

Housing Management Board Agenda



Date: Wednesday, 20 October 2021

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Distribution:

Members: Alex Marsh (Chair), Kerry Bailes, Andrew Brown, Carla Denyer, Tony Dyer, Richard Eddy, Paul Goggin, Tom Renhard, Pete Daw, Christine Jory and Ross Dallimore

Copies to: Donald Graham (Interim Director Homes and Landlord Services), Sarah Spicer (Business Innovation Manager) and Liz Cheetham (Engagement Team Leader)

Issued by: Steve Gregory, Democratic Services

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Date: Tuesday, 12 October 2021



Agenda

www.bristol.gov.uk

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To confirm as a correct record.

(Pages 4 - 9)

3. Public Forum

Up to 30 minutes is allowed for this item

Any member of the public or Councillor may participate in Public Forum. The detailed arrangements for so doing are set out in the Public Information Sheet at the back of this agenda. Public Forum items should be emailed to democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk and please note that the following deadlines will apply in relation to this meeting:-

Questions - Written questions must be received 3 clear working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting, this means that your question(s) must be received in this office at the latest by 5 pm on 14 October 2021.

Petitions and Statements - Petitions and statements must be received on the working day prior to the meeting. For this meeting this means that your submission must be received in this office at the latest by 12.00 noon on 19 October 2021.

Please note, your time allocated to speak may have to be strictly limited if there are a lot of submissions. This may be as short as one minute

4. Tenant Participation Review and Board Member recruitment

(Pages 10 - 17)

5. HRA Business Plan consultation

(Pages 18 - 22)

6. Allocation review

(Pages 23 - 32)

7. Moving Forward Together update

(Pages 33 - 37)

8. Date of Next Meeting



9. Any Other Business



Bristol City Council Minutes of the Housing Management Board

10 March 2021 at 6.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Alex Marsh (Chair), Charlie Bolton, Paul Goggin, Edwards, Christine Jory, Morris, Kerry Bailes and Ross Dallimore

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

Apologies were received from Councillors Nicola Bowden-Jones, Harriet Clough, Richard Eddy and Helen Godwin (Cabinet Member – Women, Families and Homes).

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - That the Minutes of the Housing Management Board of 10 December 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

Matters arising

Minute No. 4 (iv) - pilot project and diversity action would be covered during MFT presentation at agenda item 4.

Minute No. 3 (b) – parking on dropped kerbs, Service Manager had liaised with tenant and had taken appropriate action. Noted that the Council would always respond upon information received.

Minute No. 5 (i) - Minutes distribution was done and would continue in future.

3. Public Forum

None received.

4. Accessible Homes and TEC

The Private Housing and Accessible Homes Manager outlined the details of the report to the HMB emphasising that the Accessible Homes and TEC Hub was a team in Homes and Landlord Services focussed on assisting people to remain independent in their own homes. The team carried out a range of interventions to support residents to remain living independently in their own home from equipment to bedroom and bathroom extensions. The team arranged and oversaw the repair of bathing adaptations and the servicing and maintenance of lifts in council properties. In January 2020 a new TEC Hub had joined the team and was responsible for assessing for and providing Technology Enable Care to support adult care in providing innovative solutions to care in people's homes. The team was made up of a range of staff including Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Occupational Therapy Aids (OTAs) who were responsible for carrying out assessments of people's needs regarding access to their home environment.

The Board was informed that the Accessible Homes team had not been able to deliver on its home adaptation referrals over the last twelve to eighteen months due to the ongoing Covid-19 crisis, chronic staff shortages and significant contractual issues.

To mitigate and resolve these ongoing issues there were now robust plans in place to significantly reduce current waiting times over the coming six to eight months and improve delivery of the service.

Arising from questions the following points were made/clarified –

- a) The service carried out repairs to homes of disabled council, housing association and private tenants and to homeowners. The budget was split between the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Government's Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) for disabled homeowners and private tenants.
- b) Both budgets were well overcommitted and likely to be overspent due to a 20% increase in referrals, however there had been some additional funding from government (DFG) sources. This was primarily due to the Government's aspiration to discharge as many people as possible from hospital as soon as practical to ensure better care and wellbeing for people by being supported in their own homes.
- c) Noted that the workload was increasing, and it was therefore essential that there was value for money to achieve good outcomes. To support this there was an assessment process designed to give a bespoke outcome, it was acknowledged that this was not necessarily the same as what tenants/homeowners wanted.
- d) New build homes were being adapted to ensure they were fully accessible for disabled people and where properties were re-let adaptations would be made at that time.
- e) Noted there were 202,000 homes/units in the city and many were being modified for improved accessibility, although it was acknowledged that most walk up blocks were not likely to be suitable for this as most disabled people would find them more challenging with access, unless they were on the ground floor.

