



# Public Document Pack

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Committee Manager Katherine Davis (01903 737984)

15 November 2023

## HOUSING AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee will be held in **Council Chamber, Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, BN17 5LF** on **Thursday 23 November 2023 at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Birch (Chair), Haywood (Vice-Chair), Bence, Bicknell, Butcher, J English, Long, Pendleton, Wiltshire, Dr Walsh and Yeates

**PLEASE NOTE:** Where public meetings are being held at the Arun Civic Centre, to best manage safe space available, members of the public are encouraged to watch the meeting online via the Council's Committee pages.

1. Where a member of the public wishes to attend the meeting or has registered a request to take part in Public Question Time, they will be invited to submit the question in advance of the meeting to be read out by an Officer, but of course can attend the meeting in person.
2. We request members of the public do not attend any face-to-face meeting if they have Covid-19 symptoms.

Any members of the public wishing to address the Committee meeting during Public Question Time, will need to email [Committees@arun.gov.uk](mailto:Committees@arun.gov.uk) **by 5.15 pm on Wednesday, 15 November 2023** in line with current Committee Meeting Procedure Rules.

It will be at the Chief Executive's/Chair's discretion if any questions received after this deadline are considered.

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact [Committees@arun.gov.uk](mailto:Committees@arun.gov.uk).

## AGENDA

### 1. APOLOGIES

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

***Members and Officers are invited to make any declaration of pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda, and are reminded that they should re-declare their interest before consideration of the items or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.***

Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the interest in
- b) whether it is a pecuniary/personal interest and/or prejudicial interest
- c) the nature of the interest

### 3. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 14)

The Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Residential and Wellbeing Services Committee held on 12 September 2023.

### 4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

### 5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

To receive questions from the public (for a period of up to 15 minutes).

### 6. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

(Pages 15 - 20)

The report sets out in further detail the Committee's Revenue and Capital programme budget performance projections to the 31 March 2024. The Housing Revenue Account forecast is the subject of a separate report on this agenda.

### 7. SAFER ARUN PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY REPORT

(Pages 21 - 28)

Since the last scrutiny report was presented to the Committee on 20 June 2023, the Safer Arun Partnership has met on two occasions. This report provides a summary of those meetings and agreed actions.

8. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-2026 - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023. (Pages 29 - 34)

This report sets out the performance of the Key Performance indicators at Quarter 2 for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.

9. PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR HOUSING SERVICES - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2023 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023 (Pages 35 - 48)

This report sets out the performance of housing services at Quarter 2 for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023.

10. HOUSING SERVICES COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND DETERMINATIONS Q2 (Pages 49 - 62)

This report provides members with an overview of the complaint handling performance in quarter 2 for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023.

11. RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022-2026 ANNUAL UPDATE (Pages 63 - 116)

To provide members with an update on the progress against the aims of the Resident Engagement Strategy following its adoption in October 2022 and to provide members with an overview of the engagement carried out with residents since the adoption of the Resident Engagement Strategy.

12. HRA FORECAST UPDATE (Pages 117 - 126)

To update members of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee on the Housing Revenue Account "HRA" Forecast for 2023/24.

## **OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS**

13. ARMED FORCES COVENANT IN THE COMMUNITY CONFERENCE IN NEWCASTLE (Pages 133 - 138)

The Committee will receive a Councillor feedback report on the Armed Forces Covenant in the Community Conference in Newcastle.

14. WORK PROGRAMME

(Pages 139 -  
144)

The work programme for the municipal year 2023/24 is attached for members review and comment.

15. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The Committee is asked to consider passing the following resolution: -

That under Section 100a (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Parts 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

Note: If Members have any detailed questions, they are reminded that they need to inform the Chair and relevant Director in advance of the meeting.

Note: Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings – The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. This meeting may therefore be recorded, filmed or broadcast by video or audio, by third parties. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and as available via the following link - [PART 8 - CP - Section 5 Filming Photographic Protocol](#)



## HOUSING AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

12 September 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Birch (Chair), Haywood (Vice-Chair), Bence, Bicknell, Butcher, J English, Long, Pendleton, Wiltshire, Dr Walsh and Yeates

Councillors Cooper, Mrs Cooper and Gunner were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

### 233. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

### 234. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

### 235. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee held on 20 June 2023 were approved by the Committee as a correct record, with the Chair confirming that she would sign them at the conclusion of the meeting.

### 236. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed that there were no items for this meeting.

### 237. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no questions had been submitted for this meeting.

### 238. BUDGET 2024/25 PROCESS

The Interim Financial Services Manager was invited by the Chair to present the report. He highlighted the key dates set out in paragraph 3.7 and the Budget Process 2024/25 Flowchart set out in Appendix A.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members. It was asked how members could access the range of reports produced as part of the budget process once they became available. It was confirmed that these reports would be made available to all members of the Council via both the public and members' area of the website.

The Committee noted the Budget process for 2024/25 as outlined in the report.

239. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 30 JUNE 2023

The Interim Financial Services Manager was invited by the Chair to present the report. He highlighted Table 1 that set out the 2023/24 revenue out turn forecast as at Quarter 1, which anticipated an underspend of £400,000; and the forecast outturn position for the HRA at Table 3 that would result in an overspend of £179,000.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members.

- It was asked whether the deficit in the HRA account was due, in part, to the number of agency staff currently employed by the council and how the Council intended to reduce reliance on agency staff? The Interim Head of Housing confirmed the number of agency staff employed within the Housing Service was continuing to reduce and would reduce further in the next two months.
- The Group Head of Housing and the Interim Financial Services Manager undertook to investigate the reasons for the £50,000 compensation costs and provide members with a written answer.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager advised that contract renegotiations between Freedom Leisure's utility suppliers had reduced their rates. As at the end of Quarter 1 there been no decrease in income expected from Freedom Leisure.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager undertook to provide further details of the underspend regarding the vacant post, at paragraph 3.4 of the report, and if the vacancy had resulted in a negative impact on the service.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager undertook to provide details to members, outside of the meeting, of the timing difference between budget setting and the beginning of the financial year for the £40,000 variance. The council's budget had been revised after the close of the 2022-23 accounts and any underspends rolled forward to the current financial year, ensuring current schemes in the work programme can still be delivered. He undertook to provide more detail concerning the revised Capital budget relating to Housing Improvements and Stock Development, outside of the meeting.
- The Interim Group Head Housing added that the variance was the result of a more focused approach to undertake repairs and maintenance where properties were reaching their end of life. The boiler replacement programme would meet the Council's decarbonisation targets in terms of sustainable solutions as these solutions were introduced.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager explained that whilst the Housing Revenue Account reserve had fallen below the £2m threshold, steps were being taken to address the deficit. It was anticipated it would take three to four years to bring back into balance, the details of which were set out in the original council budget report.
- Concern was expressed at the high cost of Deprecation, and it was asked how long it would be before positive results were seen? The Interim Financial Services Manager advised that depreciation had already reduced by £1 million during 2022-23. Officers would continue to review the Depreciation Policy and both Housing and Finance would work together to look into the impact.

- Concern was expressed about the void's figures and the loss of rental income and the importance of bringing these properties back into use was expressed. The Interim Financial Services Manager advised the voids figures related to a standard 2.5% assumption for a loss in housing rental income each year and stated this percentage was standard across every local authority. He also confirmed that garage rents had last been reviewed during 2022-23.
- A breakdown of the compliance work taking place as part of budget monitoring was requested, with concern expressed that the work undertaken was either not required, the council was paying too much for this work or was not being carried out to a good standard. The Interim Group Head Housing confirmed compliance was a statutory requirement, with certain functions required to ensure the safety of residents. The Regulatory Notice had recently been removed and officers were confident the service was now following processes appropriately. Having achieved the standards required by the Regulator and the recommendations of the independent consultant. He confirmed all sub-standard work should be reported to the council to be investigated. The Council had a good inspection regime to check the required work is undertaken. Councillor Bicknell referred to a meeting compliance he had requested with officers.
- There was concern that some information requested by members, to enable them to make an informed decision, had not been forthcoming from officers.
- The Interim Financial Services Manager confirmed that the Council's Depreciation Policy was agreed by the Audit and Governance Committee and published on an annual basis prior to the close of accounts. It was reviewed on an annual basis to ensure any depreciation charged to the Revenue account was in line with expectations. A benchmarking exercise was carried out against other local authorities.
- A non-member of the committee was allowed to make comment and ask questions. He shared most of the concerns expressed by members. He expressed concern as to the number of variants to the forecast already made during Quarter 1 and advised some of the figures he had challenged with officers. However, he was pleased to see the costs for Leisure Management had reduced. Referring to paragraph 3.10, he asked why costs had increased above budget despite agency staff decreasing? He asked officers and the Committee how they would guarantee the savings, detailed at paragraph 3.11, would be made. More confidence was needed that the budget will be put on a positive trajectory. The Interim Group Head of Housing explained that agency costs were not included in the budget for established salaries and were not budgeted for. Therefore, any agency costs would create an overspend. Work carried out so far had led to improvements and a £1million adjustment being made. Financial Services had already achieved a considerable improvement, supported further by work taking place on the Service Plan to identify savings across the operational area.
- In response to a question asking if there would be a reduction in the quality of the service with front loaded expenditure on agency costs, the Interim Group Head of Housing clarified that, once agency staff were replaced with permanent staff, costs reverted back to those allowed for in the base budget.

