MEETING OF THE BOARD
17 September 2019 18:00 – 20:00
Harford Centre, First Floor, 115 Harford Street, E1 4FG

AGENDA

Open Session

Introductory items

1. Apologies for Absence
   For Information
   Chair

2. Declarations of Interest
   For Information
   Chair

3. Questions from Members of the Public
   For Discussion
   Chair

4. Open Minutes of the Board meeting on 25 July 2019
   For Decision
   Chair

Items for decision and discussion

5. THH Anti-fraud Strategy
   For Decision
   Neil Isaac

6. Digital Strategy Progress Report
   For Discussion
   Chris Smith

7. CE Report
   For Discussion
   Susmita Sen

Closed Session

Items for Decision and Information

8. Confidential Minutes of the Board meeting on 25 July 2019
   For Decision
   Chair

9. Disciplinary and Grievances
   For Information
   Steve Phillpott

10. Budget Monitoring
    For Information
    Neil Isaac

11. Maltings and Brewster Update
    For Discussion
    Will Manning
12. Annual Report on Finance & Audit Committee  
   For Information  
   Neil Isaac

13. Forward Plan  
   For Discussion  
   Chair

**Items for information and limited discussion**

14. Any Other Business  
   For Discussion  
   Chair

**Date of next meeting – Board Away afternoon**

Thursday 31 October 2019, 2 – 6pm
TOWER HAMLETS HOMES

NOTE BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Where Members of the Board have an interest in any business of the Board, then she/he must disclose this interest.

Members must disclose the existence and the nature of the interest at the start of the meeting and certainly no later than the commencement of the item when the interest becomes apparent.

Personal Interests

A Board Member must regard themselves as having a personal interest in any matter if the matter relates to an interest in respect of which notification must be given, or if a decision upon the matter might reasonably be regarded as affecting, to a greater extent than other tenants or inhabitants of the Tower Hamlets Homes area, the wellbeing or financial position of themselves, a relative or a friend, OR

a) Any employment or business carried out by such persons;

b) Any person who employs or appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are a director;

c) Any corporate body in which such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding a nominal value of more than 2% of the issued share capital in a company;

d) Anybody listed in sub-paragraphs (a) to (e) of paragraph 14 of the Resource Pack in which such persons hold a position of general control or management.

Prejudicial Interests

1. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 2 below, a Board member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter if the interest is one which a tenant of Tower Hamlets Council as covered by the Management Agreement or a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Board member’s judgement of the public interest.

2. A Board member may regard themselves as not having a prejudicial interest in a matter if that matter relates to –
a) Another relevant organisation of which they are a member;

b) Another public organisation in which they hold a position of general control or management;

c) A body to which they have been appointed or nominated by Tower Hamlets Homes as its representative;

d) Where a Board member holds a tenancy or lease with a relevant organisation, provided that they do not have arrears of rent with that relevant organisation of more than two months, and provided that those functions do not relate particularly to the Board member’s tenancy or lease.

**Participation in Relation to the Disclosure of Interests**

A Board member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must –

a) Withdraw from the room where a meeting is being held whenever it becomes apparent the matter is being considered at that meeting, unless she/he has obtained a dispensation from the Board’s Chairman or Company Secretary; and

b) Not seek improperly to influence a decision about that matter.

Should you require any further information, please contact Paul Davey, Director of Business Transformation, telephone: 020 7364 7328, paul.davey@thh.org.uk
Welcome

1.1 AL welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted for the above.

Declaration of Interest

2 CT, HC and PH declared their interest as leaseholders of Tower Hamlets Homes.

Question from Members of the Public

3 None received

Open Minutes of the meeting of the Board on 26 February 2019

4.1 THH Board AGREED the minutes of the meeting of the Board on 8th May 2019.

Communications Standards Scrutiny Review

5.
| 5.1 | GH presented the fourth scrutiny review which looked at the best practice on improving standards of communication to our residents. |
| 5.2 | Six recommendations were made in total and Board was asked to note the Scrutiny report. |
| 5.3 | Service areas affected by the review have been invited to shape and agree the scope of the recommendations and provide feedback on the report. |
| 5.4 | In response to MA’s question on what is recommendation 2 by enhancing THH’s presence on social media. Could the super 7 KPIs be tracked for each KPI? GH said we are looking at this for the residents’ panel, e.g. live tweeting and streaming. |
| 5.5 | HC said that there was a lot of good stuff about the website, but one problem is that information is not updated on a regular basis and asked that this be rectified. GH in response said that THH had just appointed a Digital Officer who would be providing dedicated support to the refresh of the website. |
| 5.6 | In response to CT, what are the key documents for THH? Do we translate the documents so that residents can understand them? GH responded unless there is a specific request from a resident for translation, and then it is not done. |
| 5.7 | PH asked at what point this will be reviewed. Will it be reviewed in 2020 by the Residents Panel? GH confirmed that the Residents Panel would review the document on a yearly basis. |
| 5.8 | AB asked is there anything specific we communicate to others e.g. sub letters? GH confirmed there was a certain amount of things we would communicate with the other residents which they would be able to find on the website. AO said that THH are producing leaflets for leaseholders to give to their sub tenants, which will contain basic information. |

*Board NOTED the Communications Standards Scrutiny Review and action plan.*

<p>| 6. | Maltings &amp; Brewster update |
| 6.1 | WM said the report had been written previously before the meeting held on 24th July. The meeting was held with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, THH Officers and residents which was the first opportunity of a public meeting for residents to talk about works and the scale and extent of the works at Maltings &amp; Brewster. |
| 6.2 | The meeting was held because the Mayor gave an undertaking at Cabinet that he would meet with M&amp;B residents. |
| 6.3 | Further assurances were given about the Health &amp; Safety of residents during the works to take place. Several presentations were given on the actual surveys and its findings, followed by a Q&amp;A session. |
| 6.4 | THH gave an update on the process and how it would work for residents. At the end of the meeting, the Mayor gave a short talk confirming that he had listened to all concerns. He undertook to write to Government to see if there was any funding they... |</p>
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<td>6.5</td>
<td>MB said that questions raised in the meeting, residents felt they were not answered well. People were worried that it might identify more works would be required. MB felt communication to residents could be better around leasehold issues. Regular updates to be provided.</td>
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<td>6.6</td>
<td>AO added concern was also expressed about how much residents/leaseholders had put up with and concern around general wellbeing.</td>
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<td>6.7</td>
<td>HC asked about the level of concern. WM said the amount of time it was all taking was the main concern.</td>
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<td>6.8</td>
<td>HC asked about payments terms for leaseholders. MB said at the Cabinet meeting on 26th June, the Mayor took decisions on buy backs to go ahead and to introduce two new payments options – 5 year payment plan and residents over 65 to put a charge on their property. This would be explored further.</td>
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<td>6.9</td>
<td>PH asked how long the works would take. How did it impact on the Better Neighbourhoods Project? WM confirmed the works will not be completed before 18 months.</td>
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| 6.10 | **ACTION:** WM to provide regular updates for Board.  

*THH Board NOTED the Maltings & Brewster update.* |   |

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<td>7.1</td>
<td>SS presented her CE report.</td>
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<td>7.2</td>
<td>A number of awards had been won including Landlord of the year,</td>
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<td>7.3</td>
<td>Performance for Stage 1 complaints very positive with number of responses on time exceeding the target of 90% in each and every quarter of 2018/19.</td>
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<td>7.4</td>
<td>Asset Management Task Force meetings had been arranged. SS and CT encouraging Board members to attend – meetings chaired by CT.</td>
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<td>7.5</td>
<td>Leasehold Review – final report in production and would be completed by October. Results to be tested against the Asset Management Task Force</td>
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<td>7.6</td>
<td>Working on a proposal for the continuation of a dedicated police team and patrol service for THH estate as funding will no longer be available after next year and would require increased investment. Looking at options and discussing with LBTH as there is a potential we would be charged for this service.</td>
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<td>7.7</td>
<td>CT asked about the impact on staff sickness. SS confirmed that there were some long term sickness in Directorates which are closely being monitored but clearly have an impact on the sickness performance.</td>
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<td>Target for “right first time” as set out at 8.2 agreed by Board</td>
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*THH Board NOTED the CE Report.*
## Actions Log: Open minutes of THH board
### 25 July 2019 6.10pm – 7.05pm

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<th>Who</th>
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<tr>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>WM to provide regular M&amp;B updates for Board.</td>
<td>WM</td>
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________________________   _______________
Chair               Date
1. **Introduction**

1.1 This report proposes the adoption of the attached draft Anti-Fraud and Anti-Bribery policies.

2. **Recommendations**

2.1 That the Board consider the draft polices and make any changes as appropriate

2.2 That the Board agree these policies (subject to any changes from recommendation 2.1).

3. **Background**

3.1 One of the recommendations from the internal audit review of governance was that THH should have a formal anti-fraud and corruption policy. The agreed deadline for this is September 2019.

3.2 In drafting the Anti-Fraud policy it became clear that a complementary Anti-Bribery policy was required to sit alongside the Anti-Fraud Policy.

4. **The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy**

4.1 This policy has been developed from the Council’s existing policy and amended to reflect the structure of THH and our operating arrangements.
4.2 The Policy sets out the definition of Fraud under the 2006 Fraud Act. It also refers to the Bribery Act and the Anti-Bribery Policy.

4.3 An early draft of the policy was shared with the Head of People Services, and his comments have been incorporated within the Policy.

4.4 Comments have also been received from the Head of Internal Audit in the Council. These comments have been reflected in the Policy.

