

Agenda

Housing and Homelessness Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)

This meeting will be held on:

Date: **Wednesday 2 August 2023**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **Zoom - Remote meeting**

For further information please contact:

Alice Courtney, Scrutiny Officer

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Committee Membership

Councillor Lizzy Diggins (Chair)

Councillor Paula Dunne

Councillor Laurence Fouweather

Councillor Jabu Nala-Hartley

Councillor Rosie Rawle

Councillor Jo Sandelson

Apologies received before the publication are shown under *Apologies for absence* in the agenda. Those sent after publication will be reported at the meeting.

Agenda

	Pages
1 Apologies	
The following apologies were received prior to agenda publication: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Jo Sandelson Any additional apologies received will be reported at the meeting.	
2 Declarations of Interest	
3 Chair's Announcements	
4 Notes of the previous meeting	7 - 12
The Panel is asked to agree the notes of the meeting held on 05 July 2023 as a true and accurate record.	
5 Housing and Homelessness Panel Work Plan	13 - 14
The Panel is asked to consider the Work Plan and agree any amendments.	
6 Report back on recommendations	15 - 24
At its meeting on 12 July 2023, Cabinet considered the following reports from the Housing and Homelessness Panel and made responses to the recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families• Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey The Panel is asked to note Cabinet's responses to its recommendations.	
7 Expansion of the Housing First Programme	25 - 34
Cabinet, at its meeting on 09 August 2023, will consider a report from the Executive Director (Communities and People) on the Expansion of the Housing First Programme. Cllr Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing, Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services, Richard Wood, Housing Strategy and Needs Manager, Ossi Mosley, Rough Sleeping	

and Single Homelessness Manager and Brendan Lewis, Senior Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness Project Officer have been invited to present the report and answer questions. The Committee is asked to consider the report and agree any recommendations.

8 Update on Customer Complaints and Feedback [presentation]

35 - 44

The Panel is asked to receive a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion; and to agree any recommendations.

Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services; and Bill Graves, Landlord Services Manager have been invited to present this item and answer questions.

9 Action Plan Update on the Housing and Homelessness Panel Mini-Review on Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

45 - 52

The Head of Housing Services has submitted a report to inform and update the Panel on progress made in relation to its recommendations from the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Mini-Review.

The Panel is asked to note and comment on progress against the recommendations.

10 Dates of future meetings

The Panel is asked to note the dates and times of future meetings of the Housing and Homelessness Panel:

- 05 October 2023, 6pm
- 02 November 2023, 6pm
- 07 March 2024, 6pm

Meetings will take place remotely via Zoom.

Information for those attending

Recording and reporting on meetings held in public

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The Council asks those recording the meeting:

- To follow the protocol which can be found on the Council's [website](#)
- Not to disturb or disrupt the meeting
- Not to edit the recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings. This includes not editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule or show a lack of respect towards those being recorded.
- To avoid recording members of the public present, even inadvertently, unless they are addressing the meeting.

Please be aware that you may be recorded during your speech and any follow-up. If you are attending please be aware that recording may take place and that you may be inadvertently included in these.

The Chair of the meeting has absolute discretion to suspend or terminate any activities that in his or her opinion are disruptive.

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". The matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

Members Code – Other Registrable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing** of one of your Other Registrable Interests*** then you must declare an

interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members Code – Non Registrable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests, then you must declare the interest.

You must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room, if you answer in the affirmative to this test:

“Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting.”

Otherwise, you may stay in the room, take part in the discussion and vote.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member’s spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

** Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person’s quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

*** Other Registrable Interests: a) any unpaid directorships b) any Body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority c) any Body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Minutes of a meeting of the Housing and Homelessness Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee) on Wednesday 5 July 2023



Committee members present:

Councillor Diggins (Chair)

Councillor Dunne

Councillor Fouweather

Councillor Rawle

Councillor Sandelson

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Peter Matthew, Interim Executive Director of People and Communities

Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services

Richard Wood, Housing Strategy and Needs Manager

Alan Chandler, Senior Refugee and Migrant Officer

Paul Reid, Rapid Rehousing Manager

Amie Rickatson, Strategy & Service Development Manager

Pat Andrade, Tenancy Management Manager

Alice Courtney, Scrutiny Officer

Also present:

Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing

Apologies:

No apologies were received

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed Peter Matthew, who had recently joined the Council as Interim Executive Director (Communities and People).

3. Notes of the previous meeting

The Panel **agreed** the notes of the meeting held on 24 April 2023 as a true and accurate record.

4. Housing and Homelessness Panel Work Plan

The Panel considered the provisional Work Plan and the list of suggested items for Scrutiny-commissioned reports at Appendix A.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that the list of items at Appendix A had been scored and ranked in accordance with the TOPIC criteria (Timely, Oxford Priority, Public Interest, Influence and Cost).

The Panel agreed to add the following items to the Work Plan and requested that the Scrutiny Officer work with officers to schedule the items throughout the remainder of the municipal year:

- Housing First Acquisition Programme Progress/Outcomes
- The performance of Housing Associations operating within the City
- Housing Services Transformation (presentation)
- City of Sanctuary Accreditation (including review of Council's current position)

In discussion, the Panel agreed that it would determine whether a further item on the implementation of refugee resettlement in Oxford (evaluation, lessons learned and improvements) was required after consideration of agenda item 8: Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families. The Panel agreed to add the 'alternative 'innovative' solutions to the housing crisis' suggestion to the longlist of ideas for Scrutiny-commissioned reports for the next municipal year, for consideration by the next year's Panel.

The Panel discussed the possibility of commissioning an item on the implementation of the Selective Licensing scheme, which could take the form of a report or a presentation, and requested that the Scrutiny Officer engage with officers around the feasibility and indicative timescales of bringing the item forward in the current municipal year.

During the 2021/22 municipal year, the Panel had considered an item on 'Housing and Carbon Reduction'. There was discussion around whether or not the Panel should request a report updating on the decarbonisation programme. The Scrutiny Officer advised that this would likely now fall under the remit of the recently established Climate and Environment Panel, but consideration could be given to hosting a joint meeting with the Housing and Homelessness Panel. Panel members added that they may wish to have a particular focus on the impact of decarbonisation of Council homes on tenants. The Panel requested that the Scrutiny Officer look into this outside of the meeting.

In addition, the Panel requested that the Scrutiny Officer work with officers to schedule the following regular/standard items throughout the remainder of the municipal year:

- Housing Performance Monitoring
- DSS Discrimination Motion Update
- Tenants' Forum

The Head of Housing Services advised the Panel that Housing Services was due to review the Tenancy Strategy during 2023/24, which was linked to Registered Provider performance. The Panel noted the suggestion that this could link in with the broader piece of work suggested around the performance of housing associations and requested that the Scrutiny Officer work with the Head of Housing Services to define a proposed scope.

The Panel further requested the Scrutiny Officer to engage with officers around the possibility of training related to financial viability being delivered to the Panel, with an opportunity for discussion.

5. Report back on recommendations

The Panel **noted** the following Cabinet responses to its recommendations:

- Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28
- Tenancy Agreement

6. Housing Performance Monitoring

The Strategy and Service Development Manager introduced the report, which set out the Council's performance on a number of key performance indicators (KPIs) relevant to Housing Services for Quarter 4 of the 2022/23 municipal year.

In response to questions, the Panel was advised that:

- The reasons for the increase in homelessness were wide-ranging; there was no single issue which was causing the increase but it was apparent that the impact of the cost of living crisis was starting to hit. This was a trend which was being seen across the country.
- The Strategy and Service Development Manager would ask Finance colleagues for further information on why there had been a reduction in arrears of just over £250,000. The Panel had expected this figure may have increased as a result of the cost of living crisis.
- Work was underway to address the number of rough sleepers without an offer of accommodation, however this strand of work was a real challenge and there were acute pressures in Oxford which were also being seen across the country.
- The Council had a small amount of discretionary funding to place particularly vulnerable rough sleepers in hotel accommodation if required.
- The Council kept internal records on the reasons for residents becoming homeless; however the records were reliant on self-declaration from tenants, which was not always forthcoming. The data could be made available to the Panel at a future meeting.
- Housing Services was actively working to prevent homelessness by working with the Private Rented Sector, for example through the Landlord Mediation Programme.