- f) Regarding younger families with disabled children noted that their needs were more specific and bespoke eg, families wanted to live near schools and family/friends.
- g) Generic adaptations eg, wider doors, were being completed wherever possible as resources allowed. Limited accessible, housing stock made it more challenging.

The Board noted the report and comments made during the discussion.

5. Moving Forward Together - update

The Business Innovation Manager (Housing and Landlord Services) gave a presentation on the updated Moving Forward Together draft model.

The Board was reminded of the draft model's six key priorities –

1. Design services from the resident's point of view.
2. Provide services that are visible and local.
3. Rebuild trust and relationships.
4. Be a diverse and inclusive service that fully represents the city of Bristol.
5. Engage residents and employees in a creative and meaningful way.
6. Give back accountability and decision making to residents and employees.

Arising from questions the following points were made/clarified -

- a) The Covid-19 lockdown had a direct impact on Housing Officers being able to be visible on site and the Director of Housing and Landlord services had left at the beginning of 2021, so it was felt that it was not the best time to make changes to the working structure of the housing service.
- b) The MFT programme was not ending as it had city wide support including the Council's Cabinet members and senior managers. The next step was to focus on the priorities put forward by residents and what could be achieved whilst still under lockdown and moving forward after.
- c) One of the main feedback from residents was the difficulty they faced getting in contact with Housing Officers so to improve on this Board members were advised that a new process would

be introduced which delivered a more team led approach, rather than a bespoke housing officer for a particular address. Residents would be able to speak to any housing officer to resolve issues on a 'one and done' basis. If a site visit was essential this would be done within two days and would be facilitated by a Service Level Agreement.

- d) Improvements to the service would be supported by ICT delivery namely Windows 10 which would enable the new process to operate efficiently through improved communication facilities such as Microsoft Teams and as new devices would be 4G enabled allowing housing officers to work more effectively on site.
- e) Work was ongoing to bring housing estates up to a common and acceptable standard using pictures of estates and defining what needed to be done to achieve this. Arising from this a question was asked about EIB/NOIB bids not being actioned. The Head of Housing Management and Estates undertook to follow this up outside of the meeting. **ACTION: Head of Housing Management and Estates**
- f) It was considered essential that in tandem with the changes being made via the MFT programme that staff were supported and trained to ensure that moral was improved, and the success of the new system/process assured. The Board was advised that there was a training programme scheduled which encompassed customer service, collaboration, ownership, and feedback to enable learning.
- g) Regarding staff retention there would be changes made to enable professional housing staff to secure career progression and hopefully this would lead to more staff remaining with the Council.
- h) Only urgent repairs were being done at the present time due to the Covid-19 restrictions but moving forward work would be done in a more joined up way, actively avoiding 'silo thinking', improvements included phoning ahead of appointments to ensure access to homes was secured and avoid return visits and the associated work to do this.
- i) Post covid-19 tenants would be contacted to make progress on outstanding non urgent work and information published on the Council's website.
- j) The Board noted a comment on the recent rent freeze decision made by the Council and the lack of consultation about this with council tenants. The Board was advised that there was no legal requirement for the Council to consult on rent changes however it was acknowledged that the Regulator of Social Housing was seeking greater governance for tenants.
- k) Some specific examples of repair work were reported and the Service Manager (Responsive Repairs - Housing and Landlord Services) undertook to investigate them outside of the meeting. **ACTION: Service Manager (Responsive Repairs - Housing and Landlord Services)**

The Board noted the presentation and the comments made during discussion.

Ross Dallimore joined the meeting at this point

6. Covid-19 - verbal update

The Service Manager for Responsive Repairs gave a presentation updating the Board regarding the Council's housing service and its response to the Covid-19 crisis.