5. The Anti-Bribery Policy

5.1 This policy has been developed from one written by another ALMO so at its base it reflects the Council: ALMO relationship.

5.2 The Policy identifies the key elements of the Bribery Act 2010 and sets out the organisation's responsibilities under the Act.

5.3 The Policy also sets out the responsibilities of THH staff in ensuring we meet the requirements of the Bribery Act and the potential consequences of falling foul of the Act.

5.4 The policy lists the organisations and individuals it applies to. The attention of Board is drawn to the inclusion of involved resident representatives in that list; we do not consider there are other means to ensure such individuals are adequately protected and potentially held accountable.

5.5 A draft of this policy was also shared with internal audit and their comments are reflected in the document.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 These policies are intended to safeguard THH and the Council from potential financial loss and reputational damage.

6.2 These drafts have been submitted to the Council’s Head of Audit for his observations; these will be reported to EMT.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are legal sanctions that can apply to the individuals and to THH should we be found guilty of any offences under the Acts.

8. Risk Management Implications
8.1 Breaching the Fraud Act and the Bribery Act could result in both financial loss and reputational damage.

8.2 These policies should ameliorate the risks of such a breach occurring.
1. Introduction

1.1 Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) is a Company Limited by Guarantee of which the London Borough of Tower Hamlets is the sole Member. THH has therefore adapted the Council’s Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy so it fits within its governance structure. Other than those alterations it is essentially the same policy, reflecting the close working relationship between the Council and THH and the fact that significant Council budgets are delegated to THH to manage on the Council’s behalf.

1.2 THH and the Council together with other public and private sector entities are at risk of loss due to fraud, corruption, theft and error. Although THH and the Council will have good policies and procedures, financial abuse can emerge due to non-compliance. The objective of all bodies is to minimise the risk of fraud and corruption in order that for the residents of Tower Hamlets resources are earmarked for their desired objectives and services are delivered efficiently and at best value, without fear of loss or abuse.

1.3 This Strategy forms part of the governance arrangements of THH. It outlines the Council’s and THH’s intent to minimise the risk of loss to the organisation resulting from fraud and corruption originating both internally and externally. The Strategy is supported by management arrangements for effective governance and demonstrates the council’s commitment to a counter-fraud culture with high ethical standards in the administration of public monies.

1.4 Tower Hamlets is one of the most diverse authorities in the country and has undergone vast change over the last thirty years. The resultant wealth with the introduction of big business emerging from Canary Wharf has significantly affected the financial landscape. There have been huge increases in prosperity through employment opportunities and property price increases and yet despite this we still have large numbers of residents with above average deprivation. In light of these factors the Council has many challenges to manage for the benefit of all of its residents and service users. It is recognised that clearly the vast majority of our residents are honest and would not contemplate fraud.

1.5 There are however a tiny minority of people who seek to benefit themselves at the expense of others. Fraud is not a victimless crime despite the belief of perpetrators that it is. All charge payers meet the cost of fraud as services that are affected must make up the shortfall and the cost of services may well rise as a result. The objective then must be to minimise the scope for fraud and financial abuse from the outset.

1.6 To achieve this, we must have strong gateways to prevent abuse and apply effective governance arrangements. This together with robust management checks and meaningful audit assurance reviews will assist in reducing our
risk. Where breaches do occur, it is important that they are investigated, resolved and proportionate action taken together with any weaknesses addressed to minimise future exposure.

1.7 Internal Audit & Risk Management in delivering an internal audit function to THH reviews the effectiveness of internal controls in operation. The service also includes investigations into suspected cases of fraud or corruption and the development and implementation of fraud prevention practices. Fraud and Corruption can be reported to the Council and THH in a number of different ways.

1.8 This strategy outlines the Council’s and THH’s commitment and approach to tackling both internal and external fraud, including roles and responsibilities. It applies to:
- Board Members
- Employees
- Agency workers
- Contractors
- Partners
- Consultants
- Suppliers
- Tenants and Leaseholders

2. Scope

2.1 The Strategy is designed to:
- Encourage prevention
- Promote transparency
- Ensure effective investigation where suspected fraud or corruption has occurred
- Prosecute offenders where appropriate and proportionate to do so
- Close system weaknesses as they are identified
- Publicise success to act as a deterrent
- Revise controls with Internal Audit and Management

2.2 There is a reasonable expectation and requirement that all of our Board Members, employees, consultants, contractors, and service users be fair and honest in their dealings with THH and the Council and will provide help, information and support to assist in the investigation of fraud and corruption.

2.3 This Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy links into the National Fraud Strategy, “Fighting Fraud Locally” and provides a strategic approach for Local Authorities to tackle fraud, by Acknowledging and seeking to understand fraud risks. Preventing and Detecting more fraud and Pursuing those who commit fraud against the authority by prosecuting and seeking financial redress to recover losses. This strategy outlines how the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) will deliver this commitment and provides advice on how
individuals and organisations may raise concerns relating to fraud and corruption.

3. Definition of Fraud and Corruption

3.1 Fraud can be defined as;
‘any intentional false representation, including failure to declare information or abuse of position, which is carried out to make gain, cause loss or expose another to the risk of loss’.

The Fraud Act 2006 introduced a general offence of fraud, divided into three categories as follows:

**Fraud by false representation** - A person commits fraud by false representation if he/she:
- Dishonestly makes a false representation, and
- Intends, by making the representation, to make a gain for him/herself or another, or to cause loss to another or to expose another to a risk of loss.

**Fraud by failing to disclose information** - A person commits fraud by failing to disclose information if he/she:
- Dishonestly fails to disclose to another person information which he is under a legal duty to disclose, and
- Intends, by failing to disclose the information to make a gain for him/herself or another, or to cause loss to another or to expose another to a risk of loss.

**Fraud by abuse of position** - A person commits fraud by abuse of position if he/she:
- Occupies a position, in which he is expected to safeguard, or not to act against, the financial interests of another person, and dishonestly abuses that position, and
- Intends, by means of the abuse of that position to make a gain for him/herself or another, or to cause loss to another or to expose another to a risk of loss.

3.2 The Bribery Act 2010 makes it an offence to offer, promise or give a bribe, as well as requesting, receiving or accepting a bribe. The consequences of committing breaches of this legislation include custodial sentences, as well as substantial fines for organisations including Local Authorities who fail to prevent bribery.

In those circumstances any person who represents THH who is offered a bribe must report this approach without delay, as detailed in the THH’s Bribery Policy. Please see: Link to THH bribery policy
4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Conduct

THH is an ethical organisation and requires that its Board Members, Staff, inclusive of permanent and temporary workers, agency workers and contractors and all individuals and organisations associated with it to be honest and fair in their dealings with THH, the Council and its service users. Members and managers are expected to lead by example in this regard, observing the Principles of the Nolan Committee into Standards in Public Life. These are shown below:

- **Selflessness** - Holders of public office take decisions in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends
- **Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in their performance of their official duties
- **Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- **Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principals by leadership and example.

4.2 Employee Responsibilities

Employees have a critical role to play in the prevention of fraud and corruption throughout their daily undertakings and in their general conduct. All individuals should be aware of and understand THH’s expectations as relevant to their role under the Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations and other regulations of the Council and THH as outlined in section 5.1 below. Failure to adhere to these regulations may result in disciplinary action.

Employees who suspect a fraud or irregularity have a duty to report their concerns. Where such concerns exist, individuals are asked to make a note of all relevant details, such as what was said in phone or other conversations, when these conversations took place and the names of anyone involved. The matter should be reported immediately to either your:

- Line Manager
- Head of Service
- Director
4.3 Board Members will:
- Declare personal interests which could enable them to gain from, or be perceived as potential conflicts with, THH’s business;
- Raise any fraud concerns with the Chief Executive or the Council’s Head of Audit & Risk Management Services.

If complaints are received in relation to the conduct of Board Members, these will be considered by the Standards and Ethics Committee which can refer the matter either to the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team or the Board of THH.

4.4 Section 151 Officer
The Corporate Director of Resources is the Council’s appointed Section 151 Officer, responsible for the proper administration of the Council’s financial affairs. The Section 151 Officer will:
- Authorise Internal Audit to examine financial and non-financial records and to inspect the Council’s stores, assets and cash balances and those of THH and its other partner organisations;
- Require employees to provide the internal auditor with information or explanations that they may need to effectively perform their duties.

4.5 Chief Executive and Senior Management
The Chief Executive is responsible for leading and promoting THH’s ethical agenda. Directors and Heads of Service must maintain adequate systems of internal control within their respective departments. Directors will:
- Promote and implement this Strategy and supporting policies, including the THH Whistleblowing Policy and the Council’s Anti Money Laundering Policy;
- Ensure that staff and other workers, including agency staff and contractors with a financial responsibility, are made aware of the standards expected of them, as set out in Financial Regulations and the Council’s counter fraud policies and procedures;
- Notify the Head of Audit & Risk Management or the Corporate Anti-Fraud Manager immediately of any matter relating to loss or irregularities, including those affecting cash, stores or other property of the Council or its clients for whom the Council has accepted financial responsibility;
- Encourage employees to raise any concerns they may have about bribery, fraud or corruption, in line with the Anti-Fraud Policy and Whistleblowing Policy;

4.6 THH’s Audit and Finance Committee and the Council’s Audit Committee
The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy has been approved by THH’s Board. The Committees receive regular fraud update reports, regarding the investigation caseload and details of proactive anti-fraud activities planned and undertaken.