The Panel requested the following amendments be included in future housing performance reports:

- % of Council owned housing stock that has an EPC rating below C – the definition of 'below C' needed to be clarified, as it was not clear whether 'below C' meant A-C or D-F;
- Total number of affordable homes in Oxford completed in year – the end of year target stated 'none set'; it was requested that this be reframed to state whether or not the Council was on target, as there was a multi-year target set;
- That a RAG rating based on whether a target was met or not met be included in future housing performance reporting, to aid accessibility.

7. Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families

Cllr Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report, highlighting that the commitments outlined in the report were consistent with Oxford's values as a City of Sanctuary and aligned with work to date supporting refugees.

Alan Chandler, Senior Refugee and Migrant Officer added that the proposed commitment to resettle 8 refugee families per year for 5 years was determined to be manageable and sustainable; the commitment was consistent with the commitment in previous years. He advised that a number of factors had fed into the proposed commitment to resettle 8 families per year for the 5 year period – including the availability of affordable accommodation in the City and capacity to offer wraparound support to those families.

In response to questions, the Panel was advised that:

- The commitment to resettle 8 families per year over the 5 year period was a minimum; there was a small amount of flexibility within the scheme to allow a small number of additional families to be resettled in any given year without impacting on resources.
- The commitment aimed to balance ambition to support as many refugee families as possible with the number of available properties coming forward.
- There were a range of variable and fixed costs related to the scheme.
- The report was set in the context of the variety of other work the Council does to support refugees, as such it should be considered in the round.
- It was difficult to predict the number of properties which would be forthcoming.
- The scheme would be reviewed annually in terms of financial viability.
- Families were monitored regularly to check how they were settling in and that they were accessing the support available; the first year of resettlement included intense wraparound support.
- Families were placed in various locations across the City, dependent on where properties became available; refugee families were not necessarily in close proximity to one another.

The Panel **agreed** to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The Council clarifies its position in relation to the flexibility within its commitment to resettle more than 8 refugee families per year for the next 5 years; explicitly stating that any significant surplus will be rolled into the following year's commitment, but that there is capacity to support a small number of additional families in any given year.
2. The Council considers the language used within future reports and documents to ensure that individuals and families entering the UK having fled war, conflict and/or persecution are given equal status regardless of their country of origin.

Richard Wood, Housing Strategy and Needs Manager, Alan Chandler, Senior Refugee and Migrant Officer and Paul Reid, Rapid Rehousing Manager left the meeting and did not return.

8. Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey 2022

Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report, highlighting that the results of the Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey 2022 had been positive overall. She advised that there were a few areas for improvement which the Council would be focusing on – namely communications and repairs; improvement work was already underway in respect of repairs, as new technology was due to be rolled out imminently which would enable tenants to log their own repairs on the system, which would streamline the process.

Pat Andrade, Tenancy Management Manager presented the survey's key findings to the Panel, alongside the actions which had subsequently been put in place. In response to questions, the Panel was advised that:

- The Council was undertaking a rolling stock condition survey which would inform capital programmes of work to improve housing stock in a strategic way; the worst performing homes would be surveyed first and the rolling survey would put the Council in a stronger position in terms of maintaining housing stock.
- The survey was conducted via a QR code and via telephone.
- It was difficult to encourage tenants to take part in the survey; but if the Council could demonstrate it had listened to the views of respondents then engagement may increase in future.
- Housing Services took note of best practice and had an ambition to embed a culture of learning from complaints to enable continuous improvement.

The Panel **agreed** to recommend to Cabinet that:

1. The Council includes information on the number of Council tenants per ward in future Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey reports.

9. Dates of future meetings

The Panel **noted** the dates and times of future meetings.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.02 pm

Chair

Date: Wednesday 2 August 2023

When decisions take effect:

Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired

Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued

All other committees: immediately.

Details are in the Council's Constitution.

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Housing and Homelessness Panel Work Plan

NB This work plan is provisional and is subject to change. Changes made outside meetings are agreed between the Scrutiny Officer and the Chair.

Cabinet items beyond two months in advance are not included on the work plan owing to the greater potential they will move or alternative items of higher priority arise in the meantime.

02 August 2023 – confirmed reports

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Expansion of the Housing First Programme	Yes	The report requests Cabinet approval of an acquisition programme of 12 self-contained properties for use in the Council's Housing First programme. It is intended that these purchases will be part funded by a successful bid into DLUHC's Single Homelessness Accommodation programme. To consider the report and agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services
Update on Customer Complaints and Feedback [presentation]	No	To receive a presentation followed by opportunity for discussion; and to agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services
Action Plan Update on the Housing and Homelessness Panel Mini-Review on Tenant Involvement and Empowerment	No	To consider the report and agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services

05 October 2023 – provisional reports

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Housing First Acquisition Programme Progress/Outcomes	No	To consider the report and agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services

02 November 2023 – provisional reports *[note – meeting date likely to change to early December 2023]*

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Housing Performance Monitoring 2023/24 (mid-year)	No	To consider the 2023/24 mid-year Housing Performance Report and agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services
City of Sanctuary Accreditation	No	To consider the report and agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services
Private Rented Sector Regulation Policies	Yes	The report requests Cabinet approval of revised enforcement policies following consultation. To consider the report and agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety

07 March 2024 – provisional reports

Agenda item	Cabinet item	Description	Cabinet portfolio	Lead officer
Housing Services Transformation [presentation]	No	To receive a presentation followed by opportunity for discussion; and to agree any recommendations.	Cabinet Member for Housing	Nerys Parry, Head of Housing Services

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Report of: Housing and Homelessness Panel
Title of Report: Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present Panel of the Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
Key decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Cllr Lizzy Diggins, Panel Chair
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing
Corporate Priority:	Deliver More Affordable Housing; Support Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.	

Appendices	
Appendix A	Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

Introduction and overview

1. The Housing and Homelessness Panel met on 05 July 2023 to consider a report concerning Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families. The report, which is due for Cabinet consideration on 12 July 2023, recommends that Cabinet approves the resettlement of a minimum of 8 refugee families per year from any of the resettlement schemes highlighted in the report for a period of 5 years from 2023 to 2028, on the condition that the requirements in paragraph 21 of the report are consistently met to ensure scheme viability; and delegates authority to the:
 - Executive Director (Communities and People), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, to agree the resettlement of additional refugees above this allocation (which will incur additional expenditure from

Home Office grant funding for support provision) subject to sufficient grant funding; approves the use of Home Office grant funding of up to £1,313,840 (see Appendix 2 of the report) to procure the provision of 2 years of person centred support for each refugee family arriving in Oxford during the 5 year period between 2023 -2028;

- Head of Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to approve the use of the Home Office grant funding to procure additional person centred support as required;
 - Head of Housing in consultation with the Head of Financial Services/S151 Officer, the Head of Law and Governance and the Cabinet Member for Housing to allocate the approved budget and enter into contract(s) with a provider(s) for the provision of person centred support.
2. The Panel would like to thank Councillor Linda Smith (Cabinet Member for Housing), Nerys Parry (Head of Housing Services), Richard Wood (Housing Strategy and Needs Manager), Alan Chandler (Senior Refugee and Migrant Officer) and Paul Reid (Rapid Rehousing Manager) for attending the meeting to answer questions.