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When preparing the budget officers identified the expected overspends and looked for underspends elsewhere to mitigate the impact. It would not result in a reduction in staff.

The Committee noted the report.

240. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-2026 - QUARTER 1  
PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 JUNE  
2023

The Chair invited the Interim Head of Housing to present the report.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. A comment was made that report authors should be in attendance at the meeting.

During the discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Bence that a new KPI should be created concerning incidences of Council housing subletting tenancy fraud, this was seconded by Councillor Bicknell and upon completion of a vote was **CARRIED**.

A further KPI was proposed by Councillor Bence that a new KPI be created concerning the non-payment of service charges for communal areas by owners of flats sold under the Council's right to buy scheme, this was seconded by Councillor Pendleton and upon completion of a vote was **CARRIED**.

Continuing the discussion, concern was raised regarding underperforming CP16. The Interim Head of Housing explained the current IT system would be replaced in May 2024. Configuration of the future voids process had commenced with officers confident that the migration would improve compliance. A supplier purchasing framework had been introduced to improve consistency and reduce costs. He referred to the work being undertaken by the council's Legal Team to bring in measures to ensure work was completed on time whilst putting less pressure on the contractor. Concern was expressed that the council's main contractor did not incur penalties for poor performance and members asked that officers consider reinstating penalties in future contracts. Members were advised early indications showed the voids outturn was starting to improve and steps were being taken to recruit someone with the correct technical experience to improve the situation. Members were reminded of the member briefing session on the HRA, on Monday 18 September, would give members the opportunity to scrutinise the voids process.

A member raised concern about the number of out of order toilets and of a broken window at the Wave leisure Centre.

The Committee

RECOMMENDED TO THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE that

- 1) a KPI is created concerning incidences of Council housing subletting tenancy fraud; and;

- 2) a KPI is created concerning the non-payment of service charges for communal areas by owners of flats sold under the Council's right to buy scheme.

Members then noted the report update provided.

241. PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR HOUSING SERVICES - QUARTER 1  
PERFORMANCE FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2023

The Interim Business Improvement Manager was invited to present the report to members. Attention was drawn to appendix 1 that set out the key measures, including benchmarking, to assess the Housing Service's performance. These figures would be shared with residents via a new performance webpage to ensure transparency and updated quarterly.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. Referring to paragraph 3.4, concern was expressed that performance for quarter 1 had declined in nine areas, in particular the declining performance regarding emergency repairs. The Interim Head of Housing acknowledged this decline and advised performance, in terms of timescales, had been raised with the responsive repairs' contractor. As stated earlier during the meeting, steps were being taken to resolve these matters with the contractor through the flexibility of the contract and it was expected that improvements would be seen within the next few months. In response Councillor Pendleton commented that she did not want to see further decline and asked the Chair to ensure the Committee was regularly kept updated outside of the meeting.

The Interim Business Improvement Manager agreed to include in future reports the actual figures for temporary accommodation and, if achievable, to provide a breakdown of where in the District they were placed. The Housing Options Manager confirmed that as of 11 September 2023, 203 households were in emergency and temporary accommodation combined.

Concern was raised about the shortfall in rent collections, The Interim Head of Housing explained improving rent collections to upper quartile performance, to between 98% and 100%, was an area of focus in the Service Plan. The detrimental impact of arrears on tenants was acknowledged and work would continue to improve recovery rates. The Interim Business Improvement Manager added that a dedicated Financial Inclusion Officer and Tenancy Sustainment Officer assisted tenants in financial difficulty.

The Interim Business Improvement Manager undertook to clarify the different housing arrears figures set out in the report.

The Housing Options Manager provided explanation of the bandings and bidding process in relation to the housing list, details of which were on the council's website. She undertook to provide the Allocations Policy to the Committee, outside of the meeting.

A non-member of the committee was allowed to make comment and ask questions. Reference was made to past performance of the Housing Service during his time as Leader of the Council. He had supported projects, when led to believe these would result in significant improvements. Whilst he acknowledged there had been some improvements, he expressed disappointment that performance was not improving quickly enough and asked when Quartile 1 performance would be reached. The Interim Head of Housing advised the aim was to achieve quartile 1 performance regarding the priorities identified by residents. He suggested a report could be presented to the Committee outlining the plan for each priority and when it was expected quartile 1 would be received. Officers had not set out a timescale with a trajectory for improvements but were able to carry out this work and would report the results to the Committee.

The Committee noted the progress detailed in the report.

#### 242. COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE AND DETERMINATIONS

The Chair invited the Interim Business Improvement Manager to present the report to members. An update was provided on the response times for August 2023 which had achieved a 65% response rate for Stage 1 complaints and, as anticipated, some of the improvements had resulted in improved performance following quarter 1 and improvements to Stage 2 complaints of up to 40%. The report detailed the work being undertaken to improve performance and to understand the reasons for the complaints received to see what action could be taken to avoid the high number of complaints.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. Concern was expressed of the high proportion of complaints relating to the repairs service, the number of complaints responded to in time and those upheld. The Interim Head of Housing acknowledged the concerns raised and explained that work had recently taken place on processes and resources, which had resulted in improvements starting to take place. Many of the complaints referred to work not yet undertaken and officers working to resolve these issues with the contractor.

Councillor Pendleton asked the Chair to challenge the issues raised by members at the agenda preparation meeting, so officers were able to provide answers at the meeting instead of at a later date.

The Chair drew attention to the member session on the Voids process due to take place and encouraged members to attend. The Interim Head of Housing clarified emergency repairs would not be included in this session. A request was made requesting that officers provide a monthly progress update to members on both voids and emergency repairs.

The Interim Business Improvement Manager confirmed that the average compensation of £187.00 paid for stage 1 and 2 complaints, related to the period April

to June 2023. Where the Council was at fault higher levels of compensation were being seen and it was hoped that, as officers resolved the systemic issues relating to repairs, less complaints would be received resulting a lower upheld rate.

With regards to compensation payments and the impact on the HRA account, a question was asked whether contractors were held accountable, as it was the Council being penalised for the contractors inadequate. The Interim Head of Housing advised that officers were in discussions with the contractor and with internal support services to find solutions.

The accuracy of the amount of £50,000 set out in the quarter 1 report was queried and it was suggested that the report should reflect a higher amount of £65,000 until it was known the situation was improving.

The Committee

RESOLVED

1. Noted the contents of the report
2. Noted that the council has complied with the orders made by the Housing Ombudsman in their determinations.

243. PUBLIC FACING CCTV UPGRADE

The Chair invited the Communities and Wellbeing Manager to present the report to members. The report sought approval to carry out an upgrade to ensure public facing CCTV remained in operation across Arun and was compatible with ongoing monitoring and surveillance via Sussex Police following BT's decision to retire their digital and analogue service. Chroma Vision, working with Sussex Police, had come up with a solution that would result in a reduction in costs following an upgrade to a cloud-based system.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. The Communities and Wellbeing Manager confirmed that the maintenance transmission would be an annual reduction in costs year on year. Responding to concern expressed as to where the legal obligations lay regarding the use of CCTV footage, in light of instances where Sussex Police had not responded to requests for information, discussions were taking place between the District and Borough councils in West Sussex and Sussex Police. Members were informed that these councils had expressed their concern to Sussex Police that responsibility for CCTV should remain with the Police. Sussex Police had agreed to extend their transfer deadline from 31 March 2024 to 31 March 2015. The Communities and Wellbeing Manager confirmed officers shared the same concerns raised by members and agreed that responsibility should remain with Sussex Police.

During the discussion it was proposed by Councillor Walsh that Arun District Council seeks, with its partner Borough and District Councils in East Sussex and West

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Sussex, to collectively resist taking on responsibility for CCTV, which should remain with Sussex Police.

Councillor Bence added that a key point survey to establish that before £30,000 was released to carry out the upgrade, it should be established if the technology was fit for purpose and whether the CCTV cameras were located in the correct locations to identify issues.

The Communities and Wellbeing Manager added that a heat map report had been requested from Sussex Police to establish if the CCTV cameras were located in the right locations and to identify any further needs. The report would be provided to members once it was received.

Councillor Pendleton then seconded Councillor Walsh's proposal that Arun District Council seeks, with its partner Borough and District Councils in East Sussex and West Sussex, to collectively resist taking on responsibility for CCTV, which should remain with Sussex Police, it was **CARRIED**.