5. Regulations and Legislation

5.1 The Council has developed a series of regulatory documents and protocols which govern how we operate and take decisions and outline the procedures to follow to ensure that our actions are fair, efficient, transparent and accountable to our community. As well as governing operations, our regulations form a key component of the internal control environment, following and applying these creates a strong basis on which to reduce the risk of fraud and corruption. The following documents provide further information and guidance.

- Council Constitution
- Standing Orders (both LBTH and THH)
- Financial Regulations (both LBTH and THH)
- Employee Code of Conduct (THH)
  http://towernet/document_library/thh/hr/thh_hr_policies_and_procedures/Staff_Code_of_Conduct_-_May_2019
- Board Member code of Conduct (THH) – Available from the Governance Officer
- Money Laundering Policy (LBTH)

There is a range of relevant legislation that is also available. These include:

- Fraud Act 2006
- Theft Acts 1968 and 1978 as amended
- Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013
- Bribery Act 2010
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Proceeds of Crime Act 2003
- Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014
- Money Laundering Regulations 2007 as amended 2019
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
6. Strategy

6.1 Deterrence

6.1.1 The Council and THH will seek actively to deter potential fraudsters from committing or attempting to commit fraudulent or corrupt acts. They will do so through:

- Publicising that the Council and THH will not tolerate fraud and corruption, demonstrated by this anti-fraud & corruption strategy and the whistleblowing policy.
- Encouraging a strong anti-fraud culture amongst its employees and Members, and providing easy and effective means to report suspicions of fraud or corruption, e.g. the whistle blow hotline 0800 528 0294 the dedicated email address anti-fraud@towerhamlets.gov.uk and on-line form for raising concerns.
- Taking robust action when fraud and/or corruption are identified, in the form of conducting complete and thorough investigations, and taking decisive action if allegations are proven, such as prosecution, dismissal, and civil actions and financial recovery through the Proceeds of Crime Act, where appropriate.
- Engaging with the Council's Communications service where appropriate, in order to maximise the publicity of successful outcomes in combating fraud and corruption.
- Deploying robust systems of internal control to mitigate the opportunity for fraud and corruption on an on-going basis.
- Developing and delivering general and tailored fraud awareness sessions to Council employees and its partner Tower Hamlets Homes.
- Maintaining fraud awareness presentations and e-learning for all officers.

6.2 Prevention

6.2.1 THH employs a range of control mechanisms within its systems, policies and procedures in order to mitigate the risk of fraud and corruption. Directors and Managers across THH are the key management control and are responsible for assessing the risk of fraud and corruption in their operational area and, as such are responsible for implementing appropriate strategies in order to manage this risk.

6.2.2 Tower Hamlets Homes funds Housing fraud investigators who focus on the areas where the risk of fraud is seen as being high. These include potential Tenancy and Right to Buy frauds.

6.2.3 However the risk of fraud needs to be considered across the organisation. Simple but effective controls on procurements and payments such as division of duties in such areas need to be enforced.

6.2.4 The internet has made it easy to attempt frauds such as changing payee details for large suppliers. No changes should be made without an independent check being made with the Company concerned.

6.2.5 There is also a risk of CEO Impersonation fraud where an email purporting to come from the CEO or other senior staff will instruct the finance team to make payments for a specific purpose. Senior staff in THH will never
request such payments to be made so all such requests should be viewed as potentially fraudulent.

6.2.6 The Head of Audit and Risk Management is responsible for both internal audit and Counter-Fraud & Investigation. The THH Head of Resources is responsible for Risk Management within THH. All three functions work together in order to promote and advise on key actions that can be taken to aid in the prevention of fraud and corruption against THH.

6.3 Detection
6.3.1 THH has a robust Whistleblowing procedure. The THH staff Code of Conduct set out our expectation that employees will report any concerns and suspected cases of fraud or corruption appropriately.

6.3.2 The Council participates in a range of data matching exercises to detect fraud including-
- The National Fraud Initiative currently managed by the Cabinet Office.
- Undertaking internal data – matching exercises utilising data held by the Council.
- Working in partnership with local authorities, the National Anti-Fraud Network, government bodies and the commercial sector.
- Sample transaction and control testing as part of Internal Audit reviews undertaken as part of the on-going Internal Audit Plan.

7. Investigations

7.1 THH is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. Therefore, THH expects all employees, contractors, partners and suppliers to raise any concerns they may have about standards of probity in any aspect of THH’s work.

This Fraud Response Plan sets out the responsibilities of stakeholders and provides guidance for the action that should be taken in relation to suspected instances of theft, bribery, fraud or corruption involving THH’s funds and assets or those that THH administers on behalf of others, including the Council.

7.2 What to do when fraud, bribery or corruption is suspected
7.2.1 The Corporate Anti-Fraud team is responsible for the investigation of allegations of fraud and corruption against the Council and THH. Each allegation will be considered on its individual merits and a decision made on the most appropriate way to proceed with any investigation, this may include:
- Criminal or civil investigation by the Council’s Corporate Anti-Fraud Team.
- Internal examination as part of an Internal Audit review.
- Dedicated internal fraud investigation.
- Management investigation overseen by the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team.
7.2.2 Initial Action
- All allegations will be logged and risk assessed by the Intel Team Leader and reviewed by Corporate Anti-Fraud Manager.
- If it is considered the allegation requires further investigation, a lead Investigating Officer will be appointed. This officer will be suitably trained and experienced in undertaking fraud investigations to a prosecution standard by our internal Legal Service.
- The investigator will prepare an investigation plan and agree a scope of work with a nominated manager in the department where the investigation is being completed.

7.2.3 Investigations into allegations
As part of any investigation, THH via the Council’s Corporate Anti-Fraud Team will ensure that:
- Any allegation is dealt with promptly, confidentially and fairly.
- The investigation will be undertaken against an agreed scoping brief and be compliant with existing procedures and legislative guidelines.
- All records, assets and correspondence will be held securely and if it is believed that computer records are held that are relevant to the investigation these will be secured for analysis.
- If email data is considered appropriate to access in order to take the investigation forward this will be approved by the Head of Audit and Risk Management and THH’s Head of Resources before access is granted.
- The investigation will be undertaken with a view to obtaining evidence to a criminal standard.
- Where sufficient evidence leads to belief that criminal action should be considered a referral will be made to the Council’s Legal Service for consideration to prosecute.
- Where abuse identifies system breaches or other weaknesses these will be reported upon and suggestions for improvement made.
- THH’s Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Human Resources and/or the Corporate Director of Law and Governance are consulted where appropriate.
- All evidence that has been collected is stored securely and recorded appropriately.
- Any interviews undertaken are conducted fairly and in line with appropriate legislation such as the Police & Criminal Evidence Act.
- Relevant Chief Officers and Managers are informed of the progress of the investigation as appropriate.
- All investigations are conducted in a timely manner, in-line with the Criminal Procedures & Investigations Act, and the Human Rights Act.

7.2.4 As part of the investigation the Council and THH will consider whether:
- Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee involved;
- Civil or criminal prosecution action should be instigated;
- The matter should be referred to the Police;
Changes are required to improve the systems and controls of the affected area to improve effective governance and reduce further risk to fraud or impropriety; or,

Any other action should be recommended.

7.2.5 At the conclusion of an investigation, the investigating officer will report the findings to the relevant managers, Director and People Services. Where necessary, the individual who is subject to investigation will be informed of the outcome in writing and will be advised of what action, if any, is to be taken. Any disciplinary action considered will be in compliance with human resources policy and procedures.

7.2.6 Where it is found that a fraud has been committed against the Council or THH we will make recommendations to ensure that any control weaknesses which provided the opportunity for the fraud are addressed and followed up as part of the Internal Audit review cycle.

7.3 Disciplinary Procedures and Suspension from Work

Where investigations result in a case of breaches of the Code of Conduct there may be occasions when ‘prima facie’ a disciplinary investigation is appropriate. The Investigating Officer will support this enquiry but it will be undertaken independently from the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team and led by THH People Services. Where it is appropriate to consider suspension from work a decision will be made in line with THH’s Disciplinary Policy.

8. Liaison with Other Organisations

The Council will actively engage with other organisations, and develop and maintain strong links in its efforts to pursue and strengthen its anti-fraud and corruption strategy at both a local and national level. The Corporate Anti-Fraud Team works with the Police, Local Authorities, the CIPFA Counter Fraud Centre, the DWP Home Office Immigration teams and central Government departments.

The Council is an active user of the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) services and will utilise the full range of intelligence and evidence gathering avenues to support its counter-fraud and investigation activity. The Council is a member of the London Borough Fraud Investigators Group (LBFIG), with the Corporate Anti-Fraud Manager being part of the LBFIG Executive Committee.

9. Post Investigations

9.1 Sanctions

9.1.1 Where financial impropriety has been discovered, whether perpetrated by Officers, Members or third parties (e.g. suppliers, contractors, service providers), the Head of Audit & Risk Management will consult with the Corporate Director of Resources and Corporate Director of Law and
Governance as appropriate, to form a view on whether the matter should be reported to the Police. In cases where matters are referred to the Police, the Crown Prosecution Service will determine whether or not a prosecution will be pursued.

9.1.2 Should matters be dealt with internally, a decision will be made by THH Senior Management on the most suitable course of action, in accordance with the Council’s Enforcement Policy, THH Staff Code of Conduct and THH Disciplinary Policy.

9.1.3 Suspected financial impropriety by any third party that THH or the Council has dealings with will be the subject of investigation. If proven, this may result in the termination of individual contracts and may result in prosecution or civil action.