Summary and recommendations

3. Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report. There was an ongoing need to resettle refugee families, as globally there were circa 100 million forcibly displaced people. The commitments outlined in the report were consistent with Oxford's values as a City of Sanctuary and aligned with work to date supporting refugees. The proposed commitment to resettle 8 refugee families per year for 5 years was determined to be manageable and sustainable; the commitment was consistent with the commitment in previous years. A number of factors had fed into the proposed commitment to resettle 8 families per year for the 5 year period – including the availability of affordable accommodation in the City and capacity to offer wraparound support to those families.
4. The Panel asked a range of questions, including questions relating to the rationale behind the commitment to resettle 8 refugee families per year for the next 5 years; whether the Council's commitment could be more ambitious; financial viability of the scheme; placement of families within the City; how the scheme was monitored; and the support available to refugee families.
5. In particular, the Panel sought clarification on the Council's scope to increase the number of families resettled per year. A tension was identified within the report, in that it stated the commitment was to resettle a *minimum* of 8 refugee families per year; but the report also stated if an excess of 8 properties per year was secured, then that excess would contribute to the following year's commitment. The two statements did not appear to align. The Panel was advised that the proposal was to resettle 8 refugee families per year, but if that target was reached quickly and additional properties were secured in any given year, there was a small amount of flexibility to resettle more than 8 families per year. However, any large increase to the commitment of 8 families per year was not possible as significantly more resource would be required. The Panel agreed

that this position was not set out clearly in the report and would benefit from clarification.

Recommendation 1: That the Council clarifies its position in relation to the flexibility within its commitment to resettle more than 8 refugee families per year for the next 5 years; explicitly stating that any significant surplus will be rolled into the following year's commitment, but that there is capacity to support a small number of additional families in any given year.

6. The Panel had a broader discussion around the differences in language used to describe individuals' status, depending on which scheme they arrived in the UK under. It was noted that the term 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' were often used to describe individuals from Afghanistan and Syria, for instance, yet individuals from Ukraine were referred to as 'guests'. While the Panel acknowledged that this mirrored the language used by the Government within its various resettlement schemes, it agreed that there was no requirement for the Council to perpetuate feelings of inequality between individuals from different countries who had all fled similar situations of war and conflict by using the same potentially divisive language.

Recommendation 2: That the Council considers the language used within future reports and documents to ensure that individuals and families entering the UK having fled war, conflict and/or persecution are given equal status regardless of their country of origin.

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Appendix A

Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Housing and Homelessness Panel of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Housing and Homelessness Panel on 05 July 2023 concerning Future Resettlement Commitments for New Refugee Families. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1) That the Council clarifies its position in relation to the flexibility within its commitment to resettle more than 8 refugee families per year for the next 5 years; explicitly stating that any significant surplus will be rolled into the following year's commitment, but that there is capacity to support a small number of additional families in any given year.	Yes	The report recommends to Cabinet a commitment of 8 households a year for resettlement, as long as conditions outlined in paragraph 21 are met. In addition, it recommends delegation of authority to exceed that number in any given year. This provision has been included to ensure that, if opportunities to rehouse more households become available over the 5 year period, the ability is there to proceed quickly without additional approval, in line with the Council's strategic objectives. It is not anticipated that the Council would exceed the 8 households significantly each year, due to resourcing limitations, but in particular due to the very limited supply of suitable housing for families needing resettlement, as part of the broader supply and housing need challenges Oxford is facing. Any households resettled through the scheme above the 8 annually will be counted against the profile for the next year. This is because over the course of the 5 years we are aiming to resettle 40 families and this provision has been included as resettlement is often inconsistent, with

		households sometimes arriving rapidly in a short period, followed by gaps, driven by our ability to procure properties. It may be that in practice we have some years that the 8 is exceeded, followed by other years when it is not. This provision therefore provides an ongoing view on if we are on track to meet our overall commitments or not.
2) That the Council considers the language used within future reports and documents to ensure that individuals and families entering the UK having fled war, conflict and/or persecution are given equal status regardless of their country of origin.	Yes	The upmost effort goes into using the right language when drafting reports and documents in order to be clear in meaning, and to describe the status of clients who have come to Oxford fleeing war, conflict and persecution in the most appropriate language. Added effort will be put into future reports to seek to use more consistent language to describe different groups of people when possible. However, in order to ensure accuracy and clear legal meaning, at times reports must use the language prescribed in legislation, to ensure clear application of decisions made by Cabinet and Council, and to ensure compliance with ring-fenced central government funding.

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Report of: Housing and Homelessness Panel
Title of Report: Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present Panel of the Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
Key decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Cllr Lizzy Diggins, Panel Chair
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing
Corporate Priority:	Deliver More Affordable Housing; Support Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.	

Appendices	
Appendix A	Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

Introduction and overview

1. The Housing and Homelessness Panel met on 05 July 2023 to consider a report concerning the results of the Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey 2022. It was recommended that the Panel consider the report and agree any recommendations.
2. The Panel would like to thank Councillor Linda Smith (Cabinet Member for Housing), Nerys Parry (Head of Housing Services) and Patricia Andrade (Tenancy Management Manager) for attending the meeting to present and answer questions.

Summary and recommendations

3. Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report. The results of the Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey 2022 had been positive overall, however there were a few areas for improvement which the Council would be focusing on – namely communications and repairs. Improvement work was already underway in respect of repairs, as new technology was due to be rolled out imminently which would enable tenants to log their own repairs on the system, which would streamline the process. Patricia Andrade, Tenancy Management Manager presented the survey's key findings to the Panel.
4. The Panel asked a range of questions, including questions relating to how the Council planned to address any tenant dissatisfaction highlighted by the results; how the Council prioritised repairs to housing stock; survey methodology; and best practice within the identified areas for improvement.
5. The Panel was interested in understanding the total number of Council tenants in each of the City's wards, as the current report did not make it easy for Members to ascertain whether the number of survey responses from their respective wards represented a large or small proportion of the total number of Council tenants in that ward. The Panel agreed that this would be a helpful inclusion in future reports.

Recommendation 1: That the Council includes information on the number of Council tenants per ward in future Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey reports.

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Appendix A
Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of
the Housing and Homelessness Panel of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Housing and Homelessness Panel on 05 July 2023 concerning the Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That the Council includes information on the number of Council tenants per ward in future Tenant Satisfaction (STAR) Survey reports.	In Part	The STAR is one questionnaire per property, therefore it would be clearer if the information is based on the number of properties per ward which can be provided.

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To: Cabinet
Date: 9 August 2023
Report of: Executive Director (Communities and People)
Title of Report: Expansion of the Housing First Programme

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To seek approval for the expansion of the Housing First programme following a successful bid to the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme
Key decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing
Corporate Priority:	Deliver More Affordable Housing, Support Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-28

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves to:	
1.	Approve the Council's participation in the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP) in order to purchase 12 new units for Housing First alongside commissioning support for a total of 17 units, including 5 units drawn from general needs stock;
2.	Recommend to Council the allocation of a £2,888,000 capital budget (of which £1,688,000 will be borrowed by the Housing Revenue Account) for the Council's investment to purchase the properties as part of the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme as outlined in paragraph 19, the balance of which will be met by the SHAP grant;
3.	Recommend to Council a budget allocation of £600,000 to cover revenue costs to commission support providers to deliver support for the 17 units of Housing First. The funding equates to 3 years' worth of revenue but is spread over 4 financial years (para 18); and
4.	Delegate authority to the Executive Director (Communities and People) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer, to enter into agreements and contracts to facilitate the purchase by the Council of housing (to be held in the HRA) within the identified budget and within the project approval, as well as to

enter into or amend agreements or contracts in relation to support provision (revenue spend) in line with procurement requirements.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Housing First Principles
Appendix 2	Risk Register

Introduction and background

1. In 2021/22 the Council implemented a Housing First programme, to help resolve the homelessness of some of the most disadvantaged people in our community. Cabinet approved a capital programme of acquisition (11 November 2020) and the procurement of a support service (16 June 2021) to enable the service to be established.
2. The project was funded by successful capital and revenue bids from two of the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) rough sleeping programmes. These were the Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) and the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP).
3. These programmes provided capital funding to purchase 15 self-contained units, and revenue funding for a support service for these and 25 further properties (20 to be made available from council housing stock and 5 to be provided by A2 Dominion).
4. This year a third programme, the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme, has been launched by DLUHC. The council has successfully bid for £1.2 million to support the purchase of a further 12 units, and revenue funding of £600,000 to support these 12 units and a further 5 properties (to be made available from existing council housing stock). The revenue funding will provide three years of support for each property. The properties will be purchased by the Council's Housing Revenue Account, partially supported by the SHAP grant. This report seeks approval for the delivery of this extension to the Housing First programme.

