

This Report will be made public on 8 September 2020

Report Number **C/20/31**

To: Cabinet
Date: 16 September 2020
Status: Non key decision
Responsible Officer: John Holman – AD Housing
Andy Blaszkowicz – Director, Housing & Operations
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Godfrey - Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Special Projects

SUBJECT: VISION – FOR THE HOUSING MANAGEMENT SERVICE

SUMMARY: This paper outlines the vision for the new Housing Management Service; describing the delivery principles that will provide operational clarity and accountability. The Vision is the long term destination for the Service; the initial work being to ensure the service is built on sound systems, processes and staff on which the culture and values will be shaped and embedded within the council. The paper considers consultation feedback from the Tenant and Leaseholder Liaison Board and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet are asked to consider the feedback from the Tenant and Leaseholder Liaison Board and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the minor amendments to the draft Vision for the Housing Management Service and approve the draft document which sets out clear principles of how the Council will operate and manage the Housing Management Service.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To receive and note the report.**
- 2. To note the consultation responses from the Tenant and Leaseholder Liaison Board and feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 3. To note the amendment to the Vision.**
- 4. To approve the draft Vision for the Housing Management Service.**

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The housing management service transfers from East Kent Housing to the Council on 1st October 2020. The Council is fully committed to building a world class housing service where officers work together with tenants and members to deliver the best possible housing outcomes. It is key that the Council has a clearly defined set of strategic principles that will guide the design and implementation of the new service.

2. THE VISION

- 2.1 The Vision sets out an efficient, customer centric way of working. Correctly delivered, it will reflect best practice (according to industry standards / House Mark etc.), drive continual improvement, prioritise the necessary estate improvements, and create the conditions in which a truly excellent service will be delivered to FHDC tenants and leaseholders.

- 2.2 The Vision includes the following key principles;

- Tenants will be at the heart of the service.
- Digital by default with processes in place for the more vulnerable.
- Services provided by neighbourhood with specialists operating across the estate.
- Housing management service fully integrated into the Council, with specialist estate management resources and embracing case management.
- Real time reporting and clear accountability.
- New asset management strategy to establish framework for estates management, regeneration and new build, embracing modern methods of construction and the Council's zero carbon agenda.

- 2.3 The full **Vision for the Housing Management Service** is attached at appendix 1.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The Vision document was sent out to the Tenant and Leaseholder Liaison Board for their consideration. Tenant feedback was provided to officers at the Tenant and Leaseholder board meeting on 6th July. This feedback was then presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the Chair of the Tenant and Leaseholder board at the 14th July meeting. The Tenant and Leaseholder board feedback is included at appendix 2 whilst the key points from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting are listed in paragraph 3.3 below.

- 3.2 The Tenant and Leaseholder board were happy with the document and requested no changes. They summarised their feedback in the statement that they were 'cautiously optimistic' with the housing management service transitioning back to the Council.

3.3 The following points were raised at the OSC meeting:

- Carbon neutrality aspirations for new builds with the possibility of existing, stock moving towards this as well.
- Environmental aspects of existing stock, retro-fitting for added efficiency.
- Energy grant availability in attaining green standards for all stock.
- The importance of neighbourhood officers building sustainable relationships with tenants rather than contact being made by multiple officers.
- Service and compliance efficiency.
- Digital efficiency with the option of traditional services maintained for tenants/leaseholders.
- Whistleblowing and transparency – a live reporting system and dashboard information are planned.
- Safety – The Vision document is aspirational and a fresh start is needed, however it was noted that safety aspects could be added to the document.

3.4 Many of the points raised at the OSC meeting are encapsulated within the Vision document with an additional point now included about safety.

3.5 The following principle has been added to the Vision as Principle 2:

‘The Health and Safety of our tenants and leaseholders is paramount. We will learn from the past and embed a culture of health and safety throughout the organisation.’

3.6 In operational terms, the council’s estate management team will be led internally by specialists to give the necessary focus on health, safety and compliance issues.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1 The only perceived risk is set out below.

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Cabinet not willing to approve document	medium	Low	Informal and formal consultation process undertaken with the Tenant and Leaseholder Liaison Board and OSC to gain approval for Vision providing confidence in document to Cabinet.

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

5.1 **Legal Officer's Comments (NM)**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

5.2 **Finance Officer's Comments (CI)**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.3 **Diversities and Equalities Implications (AB)**

There are no diversities or equalities implications arising directly from this report.

6. **CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officers prior to the meeting:

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Vision for the Housing Management Service.

Appendix 2: Tenant and Leaseholders presentation.