9.2 Prosecution

9.2.1 Any matters considered for prosecution will be subject to the Code for Crown Prosecutors, the Evidential Test and the Public Interest test. While each case is considered on its own merits, a consistent set of principles will be applied in forming the decision whether or not to prosecute.

9.2.2 In cases where fraud and/or corruption is proven, the Council in-line with its Enforcement Policy, will consider instigating prosecution proceedings in conjunction with the Corporate Director of Law and Governance. Please see [http://towernet/document_library/legal_services/litigation/Enforcement](http://towernet/document_library/legal_services/litigation/Enforcement)

9.2.3 Should matters that are referred to the Police be considered for prosecution, action will be instigated through the Crown Prosecution Service.

9.3 Recovery of Losses

9.3.1 In proven cases of financial loss, the Council will seek to recover all such losses through whatever means it considers appropriate. If the fraud was committed by an employee, the loss may be recovered from any monies due to the individual on termination of employment.

9.3.2 Where the opportunity exists and evidence is strong enough to utilise the services of the Council’s Financial Investigator this will be done to exercise recovery through the application of Proceeds of Crime action.

10. Review of internal controls

10.1 To prevent any recurrence of fraud, the system of internal control will be assessed to identify weaknesses that have allowed the fraud to occur. The investigation report will highlight the system failures and make recommendations for improvements which will be included in an action plan for agreement with the relevant Head of Service.

10.2 The Corporate Anti-Fraud Manager will liaise with the Internal Audit team to ensure that future audit plans and work programmes reflect identified control weaknesses.
11. How to Report a Concern

11.1 There are a number of ways that individuals may raise a concern or report a suspected fraud or irregularity; any reports received will be treated confidentially in accordance with the THH Whistleblowing Policy.

11.2 Whistleblowing Policy.
Employees are urged to consider the nature of the concern, whether it involves immediate management, and the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved. Please see: http://towernet/document_library/thh/hr/thh_hr_policies_and_procedures/Whistleblowing_Policy_-_October_2018

11.3 As soon as an employee becomes reasonably concerned about a matter, they are encouraged to raise this in the first instance with their line manager. All managers have a responsibility to act on concerns raised. The line manager should report the concern to their Director or to the Councils Monitoring Officer who will consider referral to the Head of Audit & Risk Management or the Corporate Anti-Fraud Manager as soon as practicably possible.

11.4 Contact details
For further advice on any fraud issues or to report a fraud please contact one of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Job Title</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susmita Sen - Chief Executive</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Susmita.Sen@thh.org.uk">Susmita.Sen@thh.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets Homes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Rock – Head of Audit and Risk</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Paul.Rock@towerhamlets.gov.uk">Paul.Rock@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBTH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Qayum – Corporate Anti-Fraud</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Tony.Qayum@towerhamlets.gov.uk">Tony.Qayum@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager LBTH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Oakley – Corporate Anti-Fraud</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sue.Oakley@towerhamlets.gov.uk">Sue.Oakley@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Leader LBTH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Watt – Social Housing Investigations</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Rob.Watt@towerhamlets.gov.uk">Rob.Watt@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud Team Leader LBTH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can also email us on socialhousingfraud@towerhamlets.gov.uk for any housing fraud or illegal sub-letting.

And for any other fraud matters concerning Tower Hamlets Homes these can be reported on the following link https://forms.towerhamlets.gov.uk/service/Report_fraud
Tower Hamlets Homes

ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY

This Policy applies to all THH Board Members and Employees, THH Contractors, Individuals Representing THH and Involved Resident Representatives.

1. Introduction
THH is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in its business activities. This policy outlines THH’s position on preventing and prohibiting bribery, in accordance with the Bribery Act 2010. THH will not tolerate any form of bribery by, or of, its Board of Directors, employees, agents, or contractors or any person or body acting on its behalf. The Board and Senior Management are committed to implementing effective measures to prevent, monitor and eliminate bribery.

2. Scope of this Policy
This policy applies to all Board Members, all employees (including temporary, fixed term and casual employees) and associated persons (i.e. consultants, contractors, agents, Local Community Representatives and residents, acting for, or on behalf of, THH). The policy also extends to the use of contractors for personal work (e.g. should an employee use a THH contractor to carry out work at their home).

Every Board Member, employee and associated person is responsible for maintaining the highest standards of business conduct. Any breach of this policy is likely to constitute a serious disciplinary, contractual, or criminal matter for the individual concerned and may cause serious damage to the reputation and standing of THH.

THH may also face criminal liability for unlawful actions taken by its employees or associated persons under the Bribery Act 2010. All employees and associated persons are required to familiarise themselves and comply with this policy, including any future updates that may be issued by THH.

This policy covers:
- the main areas of liability under the Bribery Act 2010
- the responsibilities of employees and associated persons acting for, or on behalf of, THH
- the consequences of any breaches of this policy

3. Bribery Act 2010
THH is committed to complying with the Bribery Act 2010 in its business activities. Under the Bribery Act 2010, a bribe is a financial or other type of advantage that is offered or requested with the:
- intention of inducing or rewarding improper performance of a function or activity
• knowledge or belief that accepting such a reward would constitute the improper performance of such a function or activity

A relevant function or activity includes public, state or business activities or any activity performed in the course of a person’s employment, or on behalf of another company or individual, where the person performing that activity is expected to perform it in good faith, impartially, or in accordance with a position of trust.

A criminal offence will be committed under the Bribery Act 2010 if:

- an employee or associated person acting for, or on behalf of, THH offers, promises, gives, requests, receives or agrees to receive bribes
- an employee or associated person acting for, or on behalf of, THH offers, promises or gives a bribe to a public official with the intention of influencing that official in the performance of his/her duties (where local law does not permit or require such influence)
- There is also a corporate offence of failure by a commercial organisation to prevent bribery that is intended to obtain or retain business, or an advantage in the conduct of business, for the organisation. An organisation will have the defence to this corporate offence if it can show that it has adequate procedures in place to prevent bribery by its employees or associated persons

All employees and associated persons are required to comply with this policy, in accordance with the Bribery Act 2010.

4. What is prohibited?
THH prohibits employees or associated persons from offering, promising, giving, soliciting or accepting any bribe. The bribe might be cash, a gift or other inducement to, or from, any person or company, whether a public or government official, official of a state-controlled industry, political party or a private person or company, regardless of where the employee or associated person is situated.

The bribe might be made to ensure that a person or company improperly performs duties or functions (for example, by not acting impartially or in good faith or in accordance with their position of trust) to gain any commercial, contractual or regulatory advantage. This could be:

- To gain personal advantage, financial or otherwise, for the individual or anyone connected with the individual;
- To advantage a Company wishing to do business with THH; or even,
- Any actions taken by THH to maintain or obtain business.

This prohibition also applies to indirect contributions, payments or gifts made in any manner as an inducement or reward for improper performance, for example through consultants, contractors or sub-contractors, agents or sub-agents, sponsors or sub-sponsors, joint-venture partners, advisors, customers, suppliers or other third parties.

5. Records
Employees and, where applicable, associated persons, are required to take particular care to ensure that all company records are accurately maintained in
Due diligence should be undertaken by employees and associated persons prior to entering into any contract, arrangement or relationship with a potential supplier of services, agent, consultant or representative, in accordance with THH’s procurement and risk management procedures.

Under the THH Gifts and Hospitality Policy, employees and associated persons are required to keep accurate, detailed and up-to-date records of all corporate hospitality, entertainment or gifts accepted or offered. The policy is shown here: http://towernet/document_library/thh/hr/thh_hr_policies_and_procedures/Gifts_and_Hospitality_Policy_August_2018

6. Procedure
Employees and associated persons are required to cooperate with THH’s risk management procedures and to report suspicions of bribery to the Chief Executive as soon as reasonably practicable. While any suspicious circumstances should be reported, employees and associated persons are required particularly to report:

- requests for cash payments
- requests for unusual payment arrangements, for example via a third party
- requests for reimbursements of unsubstantiated or unusual expenses, or
- a lack of standard invoices and proper financial practices

If an employee or associated person is in any doubt as to whether or not a potential act constitutes bribery, the matter should be referred to the Chief Executive or Head of Service immediately.

7. Facilitation Payments
THH prohibits its employees or associated persons from making or accepting any facilitation payments. These are payments made to officials for carrying out or speeding up routine procedures. Facilitation payments are distinct from an official, publicly available fast-track process. Facilitation payments, or offers of such payments, will constitute a criminal offence by both the individual concerned and THH under the Bribery Act 2010.

Where a public official has requested a payment, employees or associated persons should ask for further details of the purpose and nature of the payment in writing. If the public official refuses to give these, this should be reported immediately to the Head of Service.

If the public official provides written details, the Head of Service will consider the nature of the payment. Legal advice may be sought by THH. If it is concluded that the payment is a legitimate fee, for example part of a genuine fast-track process, or is permitted locally, THH will authorise the employee to make the payment.

Where the Head of Service considers that the request is for a facilitation payment, the employee or associated person will be instructed to refuse to make the payment.
and notify the public official that the employee or associated person is required to report the matter.

THH will seek the assistance of the relevant employee in its investigation and may determine that the matter be referred to the prosecution authorities.

If an employee or associated person has any other concerns about the nature of a request for payment, he/she should report it to their Head of Service using the reporting procedure set out in this policy and or in accordance with THH’s Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure.

8. Gifts and Hospitality

This section should be read in conjunction with the gifts and hospitality policy. Employees and Board Members should not do anything that may be seen as putting them under an obligation to an individual or an organisation.

