

REPORT TO:	Housing Improvement Board September 2022
SUBJECT:	Item 3- Housing Improvement Plan Update
REPORT AUTHORS:	Lara Ashley- Culture & Change Advisor

Summary of the report:

This report provides an update on the changes proposed to strengthen the Housing Improvement Plan.

The Housing Improvement plan as presented in March 2022 received criticism for not commanding confidence of the HIB and the tenants. A number of key recommendations were made which we have sought to address in the new strengthened version and having conducted further research into underlying challenges within the Housing directorate, we are in the process of revising the plan to present to Cabinet later in the year. This update paper presents the draft changes to the plan at a high level and defines the governance of the plan going forward.

Given the scale of work required to transform the Housing directorate, we are proposing a number of changes:

1. The plan is referred to as a programme to reflect the sheer scale of work required to transform the services
2. We create agreed “ways of working” which translate into design principles for all projects to adhere to.
3. We create 7 workstreams which fall under the scrutiny of the HIB:
 - a) Vision & Direction
 - b) Customer Excellence
 - c) Strategic & operational governance & Information Management
 - d) Long-term Home & Neighbourhood Planning
 - e) Asset Compliance
 - f) Maintaining our homes
 - g) People & Organisational development
4. We have 4 “enablers” which oversee:
 - a) Technology & data;
 - b) Change & engagement;
 - c) Finance;
 - d) Programme integration.
5. Housing Transformation Steering Board is composed of cross-organisational members.
6. Other internal control boards also have oversight into the transformation programme
7. HIB members can be aligned to a portfolio workstream.

1. Introduction

1.1. The Housing Directorate requires a significant transformation programme to address the issues identified in the independent ARK report and subsequent diagnostics. Since the arrival of the permanent corporate director of housing in May 2022 much time has been spent reviewing what immediate work can be actioned and what needs to form part of a larger programme of transformation.

1.2. As part of the work on setting a new vision and mission for the directorate, we conducted over 20 workshops with residents, staff and the Housing Improvement Board to understand what the future could look like for residents (Vision) and the role of the Housing directorate in delivering that (our Mission). In addition, we sought to understand the scale of work required to transform the service and deliver the ambitions. We are still compiling the results from this diagnostic into a revised transformation plan with several “culture and change workshops” still to be completed, but we have begun to create the architecture for a new programme of work to address the challenges emerging. This paper will present this draft programme to the board.

1.3. In putting this programme together, we have reviewed the architecture of the previous plan and have updated it to include:

- New programme architecture
- New workstreams
- New enablers
- Broader ranging programme steering board
- Linkages with other internal control boards
- Our new ways of working

2. The Programme Architecture and Workstreams

2.1. Diagram 1 overleaf depicts the proposed programme architecture in this draft stage.

2.2. There are seven workstreams which make up the programme:

- 1) Vision, Direction & Transformation Plan for Housing Directorate- Aim: To establish a direction for the directorate, identify key challenges internally and externally, determine priorities, structure directorate accordingly to deliver improve services.
- 2) Governance & Information Management- Aim: To develop a robust framework for effective governance of the directorate to ensure accountability, high performance, and effective financial and information management.
- 3) Customer Excellence- Aim: To deliver a Customer Excellence approach to re-focus the directorate on delivery of excellent customer services that meet and exceed the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard.
- 4) Long-term Home and Neighborhood Planning & Investment- Aim: The proactive management of our Homes and Neighborhoods to create robust investment plans and deliver regeneration ambitions.

- 5) Asset Compliance- Aim: To develop a compliance service with a robust framework for ensuring compliance with legislative and regulatory standards, ensuring safe and compliant homes.
- 6) Maintaining our Homes- Aim: The reactive maintenance of our assets to meet and exceed our obligations to the Home Standard, ensuring supply of homes is optimized for customers and income.
- 7) People & Organisational Development- Aim: To proactively manage our culture, our development as a directorate and enable our workforce to deliver excellence to our customers, partners and each other.

2.3. The workstreams are guided fundamentally by the outcomes of the first workstream: vision, direction, and transformation plan for the directorate. Part of the outcomes from this overarching workstream are a vision and mission for the directorate which guides Housing Strategy and all the other workstreams. It is out of this workstream that we will produce the architecture, programme and project governance toolkits and reporting mechanisms for each of the control points.