Housing First

5. Housing First is an internationally evidenced housing intervention, which has proven successful in supporting people with multiple and complex needs to maintain housing. The main premise is that an individual should not need to prove they are ready for housing and is instead given a permanent offer of their own home, along with an intensive long-term support package to enable them to maintain it. A permanent offer of a home does not mean that they will remain in the same place for the rest of their life. It means that the offer of housing is permanent; if they lose or leave their accommodation they will be supported to find another home.
6. It is acknowledged that the Housing First cohort may experience difficulties along the way, but that support will always be there. Unlike traditional homelessness services, the only condition placed on the individual is a willingness to maintain a tenancy. Support is bespoke to the needs of the individual, and they are able to engage with this on their own terms. The support and accommodation are not linked and are generally not delivered by the same provider. This means support can flex according to the person's needs and aspirations over time.

7. The delivery of more Housing First accommodation is a key element of both the Council's new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, and the Countywide Homelessness Strategy. Enabling the delivery of more Housing First units is integral to the success of both strategies, which seeks transformation in our approach to rough sleeping and single homelessness, so that we can ultimately end the need to sleep rough in the city. Appendix 1 provides a summary of Housing First principles.

Housing First in Oxford

8. The current Housing First programme in Oxford (as outlined in paragraphs 1-3) is delivered by St Mungo's and A2 Dominion. Two providers were commissioned in order to provide choice to residents. There are currently 21 Housing First properties occupied, and tenants are due to move into a further five properties imminently. The first tenancy commenced in March 2022.
9. The Council's aim for this project has been to deliver a high-fidelity Housing First project. This is because the evidence from a range of projects nationally shows that high fidelity models which adhere to the Housing First principles closely have the best chances of success. Under the Housing First model, providers have been able to assist the most vulnerable people and/or those with the most chaotic housing history in the city into stable accommodation.
10. At the time of writing there had been no evictions or abandonments from any of these properties. This is a considerable success, with the average tenancy sustainment rate for Housing First nationally being 80%. A crucial factor in the success of the project has been the close working with Tenancy Management, the Rents Team and Antisocial Behaviour Teams, as well as external partners like Thames Valley Police and Turning Point (provision of drug and alcohol misuse services).
11. Despite the success of Housing First in Oxford so far, it is not without its challenges. One of the main challenges has been to release units of housing stock into the project. Owing to the high demand for one bed properties, it has been difficult to release sufficient units of stock for this project, without disadvantaging other groups in high housing need, such as care leavers or people in temporary accommodation awaiting a home. With 21 units occupied, and a further 5 soon available making the total units available to the current provision of Housing First 26 out of the 40 units that were planned and bid for under NSAP and RSAP.
12. An increase in supply has fed through to more properties being made available for Housing First this year, and we aim to reach a total of 35 units by the end of 2023/24 for the current programme. This will be achieved by releasing 8 more units from the Council's existing stock along with an additional unit from A2Dominion's stock in city.
13. Further breakdown of units available:

	NSAP/RSAP funded	Units available	Estimated units available
--	-----------------------------	----------------------------	--

		June 23	March 24
Oxford City to purchase	15	15	15
Oxford City to release from existing stock	20	7	15
A2 Dominion	5	4	5
Total	40	26	35

14. We have not been able to release 5 of the units from our own stock that we were due to under RSAP/NSAP due to the pressures outlined above. This has been acknowledged by DLUHC and these units and support can now be delivered under SHAP (see below).

SHAP bid

15. In preparing for the SHAP bid, 50 people were identified who are currently known to homelessness services and who are thought to require a Housing First solution. However, given the current low level of suitable one-bedroom properties for sale in the City and the need to acquire properties for other purposes to meet the priorities of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, a total of 12 was considered to be at the upper end of forecasts for acquisitions by the end of the programme on 31 March 2025. Given the current challenges of making our own stock available for Housing First and be supported by revenue funded support, 5 properties are considered to be realistic to release from Council existing stock for this purpose, given the challenges outlined above.
16. The 12 units purchased as part of the SHAP bid will be bought by the Council's Housing Revenue Account, and will become Council social housing stock. Tenants will be issued secure tenancies (following a standard introductory period) and will be charged a social rent, in line with other council tenants.
17. The additional acquisitions into the HRA stock will likely lead to refurbishment work needing to be completed at some of the new units in order to bring them up to Decent Homes standards, as well as an EPC C rating. It will also require additional conveyancing work to be undertaken by Legal Services. Funding for all this work has been incorporated into the bid. This is at a level that has proven sufficient for other acquisitions. The Affordable Supply Team will take steps to ensure all properties purchased are of a standard that would not require levels of investment beyond the budgeted envelope for the programme, although this further reduces the number of suitable units for purchase.
18. Persons moving into the purchased Housing First Units will be supported by dedicated Housing First support workers. The model has a low 'client-support worker' ratio, where one worker supports a maximum of 6 or 7 persons. Engagement and relationship building starts before a person moves into the accommodation and continues when the person moves into the accommodation. We have been allocated a total of £600,000 in revenue funding over a period of 4 financial years to staff the project. The procurement of the support provision using

this revenue funding will be arranged in due course. The funding profile is as follows and equates to a phased roll-out of the project based on the acquisition process:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Revenue	£66,000	£134,000	£200,000	£200,000
Units Occupied	6	12	17	17

Financial implications

19. The acquisition programme will be targeting one-bedroom properties with a target price of £200,000, to be purchased over two years. The total cost of acquisition is expected to be £2,888,000 (allowing for ancillary costs, refurbishment and contingency), with £100k per property to be provided from the SHAP programme to support the purchase costs. This results in a net borrowing cost to the HRA of £1,688,000, or £844,000 per year in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
20. Modelling undertaken in preparation for the SHAP bid showed that the scheme on its own achieved an Interest Cover Ratio (ICR) rating of 1.15 which means it is able to cover the expected interest cost of borrowing using the rental income generated with a margin of 15%. The overall impact on the overall HRA Interest Cover Ratio by including this scheme is negligible and for 2023/24 remains at the interim required minimum of 1.10. The full breakdown of the ICR at a scheme level is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. ICR Calculation

Item	Value
No. of properties	12
Total Cost	£2,888,000
Borrowing Required	£1,688,000
Annual Rent	£68,166
Estimated interest of 3.5%	£59,080
ICR	1.15

Legal issues

21. The procurement, commissioning and award of contracts for this service will be undertaken in compliance with the Council's contract rules contained in part 19 of its Constitution.

Level of risk

22. The Risk Register is attached as Appendix 2.

Equalities impact

23. Housing First is an intervention targeted at some of the most vulnerable members of society. Housing first is contained in the Councils Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which had a full equality impact assessment carried out on it before its adoption by Council. The service will be subject to monitoring of its performance and impact on individuals including matters of equality and diversity.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

24. As outlined above properties purchased through this scheme will be brought up to an EPC rating of C, if they do not already meet this standard.

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Background Papers: None

Appendix 1 – Housing First principles

Homeless Link are acknowledged as experts in the Housing First approach. They have developed a set of principles for the delivery of Housing First, with advice and support from the University of York, with feedback from Housing First providers and experts both in the UK and internationally. These are summarised as follows:

People have a right to a home

Bolstering the supply of affordable housing options and keeping any evictions to an absolute minimum. Removing the conditionality from the system, e.g. so people do not have to first prove they are tenancy ready, thereby earning the right to a home. The system views housing as a human right.

Flexible support is provided for as long as it is needed

Our need for support naturally fluctuates; it is almost impossible to predict exactly how much support an individual will need, around which issues and for how long. Yet support for those experiencing homelessness tends to be commissioned in time-limited blocks; some people experience 'cliff-edges' where support suddenly ends, some may be over-supported at times. Instead, a housing-led system allows for support to flex around a person in their own home when they need it.

Housing and support are separated

This separation means that the housing offer is not dependent on the support offer; so if the support comes to an end, the person does not have to move. Conversely, a person does not have to move into a buildings-based project in order to access support; and the support relationship can stay with a person where they want or need to move. Separating the support from the landlord function can also help to clarify the role of different workers, thereby building better relationships (in our research with people using the system, some felt staff are more interested in the building than the people).