In general, THH does not believe that it is appropriate for employees and Board members (including co-optees) to accept gifts from customers, suppliers or any other person or organisation with which THH has (or might have) business connections.

Hospitality, other than of minor value, should not usually be accepted.

All offers and all acceptances of gifts or hospitality should be appropriately approved by a Director and recorded by the Governance Officer.

9. Reporting suspected bribery

THH depends on its employees and associated persons to ensure that the highest standards of ethical conduct are maintained in all its business dealings.

Employees and associated persons are requested to assist THH and to remain vigilant in preventing, detecting and reporting bribery. Employees and associated persons are encouraged to report any concerns that they may have to their Head of Service as soon as possible. Issues that should be reported include:

- any suspected or actual attempts at bribery
- concerns that other employees or associated persons may be being bribed
- concerns that other employees or associated persons may be bribing third parties, such as clients or government officials

Any such reports will be thoroughly and promptly investigated by the appropriate Head of Service in the strictest confidence.

Employees and associated persons will be required to assist in any investigation into possible or suspected bribery.

Employees will also be required to comply with THH’s Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure.
Employees or associated persons who report instances of bribery in good faith will be supported by THH. THH will ensure that the individual is not subjected to detrimental treatment as a consequence of his/her report. Any instances of detrimental treatment by a fellow employee because an employee has made a report will be treated as a disciplinary offence. An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, employees and associated persons should not agree to remain silent. They should report the matter to the Chief Executive.

10. Action by THH
THH will fully investigate any instances of alleged or suspected bribery.

Employees suspected of bribery may be suspended from their duties while the investigation is being carried out. THH will invoke its disciplinary procedures where any employee is suspected of bribery, and proven allegations may result in a finding of gross misconduct and immediate dismissal. THH may remove Directors of the Board, terminate the contracts of any associated persons, including consultants or other workers who act for, or on behalf of, THH, cease to recognise Local Community Representatives or remove involved residents from panels, should any of the aforementioned be found to have breached this policy.

THH may also report any matter to the relevant authorities, including the Director of Public Prosecutions, Serious Fraud Office, Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office and the police. THH will provide all necessary assistance to the relevant authorities in any subsequent prosecution.

13. Review of Procedures and Training
THH will regularly communicate its anti-bribery measures to employees and associated persons. THH will arrange training sessions where applicable. The implementation of this policy and related procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis, including reviews of internal financial systems, expenses, corporate hospitality and gifts policies.

Employees and those working for, or on behalf of, THH are encouraged to contact the Head of People Services with any suggestions, comments or feedback that they may have on how these procedures may be improved.

THH reserves the right to amend and update this policy as required.
# THH Board of Directors

17th September 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Approved By:</th>
<th>Report type:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Davey, Director of Business Transformation</td>
<td>For Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Author:</td>
<td>For Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Smith, Head of Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Title:** Digital Strategy Progress Report

## 1. Introduction

This report summarises the current status of the Digital Strategy projects and the impact they have had. We are currently in the third and final year of the Digital Solutions budget.

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 That Board review and discuss the progress of the Digital Strategy Programme.

## 3. THH Digital Strategy

In 2016 the Board approved the establishment of a three-year budget for investment in digital solutions across THH. This fund would ensure THH leveraged value from its investment in additional modules of its core Northgate Housing system whilst supporting the objectives of its Customer Access and Experience Programme and wider strategic priorities.

The key projects of the Digital Strategy were as follows:

- Online Self-Service
- Rental Income Project
- Digital Communications
- Mobile Working
- Integrated Workflow

Recently a new project was initiated to review the use of Northgate Housing by Leasehold Services, along the lines of the Rental Income Project, which will also help deliver the recommendations of the recent review of Leasehold Services.
4. **Online Self-Service: MyTHH**

MyTHH was launched in May 2017 and following a concerted campaign to encourage residents to sign up to MyTHH there are currently over 5,000 registered users for the MyTHH service. Whilst total numbers registered is an important sign the key measure of success of any online platform is the continued use of the service.

The first measure to look at is the total number of pages viewed within the MyTHH service each month (Graph 1). A page could be each page looked at of a rent account statement or a page of property repairs. As you can see from the graph below this has grown steadily since the launch of MyTHH in May 2017, and we recently broke the 5,000 page views barrier in March and April 2019. There has subsequently been a reduction in use but this aligns with a similar trend in 2018 suggesting there are seasonal variations in how customers use the service. Since 2019 is the first year we are not producing quarterly rent statements it will be interesting to see how this impacts usage; throughout 2018 there seemed to be a correlation between the quarterly rent statements and usage of MyTHH.

![Graph 1 – Total Number of Page Views](image_url)

During a single visit a user may click through many pages so we can also look at site activity in terms of unique user visits which helps us see how many of the 4,900 users have logged in each month. As take up of the service has grown we have seen a reduction in the percentage of registered users logging on each month, however over half of registered users have logged on within the past year, and the bulk of these within the current year. Many users also access MyTHHH multiple times each month as shown in the following graph.
Both of these indicators show seasonal variations with dips around Christmas and summer holidays, whilst site activity rises around key customer engagement events such as Service Charge Estimates and Actuals and Rent Notifications. Statement runs also tended to generate a spike and we will have to monitor activity going forwards to see what impact the cessation of the quarterly rent statement is having on site usage.

Whilst leaseholders were initially the quickest group of customers to sign up to MyTHH the continued take up of the service has been strongest amongst tenants with almost two thirds of all registered users renting their property. This is reflected in the high levels of usage of the My Rent Account service as shown below.
Whilst take-up of MyTHH has grown strongly over the last two years we have also seen a reduction in the volumes of calls offered to the Housing Service Centre (HSC) as shown in Graph 4 which has helped contribute to a better overall customer experience. Between 2016-17 and 2018-19 there was a reduction in overall call volumes of 17% and in the same period a marked improvement in the number of calls answered from 76% in 2016-17 to 90% in 2018-19.

During this period the number of non-repair related calls offered to the Housing Service Centre fell much more sharply with a reduction of 32% compared to 4% for repairs related calls. As we progress plans to implement a fully integrated online repairs reporting solution we should aim to reduce the volume of repairs related calls by similar amounts. The following graph suggests we may have reached a limit in
The Housing Service Centre (HSC) make a record of calls on our integrated housing management system, Northgate Housing. When we look at the reasons for calling which relate to those services offered through MyTHH we see a marked reduction of 87% on average with some reasons for calling reducing by up to 98% as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Reason</th>
<th>Business Reason Description</th>
<th>% Reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LHS001</td>
<td>Leasehold Payment</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHS002</td>
<td>Leasehold Statement Request</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LHS003</td>
<td>Leasehold Balance Request</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNT001</td>
<td>Rent Payment</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNT002</td>
<td>Rents Balance Request</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNT003</td>
<td>Rents Statement Request</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNT005</td>
<td>Replacement Rent Card</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPR003</td>
<td>Repairs Chase Up or</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To assist HSC staff with encouraging customers to sign up for MyTHH or to use the service for queries such as balance/statement requests we have implemented a ‘Key Detail’ view of the customer’s MyTHH status on the client portal page the HSC use to view customer data and log calls. This ‘Key Detail’ shows whether the customer is ‘Not Registered’ for MyTHH, has started their registration but not completed it or the date they last logged into the service. Call agents can then use this to guide their conversation with customer if appropriate.

We are currently in development for the new version of MyTHH which we plan to launch as part of the next upgrade of Northgate Housing. This will offer customers a more user-friendly service with additional functionality at launch and over further releases as we continue to upgrade and develop Northgate Housing.

5. **Online Self-Service: Online Repairs**

As part of the upgrade to MyTHH a new, fully integrated online reporting solution is being developed. There are several key dependencies for this project, not least the current migration of the Northgate Housing system from its physical server in the Agilisys data centre at Welwyn Garden City to the NPS Cloud which is currently in progress and will be followed by the annual upgrade to the latest release – v6.19. This upgrade will allow us to deploy MyTHH on the new Housing Online platform, which replaces the existing Self Serve platform, for all existing users regardless of tenure.

The redesign of the communal repairs work programmes, and associated changes such as the introduction of new priority codes, which was prompted by the Communal Repairs Project is another key dependency. Detailed design work on the online reporting solution commences this month with a planned launch in the first half of 2020. The progress of the re-procurement of the Repairs contracts, which is running concurrently, is also being closely tracked to ensure that the end-to-end solution we develop will be contractor-neutral.
6. Rental Income Project

Another core project of the Digital Strategy has focused on improving the use of Northgate Housing for the collection of tenancy and licence rents and tenant service charges. The government’s Welfare Reform agenda has placed a lot of pressure on social housing tenants and rental income streams. THH was keen to review their service to ensure they could support residents as they transitioned to Universal Credit, ensuring their rent payments were prioritised and their tenancy could be sustained.

This project began in 2017 with a systemic review of arrears escalation policies to help rents staff use their time more effectively and prioritise those tenants most at risk of accruing arrears and forfeiting their tenancy. We also expanded the range of Direct Debit payment dates available to tenants through the implementation of the Payment Arrangements functionality on Northgate Housing and reviewed the Mobysoft RentSense product to see if subscribing to this service could realise further improvements in income collection. 2017-18 had been a particularly difficult year for rent income with the impact of the Southwark/Thames Water decision and an increase in Universal Credit rollout having a particularly adverse impact on rent arrears.

