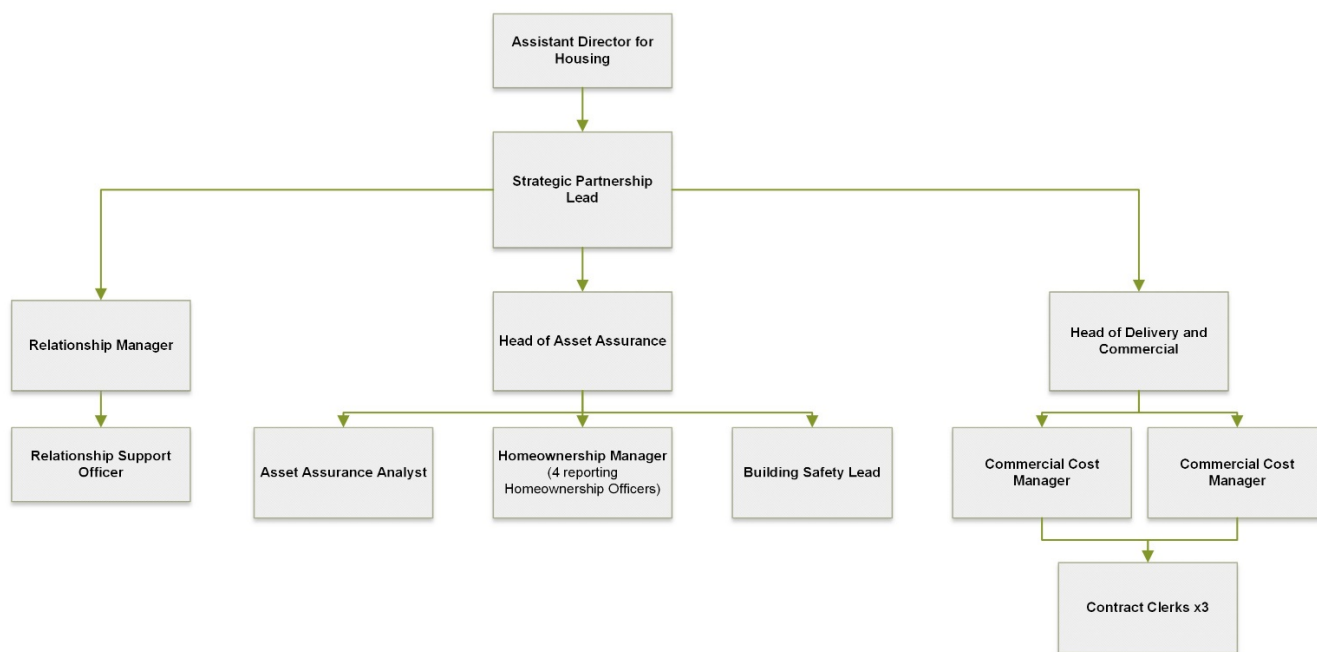
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- There were queries on the financial model and how profit calculations were directly linked to KPI and delivery performance.
  - The risk profile and projected profit calculations was something that would have to be approved at the relevant governance boards by shareholders of the bidders and who may adopt a more cautious assessment of this bidding opportunity.
  - There was some discussion on the anticipated efficiencies to be generated through the model.
  - There were queries on the pensions and TUPE implications for the eventual Delivery Partner.
  - There were queries regarding the level of support from the Thurrock housing team post contract award particularly with regards to asset management and investment planning.
  - Timescales for bidding was an issue for the bidders.
- 3.3 The Assistant Director and the Thurrock housing team agreed to address the issues raised in these discussions in a Tender Briefing note in order to facilitate and preserve the level of interest from prospective bidders to the next stage of the procurement process.
- 3.4 Thurrock formally issued the Tender Briefing note on the Find a Tender portal on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January with a corrigendum stating the following:
- Following the briefing on Friday 12th January Thurrock are issuing a Tender Briefing Note to further clarify their intention and ambition with this Tender. This has included some changes to the information previously published. Therefore, Thurrock are also restarting the Tender Period for the Selection Questionnaire stage from today, the new deadline will be 23rd February 2024.*
- 3.5 As a follow up to this tender briefing note an invitation to a second briefing session has been issued on the Find a Tender portal which will take place on Wednesday 31st January. This invitation will be open to not only those prospective bidders who attended the first briefing session but also open to any new prospective bidders. The restarting of the Selection Questionnaire period is in line the Public Contracts Regulations procurement process and has been endorsed by Thurrock’s legal advisors.
- 3.6 At the briefing session on 31st January Thurrock will present comprehensive data in relation to existing compliance performance of the HRA estate. This performance data will be shared on the Find a Tender portal and is intended to allow prospective bidders to have greater comfort and understanding of performance levels of the HRA estate in relation to:
- a) Repairs
  - b) Voids
  - c) Regulatory Compliance
  - d) Damp and mould
  - e) Disrepair.
- 3.7 Prospective bidders at the briefing session of 12th January raised a query as to Thurrock’s capacity to support the new partnership and contractual arrangements. The Tender Briefing note sets out Thurrock’s intention to resource a sufficiently sized client team with the relevant experience and expertise to support the partnership in delivering successful outcomes and Thurrock’s ongoing landlord responsibilities.

