

# CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2021

## REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, ASSETS

### UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF HOUSING REPAIRS CONTRACT

#### EXEMPT INFORMATION

Not exempt

#### PURPOSE

This report provides information to committee on the implementation process for the new housing repairs contracts along with some performance statistics for the first year of the contract.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Committee note the contents of this report.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The previous repairs contract with Wates Living Spaces came to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and following a review on the future delivery of the repairs service it was agreed to procure a new 10-year contract and at the same time take the call centre back in house; historically calls had been managed directly by the contractor(s).

Following an EU & PCR compliant procurement process which measured both cost and quality and involved tenants in the selection process the contract for repairs was awarded to Engie.

Engie is a large company employing 17,000 staff within the UK and are engaged in similar contracts within the social housing sector.

Unfortunately, the implementation and commencement of this contract took place against the initial Covid lockdown period but despite this the contract was up and running on 1<sup>st</sup> April and in a position to deliver a repairs service. Initially the works were limited to Emergency Repairs, Out Of Hours repairs, compliance works and void works but by June 2020 sufficient measures were in place to expand into other categories of work to the point where a full repairs service was being delivered by August.

During the first 12 months of the contract Engie attended to 13,978 repair calls and completed works to 323 void properties. Right first time rates have been recorded at 94% and satisfaction, which is recorded monthly, has been between 90% & 97% with complaints averaging at fewer than 8 per month. Across the suite of Key Performance Indicators that are measured as part of this contract performance has been consistently high.

Across the construction industry there have been issues with the materials and labour supply chain; to date Engie has been able to continue delivering services due to their established supply chain links.

Performance in relation to gas servicing has been consistently high since the start of the contract and has been fully compliant with the Council's servicing and access policy. There have been 3841 services completed, 3791 repairs carried out and in excess of 200 boilers installed. Despite Covid access rates have remained high and tenants have worked alongside the call centre and contractor to facilitate access.

Due to changes in the way sheltered housing schemes were operated during the initial Covid lockdown periods Engie were engaged to undertake regular Health & Safety checks within the sheltered housing schemes, this was done to ensure that the schemes remained compliant and allowed the scheme managers to concentrate on providing support to residents.

For any Public Sector contracts consideration has to be given as to how the contract can deliver Social Value, a number of elements were built into the contract during the procurement phase, due to Covid it has not been possible to deliver all of these as many would require social interaction, however despite this Engie have managed to deliver a number of local projects including some local activities at Christmas, the creation of 4 apprenticeships, the progression of 9 people into employment opportunities, 4 pre-employability workshops and a total Social Value investment of £304,000.

Looking forward Engie are working with us to develop and publish a series of 'How To' videos that will provide information to tenants on how to carry out basic DIY tasks for those repairs that fall outside the Repairs Policy.

Despite being new to the Council and starting up during the initial Covid lockdown period the Call Centre has proven to be highly effective in receiving, diagnosing, logging and deploying repairs calls. The call centre was also instrumental in ensuring gas servicing rates remained high as they were making calls to tenants in advance of service visits to ensure that Covid Safe measures were in place. In addition to dealing with the incoming repairs calls the call centre has provided an invaluable service in capturing tenant feedback following a repair, this feedback is of a more qualitative nature and is collected in addition to the more quantitative KPI data. This feedback is shared regularly with contractor and repairs team as a mechanism to drive improvements.

Our own repairs team have continued to work on site throughout overseeing the delivery of the contract, ensuring that voids are completed and ensuring that the Council remains compliant in relation to gas servicing and fire risk assessments.

Moving forward we will look for improvements in overall service delivery and performance; we will look to implement more of the Social Value measures that were set out in the contract however it should be noted that it is anticipated that there will continue to be pressures on the supply and cost of both materials and labour for the foreseeable future and this is something that we will have to continue to monitor.

### **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None – this report provides an update only

### **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

None – this report provides an update only.

### **EQUALITIES IMPLICATION**

None – this report provides an update only.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

None – this report provides an update only.

**REPORT AUTHOR**

Paul Weston – Assistant Director Assets