Arrears Escalation Policies Review

The new arrears escalation policies went live in January 2018 and had an immediate effect on in-year arrears growth as shown in the following graph. The arrears trend reduced by £240k between the end of December 2017 and the end of January 2018 with further reductions over the remainder of the 2017-18 financial year. The following financial year, 2018-19, was a lot better managed than the previous year, with arrears growth kept in check from early on and ending with an actual reduction in the overall arrears by the close of March 2019. This was the first year for some time that arrears had actually been reduced by year end.
Any Day Direct Debit

The promotion of Direct Debit to tenants has been a priority for THH for some years as Direct Debit offers both THH and customers a simple method of payment which can be easily updated each year when the rent increase applies; it is also a relatively low cost transaction method and offers overhead savings the more tenants who sign up for it. A key limitation with the way THH had been administering Direct Debits until 2018 was the cumbersome set up and management of each payment date offered to customers, as a result of which only four dates per month had been made available. Implementing Northgate Housing’s Payment Arrangements functionality allowed us to offer any day, any frequency Direct Debits, giving customers the choice to pay on any day of the month or on weekly, fortnightly or four-weekly cycles. This new flexibility would allow tenants transitioning to Universal Credit (UC) to sign up to pay by Direct Debit as close as possible to their UC payment date, ensuring they prioritised their rent payments and helping THH to ensure the rental income stream.

As an existing priority for THH Direct Debits had been regularly promoted as the payment method of choice prior to the implementation of Payment Arrangements in July 2018. At that time around 16% of residential tenancies paid their rent by Direct Debit and 65% of non-residential tenancies. As of July 2019 those figures had increased to 20% and 67% respectively.

The ability to collect Direct Debits on any date in the month was a particular requirement for THH’s response to the challenges posed by the government’s Welfare Reform agenda, and particularly the rollout of Universal Credit. There are currently 1,700 tenants recorded on Northgate as being in receipt of Universal Credit and of these 226 (13%) have been signed up to Direct Debit. The full rollout of Universal Credit has not yet happened in Tower Hamlets but the Rents service now has the ability to encourage tenants to sign up to Direct Debit on the appropriate
date to ensure they prioritise the payment of their rent when they do get switched to Universal Credit.

7. Digital Communications

This project is focused on modernising the way THH communicates with residents. The Communications Suite functionality on Northgate Housing will enable us to send text messages and emails to residents instead of or in addition to traditional letters. The solution has been tested and signed off and LBTH IT are in the process of configuring the live database prior to the migration of Northgate Housing to the NPS Cloud environment. The Rents service has drafted the text messages they intend to start sending out to tenants in arrears and these will shortly be developed and tested. In support of this we have also reviewed the way we maintain mobile and email contact details and made a concerted effort to improve the quality and quantity of this data to support the rollout of these new communications channels.

For current tenancies in residential properties we hold mobile numbers for 71% of all current tenancies and for 77% of current tenancies in arrears. We hold no contact details for 174 current tenancies, 52 of which are in arrears.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Tenants</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>With an Arrears Balance</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>With a Credit or Zero Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10,794</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3,888</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>6,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Mobile</td>
<td>7,711</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>3,010</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>4,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,083</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>2,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landline</td>
<td>3,224</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>2,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email address</td>
<td>4,898</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>1,969</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>2,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Contact Details</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Three</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Only</td>
<td>3,521</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>1,313</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>2,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile &amp; Landline</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile &amp; Email</td>
<td>3,610</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>1,498</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>2,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landline &amp; Email</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landline Only</td>
<td>1,877</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Only</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Current Tenant Contact Details

Other service areas are developing ideas for other text or email communications.

In addition Property Services have recently started installing new video door entry systems which have the capability to allow messages to be sent to the control panel in each property connected to a system. Teams across THH are in the process of collaborating to ensure that these systems can be used effectively to the best advantage of residents and THH; potential uses include notifications of planned servicing on lifts etc.
8. Mobile Working

A significant project of the Digital Strategy has been the implementation of Kirona Job Manager to allow staff to complete housing management activities whilst out of the office and seamlessly update Northgate Housing. The first applications of Job Manager, for pre and post inspections in the Repairs service (for all types of general build, mechanical and electrical inspections) and for monthly estate inspections in the Neighbourhoods service went live at the end of May 2019.

Repairs Inspections

The key objective in mobilising repairs pre inspections was to improve the customer experience by ensuring that these inspections are resulted and associated works orders are issued much more quickly, whilst for post-inspections it was to make this process much more efficient, allowing repairs management to have more timely and accurate information with which to performance manage repairs contractors.

In the 12 months to the end of May 2019 inspections were completed on average 4.3 days after their target date. In the first two months of use this figure has dropped to 2.6 days before their target date – a swing of almost seven days.

Since JobManager has been in use 47% of pre-inspections have not resulted in a works order being raised. Of those pre-inspections which did result in a works order being raised 87% were raised using JobManager whilst the inspector was on site.

Estate Inspections

The estate inspections process was thought to consume a lot of time for Housing Officers, with information and actions gathered during the course of the estate inspection having to be entered onto a range of systems and spreadsheets once the housing officer returned to the office. The mobile solution interfaces business actions directly to Northgate Housing which are then distributed by Task Manager to the relevant teams such as Environmental Services thereby providing officers and team leaders with more oversight and the ability to track reported issues. The solution also reduces the amount of time Housing Officers spend re-keying information following an estate inspection and has already generated an appetite for further applications of Job Manager to support housing management activities such as tenancy audits and sign-ups.

There are 82 estates requiring inspection each month. In the first month of operation, June 2019, 77 of these were completed using Job Manager and this improved to 81 in July. Despite the mobile working solution allowing Housing Officers to complete their inspection in real time over 70% of Estate Inspections are being completed after their publicised scheduled date. In many cases this is because the inspection itself is being rearranged and carried out on a later date than the one originally scheduled. In other cases, Housing Officers are failing to enter the scores on the devices until after they have carried out the inspection; we do not consider this to be a training issue as considerable time was spent by the project team supporting Housing Officers throughout the first three months of rollout.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jun-19</th>
<th>Jul-19</th>
<th>Aug-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Estate Inspections Due</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Completed On Time</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Completed Late</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Completed Early</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Uncompleted</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Completed On Time</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Completed within Month</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Completed after Month</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Completed before Month</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Completed within Month</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estates with more than one Inspection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Estate Inspections Mobile Working Performance

As the Estate Inspections process was previously wholly manual it is difficult to quantify how long it used to take and therefore calculate what efficiencies may have been achieved. However feedback from Housing Officers has been broadly positive as shown in the project’s survey of users.

User Survey

The project team designed and issued three surveys for different groups of users on 01-Jul-19, a month after go-live. 88% of staff responded. The average scores given by staff are shown below. We are still reviewing comments given by respondents to questions about what they like and dislike about the new functionality, and their suggestions for further uses for mobile working. We will repeat the survey in two months’ time to measure increased comfort in using the system and devices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How comfortable are you using Kirona Job Manager for…</th>
<th>Jun-19</th>
<th>Jul-19</th>
<th>Aug-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completing Estate Inspections?</td>
<td>7.2 (/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing Repairs Pre-inspections?</td>
<td>6.8 (/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling Repairs Pre-inspections?</td>
<td>8.0 (/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewing, updating and completing Business Actions in Northgate Housing?</td>
<td>6.5 (/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing Repairs Post-inspections?</td>
<td>5.9 (/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching for Repairs Post-inspections?</td>
<td>5.3 (/10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Apple iPad Mini?                                       | 7.8 (/10) |       |        |
| Motorola One smartphone?                               | 7.1 (/10) |       |        |

| How comfortable are you using your mobile device?      | 7.5 (/10) |       |        |
| How happy are you with the support you’ve been given by the project team during the implementation? | 8.5 (/10) |       |        |
| How likely is it that you would recommend Kirona Job Manager to a colleague? | 7.2 (/10) |       |        |

Table 4: Mobile Working User Survey Results
9. **Integrated Workflow: Task Manager**

For some time THH has used a workflow system, Comino, which is separate from its main housing management system, Northgate Housing. This has led to a fragmented view of the customer with Comino used inconsistently across the organisation and has required staff to re-enter data on two systems.

Implementing the Northgate Task Manager functionality is enabling us to retire the use of Comino workflow and improve the holistic view of the customer within the Northgate Housing system. Earlier this year we switched on Task Manager for Rent Arrears Officers, enabling them to manage their arrears escalation actions more easily, and then extended this to the Voids team. As part of the rollout of Mobile Working this is now being extended to Housing Officers and Environmental Services and work has also started on developing workflow processes in Leasehold services on Task Manager.
1. Introduction

This report provides the Board with a performance report up to the end of July 2019 along with a summary on a new training programme for staff, a Business Plan 2020 update and short briefings on the recent THH Jobs Fair, the summer holidays youth projects on THH managed estates, TMOs, changes to tenancy conditions and the Customer Access and Experience programme and the Altair Review action plan.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That Board Directors note the contents of this report

3. Training Programme

Over the summer we have been developing a new training programme for the organisation. As in each year this follows the performance appraisal and objective setting for all staff that takes place in April and May. This year we had a new system for appraisals and objective setting called Performance Hub which made the whole thing more streamlined and effective, especially in establishing the ‘golden thread’ between THH’s business plan objectives and the objectives of all tiers of staff.

We wanted to make the training programme broad, corporately based and focused on areas that the Board and management felt needed strengthening. These include training on health and safety and compliance, aspects of our culture change programme focusing on inclusive leadership, development for managers and equality and diversity.