Key points summarised were –

- a) There was always a balance to be struck between the needs of the Council's residents and the safety of its staff.
- b) Mutual property exchanges had been limited due to the Covid-19 situation, but some were prioritised where the situation was serious eg, domestic abuse.
- c) Recognised that for each lockdown the Council had learned lessons from previous ones and improved on how it reacted. This enabled the service to build in more resilience.
- d) Regarding the repair service trials were underway using videos, photos, skype and zoom to make progress and act upon requests. Although the technology had yet to be refined that was the direction of travel that the Council wanted to pursue going forward. Future aspiration was an 'Amazon' style quick and efficient service via a quick online activity.

The Board noted and appreciated the work that had been done to maintain services during the Covid-19 period so far.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Next meeting to be held in mid/late July 2021, date to be confirmed.

8. Any Other Business

- a) Question about Local Area Forums and older people not able to attend online to express their views. Common rooms not available due to Covid-19 restrictions. Currently there was a free dial in option available which was being used and found to be increasingly successful. There were free Zoom training sessions for residents that wanted it.
- b) Letters from BCC had return address to Wakefield and use paper copies not compatible with green policies. Officers noted the comment.
- c) Issue of tenants who were on the sex offender's register being housed within 100 metres of a school, but law states minimum half a mile. Application on housing register does not require declaration of a sex offence. Could go on the register as a question but the question might not be answered accurately. If a known sex offender was to be housed police would make the final decision. If a high-risk offender, they were not allowed to bid for a home. Other suggestions about how this issue could be improved were discussed.
- d) Mutual exchanges were refused for various reasons namely property too big or small or around a court action. Other than that, could not prevent a mutual swap, if it was a criminal activity it

could be stopped. People have a right to be housed and sometimes it was preferable to know where they were. Noted that there were barriers to action at BCC that were allowed elsewhere. Information exchange might be a solution.

Meeting ended at 7.50 pm

CHAIR _____

Moving Forward Together

Resident Engagement Review

A review of tenant and leaseholder participation with
Bristol City Council Housing and Landlord Services

Bristol City Council Housing Management Board

20 October 2021

Presented by Sarah Spicer & Lesha Wilson



Agenda Item 4



Why review resident engagement?

Residents said...

It can be difficult to make contact with the right person

You do not always listen and act upon my views

There are insufficient opportunities to get involved

BCC staff are not visible in their local area

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Key reasons:

1. Improving services and aligning with resident priorities (MFT)
2. Review LHF pilot - improve things that are not working well
3. Widen engagement, increase diversity of resident voices and those who actively get involved
4. Strengthen voice of residents in scrutiny and influencing decisions, service delivery, continuous improvement and future service
5. Adapt and learn from Covid 19
6. Statutory drivers - Consumer regulations and charter for Social Housing (White paper), Housing Ombudsman





Our vision for resident engagement

to provide a great service and ensure that all residents are encouraged to:

- be involved in the development of thriving communities
- participate in discussions to drive resident-led improvements
- provide feedback that enables us to cater the service to the needs of residents





Four ways to engage with residents



A new framework to improve access to services and engagement with residents across the city and communities

1. Access to Services

An 'always on' level of service provision and communication. A range of communication channels to be used. Digital channels should, wherever possible, be available to enable residents to complete certain actions related to their tenancy such as payment of rent or reporting repairs or to request advice, support or assistance from services.

2. Engaging Residents

Deeper level of engagement between H&LS and residents, to enable us to better understand residents' needs and deliver the outcomes residents have asked us to.

3. Engaging Communities

Working with others and acting as a broker to bring together relevant stakeholders in activities which help to create thriving communities and make a positive impact on the lives of residents.

4. Resident Participation and Insight Management

Making sure residents have a say about their services and hold us to account for how we are doing. We will make sure residents, service users and other stakeholders can influence decision-making and service improvements. We will use this insight, alongside other resident data, to meet our compliance requirements and improve resident satisfaction.





Our suggested promises to residents...

