

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2023

TITLE: ROOFING AND MAJOR REPAIRS TO COUNCIL HOUSING

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RECOMMENDED that the Committee notes:

- A** The completion of the business process review of major works roofing referrals from HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd (HTS).
- B** The progress of the 2022/23 Housing Capital Roofing Programme
- C** The HRA Business Plan – re-prioritisation of schemes delivered through the Housing Capital Programme to support the Roofing Programme and associated roofing repairs such as a programme to deliver guttering works.

BACKGROUND

1. The Council seeks to maintain its stock to current Government decent homes standards through a combination of planned inspections, annual programmes of work and reactive approaches where required. The Council takes a proactive approach as part of the approved Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan Housing Investment Programme which includes works packages to address stock condition issues and address any building failures identified. Stock is identified for annual planned capital investment from targeted stock condition surveys in order to develop roofing repairs and major repairs to Council housing programme.

How are roofing repairs identified?

2. Each year, it concludes the amount of resources it has available and sets budgets for capital and planned maintenance over the Business Plan period within resources forecasted. Continued review of these assumptions are made aligned to available resources, as well as wider town priorities. The Council's Housing Investment Programme centres upon establishing a set of internal, external and compliance related work packages. These programmes have reached over 8,000 homes to date illustrating the continued ambition and ongoing scale of delivery. The revised HRA Business Plan (2022-2052) is expected to be approved at Cabinet and Council in February 2023.

3. Historically roofing works had been dealt with through the Housing Capital Programme as part of the external Housing Investment Programme which focused primarily on total flat block refurbishment. One-off roofing projects for individual street properties was delivered on an ad-hoc basis through the externals programme. Individual properties requiring major works are delivered through other work streams contained within the Housing Capital programme an example of this is properties with structural defects.
4. The Council tracks responsive repairs works and currently identifies trends/hotspot areas through the monthly Annual Service Charge financial reports at joint operational meetings with HTS. The monthly reports tracks progress of completed works, work in progress against a flat line monthly projection based on the previous years activity within each work stream.
5. In recent years three specific work streams had seen a year-on-year increase in backlog of works being recorded as WIP (work in progress), these were roofing, fencing and plastering. Roofing was a particular issue due to the increased cost associated with undertaking temporary repairs and the associated costs of scaffolding required to undertake the repairs.
6. In late 2019 a review of the roofing WIP was undertaken and broken down into work streams it was noted that the majority of the repairs related to guttering and associated rainwater goods. The review also identified that a number of the roofing repairs in the backlog works were deemed as beyond economical repair.
7. Following a number of meetings and discussions with HTS a process of referrals from HTS to the Council commenced. Initially there were delays associated with the inspection/referral process to the Council which ultimately led to a delay in processing properties through the system. This was primarily due to staffing capacity within HTS and the use of sub-contractors and the need for the Council to pre-inspect properties prior to committing to the programme.
8. Following the review the Council noted a significant increase in the volume of cases being referred for new roofs and a programme was developed and a budget allocation of £1million was identified within the Housing Capital Programme for 2020/21. Due to the ongoing demand a further £400,000 was allocated as part of the 21/22 programme and an injection of funding of £500,000 in December 2022.
9. As a result in the increased number of roofs failing across the stock the Housing Capital Programme was reviewed. This was aligned to the Asset Management priorities to take account of the failure rate in the last three years, having considered the following factors:
 - a) The age of stock.
 - b) Costs associated with repairing a roof which took the cost beyond economical repair;
 - c) Escalating costs associated with scaffolding.
 - d) Material availability; and
 - e) Climate change.