The Community Safety Officer advised that Arun was in a better position than other councils, as a CCTV upgrade had been undertaken during 2018 and undertook to provide members with a list of the Council's public facing CCTV cameras and their locations.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Bence.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

1. the upgrade work totalling £30,000, allocated from existing budgets, to ensure that CCTV remains in operation across Arun and is compatible with ongoing monitoring and surveillance via Sussex Police. Resulting in reduced annual costs to maintain current CCTV system be approved.
2. Noted that external funding is being explored via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which could cover 50% of the costs and the Safer Streets funding via the Sussex Police Crime Commission. Arun District Council will seek to apply, accept, and draw down appropriate funds to cover the cost of the upgrade.
3. That Arun District Council seeks, with its partner Borough and District Councils in East Sussex and West Sussex, to collectively resist taking on responsibility for CCTV, which should remain with Sussex Police.



244. SHAP - (SINGLE HOMELESS ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME)

The Chair invited the Housing Options Manager to present the report to members. The Report asked members to approve proceeding with submitting suitable accommodation schemes for funding in accordance with SHAP grant conditions.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. Members expressed their support for the implementation of suitable accommodation schemes for SHAP funding. Responding to questions the Housing Options Manager explained the accommodation would become stock owned by the council for a period of three years, dovetailing the rough sleeping project due to end 31 March 2035. In response to a question concerning the need for accommodation, the Housing Options Manager advised the gap analysis undertaken clearly identified a large need for the provision of homeless accommodation in Littlehampton, with a much lower need in Bognor Regis. The DLUHC had confirmed their support for development in Littlehampton. A member suggested that the suitability of council owned land should be investigated, and suggested Nightingales, Findon. The Housing Options Manager advised officers were aware of the HRA owned plots of land and were exploring their potential. It was noted that the development must be completed by March 2025.

The Interim Head of Housing advised that officers were actively investigating if any council owned land was suitable and whether it could be used in a financially sustainable way.

Assurance was sought that the Committee would receive a report detailing the project costs, to enable members to gain an understanding of the financial commitments in full, before the Committee reached a final decision. The Housing Options Manager responded that once the outcome of the bid was known, the financial implications would be understood, and reported to the Committee. The deadline for the bid submission was November 2023.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Pendleton.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

the submission of suitable accommodation schemes for SHAP funding be approved.

245. HOUSING HOMELESS STRATEGY EXTENSION

The Chair invited the Housing Options Manager to present the report to members. The report sought to extend the Homeless Strategy for a further year to allow a procurement process to be undertaken.

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The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. A member expressed strong concern about the delay in implementing the Strategy and commented that the Strategy could not be extended beyond five years. An explanation was requested as to why the Committee was being asked to agree a further extension until 2024. Responding to the concerns raised, the Interim Head of Housing corrected an error in the report and clarified that the new Strategy was required to be adopted by “2024” not “2023”, as stated under the Directorate Policy Context on page 105. He therefore confirmed that the requested extension was within the five-year period allowed. He advised that the procurement process had been delayed due to the Housing Options Manager post being vacant. The tender process was now underway, and it was anticipated a contractor would be secured within several weeks. Work was expected to commence before the end of this year and was expected to take several months to complete. Whilst the response provided by the Interim Head of Housing was excepted, further concern was expressed that it had been promised the Strategy would be on the table now. Concern was also raised that during the vacancy period, no consultants had been engaged, as it was they who would undertake most of the work. The Interim Head of Housing responded that the requirement to undertake a procurement process was the reason for the delay caused by the vacancy.

A request was made to add this item to the Committee work programme to enable progress to be monitored by the whole committee. The Interim Head of Housing explained that the evaluation process included assessment of the milestones, which would provide an indication of where the project should appear on the work programme.

A request was made that officers address the typographical error on page 105, to ensure the correct date of 2024, was amended in future reports.

A request was made, through the Chair, that close monitoring of the procurement process should take place and that a report be produced for members of the committee to ensure the project was completed.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Bence and seconded by Councillor Walsh.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

the extension of the Homeless Strategy until 2024 be approved.

#### 246. LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND

The Chair invited the Interim Head of Housing to present the report to members. He drew attention to the challenging timescale required to ensure the seven temporary homes, intended for use by Afghan and other refugees, were ready for use by March 2024 in order to receive funding towards the project.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. Members indicated their overall support for the project. Responding to a suggestion to buy back ex-council houses sold on the housing market, the Interim Head of Housing advised that the intention was to buy new properties, as the assets were newer with less depreciation. Ex-Council houses were likely to be older properties and require renovation, so may not be ready in time to meet the funding deadline. With regards to the borrowing of the balance required to fund the project, there were a number of options available, such as the Public Works Loans Board or internal borrowing.

A member referred to the Committee's previous discussions with officers concerning interest rates and the cost of borrowing and expressed concern that officers had not reported back to members updated information, in light of recent interest rate rises. There was no clear understanding of financial commitment or explanation of the project's cost over time or the full financial costs, and it was requested this information should be brought before the Committee, so the financial implications were understood before a final decision was made. The Interim Head of Housing advised that the recommendations were designed to mitigate the challenges. Once suitable properties were identified and a price agreed, the council's evaluation software would evaluate the entire life cost of the project. The recommendation asked members to agree that once the elevation was completed the Section 151 Officer is given delegated powers, in consultation with the Leader, Opposition Leader and the Chair of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee, to approve the acquisition if a positive financial appraisal was received, which would ensure completion by March 2024.

A member asked officers to consider arranging a special meeting so that the decision could be made by the Committee as a whole and make the decision based on the financial commitment before them. The Interim Head of Housing asked the Committee to note there may be difficulties in arranging a special meeting, as when suitable properties were found it was likely there would be a short time frame to secure their purchase.

A non-member of the committee was allowed to make comment and ask questions. He outlined the reasons why, as the Opposition Leader, felt uncomfortable being asked to consider approving the urgent decision following an expression of interest, having been given a short deadline to make his decision with a lack of financial information. He recalled that a previous meeting of this Committee, members raised concern as to the impact of borrowing costs to the council. He had been assured by the Section 151 Officer that the project would not progress if assessments found there was no financial business case and told that rigorous financial testing would be undertaken by the Finance Service before advice was given to the Committee. He expressed concern that the initial approach provided to him had changed. The Interim Housing Manager referred to an email he had since sent to the Opposition Leader setting why a different approach was being taken and included an invitation to discuss why a new approach was now being offered, and to speak to him if he had any concerns.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Bence.

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### The Committee

#### RESOLVED that

- (a) progression of the LAHF award of £1,092,000 to acquire seven additional homes for use as temporary accommodation be approved;
- (b) the use of HRA borrowing as match funding of a minimum 60% (up to £1,640,000) be approved;
- (c) Subject to recommendation (d), the acquisition of seven new homes for up to a maximum total cost of £2,730,000 for use as temporary accommodation and in accordance with the LAHF grant conditions be approved; and
- (d) Delegates authority to the Group Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Leader, Opposition Leader and Chair of this committee, to provide final written approval of the acquisition subject to the Group Head of Finance being in receipt of a positive financial appraisal.
- (e) Noted that an appraisal of the LAHF scheme will be brought to this committee once it is completed and in use.

#### RECOMMENDED TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

- (f) that this scheme is included within the Council's capital programme at a total cost of £2.73M, with £1.09M to be funded from central government grant and £1.64M to be funded by the Council through additional borrowing.

### 247. COUNCIL HOUSING COMPLIANCE STRATEGY

*(Councillor Walsh left the meeting after the vote on this item at approximately 8.47pm)*

The Chair invited the Interim Head of Housing to present the report to members. He advised that the council had demonstrated to the Regulator of Social Housing it was now meeting its obligations, and hence the Regulatory notice had recently been withdrawn. Part of the continuing work was the development of an overarching Compliance Policy.

The Chair then invited members to make comment or ask any questions. With regards to the photographic evidence previously taken when council properties were surveyed, four years ago, the Interim Head of Housing explained that in addition the regulator expected the council to provide a methodology for its findings.

Responding to a request for physical copies of gas, electrical and asbestos certificates to be placed at each property, the Compliance Manager, Maintenance Services, advised that evidence of all inspections, surveys and tests was held electronically. He confirmed that all contractors had electronic access to view the data at any time.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Bence and seconded by Councillor Walsh.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Committee approved the adoption of the appended Compliance Strategy.

248. OUTSIDE BODIES UPDATES

The Chair advised members that there were no report updates for the meeting.

249. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair advised that the work programme for 2023/24 was for information only and asked members if they had any questions or comments.

