

Tenant & Leaseholder Panel

Meeting held on Tuesday, 6 February 2024 at 6.30 pm in Council Chamber, Town Hall,
Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Yaw Boateng (Chair);
Leslie Parry (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Adele Benson (Online), Alisa Flemming (Online), Brigitte Graham,
Lynne Hale and Chrishni Reshekaron (Online)

Also

Present: Councillor Leila Ben-Hassel, Councillor Clive Fraser, Jill Arboine, Ishia Beckford, Tamar Coleman, Yvonne Davy, Ian Leonard, Dave Mundy, David Palmer, Lorraine Podiephatshwa, Marilyn Smithies, Sharon Swaby, Jamil Tarik, Kim Wakely, Verna Francis (Senior Resident Involvement Officer), Mary Larby (Director of Housing Management), Sue Hanlon (Interim Director of Assets), Jerry Austin (Interim Head of Repairs and Maintenance, online), Kevin Hartshorn (Interim Head of Asset Planning & Capital Delivery), Karen Agbabiaka (Director of Streets & Environment), Lara Ashley (Housing Transformation Lead), David Baptiste (Housing Regeneration Lead), Lisa Goldstone (Operations Manager), Charles Baker (Head of Environment and Neighbourhoods), Pamela Leonce (Independent Assurance Panel Member)

Apologies: Councillor Lara Fish, Theresa French, James Fraser, Guy Pile-Grey, Debra Pring and James Gitau

PART A

76/24 **Welcome and Introductions**

The Panel Members, Councillors and officers in attendance introduced themselves.

77/24 **Disclosure of Interest**

There were no disclosures at this meeting.

78/24 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting meetings held on Tuesday, 10 October 2023 and Tuesday, 9 January 2024 were agreed as accurate records.

Councillor Hale entered the Council chamber at 6.40pm.

The Chair introduced the item and invited the Director of Assets and the Interim Head of Asset Planning & Capital Delivery to address the Panel. The Director of Assets and the Interim Head of Asset Planning & Capital Delivery conducted a presentation to the Panel, which can be found via the following link: <https://civico.net/croydon/meetings>

In response to questions from Panel members, officers informed the Panel that:

- Residents were not expected to bleed radiators themselves.
- Officers were aware that some residents may not have had access to the website.
- Officers were trying to share more information with residents and when operatives went out to resident's properties, they could show residents how to bleed their radiators and leave a key with the residents who were happy to bleed their radiators themselves.
- There was a government consultation which began in January 2024 and closed on the 5th March. Officers had met with the Local Government Association (LGA) to discuss what timescales the government had proposed for the completion of the repairs.
- There was a deadline for 24 hours to complete emergency repairs, 14 days to complete an assessment with a further 7 days to complete repairs.
- The Council would be going back to the government with feedback and to clarify how these new laws would dovetail with existing laws.
- The asset management strategy considered damp and mould as part of the strategy; however, it was an overarching strategy which considered a multitude of areas including disrepair.
- The asset management strategy was an agile document which would continually be reviewed and refreshed.
- The repairs service had improved since the meeting in January, and officers were working with the contractors to improve and stabilise the services.
- Officers were still mobilising the services and some of the information received from the outgoing contractor was not available.
- The contact centre was established in August 2023 and the staff numbers were based on what officers believed to be an average number of call handlers that you would have for a similar number of properties.
- After two months it became clear that the volume of repairs was much higher than what had previously been reported to the Council by the outgoing contractor. The Council then took on additional resource in the contact centre, all of which were temporary.

- If the volume of repairs remained at the same level over the next three or four months, then officers would need to investigate why the number of repairs required had not fallen.
- There was the possibility for team leaders in the contact centre to listen into calls, and officers were looking into whether there was other software which would help them to assess the quality of the calls.
- Officers had not been into homes for several years; they had gathered a lot more information about their housing stock recently and this was the cause of the fluctuation in numbers reported.
- Hazards needed to be addressed within a certain timescale, officers needed to address these hazards quickly to reduce the danger presented by the hazard before dealing with the problem on the back of it.
- The hazards from damp and mould, disrepair or fire hazards had been prioritised.
- Officers were still working on a reporting methodology for hazards and component failures.
- 36% of the Councils housing stock had been surveyed, 40% would have been surveyed by the end of March 2024, another 20% would have been surveyed by September and then 20% annually.
- There was an issue with the forms at the previous meeting, some were collected but others did not make it to the relevant officers.
- The contact centre had targets as set out in the mobilisation plan, these targets would be step targets, and these would be sought to be achieved by September 2024. The contracts stated that calls would be answered within 20 seconds. This was not being met, but the expectation was to achieve this target by September.
- The voids, damp and mould disrepair teams had been visiting properties conducting short snappy stock surveys to produce data quickly.
- The contact centre had targets which had been drawn up as part of the mobilisation plan. These targets would be stepped targets and officers expected to see a stepped improvement between February and September.
- The asset management strategy would be based on around 40 actions which would be developed over the next 5 years, this would change as officers began to understand more about the Councils housing stock. the data being collected by the stock surveys would help to formulate the strategy.
- The outside of the blocks was assessed as part of the survey, officers would investigate their cyclical decoration and if this was executed right then it would go a long way to easing some of the pressure on the reactive repairs.
- The housing health and safety rating system included 29 different hazards.
- Officers would circulate a list of the hazards to the Members.
- It was important that residents reported any issues that they experienced.