We will:

- ✓ Provide all residents with an equal opportunity to contribute, removing barriers to effective participation to make sure we hear from a diverse range of residents
- ✓ Create a culture of mutual trust, respect, partnership and ownership between residents, elected members, and officers at all levels, working together towards improving housing conditions and housing services
- ✓ Make resident engagement a live, continuous two-way activity
- ✓ Enable a joint process of agenda setting and information sharing
- ✓ Make sure decision making processes are open, clear, and accountable
- ✓ Develop good working relationships that are flexible and adapted to local circumstances
- ✓ Tailor resident engagement in areas to suit the particular needs of communities

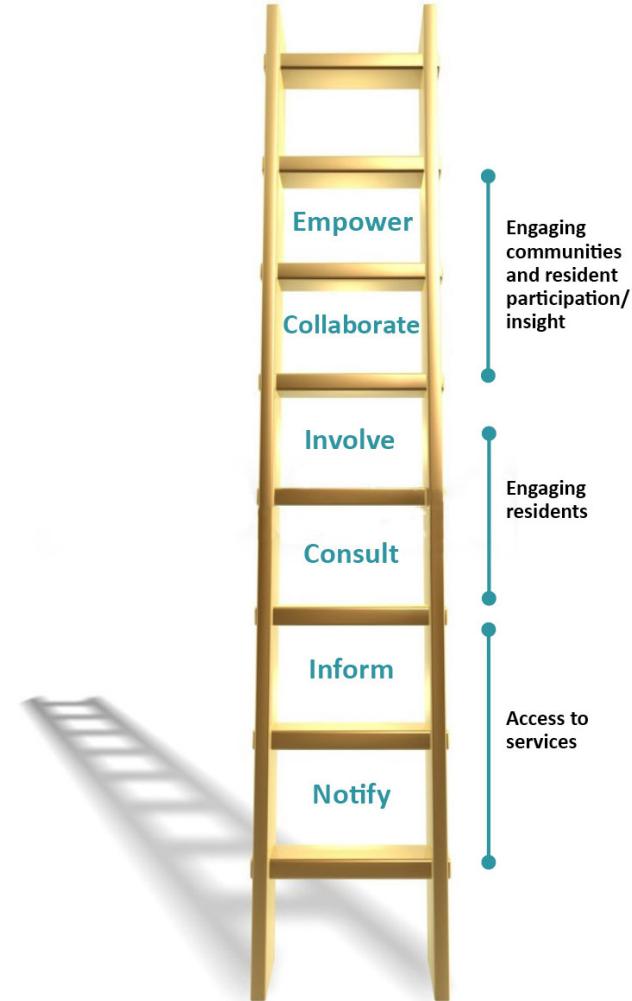
**We will be testing
these promises with
residents**

Resident engagement priorities



In 2021 we'll

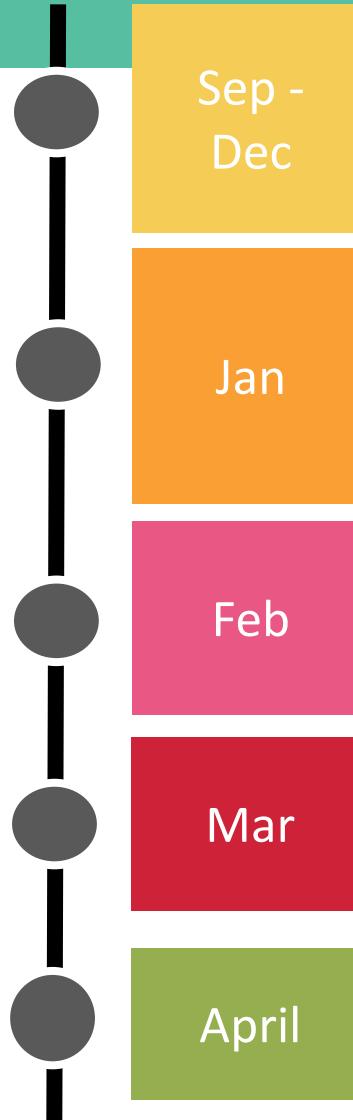
- ✓ Take steps to improve access to services
- ✓ Train colleagues on customer service and resident engagement
- ✓ Introduce estate walkabouts
- **Undertake a full review of resident participation including community engagement and resident participation within landlord services – to be completed by March 2022**
- Align what we are doing with requirements set out in the Social Housing White Paper and new consumer standards for social housing landlords





Format of review and timeline

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Sep - Dec
Set up tenant reference group – Housing Scrutiny Panel+
Promote review
Launch resident surveys – STAR, plus online tenant survey

Begin TPAS review – desktop self assessment (8 weeks)
Self-assessment activity with existing tenant panels
Internal colleague workshops or interviews with housing colleagues, members and other BCC teams