- Review of Pets Policy: The Interim Head of Housing explained why this Policy was not on today's agenda, following its inclusion on the work programme at the last meeting. He advised before it was considered by the Committee, November at the earliest, the engagement of residents would need to take place to understand all the relevant issues, especially in light of recent dog attacks across the Country, before its consideration by members.
- Housing Homeless Strategy Extension: This item was added to the Committee work programme, as agreed under Minute 111, to enable progress to be monitored by the whole Committee.

Members then noted the work programme for 2023/24.

250. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Bicknell and seconded by Cllr Bence.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That under Section 100a (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve

Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 12.09.23

the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

251. INSOLVENCY COUNCIL TAX WRITE OFFS

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Bence and Cllr Pendleton.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To write off the outstanding council tax charges totalling £5,181.86 which are subject to insolvency action, preventing the Council from pursuing the debtor for payment.

252. BUSINESS RATES WRITE OFFS - INSOLVENCY

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Bence and Cllr Bicknell.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To write off the outstanding business rates charges totalling £22,286.70 which are subject to insolvency action, preventing the Council from pursuing the debtor for payment.

(The meeting concluded at 8.55 pm)

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee - 23 November 2023</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Budget Monitoring Report to 30 September 2023</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Antony Baden – Group Head of Finance &amp; Section 151 Officer</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b> The Council's budget supports all the Council's Objectives.	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b> Budget monitoring and forecasting are key in ensuring sound financial control and control of spending is in place. It is also a major part in ensuring sound governance arrangements.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b> The report shows the Committee's Revenue budget and Capital programme forecast out turn position for 2023/24 as at the end of Quarter 2.	

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to apprise the Housing and Wellbeing Committee of its forecast out turn against the 2023/24 budgets, which were approved by Full Council at its meeting of the 9 March 2023.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. It is recommended that Committee notes this report.

## **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1. The report sets out in further detail the Committee's Revenue and Capital programme budget performance projections to the 31 March 2024. The Housing Revenue Account forecast is the subject of a separate report on this agenda.

## **4. DETAIL**

### **Revenue Budget**

- 4.1. Table 1 below shows the 2023/24 revenue out turn forecast as at Quarter 2 and anticipates an underspend of £240,000, which is a reduction of £160,000 since the Quarter 1 forecast. The major changes are explained in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4.

**Table 1 – Revenue Budget forecast**

<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee</b>					
<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget £'000</b>	<b>Forecast £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>	<b>Variance (Qtr.1) £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>
Homelessness (including Temporary Accommodation)	2,442	2,778	336	36	300
Arun Lifeline	(7)	12	19	0	19
Laburnum Day Centre	49	49	0	0	0
Day Centres	78	78	0	0	0
Housing Strategy, Advice & Enabling	39	21	(18)	(18)	0
Community Development	234	234	0	(40)	40
Children's/Adult Safety Initiatives	57	57	0	0	0
Safety Services (Crime Red)	716	600	(116)	0	(116)
Health & Equalities Partners	45	45	0	0	0
Arun Leisure Centre	201	201	0	0	0
Fred Lyons Pool	112	112	0	0	0
Littlehampton Swimming Centre	284	284	0	0	0
Leisure Management	(488)	(863)	(375)	(378)	3
Windmill Theatre	21	21	0	0	0
Concessionary Fares	11	11	0	0	0
Revenues & Benefits Administration	2,170	2,084	(86)	0	(86)
Rent Allowances	440	440	0	0	0
Rent Rebates	171	171	0	0	0
<b>Housing &amp; Wellbeing - Total</b>	<b>6,575</b>	<b>6,335</b>	<b>(240)</b>	<b>(400)</b>	<b>160</b>



**4.2. Homelessness** – The Quarter 2 forecast overspend has increased by £300k due to expenditure on providing Temporary Accommodation. The council have three times the number of households in nightly paid private rented sector accommodation than its own stock. The overall number has increased considerably since April 2023 from 166 households to 205 currently. This reflects the national picture of the highest numbers ever since records began in 1998 and of the overall picture across the country. The situation is exacerbated by record high rents in the private rented sectors where the local housing allowance typically covers about 50% of the rent, thus making it unaffordable to most homeless clients. The Council's social housing applicants list is lengthening, which means the length of an average stay in nightly paid accommodation also lengthens.

**4.3. Safety Services** – £116k underspend against budget. Staff vacancies are expected to show an underspend against this service.

**4.4. Revenues & Benefits administration** - The £86k underspend is mainly due to staff vacancies of £138,000, which are partially reduced by £52,000 due to the use of temporary staff to provide essential cover for a Recovery Officer.

### Capital Programme

4.5. Table 2 below details the 2023/24 forecast capital programme forecast out turn as at Quarter 2 and anticipates slippage in 2023/24 of £6,370,000

Table 2

Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Capital Programme							September 2023 (Quarter 2 2023/24)			
Housing and Wellbeing Committee										
Project	Original Capital Budget (Approved) 2023/24	Carry Forwards from 2022/23	Additional Approvals In-Year	Reprofiled	Revised Capital Budget (Approved) 2023/24	Forecast Outturn for the Year (2023/24)	Variance (Forecast Outturn vs Revised Budget)	Capital Budget 2024/25	Capital Budget 2025/26	Capital Budget 2026/27
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
ALC Wet Change	0	578			578	578	0	0	0	0
Housing Improvements and Stock Development	2,931	7,821	3,780	(6,671)	7,861	7,091	(770)	9,585	2,903	2,776
Decarbonisation (match funding)	3,000	0			3,000	0	(3,000)	0	0	0
Civica Implementation	467	60		(107)	420	420	(0)	160	0	0
Sheltered Accommodation	2,600	0			2,600	0	(2,600)	2,000	1,400	0
<b>Housing and Wellbeing (HRA) - Total</b>	<b>8,998</b>	<b>8,459</b>	<b>3,780</b>	<b>(6,778)</b>	<b>14,458</b>	<b>8,088</b>	<b>(6,370)</b>	<b>11,745</b>	<b>4,303</b>	<b>2,776</b>

4.6. The total capital budget for 2023/24 is £14,458,000, which includes slippage from the previous year of £8,459,000 and expenditure reprofiling of £6,778,000 into future financial years in relation to existing schemes. Members will note that this

has not resulted in additional expenditure but reflects the estimated timing of future costs. Table 2 also indicates estimated slippage in 2023/24 of £6,370,000. The reasons are outlined in paragraphs 4.7 to 4.9.

4.7. The Housing Improvements & Stock Development scheme slippage (£770,000) relates to budget that has not yet been allocated to a specific area of work. This will be carried forward into the following financial year if required.

4.8. The Decarbonisation scheme slippage of £3,000,000 has arisen because the scheme has been put on hold as a result of the Council's unsuccessful bid to secure matched grant. Officers are considering other options and will report to Members in due course.

4.9. Officers are also developing options around the Sheltered Accommodation scheme (slippage of £2,600,000) and will report these to Members in due course.

4.10. The Warwick Nurseries & Boweries scheme was approved at Full Council on the 19 July 2023 with a capital budget of £3,780,000 and is included in Housing Improvements & Stock Development in Table 2.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

5.1. Consultation with other stakeholders is not required for this report.

## **6. OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

6.1. Not applicable.

## **7. COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from the matters set out in this report. Committee will note that the Group Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer will work throughout the financial year with other Group Heads to mitigate any overspends that have been highlighted in the report and to maximise potential income generation opportunities/cost avoidance efficiencies.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1. Regular budget monitoring and forecasting mitigates against the risk of poor financial control and ensures that Members are informed when corrective action is required and what action has been taken.

## **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1. None.

## **11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1. None.

## **12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1. None.

## **13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1. None.

## **14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1. None.

## **15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1. None.

## **16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1. None.

## **17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1. None.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Antony Baden

**Job Title:** Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer

**Contact Number:** 01903 737558

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

[Budget Book 2023/24](#)

[Minute 779, Full Council 9 March 2023 – Arun District Council budget 2023/24.](#)

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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee on 23 November 2023</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Safer Arun Partnership scrutiny report</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Dax O'Connor, Community Safety Officer</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b> IMPROVING THE WELLBEING OF ARUN: Develop and implement a Wellbeing Strategy to plan services, resources, amenities, activities, and places to help our community thrive	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b> The Council has a duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 5) to review and scrutinise the decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions by the Safer Arun Partnership.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b> Not applicable to this external body scrutiny report.	

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report provides the latest update information in relation to the performance of the Safer Arun Partnership to allow this committee to carry out its statutory scrutiny function.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report.

### 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1. Since the last scrutiny report was presented to the Committee on 20 June 2023, the Safer Arun Partnership has met on two occasions. This report provides a summary of those meetings and agreed actions.
- 3.2. Grant funding decisions can be found at 4.4., 4.5. and 4.13 of this report. The Safer Arun Partnership considers applications from statutory agencies and community groups where initiatives address community safety concerns linked to the partnership's strategic priorities.