Individuals have choice and control

Choice is often designed out of the service response to single homeless people: people are 'placed', 'sent', 'signposted' and, if very lucky, 'housed'. Research suggests that increasing a person's sense of choice and control improves their outcomes and that services are less effective when they are "done to people". Instead, a housing-led system treats people experiencing homelessness as adults and citizens.

The service is based on people's strengths, goals and aspirations

Seeing the person as a survivor, as an individual, as a person, rather than a problem to be managed, and recognising that everyone has strengths. In a housing-led approach, we move from assessments which focus on risks, needs and eligibility to more creative assessments which recognise the strengths, resources and relationships the person brings to the situation and works with them to consider how they can build on these.

An active engagement approach is used

Recognising that services are often 'hard-to-reach', and that closing the case of a person who is experiencing homelessness, substance use or mental health challenges because they behave in a way we find challenging is often counter-productive. Instead, professionals are responsible for proactively engaging their clients; making the service fit the individual instead of trying to make the individual fit the service.

A harm reduction approach is used

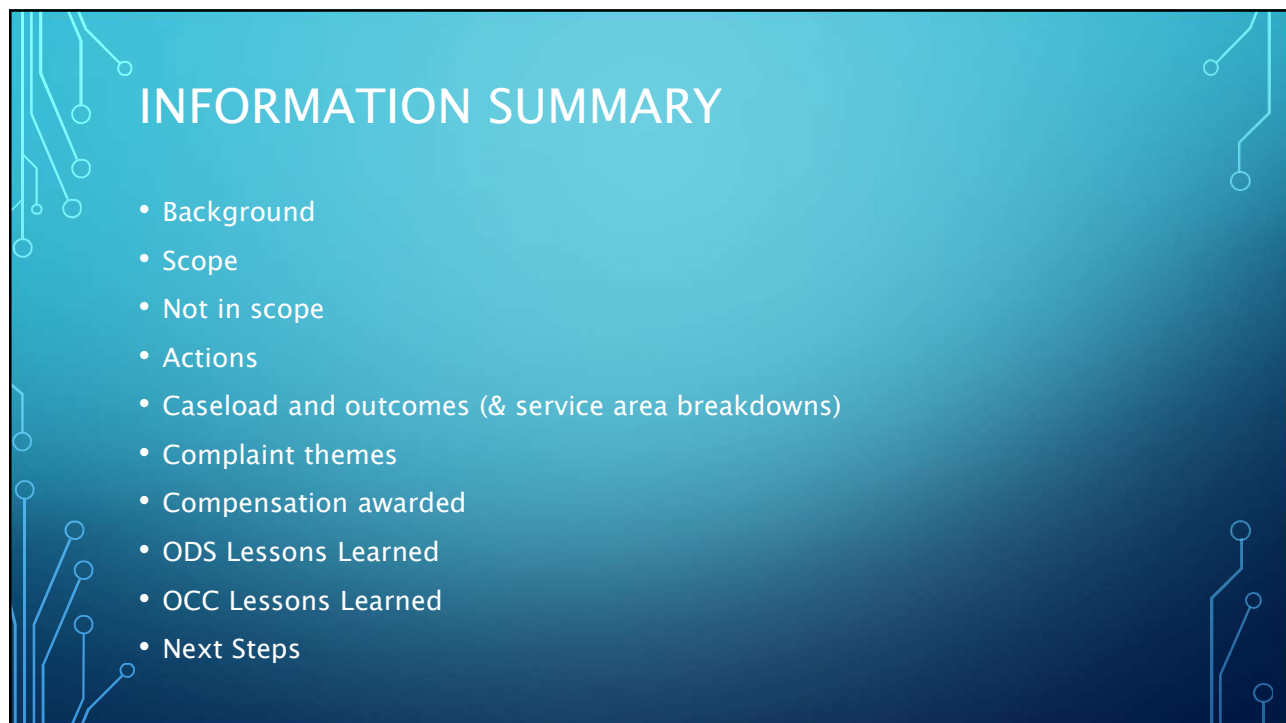
Recognising that abstinence from substance use and other potentially harmful behaviours is not desirable and/or realistic for many at this point in time, and that these individuals may disengage if pressured into abstinence by professionals. Instead, workers support

individuals to set their own goals and develop their own strategies to manage risk. A housing-led approach recognises the harm that comes from all forms of homelessness (especially rough sleeping) and seeks to reduce this by avoiding homelessness or by supporting a person to exit homelessness as quickly as possible.

Appendix 2: Risk Register

Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence	Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current		Residual		Comments	Controls				
							I	P	I	P	I	P		Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
Tenancy Sustainment	Tenants are evicted due to arrears, antisocial behaviour or other reasons	Opp	Appropriate support not provided	Potential increase in rough sleeping	14/6/23	Ossi Mosley	3	3	3	2	3	1		Ensure Housing First services are delivered with a high fidelity to Housing First principles	31/3/24	In Progress	25	Brendan Lewis
Housing First acquisition	Properties are suitable for HF tenants due to location, property type or other reasons	Opp	Limited availability of one bed properties	High failure rate of HF tenancies	14/6/23	Paul Wilding	3	3	3	3	2	2		Review previous acquisition programmes with affordable development team. Work with Tenancy Management, Anti social behaviour and providers to manage any risk associated with certain locations.	31/3/25	In Progress	25	Brendan Lewis
Increase in demand for Housing First	Continual flow to the street leads to increasing demand for Housing First accommodation	threat	Cost of living and increasing housing affordability gap leads to an increase in homelessness and rough sleeping	Service unable to meet demand	14/6/23	Ossi Mosley	3	3	3	2	3	1		Ensure prevention work is increased across Housing Needs. Adopt a system wide approach to managing homelessness.	31/3/25	In Progress	10	Ossi Mosley

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Background

- Housing Ombudsman launches Complaint Handling Code July 2020
- Updated and strengthened April 2022
- Universal definition of a complaint
- Providing easy access to the complaints procedure and ensuring residents are aware of it, including their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service
- The structure of OCC complaints procedure – only two stages and clear timeframes set out for responses
- Ensuring fairness in complaint handling with a resident-focused process
- Taking action to put things right and appropriate remedies
- Creating a positive complaint handling culture through continuous learning and improvement
- Demonstrating learning in annual reports
- Annual self-assessment against the Code

Scope

- All complaints relating to the housing landlord function that would be covered by the Housing Ombudsman
- Complaint Handling
- Day to day repairs
- Estate Management
- OX Place
- Planned Maintenance
- Anti-social behaviour (excluding statutory nuisance)
- Tenancy and Leasehold Management, Involvement and Sustainment
- Oxford Direct Services
- Incomes (Rent team)
- Contact Centre

Not in Scope

- All complaints relating to the housing landlord function covered by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman
- Housing Allocations
- Homelessness
- General Housing Advice
- Housing Benefit cases
- Housing Grants
- Statutory Noise Nuisance & ASB not within the remit of a social landlord
- Sales, including the Right to Buy
- Planning & Building Control
- Parks and Communal Estate Maintenance