Feb
Commission field survey/focus groups/interviews with under-represented groups
Review existing channels and explore options for new

Mar
Identify best practice
Analyse and feedback results
Consider options and recommendations made by TPAS review

April
Decision point:

- Identify priority areas for improvement
- agree new framework



Outcomes



Increased voice of council tenants and leaseholders in Bristol

- Refreshed resident engagement offer developed and agreed with residents and colleagues
- Refreshed resident engagement structure for housing and landlord services
- New / improved engagement activities that are agile and link back to decision making Increased diversity of residents voices and involved residents
- Resources and support to encourage and enable resident engagement
- Approach to help understand impact of resident engagement – clear KPI's and clear feedback loop

Update to Housing Management Board

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Agenda Item 5

Bristol's big housing conversation

Investing in council homes

Help shape our 30-year plan for council homes



Highlights

- Consultation live in October and open until the end of November
- Advertised across the city, free papers, blocks, libraries and community centres
- Main focus is the online budget/investment simulator
- Other formats available if needed
- Open to everyone including council employees
- Paper form available on request

The Budget Simulator

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- Participants asked to balance the budget
- Using a series of sliders
- Managing the cost of investments
- Against the rent and borrowing amounts
- Also a simple form and available on paper if needed

[The big conversation - Bristol's Big Housing Conversation - bristol.gov.uk](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/housing-conversation)

The screenshot shows the Bristol Budget Simulator interface. At the top, a green bar indicates "You have an affordable plan". To its right, a black bar displays "Overspend £0.00m" and "On Budget 0.0%". Below this, the total expenses are shown as £3.66bn. A progress bar at the bottom indicates 0% (grey), 60% (light grey), and 100% (dark grey). A "Consequences" button is also visible. The main area contains a list of investment options:

- Investment: Improvements to Blocks Communal Areas and Estates
- Investment: Additional Services For Tenants
- Investment: Kitchens and Bathrooms
- Investment: Energy Efficiency & Carbon Neutral
- Investment: Building New Council Homes
- Income: Rent Amount for the next 3 years
- Income: Borrowing Amount

For the first investment item, there is a detailed description, a slider control set to 0%, and a comment input field.

[Investing in Council Homes Survey](#)
[\(Preview\) Microsoft Forms \(office.com\)](#)



Bristol's big housing conversation

Look out for publicity materials

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Bristol's big housing conversation

Investing in council homes

Help shape our 30-year plan for council homes

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Help shape our 30-year plan for council homes

We know we have a housing crisis in Bristol, and we want to be part of finding solutions, making sure more people have a roof over their head that they can be proud of.

What do you think should be our priority for spending and raising the money that we need?

- Investing in council homes – we need your view www.bristolhousingconversation.co.uk. The consultation is live until Friday 26 November.

If you would like this information in another language or accessible format, please email housing.conversation@bristol.gov.uk or call 0117 352 1444

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Investing in council homes

Help shape our 30-year plan for council homes

We know we have a housing crisis in Bristol, and we want to be part of finding solutions, making sure more people have a roof over their head that they can be proud of.

What do you think should be our priority for spending and raising the money that we need?

How do we get the right balance between investing in the standard of our existing homes, investing to reduce carbon emissions, and investing to build new homes?

We need your view to help shape the plan for delivering council homes across our city.

- Investing in council homes – we need your view www.bristolhousingconversation.co.uk. The consultation is live until Friday 26 November.

If you would like this information in another language or accessible format, please email housing.conversation@bristol.gov.uk or call 0117 352 1444

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL



Questions?

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Investing in council homes



Help shape our 30-year plan
for council homes



HMB Allocations Review Overview October 2021

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Housing Options – Paul Sylvester

Business Innovation : Projects

Slide 1



Reason for the Project

Home Choice Bristol is used by Bristol City Council to allocate social housing. It is a common housing register with a single set of qualification criteria, a guiding policy, priority banding system and arrangement for advertising properties (choice-based system). It is used by BCC and 18 housing associations.