#### **4. DETAIL**

- 4.1. Councillor Alan Butcher was elected as the Safer Arun Partnership's new Chairperson at the meeting on 25 July 2023. Thanks were given to Councillor Alison Cooper for her stewardship as Chair over the previous two and a half years.
- 4.2. The key points of the partnership meeting dated 25 July 2023 are set out through sections 4.3 to 4.9 of this report.
- 4.3. A significant budget of £92,000 was noted as being available due to underspend across previous years. Officers advised partners that it should be a priority to identify suitable projects to make use of these funds. Grant funding is allocated to the Safer Arun Partnership from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, and it is imperative they see that funds are being utilised to combat crime and anti-social behaviour in line with the partnership's strategic priorities.
- 4.4. Five initiatives were proposed, with funding agreed as follows:-
- Youth voice led safety project-  
National youth arts charity, Artsworld, to collaborate with the APC in Littlehampton to develop safety messages that are devised, created, and delivered by pupils themselves. The project will explore what the key issues are locally that impact young people's sense of safety and the safety of their own communities. Various mediums of communication will be explored with young people themselves determining how to deliver and showcase their messaging to their peers.  
£6,000 allocated
  - Safer Schools event-  
To provide a seminar for all Year 7 or 8 pupils attending secondary school in Arun, giving information, and sharing lived experiences in relation to violence, drugs, and criminal exploitation. Funding required to cover venue hire, two-way transport for all pupils, costs of speakers, and set-up of a marketplace for youth service organisations to attend and engage with pupils highlighting the diversionary activities available.  
£20,000 allocated
  - Enhancing Community Speedwatch-  
As part of the Arun and Chichester Road Safety Action Group, it is noted that Arun has distinctly fewer active speedwatch groups. This proposal would seek to support formation of new groups and to acquire 'training' equipment that groups can loan whilst establishing themselves.  
£5,000 allocated

- Supporting reduction of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)-  
To provide funds for Arun DC's Safeguarding Lead to obtain a small stock of personal safety devices, doorbell cameras, and PAYG mobile phones, which can be utilised alongside Arun NPT to support victims and those at increased risk of personal harm.  
£3,000 allocated
  - Local Action Teams-  
SAP has endorsed the creation of Local Action Teams where they are considered necessary to address localised issues such as increased fear of crime and ASB due to feeling unsafe in that area. A Local Action Team will bring together 'on the ground' stakeholders and agencies to tackle these issues. This proposed budget would allow the LAT to implement practical measures and promotional activities.  
£6,000 allocated
- 4.5. The partnership subsequently considered an application from Angmering Parish Council for funding of £817.56 aimed at increasing target hardening work around the Community Centre, to include enhanced CCTV and anti-climb paint. Approval was given and funds have been paid.
  - 4.6. Agreement was given to contribute to the planned community safety survey being run in conjunction with all Community Safety Partnerships across West Sussex. Whilst WSCC will be hosting the survey, it was noted that residents tend to identify more with their local area more than the county. The platform will allow people to select the area where they live so that views can be recorded at a local level. Consulting with residents to understand how safe they feel, and the community safety issues relevant to them is vital for the partnership to ensure that targeted work is undertaken.
  - 4.7. Partners identified a heightened risk around children and young people, both in Arun and across the county. A number of activities were planned to take place over the summer months, with a multi-agency approach agreed. Both higher and lower level engagement would take place with young people and inform a collective longer term response. Targeted hotspot locations included railways stations and rail travel, local parks, and town centres.
  - 4.8. The key points of the partnership meeting dated 24 October 2023 are set out through sections 4.11 to 4.17 of this report.
  - 4.9. It was noted that the Community Safety consultation is underway and runs until 3 November 2023. Results will be collated by WSCC during the following weeks with results and analysis passed to each Community Safety Partnership as soon as possible.
  - 4.10. In response to concerns around youth disorder and violence, partnership work is underway with a focus on train lines and cross-district travel. BTP, Southern Rail and youth services are involved.

- 4.11. It is noted that fraud now accounts for approximately 40% of all reported crime. Work in Arun includes delivery of fraud awareness presentations by Community Wardens and promotion of Get Safe Online campaigns. WSCC will be creating a dedicated project for delivery which will be shared with the CSP and partners to push through local networks to reach residents across the district.
- 4.12. SAP makes an annual contribution towards a data analyst role at WSCC. It has been requested that they provide a quarterly data report, utilising statutory agency data sets, and specific to the adopted strategic priorities of each district. This will assist the partnership to track progress and measurement of outcomes of the work done.
- 4.13. The following funding application was agreed:-
- Youth diversionary activity fund-  
Neighbourhood Youth Officers and ASB Caseworkers will have access to funding that can be utilised to support young people access diversionary activities where they come to notice for their involvement in ASB and concerns are raised that they could escalate to violence or crime. There are currently only limited options available to divert young people from such behaviour, such as free swimming passes. This does not appeal to everyone. Officers will work closely with the young person and their family to identify appropriate activities that meet their interests and are most likely to help curb their anti-social or criminal behaviour.  
£3,000 allocated
- 4.14. The Council's Community Safety team have identified the need for an effective detached youth outreach service across the district, to engage with young people and guide them in the choices they make. An initial approach was outlined with all partners agreeing to this approach, in principle. A more detailed project plan has subsequently been provided and distributed to partners for comment and agreement to provide partnership funding.
- 4.15. The partnership undertook a detailed conversation about the heightened tensions, ASB, and crime in Littlehampton town centre. Individual agencies are all carrying out work to address the concerns being raised, but it was agreed that some of this has not been shared with the community. Details of live investigations will not be published, but there are opportunities to build up community trust by providing updates to the public on the proactive work being completed. Some examples of work that could be shared include:-
- The extended foot patrols by Community Wardens and police to counter reported ASB and gatherings in the High Street during specific times. These are being supported by officers from the Council's Community Safety team.



- WSCC funding secured to provide immediate youth outreach sessions in the town centre during the evenings.
- Establishment of a Local Action Team that involves ‘boots on the ground’ officers from multiple agencies and local stakeholders to identify and carry out practical direct action and review enforcement options.
- Op Sonar set up as a dedicated police response to town centre concerns.
- Ongoing liaison between the ASB team and licensing authorities to identify premises supplying alcohol to street drinkers or underage persons.
- Partners participating in community engagement and listening events, such as the town council’s market stall, and days of action.
- Delivery of ASB early education talks to primary school pupils by Community Wardens. To be followed up by police Neighbourhood Youth Officer.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1. Consultation has not been undertaken in relation to this information report.

## **6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 6.1. Consideration of options / alternatives is not required as this is an information report relating to an outside body.

## **7. COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

- 7.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

## **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

- 9.1. This report is an “information only” paper which provides detail from which the committee can scrutinise the performance of the Safer Arun Partnership. It should be noted that SAP is an outside body.

However, when undertaking scrutiny of the Safer Arun Partnership, the committee does have authority to make its own recommendations back to the partnership in relation to any performance and reporting elements it deems appropriate.

**10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1. This report resolves the Crime and Disorder Committee's statutory duty in providing scrutiny of the local community safety partnership.

15.2. It is noted that the council's Housing and Wellbeing committee is designated to serve as the statutory Crime and Disorder Committee in Arun.

**16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

**17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1. There are no direct impacts on the above areas arising from this report.

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**CONTACT OFFICER:**

<b>Name:</b>	Dax O'Connor
<b>Job Title:</b>	Community Safety Officer, Wellbeing and Communities
<b>Contact Number:</b>	Ext 37834

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Safer Arun Partnership Plan 2023-2025 [www.arun.gov.uk/safer-arun-partnership](http://www.arun.gov.uk/safer-arun-partnership)

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## **Arun District Council**

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators 2022-2026 – Quarter 2 performance report for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Jackie Follis, Group Head of Organisational Excellence</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b> The Key Performance Indicators support the Council's Vision and allows the Council to identify how well we are delivering across a full range of services.	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b> This report is produced by the Group Head of Organisational Excellence to give an update on the Q2 Performance outcome of the Key Performance Indicators.	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b> Not required.	

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. In order for the Committees to be updated with the Q2 Performance Outcome for the Key Performance indicators for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report and provides any questions or comments on the indicators relevant to this Committee to the Policy and Finance Committee on 8 February 2024.

### **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1. This report sets out the performance of the Key Performance indicators at Quarter 2 for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.

### **3. DETAIL**

- 3.1. The Council Vision 2022-2026 was approved at Full Council in March 2022. To support the Vision we need a comprehensive and meaningful set of performance measures which allow us to identify how well we are delivering across a full range of services. Two kinds of indicators were agreed at the Policy and Finance Committee on 17 March 2022. The first of these are annual indicators and will primarily update the progress against strategic milestones. In addition to this 'key performance indicators' (KPIs) will be reported to committees every quarter. These KPIs are known as our Corporate Plan.