2.4. Each of the workstreams contains several projects each with their own project lead. We are currently developing a programme plan detailing timeframe, risks, stakeholders, impact on customer, impact on business, interdependencies, outcomes, cost and measures of success. Workstream terms of reference will be defined, including frequency of meetings, members, remit and responsibilities.

2.5. The workstreams report regularly into the Housing Transformation Steering Board which has reporting lines into Corporate Management Team, the Political governance structure (Portfolio holder, Mayor, Scrutiny, Cabinet) and the Housing Improvement Board.

2.6. We would seek a “portfolio holder” from the Housing Improvement Board to support each workstream if practical.

2.7. In addition, we would work with appropriate resident bodies to develop our projects so as to ensure we have captured accurately the drivers that we are responding to, that our approach is appropriately engaging and that the solutions are designed with residents in mind.

3. Enabling Streams

3.1. In addition to the workstreams, there are four programme enablers which provide a particular “lens” on each of the workstreams. These are:

3.2. These enablers support the workstreams and their projects to ensure sufficient attention is drawn to areas that form part of their “enabling” lens.

4. Programme Steering Board membership

4.1. We are seeking broader membership for the Transformation Steering board. This membership will seek representation from across the organisation and from across interested partners and key people whose services and input will be impacted by the programme.

4.2. We will propose it to contain the following members:

- Corporate Director of Housing
- Transformation Lead
- Senior Strategy Officer
- Director of Estates & Improvement
- Director of Tenancy Services
- SCRER representative
- Adult Social Care & Health representative
- CYPE representative
- Programme manager (Project Management Office)
- Head of Resident Contact
- Nomination from Digital Services
- Nomination from Finance
- Resident Engagement Nomination
- Cabinet Portfolio Member

5. Linkages with other internal control boards

5.1. There are several other internal governance structures which form part of the programme architecture. There are internal control boards which seek to oversee digital solutions (Digital Approvals Board and Digital Internal Control Board), correct and appropriate programme management (PMO), inclusion of the Resident voice in all we do (Resident Voice Internal Control Board). Thereby ensuring that we have sufficient governance and engagement from across the organisation and can work collaboratively to deliver holistic services.

6. Our new ways of working

6.1. We have devised several working principles for the programme which encompass our approach to all we do. These are:

- Put Customer at the heart of service delivery
- Continuous learning and agile delivery
- Co-create and engage with residents in all decisions
- Strong governance around the work- aware of the risks, plan
- Be innovative, Be brave, Be honest, Go for it
- Be collaborative and consult key partners throughout the process
- Learn from the success (and failures) of others
- Understand our interdependencies
- Proper consideration and allocation of Resource
- Using the right skill to deliver change
- When we fix it, we fix it in a lasting way- sustain and manage the change

7. Addressing the challenges of previous plans

7.1. Criticism of previous plans have been made against the following key themes summarized below:

- Insufficient addressing of root causes of the conditions at Regina Road
- Insufficient Governance and oversight of the housing service by political leadership and corporate leadership
- Treating with tenants with respect- that their homes and surroundings are in good condition, staff treat tenants with respects in all communication and there are good involvement structures in place
- Improving data and its use- ensuring the correct and accurate data is used to reflect performance and backlog
- Staffing capability- impacted by lack of stability in leadership and lack of staff involvement
- Quality of planning and the lack of resident-focused vision at the heart of the service. Reconciling activities with business plan and including strong tenant scrutiny

7.2. We have sought to ensure these concerns are addressed in the revised plan and include:

- Separate Regina Road short and long-term action working groups with a Lead Programme Manager
- Update to the governance of the transformation programme to include better oversight and stronger governance within the Council for cross-organisational collaboration. New Vision & Mission being co-created with residents, staff and HIB
- Strong incorporation of resident engagement in project initiation and implementation with core responsibility sitting in “change enablement” and linkage with Resident Voice Internal Control Board and involvement of our resident partner organisations. This is in addition to developing our focus on co-creating activities including a residents’ charter as well as incorporating additional “Resident engagement development activities” in the programme.
- New activities around performance KPI data, asset data and monitoring have been incorporated into the “Governance & Information Mgmt” and “Long-term asset planning” workstreams.
- We have a new corporate director in place and are in the process of reviewing our leadership team to provide longer term stability. Staff have been included in discovery workshops (still ongoing) designed to strengthen the plan and initiate buy-in into transformation.
- Residents have been at the heart of identifying areas to include in the plan and have been instrumental in determining the vision and mission, the residents charter and will be engaged going forward as part of our project and programme planning.