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- 3.8 Included below is a structure chart which sets out Thurrock’s anticipated structure, for the management of the Contract, engagement with the Provider and the delivery of responsibilities to be undertaken by Thurrock. High-level role descriptions have been included in the tender briefing note to give further clarity to the prospective bidders.
- 3.9 This proposed client team structure builds upon the staffing structure presented to Cabinet in the report on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 by adding two new positions (Building Safety Lead and an additional Commercial Cost manager) to boost the capacity of the Thurrock team in meeting its responsibilities.



- 3.10 With the new deadline for the submission of the Selection Questionnaires from prospective bidders moving from 25th January to 23rd February, all other procurement gateways and timeframes have been amended accordingly **except** the selection of a preferred bidder, notification letter, Standstill Period, Mobilisation Period and Go Live date. These dates remain as per the original procurement timetable.

Table: Indicative Procurement Timetable	
Activity	Indicative date or period
FTS Contract Notice sent for publication	14/12/2023
SQ deadline for Applicant clarification questions	17:00 16/02/2024
SQ submission deadline	12:00 23/02/2024
SQ Evaluation Period	26/02/2024 – 07/03/2024
SQ Notification letters issued	19/03/2024
Invitation to Submit Outline Solutions Issued	20/03/2024
ISOS Bidders Briefing	Indicative 02/04/2024

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Deadline for Bidder ISOS clarification questions	17:00 17/04/2024
ISOS submission deadline	12:00 24/04/2024
ISOS Evaluation Period	25/04/2024 – 03/05/2024
ISOS Notification letters issued	17/05/2024
Competitive Dialogue Period	27/05/2024 – 14/06/2024
Invitation to Submit Detailed Solutions	01/07/2024
Deadline for Bidder ISDS clarification questions	17:00 26/07/2024
ISDS Submission Date	12:00 06/08/2024
ISDS Notification letters issued	13/09/2024
Standstill Period	16/09/2024 – 26/09/2024
Mobilisation Period	30/09/2024 – 28/02/2025
Contract Go Live	28/02/2025

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 This report is an update to Cabinet and there are no fundamental changes to the initial Cabinet decision from 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

#### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 The Lead Portfolio Holder for Housing, Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Working Group made up of members from Housing O&S have been kept abreast of developments from the outset of this procurement and continue to be engaged with regular meetings and briefings. Working Group meetings have been aligned to coincide with key gateways of the procurement process. The next session of the Working Group is on 15<sup>th</sup> February.
- 5.2 A resident engagement strategy and stakeholder matrix is being developed for this procurement. Residents will be integrated into the process of engagement and evaluation post competitive dialogue. The development of communications that will give residents information about this opportunity has begun.

#### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 The recommendations within this report align with the strategic theme of the Improvement and Recovery Plan to be a focussed, cost-effective, sustainable organisation, with a co-designed approach to service provision which is delivered in partnership with residents and other key partners, with collaboration across multi-disciplinary teams

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## 7. Implications

### 7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**  
**Assistant Director - Strategic and Corporate Finance**

The reports provides an update on the Procurement process for a Strategic Delivery Partner for Housing Works.

There are no changes to the financial implications provided for the Cabinet report of 8 November 2023, which detailed the proposal.

As the procurement exercise develops, the financial implications pertaining to future reports will be updated accordingly.

### 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Kevin Molloy**  
**Principal Solicitor**

As this is an update report the legal implications remain as reported to Cabinet for this procurement in November 2023.

### 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**  
**Community Development Team**

As this is an update report the legal implications remain as reported to Cabinet for this procurement in November 2023.

All information regarding Community Equality Impact Assessments can be found here:  
<https://intranet.thurrock.gov.uk/services/diversity-and-equality/ceia/>

### 7.4 Risks

A risk register for this procurement exercise has been compiled and been regularly reviewed and updated. Officers from Corporate Risk and Insurance Team are sighted on this.

### 7.5 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children

NA

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8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

9. **Appendices to the report**

None

**Report Author:**

Ewelina Sorbjan - Assistant Director of Housing and Development, Adults, Housing & Health.

Mohammed Saheed Ullah – Housing Repairs and Planned Maintenance Manager, Assets Repairs & Compliance.

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**Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme  
2023/2024**

Dates of Meetings: 20 June 2023, 28 September 2023, 21 November 2023, 9 January 2024, 5 March 2024

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Requested by Officer/Member</b>
<b>20 June 2023</b>		
Procurement of Repairs and Planned Maintenance Housing Contracts	Saheed Ullah	Officers
Houses of Multiple Occupation – Update report	Dulal Ahmed	Members
Hostel Management	Ben Tovey	Officers
Terms of Reference	Democratic Services	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing Item
<b>28 September 2023</b>		
Housing Development Programme Update	Ewelina Sorbjan/Keith Andrews	Members
Housing Ombudsman Report: Spotlight on Damp and Mould - Thurrock Council's Response	Ewelina Sorbjan/Saheed Ullah	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing Item

<b>21 November 2023</b>		
Blackshots Estate - Update on Demolition and Redevelopment	Keith Andrews	Officers
Housing Complaints Process, Regulation, Business Intelligence and Performance Report	Chris Seman	Members
Housing Strategy - Year One Update	Ryan Farmer	Officers
Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023	Ryan Farmer	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing Item
<b>9 January 2024</b>		
Proposal to Designate Additional HMO Licensing Scheme	Dulal Ahmed	Officers
Right to Buy receipts management/PHI Updated	Mike Jones	Officers
Housing Revenue Account – Rent Setting and Budgets 2024/25	Mike Jones	Officers
Update on Procurement of Housing Contracts for Works Through a Partnership Model	Ewelina Sorbjan	Officers
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing Item
<b>15 February 2024 Extraordinary</b>		
Update on Procurement of Strategic Delivery Partner for Housing Works	Alastair Wood	Officers
Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy Kick-Off	Ryan Farmer / Chris Wade	Officers
Homelessness Update 2023	Ryan Farmer / Chris Wade	Officers
Best Value and Service Benchmarking	Alastair Wood	Officers
<b>5 March 2024</b>		
Portfolio Holder Report	Ryan Farmer	Officers

HRA – connection with the wider authority	Mike Jones	Officers
Findings of Stock Condition Survey of Housing Portfolio	Alastair Wood	Officers
Update on the Procurement	Saheed Ullah	
Work Programme	Democratic Services	Standing Item
Blackshots Redevelopment Business Case	Keith Andrews	Officers
Teviot Avenue Nos – 158 – 228 (evens) – Demolition and Redevelopment	Keith Andrews	Officers

Clerk: Jenny Shade  
Last Updated: February 2024

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