THH has always had an active commitment to diversity and inclusion, and our work has been recognised with multiple accreditations and awards, culminating in the winning of our Diversity Pioneer award at the UK Housing Awards earlier in the year. However, we recognise that it is important that we are not complacent – recent HR case experience, both here and in other organisations, has highlighted how new technologies are blurring traditional boundaries between work and home life, and our office move earlier in the year highlighted the importance of being sensitive to the varying needs and requirements of all of our staff.

Page | 1
We have therefore commissioned an external training provider to work with us to develop this training, with a brief that covers all the legal aspects relating to the nine protected characteristics, but also looks at issues of sensitivity, perceived prejudice or ambivalence towards diversity, as well as unconscious bias and assumptions.

We will also be developing a training programme for you as Board Directors and will commence this shortly through a skills audit.

4. Update from Neighbourhood Services

Leasehold Sublet Project

Board Directors will recall that we are seeking to improve the information we hold regarding leasehold properties that have been sublet. We have written to 2500 leaseholders who we believed maybe subletting and a further 1600 follow up letters to those who have failed to respond to the initial request. From these letters we have generated 1371 subletting responses plus additional returns where the leaseholder is advising they are themselves in residence. To date we have seen an 11% increase in the number of registered sublets within the stock.

The project team have also been working closely with the Council’s private sector housing team who are operating a selective licensing scheme and a borough wide HMO licensing scheme, both of which apply to THH managed sublet leasehold stock. We are sharing information across teams and making referrals to address concerns regarding breaches of licences or other private sector housing standards.

The project team have also undertaken work to set up various codes on our ICT systems to highlight subletting and licensing documents which will help us to easily identify sublet registrations. We are currently working on developing a subletting registration process on Northgate, which will also streamline the process by allowing the logging of subletting information and sending out letters from one system.

Finally Board Directors will recall that we have developed a basic sublet pack that leaseholders can give to their tenants that is now use by a number of other RP landlords in Tower Hamlets. We plan to revisit the pack to work on making it less generic and more area specific.

Traffic Management Orders

The first stage of the TMO consultation in the Wapping area has been agreed by the Council. This covers 14 estates. We can now proceed to the second stage consultation which will be undertaken by our contractor, Project Centre. Following resident comments, minor changes to the plans have been made. Residents can still submit any further views during this final stage. Any feedback is then considered by the Council prior to making the final decision.

In Shadwell, well-attended resident meetings took place in Tarling, Solander and Shadwell Gardens where reaction has been mixed. Some amendments to plans will be made in response to resident comments, but the substantive issue is that there is not enough space to cater for the level of car ownership in the area. A number of residents recognised this and some had witnessed the blocking of emergency vehicles in the area due to selfish parking.

Evening walkabouts have also taken place on the following estates: Royal Mint, Martineau and Berners where again the response was generally favourable.
Safeguarding work

Further to the board discussion in April 2019 four Board Directors recently met with the Director and Head of Neighbourhoods to review this area of work and agree ongoing input into this agenda.

The discussion focussed on the overarching improvement plan that officers were working on and areas to strengthen. This included:

- A stronger focus on partnership working particularly with local groups who could assist with any identified cultural barriers
- Maximising opportunities for contractors to alert us to concerns
- Responding to child criminal exploitation in dealing with ASB
- Considering a joint landlord approach to safeguarding communications
- Focussing on support for staff and managers dealing with difficult cases

The group will meet again in November to review progress on the action plan.

Hosting the Chartered Institute of Housing

The CIH are visiting us on 16th September 2019 to hear about changes we have made to the way we provide services to reflect the changing nature of housing management. We will highlight work we have been doing on fire safety visits, improving our THH wide approach to leasehold management, investing in preventing and responding to ASB and the work we are doing from our financial health centre.

5. Business Planning for 2020

Work to underpin the development of the next Business Plan is underway. The Senior Management Team Away Day, held in July, was used in part to consider our contribution to the strategic priorities of Tower Hamlets Council and generate thoughts about future ambition for THH.

In addition, over the course of the summer around 120 staff from across the organisation came together in a series of workshops to talk about how we live up to our commitment to provide excellent customer service. Staff were asked to share their ideas on the organisational values THH should have to help ensure we always put our customers first.

The six themes and corresponding comments suggested that values staff identified as being most important to deliver great customer service are:

- Meet customer expectations - reliable
- Keep customers updated – responsive
- Work together as one – accountable
- Understand and meet the needs of all customers – personalised
- Make it easy for customers to get what they need - straightforward
- To be the best – ambitious

The themes and suggested values have been subject to an all staff survey in which 204 staff chose to take part.
Both these strands of work will form the basis of resident consultation, initially by way of two workshop events taking place later this month. Output from the resident’s workshops, together with insights derived from our regular satisfaction tracker survey, will be ‘tested’ through an on-line survey open to all.

A full update will be provided for the Board at the planned Away Day on 31st October as context for the work Board will do to shape the Business Plan for next year. Councillor Islam, Cabinet Member for Housing has also been invited to the Away Day to help us align our objectives with those of the Council.

6. THH Jobs Fair – August 2019

August 2019 saw THH partner up with a range of organisations to organise and deliver two really successful jobs fairs.

The first event was a construction industry focused jobs fair held on 1st August, organised in partnership with a number of Tower Hamlets based housing organisations in association with TFL, to fill vacancies arising from the proposed housing developments by TFL and its partners. Over 200 residents attended the jobs fair, with all the recruiters providing really positive feedback on sign-ups for their vacancies and apprenticeship opportunities.

The second jobs fair held on 30th August, was organised in partnership with LBTH’s training & employment agency Workpath. Over 450 residents attended to sign up for vacancies with employers such as Metropolitan Police, National Audit Office, Barts NHS Trust, Vision Express, Falcon Green, TFL and 15 other employers, including some THH contractors, all with live vacancies. Also on hand was our employment provider, Go Train, to support residents with CV writing, interview techniques and other support.

Mayor John Biggs and Cabinet Member for Work & Economic Growth Cllr Motin Uz-Zaman also attended to speak to some of the employers and job seekers.

7. Summer Youth Project 2019

THH commissioned seven youth organisations to deliver a range of youth activities out on our estates over the summer holidays, as part of our work to reduce ASB.

The five week programme designed to provide diversionary activities to prevent them from getting involved in anti-social behaviour and to keep them occupied during the summer holiday period, saw the seven organisations deliver a wide range of estate based activities including, arts, multi-sports, day trips to the seaside and theme parks, training programmes and community fun day events. Over 500 young people as well as residents and parents took part in the successful programme.

A detailed evaluation of the programme is being undertaken, however initial feedback from the young people, some of the TRAs, Councillors and residents has been really positive.

A more long-term programme of detached youth work on our estates to link young people with activities in council run Youth Hubs and other activities across the borough is being planned and will be rolled out over the next few months, as part of a wider programme of youth engagement and development programme with the objective of reducing ASB.

8. Customer Access and Experience Programme Update

The Customer Access and Process Redesign Project
A report was presented to the Customer Experience Task Force on 3rd September to bring them up to speed with the project. The focus of the project is to redesign the processes used by the Housing Services Centre (HSC) to make the processes more efficient and to automate them where possible. The initial work has been to produce an updated document library (A-Z of policies and procedures) on the intranet to help with the first time resolution of enquiries received by the HSC and other teams. Once this work is completed, the next stage will be to redesign the most widely used processes and reduce the level of manual intervention. This will include encouraging customers to use web forms instead of email so that the forms can be automatically routed to the correct team based on the subject.

The project is a complex one involving a number of processes and the development of IT systems, and will therefore run well into the next financial year.

**The Repairs Online Project**

A detailed business case has been drafted by the Project Manager to assess the cost and benefits of introducing the online system with different options for functionality and integration. One of the key considerations being examined at the moment is to identify a resource scheduler (i.e. appointments system) that can be integrated with the repairs online portal so that customers can book appointment slots for their repairs. However, this part of the project is unlikely to be implemented until the start of the new repairs contract in April 2021 as it may not be feasible for Mears to integrate a new resource scheduler with their system in the last year of their contract.

The business case will be agreed in October and this will enable the Project Manager to proceed with the procurement and purchase of the online portal system.

**9. Revised Tenancy Conditions**

A revised set of LBTH tenancy conditions has now been drafted, and a provisional time line and consultation plan have been agreed.

**The main proposed changes**

- Reinstate the succession rights taken away by the 2011 Localism Act.
- Allow homes to be used for business in certain circumstances.
- Introduce photo ID, and strengthen wording regarding sub-letting and being away from home to help combat housing fraud.
- Strengthen conditions in relation to fire safety, domestic abuse, safeguarding, access, and gang-related ASB.
- Update the conditions to take account of Traffic Management Orders, GDPR and water rates no longer being collected with the rent.

Formal consultation on the revised tenancy conditions is scheduled to start in mid-January 2020 at the earliest. This will run for two months to mid-March. The issue of the Notice of Variation is planned to take place in August 2020.

In terms of tenant consultation, we are writing to all tenants enclosing a booklet setting out the proposed new conditions and summarising the changes. In addition an on-line survey will be set up on the Council’s website.
A series of six 4-hour drop-in sessions at the Financial Health Centre are also planned to take views and answer tenant’s questions.

10. Social Housing Broadband

Central Government has set a target for half of UK homes to have a fibre-optic broadband connection by 2025 and all properties connected by 2033. There are new obligations for landowners to grant access to their properties for this purpose.