The current lettings approach does not address the following problems:-

- It does not help create mixed and balanced communities - In fact, it appears to concentrate the numbers of households facing poverty, with disadvantaged backgrounds, ill health and support needs etc in social housing areas and estates
- Households in bands three and four receive few offers
- It does not make best use of currently adapted homes
- There are rising numbers of statutorily homeless households and this is likely to increase
- Some housing associations have introduced additional letting criteria, outside the HCB policy arrangements, particularly concerning financial capacity, to deal with perceived risk when offering (or not) housing to low-income households

What we aim to achieve

To deliver a future vision for the service that:

- Supports more mixed, balanced and sustainable communities
- Houses those in the greatest need
- Is more efficient and user friendly for applicants, the council, housing associations and other partner organisations
- Give realistic expectations about being housed to those who have joined the HCB register

Criteria for success

It was envisaged that this might affect:

- **Processes** – application, assessment and allocation processes and the underpinning policy
- **Organisational structure** – How we are organised to deliver i.e. changes to team structure and roles
- **Technology** – i.e changes to the current ABRITAS system or potential procurement of an alternative IT system in support of the revised approach
- **Information** – data cleansing, possible data migration, new performance measures

Mandate

The is to conduct a review of the allocations scheme to attempt to address these issues.

Areas under review:

- Common register and allocation policy
- Choice based approach vs. a managed list
- Open register/ qualification criteria
- Banding system
- Priority for specific groups
- Flexibility: local lettings, landlord agreed transfers, letting policies or priority for positive behaviours (asset based approach)

It was decided that the work was to be carried out in a way that enlisted community participation and involvement to identify and understand community needs and priorities.

Status & Proposed timeline

Completed to date:

Between Nov 2019 and March 2020, internal stakeholders were engaged and an online survey was conducted.

A series of Community based engagements was conducted, however COVID prevented concluding event. A Report was produced by Locality who facilitated these events.

Report attached to meeting request

Additional research was undertaken into the allocations policies of other Core Cities and elsewhere (which needs to be updated with significant changes that have taken place since March 2020 e.g. Manchester have introduced a new Allocations Scheme)

All of this forms input to the review.

- June to August: Pre-planning
 - Reconstitute Project Board & Steering Group (*Numerous changes*)
 - Evaluate Locality Report on Community Engagement outputs (Confirm scope)
 - Confirm timeline expectations
- Start work again September
 - Reconvene Project Board (Internal Delivery Management)
 - Reconvene Steering Group (Direct / Guide / Enable)
 - Constitute a Member Group and a Residents Working Group (Input, Co-design)
 - Housing Management Board briefing and steer (Influence/ Advise)
 - Autumn Housing Forum (Inform / Engage)
 - Additional Consultation (Advice/ Adults & Children's/Members etc)
 - Reconvene Community Groups & Housing Providers to review consultation output & action plans
 - Refresh Mandate and priorities
- Sept - Jan:
 - Formalise proposals (Amendments to policy, process, communication, teams, systems...)
 - Develop associated delivery plans (for the above)
 - Prepare for public consultation
- Jan/Feb: Commence Public consultation (6 weeks)
- April 2022 onwards – Deliver the change



Housing Options – Paul Sylvester

Business Innovation : Projects

Slide 8



Current Status

- Project Board and Steering Group have reconvened
- Member Working Group has been established but not yet engaged on this project
- Resident Working Group is WIP (To be broadly representative of those on the Housing Register including BAME, those with disabilities, the elderly, Care Leavers etc)
- Work has started on Policy proposal development
- Work has started on Communications Review
- We are planning a collective Journey Mapping exercise to review the process end-to-end to really understand the current customer experience
- We have some resourcing challenges (no official budget for the project in this financial year but it is deemed to be a priority under the Big Housing Conversation and will be running as an initiative under that banner)

Thank You

The vision for Moving Forward Together

To improve housing services, meet the needs of residents and make Housing and Landlord Services a great place to work, with equality and diversity at its heart