- 3.2. A short report and appendix will go to each of the other Committees in the cycle of meetings after each quarter has ended. This appendix will only contain the indicators which are relevant to each Committee.
- 3.3. A full report showing quarterly performance against all indicators (which are measured at that quarter) will go to the relevant Policy and Finance Committee meeting at the end of the cycle of the other Committee meetings. Members of the other Committees will be able to give comments or ask questions about the KPI indicators that are relevant to their Committee and these will be submitted to the Policy and Finance Committee for consideration.
- 3.4. This is the quarterly report covering performance from 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023 and will cover only those indicators that are due to be measured at this point.
- 3.5. Thresholds are used to establish which category of performance each indicator is within.

	Achieved target	100% or above target figure
	Didn't achieve target but within 15% range	85%-99.9% below target figure
	Didn't achieve target by more than 15%	85% or less target figure

- 3.6. There are 42 Key Performance indicators. 8 of these indicators relate to this Committee and all 8 are measured at Q2.
- 3.7. This report gives the status of the indicators at Q2. Appendix A gives full commentary for each indicator.

Status	Number of Key Performance indicators in this category at Q2
Achieved target	2
Didn't achieve but within 15% range	2
Didn't achieve target by more than 15%	2
No data available	1
No status known until Q4	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>

- 3.8. Actions to be taken

- **CP16:** This is being monitored closely by the Interim Group Head of Housing and Interim Chief Executive and Director of Environment and Communities to ensure contractor performance is improved.
- **CP17:** As the commentary says, preventing homelessness continues to be more difficult than it has been previously. An increase in landlords selling or re-letting their homes for higher rents coupled with an increasingly unaffordable privately rented sector and lack of available social housing has meant more and more households' homelessness is unable to be prevented. Local housing allowances remain frozen and the gap between the LHAs and market rent continues to increase. This situation is being monitored closely by the Interim Group Head of Housing and Interim Chief Executive and Director of Environment and Communities.

3.9. Data is not available

Data is not available for CP19, Number of Housing Register applications activated 'live' within 15 working days upon receipt of all verification documents. The Council is waiting for the implementation of Abritas, our new housing register system, which is expected to be completed around October. The housing register applications will need to be re-registered on the new system, so there will be some lag before the system is in a steady state, but then the data will be available. The expectation in this will be in the 3rd quarter of this year (2023/24).

**4. CONSULTATION**

4.1. No consultation has taken place.

**5. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

5.1. To review the report

5.2. To request further information and/or remedial actions be undertaken

**6. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF CORPORATE SUPPORT/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

6.1. None required.

**7. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1. None required

**8. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1 As this report is an information paper, there are no recommendations for the Committee to consider. This report is to be taken as read only with Members having the opportunity to ask questions at the meeting on service performance. Members can also submit questions or comments on the indicators relevant to their Committee and these will be considered by the Policy and Finance Committee on 8 February 2024.

**9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

9.1. Not applicable.

**10. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

10.1. Not applicable.

**11. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

11.1. Not applicable.

## **12.EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

12.1. Not applicable.

## **13.CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1. Not applicable.

## **14.CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

14.1. Not applicable.

## **15.HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

15.1. Not applicable.

## **16.FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

16.1. Not applicable.

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**






**Name:** Jackie Follis



**Job Title:** Group Head of Organisational Excellence

**Contact Number:** 01903 737580

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** *None*



No.	Indicator	Service Committee to consider this	CMT Member	Assess by	Target 2023	Q1 Status	Q2 Commentary	Q2 Outturn and status (April to Sept 2023)	Improved or not since Q1 figure (Q2 compared to Q1)
CP11	Number of Visits to Council Leisure Centres	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	956, 650	No status known until Q4  <b>Outturn for Q1 314,601</b>	Freedom Leisure continue to be looking like they will be above target by the end of the year and visits have increased across Arun Leisure Centre and The Wave by 1919 versus September 2022	No status known until Q4  <b>Outturn for Q2 643,718</b>	Up by 329,117 visits (better)  
CP15	Time taken to process Housing/Council Tax Benefit new claims and changes in circumstances	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Lower is better	8 days	<b>Achieving</b>  <b>Outturn for Q1 3.6 days</b>	A slight increase in September but still below target	<b>Achieving</b>  <b>Outturn for Q3 3.6 days</b>	Same as Q1  
CP16	Average days to re-let all properties (key to key) excluding major voids	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Lower is better	Q1 70 Q2 60 Q3 50 Q4 40	<b>Not achieving</b>  <b>Outturn for Q1 80 days</b>	Target for Q2 is 60 days. We are still prioritising temporary accommodation, but continue to be affected by poor contractor performance. An increasing number of void properties are being passed to a 2nd contractor in an attempt to improve turn around times	<b>Not achieving</b>  <b>Outturn for Q2 73 days</b>	Down by 7 days (better)  
CP17	Of homeless cases owed a prevention duty, % successfully resolved	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	55%	<b>Not achieving but within 15% range</b>  <b>Outturn for Q1 52%</b>	Preventing homelessness continues to be more difficult than it has been previously. An increase in landlords selling or re-letting their homes for higher rents coupled with an increasingly unaffordable privately rented sector and lack of available social housing has meant more and more households' homelessness is unable to be prevented. Local housing allowances remain frozen and the gap between the LHAs and market rent continues to increase.	<b>Not achieving</b>  <b>Outturn for Q2 46%</b>	Down by 6% (worse)  
CP18	Of homeless cases owed a relief duty, % positively relieved	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	35%	<b>Not achieving but within 15% range</b>  <b>Outturn for Q1 34%</b>	A lack of available affordable privately rented accommodation & social housing alongside increased demand makes it more difficult to relieve homelessness within statutory guidelines before a full decision on an application is reached. Rents for privately rented accommodation are making the sector inaccessible to a large portion of homeless households. This is creating increased demand for social housing which is making wait times longer.	<b>Not achieving but within 15% range</b>  <b>Outturn for Q2 30%</b>	Down by 4% (worse)  

No.	Indicator	Service Committee to consider this	CMT Member	Assess by	Target 2023	Q1 Status	Q2 Commentary	Q2 Outturn and status (April to Sept 2023)	Improved or not since Q1 figure (Q2 compared to Q1)
CP19	Number of Housing Register applications activated 'live' within 15 working days upon receipt of all verification documents	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	75%	No data available	The implementation of Abritas, our new housing register system, is expected to be completed around October. The housing register applications will need to be re-registered on the new system, so there will be some lag before the system is in a steady state, but then the data will be available. The expectation in this will be in the 3rd quarter of this year (2023/24).	No data available	No data available
CP20	Rent collected as a proportion of rent owed (dwellings)	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	97%	Not achieving but within 15% range <b>Outturn for Q1 95.11%</b>	Performance has declined slightly compared to Q1. We have a dedicated income officer who focuses on high level cases and our neighbourhoods officers receive regular income training.	Not achieving but within 15% range <b>Outturn for Q2 95.06%</b>	Down by 0.05% (worse) 
CP21	Percentage of non-emergency repairs completed within 20 working days	Housing & Wellbeing	Philippa Dart	Higher is better	90%	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q1 90.70%</b>	This percentage relates to Osborne works orders only. Performance has increased compared to Q1, with more works being completed in target timescales. We continue the work with the dynamic purchasing system and which we are confident will continue to improve the repairs service provided to our residents.	Achieving <b>Outturn for Q1 96.48%</b>	Up by 5.78% (better) 

## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Performance measures for housing services – Quarter 2 performance for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Sasha Hawkins – Interim Business Improvement Manager</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<p><b>CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:</b></p> <p>The performance measures will support the Council’s vision and will allow the council to have visibility of how housing is performing as a service.</p> <p>It will support the following aim.</p> <p>Delivering the right homes in the right places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring the existing housing stock in the district (private sector and council owned) is maintained to a high standard</li> <li>Continue to bring empty homes back into use for the benefit of the community</li> </ul>	
<p><b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b></p> <p>The Regulator of Social Housing expects that members and executive leaders are given performance information pertaining to the quality of homes, service performance and our engagement with tenants. Our Resident Engagement Strategy has a specific aim ‘Be Accountable’ and we set out in this our commitment to publishing performance measures.</p> <p>The performance measures set out within this report will ensure we are continuing to meet the requirements of The Regulator and deliver on the aims of our strategy</p>	
<p><b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b></p> <p>Work continues to improve arrears levels across our general needs and leaseholder stock, which will increase the income received.</p> <p>There are no other direct financial implications associated with this report.</p>	

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members with our Q2 performance on the agreed set of housing measures.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the content of this report.