Actions

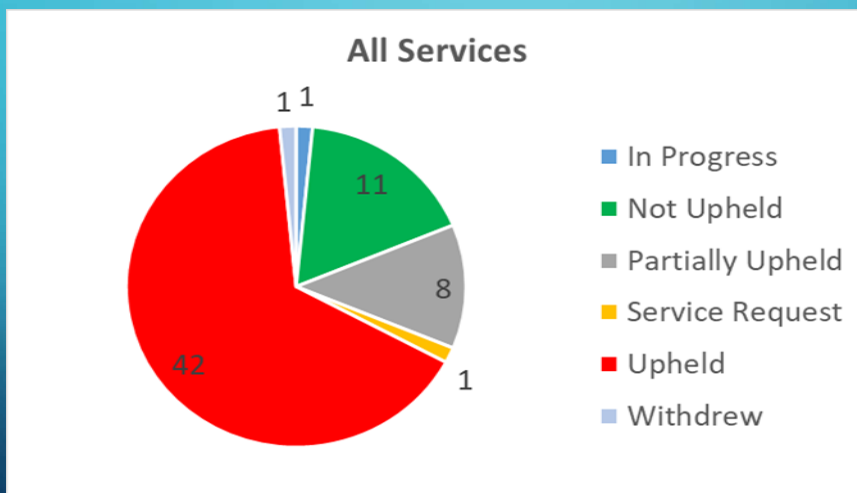
- ✓ Updated corporate complaints process, aligned to Housing Ombudsman Code
- ✓ Clear definition/parameters of complaints adopted
- ✓ Two stage process now in place
- ✓ Procedure clearly set out, including response times
- ✓ Clear guidance on unreasonable behaviour & vexatious complaints
- ✓ Dedicated Customer Care & Complaints Officer in Landlord Services
- ✓ Improved tracking and management of cases
- ✓ Integrated working with ODS Complaints and Customer Care Officer
- ✓ Joint working with LGA Ombudsman Complaints Officer
- ✓ Designing joint OX Place Complaints Process
- ✓ Shared lessons learned
- ✓ Ongoing complaints publicity campaign

Caseload & Outcomes – October To March 2023 OCC & ODS

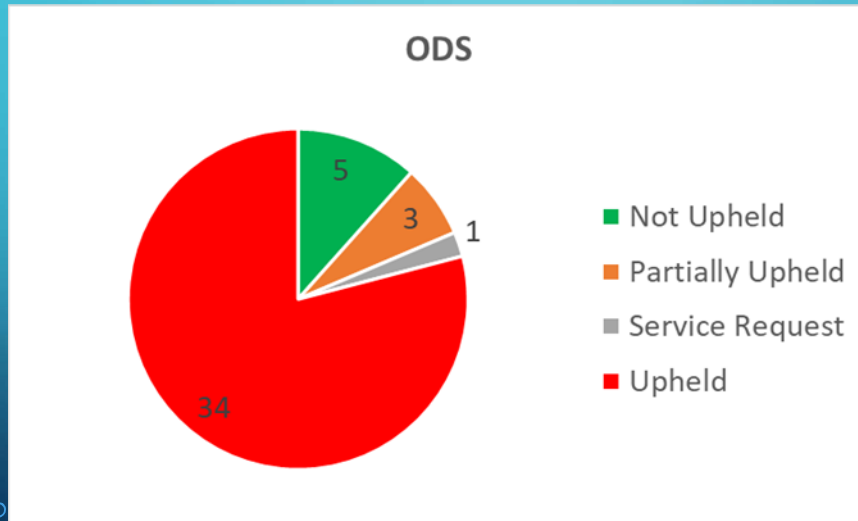
Complaint Outcome	Numbers
In Progress	1
Not Upheld	11
Partially Upheld	8
Service Request	1
Upheld	42
Withdrew	1
Total	64