Project Objectives

Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) and the Council are taking advantage of the legislation to deliver gigabit capable connections to the Tower Hamlets housing stock. Providers will adhere to a standardised wayleave agreement that determines how they deliver their services to the THH housing stock (including leasehold properties).

NB: the average fibre broadband speed is between 40 and 80 Mbs, where 1 Gbs (gigabit) = 1,000 Mbs.

Delivery

The wayleave has now been issued to interested parties and it is expected that the first operator (Community Fibre) will be in a position to sign an agreement with THH by 27th September 2019.

Three providers have expressed an interest and three pilot schemes have been discussed:

- Community Fibre – Lincoln Estate, Leadenham Court (This site visit has been conducted)
- HyperOptic – Locksley 1a
- Virgin Media - Solander Gardens East, Bewley House

THH will oversee the implementation, issue permits to work, and ensure the operators fulfil their obligations to liaise with stakeholders, keep residents informed of the works programme and make sure the rollout does not impact current works planned by THH.

Benefits

The negotiations with broadband providers focus on investment in ‘digital wellbeing’ initiatives, providing:

- resident access to the internet
- a low cost ‘social tenant’ tariff to a proportion of tenants
- complimentary high-speed broadband connections to indoor spaces open to the public
- digital skills support for local communities within the borough
- job and apprenticeship opportunities within the borough

Next steps

Once the wayleaves are signed the project will bring together all interested parties in early October 2019 to schedule the broadband rollout. Implementation is expected to last between 18 and 24 months.
11. Performance

Performance to July 2019 remained strong with almost 80% of targets being exceeded or met and a further 10% very close to being achieved. Appendix 1 details results for each indicator.

Of the two indicators at ‘red’ status:

- Unauthorised occupancy; the number of homes recovered falls short of the profiled target by just one. An erratic pattern of performance is expected for this indicator and we anticipate higher performance coming through as the year progresses.

- Long term re-let time; the monthly average fell by 15 days between June and July bringing performance closer to target. Relets in the period were delayed by a range of factors, including two homes that were subject to vandalism during the void period. A new escalation protocol was introduced in July 2019 to provide the Directorate Management Team with oversight of void delays.

12. Altair report action plan

As Board Directors will recall, LBTH commissioned a housing consultancy, Altair, to conduct a review of the services provided by THH with the purpose of developing a series of options to enable LBTH to consider how it might deliver housing management in the future.

Following an extensive review that spanned from August 2018 until March 2019, their final report was published in April 2019.

At each stage of the review, Altair developed a set of recommendations for taking forward by both THH and LBTH.

These recommendations to THH will inform the business plan being drafted for April 2020 and are attached as appendix 2 to this report. Recommendations for LBTH also made by Altair are contained within appendix 2 for information. Many of the LBTH recommendations focus on the Council as client to the ALMO. LBTH have commissioned Inner Circle Consulting to take an independent view of their clienting arrangements and THH senior officers are assisting in this review.
### APPENDIX: Tower Hamlets Homes Key Monthly Performance Indicators

#### Year to date performance: July 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KPI Name</th>
<th>Target YTD</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>YTD Score</th>
<th>Trend</th>
<th>PREVIOUS YEAR Year YTD July 2019</th>
<th>Year on Year Trend</th>
<th>Out-turn 18/19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 % of calls answered</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>87.4%</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>96.5%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 % of Complaints responded to in target STAGE 1 ONLY</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
<td>95.7%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>92.5%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>93.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Complaints Escalation: % of Complaints Upheld at Stage 2</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homes &amp; Neighbourhoods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Repairs: Appointments kept</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
<td>90.3%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>93.1%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 % of properties with a current gas safety certificate</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>99.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Repairs: Emergency repairs in target</td>
<td>98.5%</td>
<td>93.6%</td>
<td>98.6%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>96.5%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>97.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Repairs: Non-emergency repairs in target</td>
<td>98.5%</td>
<td>93.6%</td>
<td>99.0%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>98.2%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>98.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 % of repairs completed right first time</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>81.2%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 % of tenants rating the repairs service as excellent, good or fair</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>87.4%</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Unauthorised Occupancy: Homes Recovered</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organisational</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Average time to relet empty homes - Short term (days)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Average time to relet empty homes - Long term (days)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 % rent collected (of rent due)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>102.0%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>103.8%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>99.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Current arrears as % of rent roll</td>
<td>5.30%</td>
<td>5.33%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 % of Members’ Enquiries responded to in target</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Service charge collected</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>102.6%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>97.2%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Major works charge collected</td>
<td>100%**</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>110.0%</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>104.8%</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>116.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

1 Minimum Score: Lowest value to avoid indicator showing ‘red’

2 TREND: Compared to previous month

*The target for Service Charge Collection is £13.75m which means that the performance target for each month is therefore 100% of the projected collection figure for that month.

**The target for Major Works Charge Collection is £3.3m which means that the performance target for each month is therefore 100% of the projected collection figure for that month.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref No.</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Finish Date</th>
<th>Lead Person</th>
<th>Resources Required</th>
<th>Comments / Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THH1</td>
<td>The ALMO’s Business Plan should include more explicit reporting of how THH’s achievements align with the ambitions of the Council</td>
<td>Produce a new business plan for 2020 which takes full account of the Council’s priorities as set out in their current strategic plan which runs to 2023.</td>
<td>Oct-19</td>
<td>Mar-20</td>
<td>S Pace</td>
<td>The 2019-20 business plan made explicit reference to the council’s priorities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THH2</td>
<td>THH should continue to target higher leaseholder satisfaction, given the large proportion of leaseholders in their resident body (approximately 45%)</td>
<td>Implement the improvement plan resulting from the leasehold service review</td>
<td>Sep-19</td>
<td>Jun-20</td>
<td>A Olesanya</td>
<td>R Haris</td>
<td>J Sathip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THH3</td>
<td>THH should note the common feedback from both residents and LBTH about the quality of major works and contract management and seek to make improvements as necessary</td>
<td>Continue the implementation of the Better Neighbourhood and the Block Communication and Engagement Plan</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>J Sathip</td>
<td>B Campbell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THH4</td>
<td>THH should give consideration to increasing investment in rent arrears collection (in the context of a service review of the rent collection function undertaken in summer 2018, the recommendations of which are yet to be implemented)</td>
<td>Refresh the 2018 rent collection service review and produce a report for EMT to consider.</td>
<td>Aug-19</td>
<td>Aug-19</td>
<td>B Greenidge</td>
<td>The implementation of the Leasehold Service Review action plan will also help with the successful delivery of the major works processes.</td>
<td>The Asset Management Team will also continue monitoring/tracking the Kwest survey results and complaints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THH5</td>
<td>THH should consider focusing on improving major work recharge collection rates</td>
<td>No specific action is needed (see comments).</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>The reduction in the collection rate occurred in March 2018 and was the result of a number of payments without a specific invoice number being allocated to the older major work invoices. These payments were subsequently transferred to the correct invoices. The major work collection rate for 2018/19 showed a significant increase to 116%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THH6</td>
<td>THH should implement regular reporting of cost KPIs and/or cost benchmarking to support the ALMO in achieving VM</td>
<td>Complete the annual Housemark cost benchmarking exercise and submit the data to Housemark.</td>
<td>Jun-19</td>
<td>Aug-19</td>
<td>L Owen</td>
<td>S Philips</td>
<td>A Coates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THH7</td>
<td>Introduce a suite of cost/VM measures for regular reporting.</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Dec-19</td>
<td>L Owen</td>
<td>A Coates</td>
<td>Adam has emailed Neil to ask about the level of detail that will be required and the frequency of reporting.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>THH8</td>
<td>Consideration should be given to how best to improve communication between teams within THH, between THH and the Council, and between both of these bodies and residents</td>
<td>Develop an Internal Communications Strategy</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Sep-19</td>
<td>B Schofield</td>
<td>Communications Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>THH9</td>
<td>Implement the recommendations from the Residents' Panel review of communications</td>
<td>Jul-19</td>
<td>Mar-20</td>
<td>B Schofield</td>
<td>Communications Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>THH10</td>
<td>Introduce Office 360 to assist with internal collaboration and communication</td>
<td>Oct-19</td>
<td>Dec-19</td>
<td>C Smith</td>
<td>B Schofield</td>
<td>K-P Anane</td>
<td>LBTH IT Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ref No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBTH1</td>
<td>The Council should clarify to THH its expectations regarding the ALMO’s VfM objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBTH2</td>
<td>LBTH should consider the purpose of the various bodies in the THH governance / engagement structure to ensure that the division of responsibilities, delegations and terms for each are clear and fit for purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBTH3</td>
<td>LBTH and THH should work together to formally clarify their respective roles (including the levels of delegation and authority) in order to reduce duplication of meetings, papers etc. between the two organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBTH4</td>
<td>LBTH and THH should work together to provide clarity over the Council’s expectations of the ALMO, and define a common vision for the Council/ALMO relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBTH5</td>
<td>LBTH should consider whether or not to extend the savings targets currently in place for the ALMO, subject to an appropriate scoping exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBTH6</td>
<td>LBTH should review services, costs and performance to ensure that both LBTH and THH, and residents, are happy to continue with current arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBTH7</td>
<td>LBTH should undertake appropriate negotiations with the ALMO regarding the extension of the agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBTH8</td>
<td>LBTH should ensure that the rationale for its provisional decision are clearly communicated to residents, and that relevant stakeholders are consulted</td>
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</tbody>
</table>