ISSUES/PROPOSALS

10. Business Process review – works concluded and now HTS and Council have a robust process in place for referrals with regular audits in place to monitor performance. The roofing referral list and programme list are now discussed monthly as the ASC meeting with HTS and Council staff in attendance. In addition to this, weekly audits are undertaken on the lists held by both parties to ensure that performance is on track and that there are no discrepancies in the works programmes.
11. Weekly performance reports on progress as set out in the table below are provided on a weekly basis for the Deputy Leader/Housing Portfolio Holder. All works associated with the 21/22 HTS programme of roofing works has now concluded, and work progress on the remainder of properties identified within 22/23 programme is as follows:

Works awarded and/or on site works in progress	30
In the design/party wall/building control or awaiting quotes from contractors	21
Specification stage	4
Total	55

12. Following the release of funds in late 2022 the team at Latton Bush have been actively working on progressing works on the remainder of properties referred. It is anticipated that all sites will be either completed or nearing completion by 31 March 2023, subject to the supply chain availability in terms of both roofing contractors and materials and sign off/conclusion of requirements associated with building control/party wall requirements. A list of the 2022/23 capital roofing registered is outlined in Appendix A.
13. The prioritisation of works is dependent on two main factors beyond economical repair and total component failure. The properties that fall into the financial category are in the main pitched tiled roofs and these are therefore given a medium to low priority. However, the second category tend in the main to be felted flat roofs and these are treated as a high priority due to the difficulties in application of any temporary repair. Flat roof failures also tend to have associated issues with saturated insulation causing damp and mould. Individual circumstances around the vulnerability of the resident are taken into account and are considered where appropriate when prioritising works.
14. The 2023/24 programme will primarily focus now on flat blocks due to a reduction in the number of individual street properties being referred for new roofs. The list of sites currently identified for inclusion in the programme are being surveyed and will be prioritised accordingly. It is important to note that Leasehold consultation requirements need to be factored into the delivery timetable for flat block works.
15. During the review it was noted that the vast majority of backlog work within the roofing work stream was associated with guttering works and in order to address

this and reduce the backlog, the Council has committed a further £300,000 to address this specific area of work. It is anticipated that these works will start in April 2023. A project plan is currently being developed with timescales for delivery.

16. The Council's Housing Management system (Orchard) has enhancements programmed in for 2023/24, as part of its Business plan IT programme. These new workflow systems will enable the Council to review stock condition data, asset management data and responsive repairs date collated through the new Orchard Asset Management system, enabling the Council to take a proactive approach to stock management through the use of structured data systems linking to the HTS Responsive Repair module.
17. The Council and HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd continue to move towards developing a set of shared objectives to provide further enhancements to the service they provide for repairs and maintenance to tenants and leaseholders. Throughout 2022/23, improvements have been targeted to the customer service which will be jointly implemented by both organisations, allowing customers to report repairs online, providing enhanced information about the status of a repair and improvements to the way repairs are scheduled and the time taken to complete them. An external review of the "service improvement targets" set out in the HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd's Business Plan 2023 is underway. This will involve new KPI's associated with the HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd service agreement and customer measures is in progress to ensure that they are aligned to the Council's Corporate Strategy.

How is performance managed?

- 18 Performance monitoring is managed through regular meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Housing Standards Board and Tenant/Leaseholder Panel meetings with decisions taken to Cabinet along with JFPR reports. In addition, the Councillor enquiry system respond to individual cases as appropriate. Tenants and Leaseholders are keep informed by the Housing Officer, leaseholder consultation exercises, responses to emails and telephone calls as well responses to enquiries and complaints.

IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Growth and Regeneration

As set out in the report.

Author: James Gardner, Assistant Director – Regeneration

Finance

Financial implications are in line with the HRA business Plan.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Housing

Implications contained within the report.

Author: Andrew Murray, Director of Housing

Communities and Environment

Nonspecific.

Author: Jane Greer, Director of Communities and Environment

Governance and Corporate Services

None specific.

Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services

Appendices

Appendix A – 2022-23 Capital Roofing Register

Background Papers

None.

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used.

ASC – Annual Service Charge

HRA - Housing Revenue Account

HTS - HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd

KPI – Key Performance Indicator

WIP – Work in Progress