Complaint Stages	
Stage 1 Complaint	61
Stage 2 Complaint	3
Grand Total	64

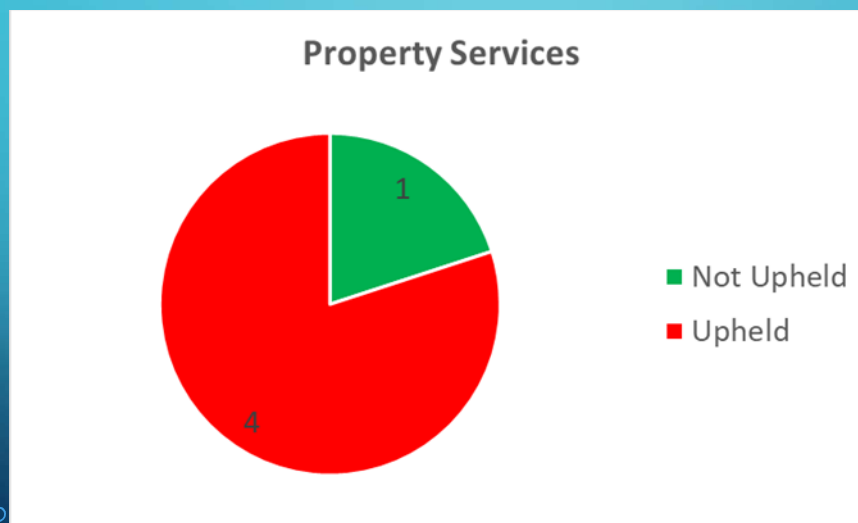
Complaint Outcomes



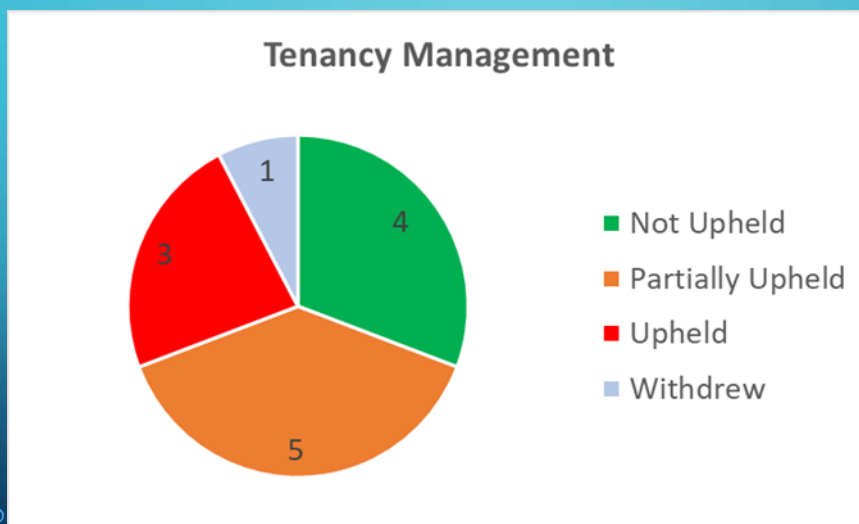
Complaint Outcomes ODS



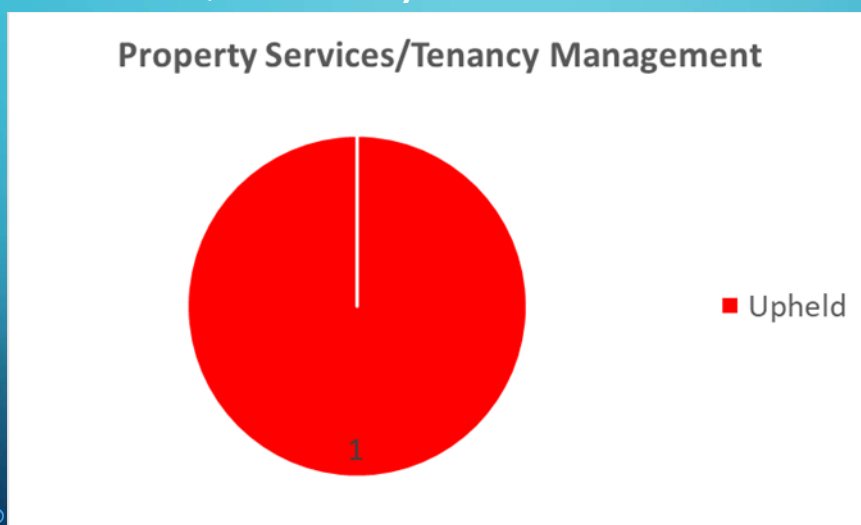
Complaint Outcomes Property Services



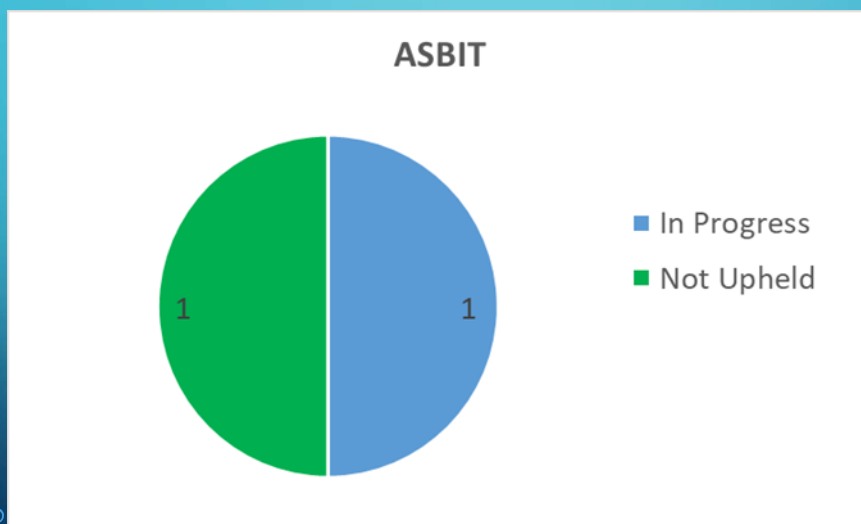
Complaint Outcomes Tenancy Management



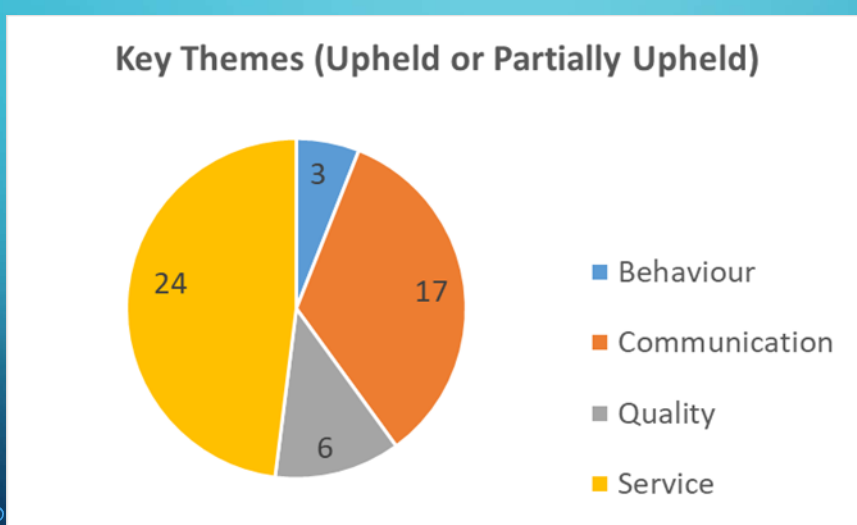
Complaint Outcomes Property Services/Tenancy



Complaint Outcomes ASBIT



Complaint Themes



Compensation Awarded

- Out of pocket expenses, reparation, inconvenience, damages, time & trouble
- Aligned with Ombudsman payments
- Four awards in period

Oct-22	£0.00
Nov-22	£1,301.76
Dec-22	£50.00
Jan-23	£0.00
Feb-23	£0.00
Mar-23	£1,230.00
Total	£2,581.76

ODS Lessons Learned

- ✓ Additional training required on assertiveness, conflict management, implementing an escalation process when customers not satisfied
- ✓ EQIA review on complaints, vulnerable customers and accessibility of service.
- ✓ Consistency on compensation awards offered
- ✓ Action notes not consistently picked up or responded to. Additional training and oversight to be implemented to improve percentages
- ✓ Sub-contractor delays – better communications with customers required, with clear and recorded timescales
- ✓ ODS – Better clarity on job priorities
- ✓ Multi-order work team established
- ✓ Complaints Handling – Incorrect information provision, no apparent stage 2 enquiries, no apparent compensation awards – oversight agreement with OCC

OCC Lessons Learned

- ✓ New tenancy welcome visits introduced after mutual exchange completions
- ✓ New tenancy six- week welcome visits target set to 100%
- ✓ Improved communications and processes for new build handovers between developers, OX Place, housing, ODS and contractors
- ✓ Improved system managed defect process for new builds, including contractor performance
- ✓ Internal training on communication etiquette for tenants, members and senior managers
- ✓ Improved system record keeping on all contacts with tenants and actions between OCC & ODS
- ✓ Provide training from HQN on writing complaints letters to secure consistent outcomes

Next Steps

- Publication of Annual Report to include summary of complaints and lessons learnt
- Website to be updated to include case studies – "You said, we did"
- Ongoing Complaints Ambassador Review Group
- Publication of Complaints annual self-assessment on website
- Publication of Complaints TSM results on website
- Customer Care & Complaint Manager to be recruited as part of LLS Transformation
- Extension of existing complaint system on QL to housing & property services complaints
- Corporate consideration of a complaints solution to embed existing joint working arrangements

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To: Housing and Homelessness Panel
Date: 02 August 2023
Report of: Head of Housing Services
Title of Report: Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Mini Review

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To inform and update panel members on progress made on recommendations from the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Mini-Review
Cabinet Member with responsibility:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing
Corporate Priority:	Support Thriving Communities
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2028
Recommendation(s): That the Panel resolves to:	
1. Note and comment on progress against the recommendations.	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Mini Review – Action Plan Update

Background

1. The Housing and Homelessness Panel carried out a mini review into Tenant Involvement and Empowerment in 2021/22 and in spring 2022, produced a document, “Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Mini-Review”.
2. The review document provided 19 recommendations to improve the scope and range and influence of the Tenant Ambassador groups and work remits. This report feeds back on the recommendations, identifying achievements, dependencies and challenges and covered a far wider range of recommendations than involvement and empowerment.

Progress

3. Progress against the recommendations and commentary are set out in Appendix 1 - Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Mini Review – Action Plan Update.
4. The recommendations and progress have been presented to the Tenant and Leaseholder Ambassadors and approved as an action plan.

Next Steps

5. Officers will continue to progress outstanding action plan items where possible.
6. A further update to the panel will be provided later in the municipal year.

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Appendix 1 - Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Mini Review – Action Plan Update

Recommendation	Timelines	Progress – to July 2023
1) That the Council identifies appropriate thresholds above which procurement or interview-focused ambassadors will be invited to be involved in the respective process.	Implementation April 2023	<p>Procurement: The recommendation has been agreed with the Council's Procurement team and implementation commenced with the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of threshold level of engagement – contracts within housing revenue account areas with the threshold to be subject to review. • Ambassadors to review social value segment contract – quantified as 10% overall scoring on award. • Ambassadors do not have sight of the financial or technical elements of the contract tender bids. • Ambassadors receive feedback on successful contractor and to attend contract management meetings where appropriate. <p>Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassadors to be part of a stakeholder panel for any permanent Landlord Services role for a team leader or manager role up to and including Head of Service.
2) That the Council establishes a board with Cabinet member, senior officers and tenant and leaseholder representatives to meet on a regular basis to discuss tenant and leaseholder issues, and to report on progress and performance.	Nov 2023	<p>An initial proposal has been drafted however there are still some difficult issues that remain outstanding including remuneration of residents and the ability to recruit and retain sufficient interest.</p> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide full proposal for a tenant and leaseholder Board, an action plan, timeline, and Terms of Reference to Head of Service for agreement and sign off • Terms of Reference to be agreed with Ambassadors • Recruitment campaign to commence from October