## **3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1 This report sets out the performance of housing services at Quarter 2 for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023.
- 3.2 These measures are in addition to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures we are required to report on by the Regulator.
- 3.3 The Regulator of Social Housing expects Members and executive leaders to regularly scrutinise performance information pertaining to the quality of homes, service performance and our engagement with tenants.
- 3.4 Compared to 30 June 2023 our performance has improved in 7 areas and declined in 7 areas; this performance is based on looking month on month, where the trend shows improvements on average across the quarter this will be highlighted.
- 3.5 The average relet time in days for all voids has reduced from 80 days in June to 65 days in September, whilst this is still higher than we would like performance is improving this is as a result of us implementing a new voids process and awarding the voids work to a new contractor who are delivering properties back to us quicker.
- 3.6 We are continuing to work with our contractors to improve repairs performance and to ensure they meet the repairs timescales we have set, as the time taken for repairs to be completed is not meeting the targets we have set and is not providing the service we expect for our residents. Performance continues to trend at similar levels and is not seeing a large % increase quarter on quarter.
- 3.7 Arrears due has increased slightly from 4.89% from 4.94%, steps are being taken to improve income recovery, however external factor such as the cost of living have an impact on arrears levels.

- 3.8 We have continued to work with residents to gain access to their homes to carry out vital safety checks and we have seen performance improve this quarter from 94.65% to 96.83% for EICR checks and from 98.71% to 99.74% for gas checks.
- 3.9 On average complaints performance has improved this quarter and this is set out in more details within the Complaints and Determination report taken to committee this evening.
- 3.10 The average time households spent in B&B and TA is down, and the number of cases where homelessness is prevented has increased.
- 3.11 Further detail on the figures and the actions being taken to improve performance are set out in Appendix 1 under manager comments.

#### 4 **DETAIL**

- 4.1 There are 14 measures set out at Appendix 1 which give performance information pertaining to key areas of our service. Where any measures are only collected annually this will be set out in the report.
- 4.2 Within the tables set out in Appendix 1 we have also set out our benchmarking against other providers, this data is provided by Housemark and determines which quartile our performance is in.
- 4.3 Due to the benchmarking timelines not all quartile information for 2022/23 is available yet, which is the year we will be benchmarking against, this will be set out in the manager comments where this is the case.
- 4.4 Other measures will be added to the table as we collate further data.
- 4.5 The column titled “ADC Quartile 2022/23” represents our performance for 2022/23 and gives members insight into how our current performance is measuring against last year’s performance, and the upper quartile column gives members insight into how far we are from upper quartile performance. Our target is to be operating in the upper quartile.
- 4.6 We our continuing work to improve void performance, which has seen improvements in relet times this quarter. We have appointed a new contractor to carry out our void works, initial figures show improvement however we will see the full results of this change in next quarters report.
- 4.7 We have also introduced a new process for managing voids which will take effect when our new Technical Officers are in post, one of these changes is pre-void inspections, which will allow us to assess the condition of the property prior to the property becoming vacant. Members were invited to a briefing on 27 September 2023 which set out these changes in more detail.
- 4.8 The table below sets out the number of voids in compared to the number of lettings made across the two quarters.

4.9

	Q2 (01/07/2023 – 30/09/2023)	Q1 (01/04/2023 – 30/06/2023)
Voids in	77	58
Lettings	66	42

- 4.10 The work we are doing to improve our complaints performance and satisfaction is set out in a separate report which has been presented to members this evening, but we are seeing improvements in this area and are close to moving up a quartile.
- 4.11 In respect of rent arrears, staff continue to receive regular training on income recovery, and one of our officers is still solely focusing on this area and looking at high level arrears cases. Our financial inclusion officer is continuing to offer advice and support to those in arrears.
- 4.12 There are delays in our main repair's contractor providing their data to us which impacts our reporting of completed works and means there is a delay on their works orders being included in reporting. We will therefore need to report to members a quarter behind for the two measures relating to repairs completed in time. These measures represent Q1 performance compared to Q4 performance. We are working on the options to rectify this.
- 4.13 However, our repairs performance still falls below our target and the service we want for our residents. This continues to be addressed by the Repairs and Maintenance Manager who meets with contractors on a regular basis to monitor performance and resolve issues.
- 4.14 We are also using the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to address the performance of contractors and we will be placing a tender for repairs orders over £500 onto the DPS, this is due to the poor performance to date on these orders. By tendering this piece of work, we hope to see improved repairs times for our residents, increasing their satisfaction with the service and reducing ongoing repairs times.
- 4.15 The data for West Sussex Authorities has not been updated since Q1 by the Department of Levelling up Homes and Communities so this has not been included in this report as Q1 performance has already been brought to committee.
- 4.16 At the committee meeting in September 2023 members requested further performance information pertaining to housing fraud and service charge arrears for leaseholders.
- 4.17 We cannot benchmark against these figures as they are not measures by Housemark, but our own performance is set out in Appendix 2 and will be reported to this committee each quarter.
- 4.18 We have submitted our performance information for 22/23 to Housemark and this benchmarking will be available for next quarters report.
- 4.19 A guide to the measures is set out at Appendix 3

## **5 CONSULTATION**

5.1 No consultation has taken place

## **6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

6.1 To review the report and performance measures at Appendix 1

6.2 To request further information and/or remedial actions to be undertaken.

## **7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1 There are no financial implications

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 There are no implications identified

## **9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1 There are no legal and governance implications

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1 No impact identified.

## **11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1 Appendix 1 set out performance information pertaining to compliance and repairs. These measures give oversight to help support effective management of health and safety risks associated with our housing stock.

## **12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 The recommendations of this report have no impact on the Councils General Fund Portfolio or the delivery of Property, Estates, and Facilities functions.

## **13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 Not required for this report

**14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 No impact identified

**15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 No impact identified

**16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 There are no implications identified.

**17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 There are no implications identified

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**CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Sasha Hawkins

**Job Title:** Interim Business Improvement Manager

**Contact Number:** 01903 737656

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**









Appendix 1 – Table of performance measures

Appendix 2 – Fraud and leasehold charges performance

Appendix 3 – Guide to measures



## HOUSING PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Repairs	Data source	ADC Quartile 2022/23	Upper Quartile (target)	Current Performance	RAYG	Previous Performance	Direction	4-month trend
% of emergency repairs completed in time	Housing System	<b>2</b> 97.57%	99.1%	83.33% (Q1)		94.05% (Q4)		
% of non-emergency repairs completed in time	Housing system	<b>3</b> 79.42%	93.72%	68.77%(Q1)		66.06%(Q4)		
Average cost of a responsive repair	Housing System	<b>4</b> £246.66	£125.56	£312.85 (Q1)		£217.98 (Q4)		
Satisfaction with repairs	KWEST Monthly survey	N/A	N/A	79% (Sept 2023)		82% (Jun 2023)		

### MANAGERS COMMENTS:

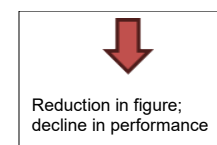
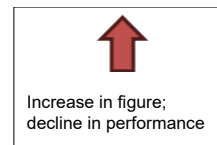
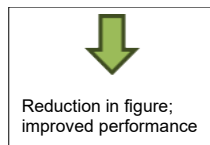
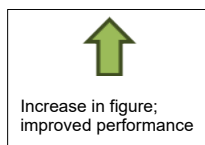
There are delays in our main repairs contractor providing their data to us which impacts our reporting of completed works and means there is a delay on their works orders being included in reporting. We will therefore need to report to members a quarter behind for the two measures relating to repairs completed in time. These measures represent Q1 performance compared to Q4 performance. We are working on the options to rectify this. The two measures at the top of the table above show Q1 performance whilst the other measures show Q2.





We are continuing to work with our contractors to improve repairs performance and to ensure they meet the repairs timescales we have set. The time taken for repairs to be completed is not meeting the targets we have set and is not providing the service we expect for our residents. Performance continues to trend at similar levels and is not seeing a large % increase quarter on quarter. Further information is set out in the main report on the work we are doing to improve repairs performance.

The figures above represent performance across a range of contractors not just Osborne Property Services Ltd.

The average cost of a responsive repair has increased this is due to an increased number of higher value repairs being carried out across the quarter, the repairs and maintenance managers monitors expenditure each month.

Key to directional arrows:







Compliance	Data source	ADC Quartile 2022/23	Upper Quartile (target)	Current Performance At 30 Sept 2023	RAYG	Previous Performance At 30 Jun 2023	Direction	4-month trend Jun – Sept 2023
% of domestic homes with a satisfactory EICR	Housing system	<b>3</b> 95.08%	99.57%	96.83%		94.65%		
% of homes with completed gas safety checks	Housing system	<b>4</b> 98.35%	100%	99.74%		98.71%		

#### MANAGERS COMMENTS:

Our neighbourhood and compliance teams have been working together to gain access to homes where we need to carry out important safety checks, where we have not been able to gain access then our no access policy is used, and as a last resort legal action is sought to gain access.