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Agenda Item 7



A blueprint for success

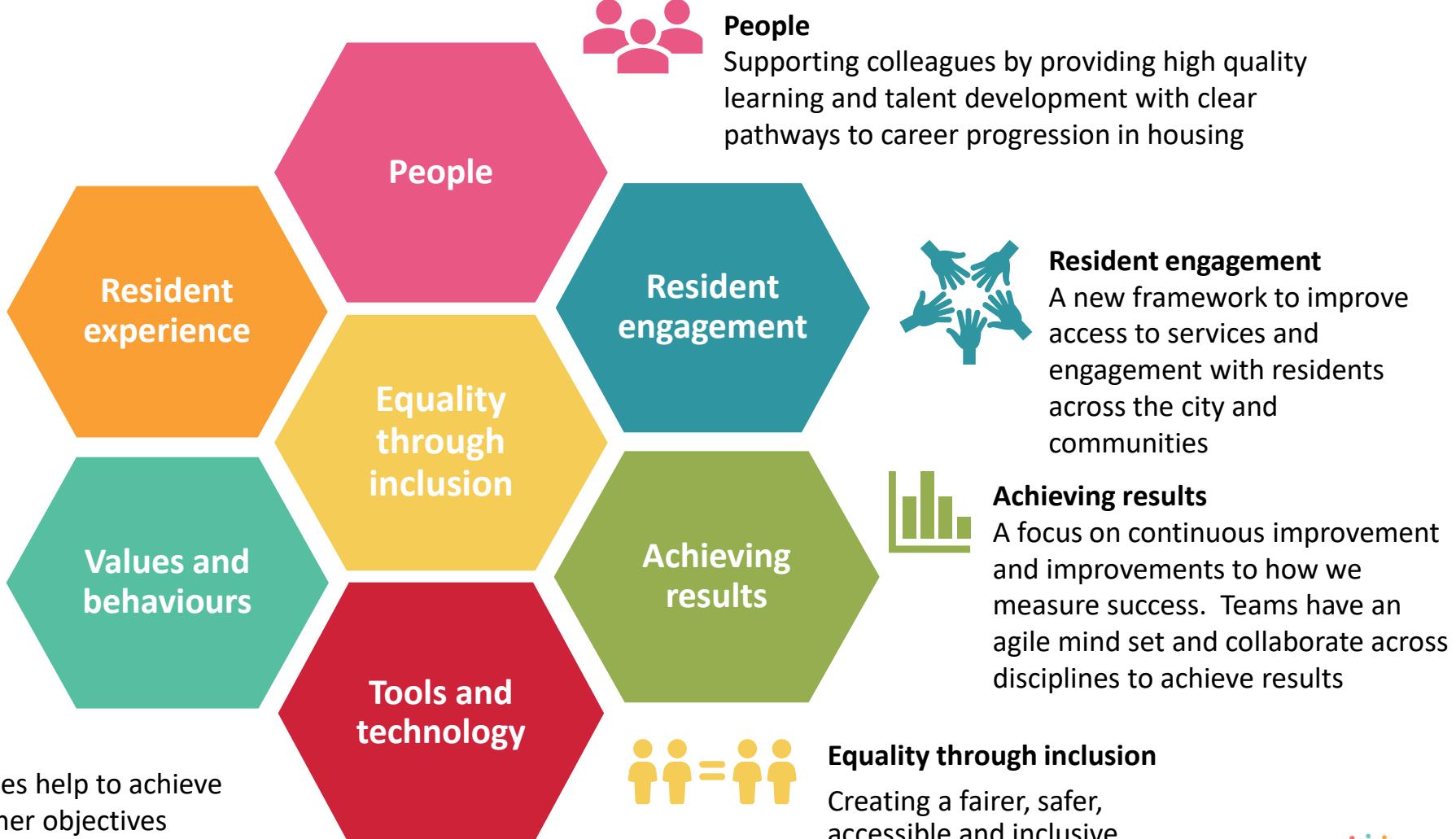


Resident experience
Updated policies and processes improve the resident experience and increase satisfaction

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Tools and technology
IT roadmap and activities help to achieve Moving Forward Together objectives



What we've been working on since June 2021

- A new blueprint for success – shared with colleagues, Cllrs and members
- Hearing from residents - running two types of surveys using a company called Acuity (transactional and resident satisfaction)
- Customer service training rolling-out – 300 colleagues to attend by the end of this year



What we've been working on since June 2021

- New rota to make housing officers easier to contact now live
- Equalities through inclusion – we're working with each of our services to find ways to make us more representative of the communities we provide services for
- Colleague survey launched – asking the important questions to understand how it feels to work for Housing and Landlord Services



What's next?

- Working on how we can learn more from the data we collect
- Resident satisfaction survey started in autumn
- Equalities through inclusion
 - Training to be rolled out to managers
 - Bespoke training for responsive repairs and planned maintenance colleagues
- New estate and neighbourhood standards to be set