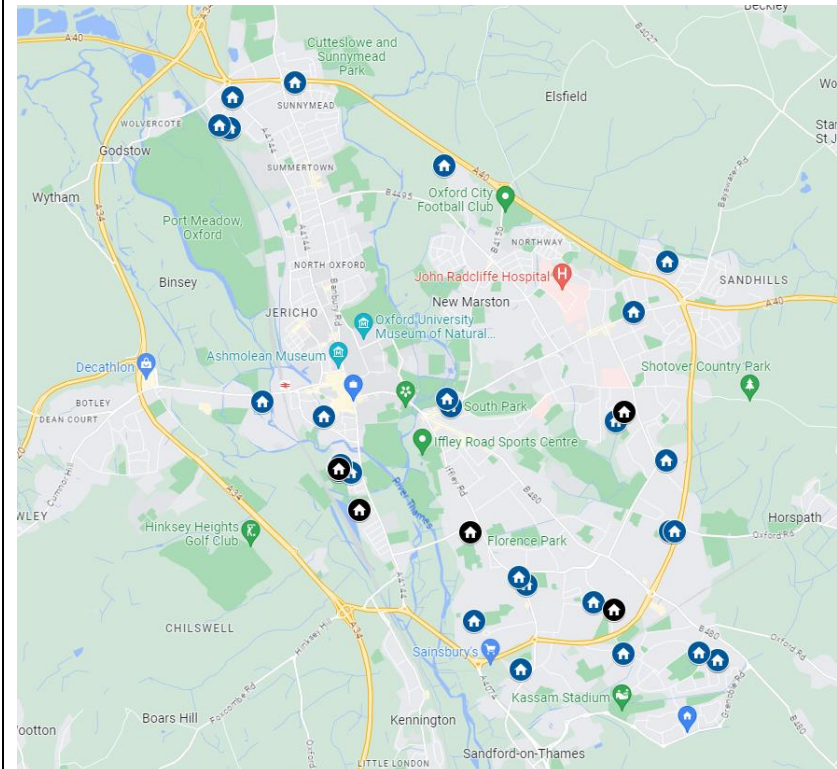
3) That the Council makes the greatest effort to ensure that tenant representatives on the board reflect the geographic and demographic diversity of the Council's tenants.

April 2023

2023

A mapping exercise has been completed on new and existing Ambassadors:

Age	Ambassadors
18-35	1
36-45	4
46-55	11
56-65	9
66-75	8
76-85	3



July 2023

A recruitment and community engagement programme is ongoing. We are:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advertising in Tenants in Touch • meetings with faith group leaders • talking with Locality Managers, Tenancy Management Officers • making use of the Resident Liaison Co-ordinators and Building Safety Resident Engagement Officer to improve our visibility • STAR survey provided 10 volunteers to attend induction meetings and five new Ambassadors recruited.
4) That the Council establishes the planned Housing Development Working Group as a matter of priority, that it includes within its scope issues relating to interior design of the homes built, and that a more precise name is agreed.	Underway	<p>Ambassadors are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing new build designs with OX Place • Reviewing new build communal areas and management standards. • Engagement Day between teams booked for August.
5) That the Council implements ways to recognise the contributions of tenant ambassadors which do not incur universal credit clawback or other benefit issues.	In Place	<p>All larger scale survey/meetings recognise and award participation with prizes. A recent survey to review the tenant in touch magazine process awarded three participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Frier • £100 voucher • £50 voucher
6) That the Council recruits more tenant ambassadors from younger age groups, particularly to participate in the Housing Development Working Group and Great Estates	Ongoing	<p>We have been working with resident Ambassadors to identify and target younger tenants to join however this is challenging. Further effort to include promotion when the digital edition of Tenants in Touch is launched (1st Edition delivered 21/7) - more likely to attract younger people.</p> <p>Further recruitment efforts to take place with new tenants at the six-week welcome visits carried out by Tenancy Management.</p> <p>As part of the Landlord Services Transformation work, younger tenants will be targeted for engagement activities, linked in with digital channel shift (Customer Portal, Localz, digital Tenants in Touch, promoted</p>

		through a variety of media).
7) That the Council recruits a tenant ambassador to represent the views of older, frailer residents.	Achieved and in place	The representation is in place and recommendation achieved – see response to recommendation 3.
8) That the Council interrogates the data at ward-level from the census (when available), and the tenant satisfaction survey, alongside the knowledge of locality workers to develop a profile of the specific needs of each ward, and that this is shared with members and used to identify priorities for work planning at community level.	Project ongoing.	<p>The Council's Business Improvement Team have been approached to carry out cross-tabular analysis on the findings between census data and the STAR survey. Results are expected autumn 2023.</p> <p>Locality Managers have been approached to ask for their views of the priorities of their areas, noting that wards and locality patches are not coterminous.</p>
9) That the Council works to develop a distinct Housing identity.	Ongoing	This is being reviewed as part of the ongoing Landlord Services Transformation work, which will involve improved communication with tenants and members and greater publicity of the service and the work that is carried out by staff.
10) That the Council ceases to make reference to 'customers' or 'clients' in its reports unless the relationship is genuinely commercial.	Ongoing	Wherever appropriate tenants and leaseholders will be referred to as such in reports although noting the Council's preference for the use of the word, "citizens".
11) That in the event that the Tenants Forum established by the DSS discrimination motion does decide not to pursue a joint Council and private rented sector structure, that the Council ensures that a Council Tenants Forum continues to be provided.	Paused	<p>At its meeting of 13 March 2023, the Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety provided an update to the Housing and Homelessness Panel, advising that setting up of the Forum would be paused until enforcement action in regard to selective licensing of private landlords had begun.</p> <p>Should this prove to not be viable then the Tenant Involvement team will pursue the available options.</p>
12) That the Council prioritises the collection of the KPIs required for distribution by the Social Housing white paper.	In place and underway	<p>KPIs are being collected via the Project Lead on the Social Housing White Paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Project Tracker has been created to manage OCC's progress. • SHWP (Social Housing White Paper) Task & Finish Group holds monthly meetings. • Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) will provide first

		<p>official benchmarking data with other social landlords. Although there is only a requirement to start providing this annual data to RSH (Regulator of Social Housing) from spring 2024, the council is already collating data. This data will be published on our website in autumn 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RSH (Regulator of Social housing) will be publishing all TSM data themselves starting summer 2024, as a benchmark across eligible (1000 homes and above) social landlords • ODS' (Oxford Direct Services) new repair transactional software called Localz has been launched, which includes transactional satisfaction surveys on two of the TSMs • A new Landlord Service Performance webpage on our website will be designed and then populated with the above information.
13) That the Council publishes, in addition to the annual report required by the Social Housing white paper, live performance data on its website, and distributes performance details to tenants in each Tenants in Touch magazine.	By April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The STAR survey results 2022 have been publicised with a press release on the Council's website and will also be shared via Tenants in Touch and the Annual Report to tenants. • Work has commenced to develop STAR survey 2023 continuing work with Acuity as our external contractor • A PowerBI specialist has been recruited to create live performance dashboards that will enable real time performance information to be published on the Council's website as well as improving overall performance visibility for managers.
14) That in its reporting against Social Housing white paper KPIs the Council benchmarks against relevant comparators.	In place	We will benchmark against comparators when the data is published (expected summer 2024)
15) That the Council reviews whether the structures to enable tenants to challenge areas of spend under the Social Housing white paper are sufficient to give tenants meaningful challenge to Council spending.	In place and ongoing	<p>Challenge opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on Housing Revenue Budget and budget consultation process • Video training by Finance Business Partner • Monthly training programme ongoing for all

		<p>Ambassadors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HRA challenge date set for Ambassadors
16) That the Council implements and promotes a clearer process for councillors and tenants to influence the spending of the Great Estates programme.	Under review	The Great Estates project is currently being reviewed.
17) That the Council implements a councillor casework system for housing issues within QL within 12 months	In progress	The Council is currently evaluating which software system would be the most effective. The intention is to utilise one of two existing systems. Our aim is to start with a pilot of Members in the autumn.
18) That the Council holds discussions with Thames Valley Police to determine whether additional resources for community policing have become available, and to propose reinstating Neighbourhood Action Groups or similar ward-based stakeholder meetings in priority areas if so.	Ongoing	<p>There is an agreement across partners that Neighbourhood Action Groups are not the most effective way to achieve joint working.</p> <p>Neighbourhood policing has numerous competing demands on resources, reducing officers available. ASBIT continues to work closely with TVP to prevent and tackle ASB within local areas.</p> <p>Joint working highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A multi-agency group has been formed in Barton, providing targeted work with young people and the wider community. A successful knife sweep was carried out. Deployable CCTV in use. Advice also given to partners on appropriate and legal use of CCTV.
19) That the Council undertakes preparatory work with the Police to enable joint working at a locality level to be established as quickly as possible.	In place	<p>This recommendation is accepted and is ongoing. Our best practical examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint multi agency knife sweep teams Joint community engagement work Joint CCTV deployment arrangements Joint walkabouts and problem-solving meetings