It was agreed that the summary document would be circulated to the Panel.

The Chair introduced the item and invited the Director of Streets & Environment to address the Panel.

The Director of Streets & Environment conducted a presentation to the Panel, which can be found via the following link: <https://civico.net/croydon/meetings>
In response to questions from Panel members, officers informed the Panel that:

- The Council offered a bulky waste collection service that was chargeable to residents and for residents who lived in tenancy properties there was a bulky waste clearance service. Residents needed to leave any waste which they wished to be collected in a location that was accessible for the cleanup crew.
- Officers were in dialogue with bidders to find a more sustainable solution that reflected the needs of the Councils communal and curbside properties.
- The food waste service was on offer to all tenants, officers needed to work with the managing agents to ensure that the aspirations of the residents were met.
- Croydon was in the top quartile in London for the highest recycling rates.
- Under legislation it was now mandatory to organise weekly segregated food waste collections for all residents.
- Officers would identify which housing estates could accommodate additional bins and officers would liaise with their service providers to ensure that weekly collections were undertaken as part of the core service.
- Officers were aware of all the food waste collections from the communal and curbside properties.
- 23% of Croydon's general waste contained food.
- Residents were required to present their textiles alongside their waste collection. The refuse crew had a cage where the textile bags could be deposited.
- If the textile collection was missed, then an ad-hoc collection would need to be arranged.
- If the cage for textile collections was full then the collection crew would call their supervisor who would then empty the cage so that the operatives could continue to collect.
- The cages containing the textiles collection were emptied daily.
- The fly tipping strategy was under review as it was currently a reactive service.
- Officers felt as though they had been a victim of their own success in the past as the quicker that they removed fly tips, the quicker they would re-appear. The fly tipping consisted of discarded domestic waste and contractors had been instructed to clear all fly tips as they were reported, however, the volume of fly tipping had increased. This was a

national issue that needed to be addressed as the Council spent around £100,000+ a month to clear fly tips.

- Prior to entering their current procurement strategy, officers undertook a borough wide consultation with residents through online surveys and resident drop-in sessions and officers received over 3000 responses back on their waste and street cleansing service. This was done prior to officers finalising their procurement strategy.
- Officers would make a recommendation to cabinet on whether to award a contract to the preferred bidder.
- Needles for self-administered injections needed to be collected by the Council, this was free service for residents. If the medication was administered by a third party, then it would be their responsibility to dispose of the waste.
- Officers acknowledged that missed collections had a significant impact on households and informed the Panel that they now had a fully resourced client services team.
- If a resident had a missed collection, they had 48 hours after the day of collection to report the missed bin collection. The client services team would review the statistical data to look for a trend in the reported missed collections.
- For disputes with the waste collection crew regarding the accuracy of reported collections, the service provider was required to provide an assured collection for 6 to 8 weeks. An assured collection required the service provider to confirm on their devices that for every collection, this meant that the collection crew would only be miss a collection if the bins were not presented or contaminated. This would be logged onto the system and their supervisor would then inspect and attend on the day.

81/24 **Update on Transformation**

The Chair introduced the item and invited the Housing Transformation Lead to address the Panel.

The Housing Transformation Lead conducted a presentation to the Panel, which can be found via the following link: <https://civico.net/croydon/meetings>

In response to questions from Panel members, officers informed the Panel that:

- The tenancy check would be done by tenancy officers, when an officer undergoes a tenancy check they would show their badge when they introduced themselves.
- Officers would provide residents with an email address to report any issues within their estates.
- Any form of identification which contained a photograph, such as a freedom pass would be accepted as valid forms of identification.
- Invalid passports were acceptable.

82/24 Housing Regeneration Strategy

The Chair introduced the item and invited the Housing Regeneration Lead to address the Panel.

The Housing Regeneration Lead conducted a presentation to the Panel, which can be found via the following link: <https://civico.net/croydon/meetings>

In response to questions from Panel members, officers informed the Panel that:

- Community led housing groups were welcomed.
- The LBC housing strategy had an emphasis on social housing.

83/24 Report from Resident Representatives

The report was noted by the Panel.

84/24 Any Other Business

85/24 Date of next meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on 27 February 2024 at 6:30pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm

Signed:

Date:

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