We have also continued to work with contractors to ensure all certification is up to date and this is reflected in the increase % for EICR.

Both of these things have resulted in improved performance.

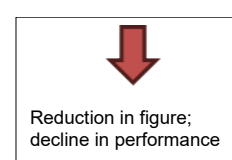
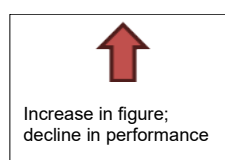
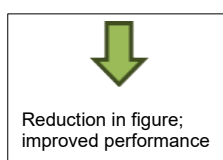
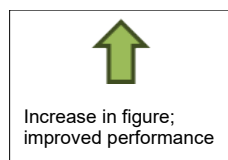
Voids	Data source	ADC Quartile 2022/23	Upper Quartile (target)	Current Performance At 30 Sept 2023	RAYG	Previous Performance At 30 Jun 2023	Direction	4-month trend Jun – Sept 2023
Average relet time in days (all voids)	Housing System	<b>3</b> 76.55	45	64.57		79.93		
% Void loss	Housing System	<b>3</b> 1.65%	0.94%	2.13%		1.96%		



#### MANAGERS COMMENTS:

Voids performance has improved across the quarter, and with the appointment of new technical officers and a new voids contractor we anticipate this upward trend will continue and that we will see further improvements next quarter.

Members had a briefing on 27 September which updated them on the planned changes to the voids process, some of these changes have already been implemented and will continue to be embedded within the service.





Key to directional arrows:



Financial	Data source	ADC Quartile 2022/23	Upper Quartile (target)	Current Performance At 30 Sept 2023	RAYG	Previous Performance At 30 Jun 2023	Direction	4-month trend Jun – Sept 2023
Arrears – as a % of rent due	Housing System	<b>3</b> 4.71%	2.2%	4.94%		4.89%		

#### MANAGERS COMMENTS:

Arrears due has increased slightly from 4.89% to 4.94%, steps are being taken to improve income recovery, however external factors such as the cost of living have an impact on arrears levels. One officer is solely working on income recovery and focusing on high level arrears cases. Our Financial Inclusion Officer continues to work with residents to help them maximise their income.

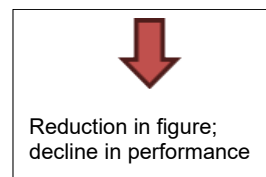
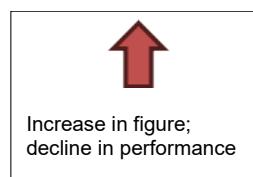
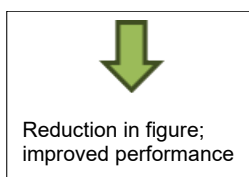
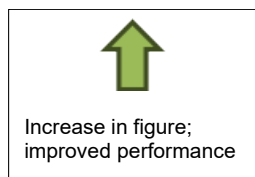
Complaints	Data source	ADC Quartile 2022/23	Upper Quartile (target)	Current Performance At 30 Sept 2023	RAYG	Previous Performance At 30 Jun 2023	Direction	4-month trend Jun - Sept 2023
No of stage 1 complaints 63% responded to in time	Housing System	<b>4</b> 38.9%	93.82%	24 in Sept 50%		25 in June 27.78%		
No of stage 2 complaints 43% responded to in time	Housing System	<b>4</b> 15.6%	96.1%	5 in Sept 60%		3 in June 71.43%		




#### MANAGERS COMMENTS: (note – excludes non-tenant complaints)

Month on month we are still seeing fluctuations in the % of complaints responded to within time, there has been an improvement in September compared to June for Stage 1's but a decline in performance for Stage 2's.

However, the average across the quarter including complaints responded to within agreed extended timescales was 63% of Stage 1's on time and 42% for Stage 2's which has increased on the average from last quarter. We are also close to moving up a quartile for performance.

Key to directional arrows:



Homelessness and Housing Need	Data Source	Target Vision targets	Current Performance As at 30 Sept 2023	RAYG	Previous Performance As at 31 Jul 2023	Direction
Average time households spent in B&B and EA	Local performance info	12 weeks	16 weeks 168 households		17 weeks 153 households	
Average time households spent in TA	Housing system	64 weeks	29 weeks (204 days) 44 households		33 weeks (233 days) 38 households	
Applicants on the housing waiting list	Housing system	N/A	2063		1944	

#### MANAGER COMMENT

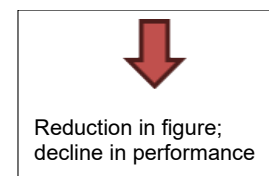
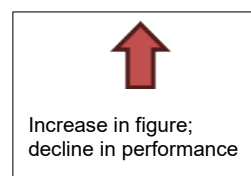
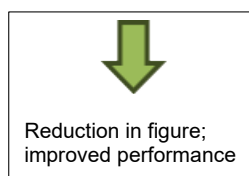
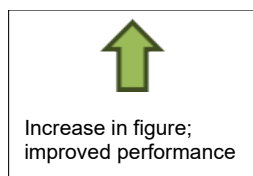
Our options team continue to work under unprecedented demand on the service with numbers in temporary accommodation still at the highest numbers for 25 years since records were created, locally and nationally. Numbers have increased slightly with 212 households in temporary accommodation and emergency accommodation combined compared to 191 in July. The average length of time spent in both emergency accommodation and temporary accommodation has reduced this quarter

The numbers of households on the housing waiting list have also increased compared to July which further shows the increased demand on the options service.

Housing options officers continue to have high caseloads and are working hard to prevent and relieve as many homeless cases as possible

<b>TOTAL ON HOUSING LIST AS AT 30 SEPT 2023 = 2063</b>						
Banding and Bed need breakdown for general needs and sheltered housing applications:						
Band / Bed	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
A	75	27	8	5	0	115
B	222	125	79	58	7	491
C	652	430	291	80	4	1457
TOTAL	949	582	378	143	11	<b>2063</b>

Key to directional arrows:



## Appendix 2

Housing Fraud	Data source	Current Performance At 30 Sept 2023	Previous Performance At 30 Jun 2023
Number of fraud cases open	Housing data	15	18
Total value of savings to the council	Housing data	£744,000	£558,000

### MANAGERS COMMENTS

The numbers of fraud cases open remains consistent across the two quarters, we are seeing an increase in reports of sub-letting and non-occupation which are being investigated by our Fraud Investigation and Enforcement Officer.

Each case of tenancy fraud costs local authorities an estimated £93,000 and this figure is used to calculate the savings above, during quarter 2 we uncovered 8 cases of housing fraud.

From April 2023 to September 2023 we have recovered 6 properties.

<b>Leaseholder charges</b>	Data source	Current Performance At 17 October 2023
Value of charges outstanding	Housing system	£214,474.97

#### MANAGERS COMMENTS

We charge leaseholders annually in arrears, they receive their annual bill each year to cover the previous financial year. This year saw a n increase in compliance works which means service charges will be higher for leaseholders. Where we carry out major works such as roof replacements we carry out S20 consultation with any leaseholders effected before commencing work, when the works are completed the charges are then apportioned to leaseholders effected.

We have a Leasehold Officer within the service who will be working to reduce the level of arrears, and we have a income recovery policy in place which sets out the pre-action protocol to follow.

## Guide to new performance measure tables

<b>Measure</b>	Brief description of each performance measure
<b>Data source</b>	Where the measure is stored or generated. Most measures will be data that we extract from a relevant housing system, some might come from survey data and others may come from Housemark or government tables
<b>ADC quartile</b>	<p>This is taken from our Housemark subscription. A number in bold and a background colour displays which quartile our last submission places us in, with Quartile 1 (green colour) being the top performing position and Quartile 4 (red colour) being the lowest performing position.</p> <p>Also in this box is the figure we provided in our last submission that determined the quartile position</p>
<b>Upper quartile</b>	This shows what figure we'd need to achieve to get into quartile 1 (based on last submission information) and is also the current target for this measure.
<b>Current performance</b>	This is our most recent performance data - could be a monthly, quarterly, or annual figure
<b>RAG status</b>	Red, Amber Yellow, and Green colours to show which quartile our latest performance figure would put us in, if we compared current performance against last Housemark submission information
<b>Previous performance</b>	This is our previous performance data - could be a monthly, quarterly, or annual figure
<b>Direction</b>	<p>Will show red or green arrows in an upward or downward direction to show the difference between our current and previous performance.</p> <p>The direction of the arrow shows whether the current performance figure is higher or lower than previously, the colour indicates whether that direction is positive or negative.</p>
<b>Trendline</b>	Visual display of the recent trajectory of each measure over the last 4-month period (where applicable)

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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Housing services complaints performance and determinations Q2</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Sasha Hawkins – Interim Business Improvement Manager</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>

### **CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:**

The report supports the following areas in the corporate vision:

- Delivering the right homes in the right places
- Support those in our community that need help, providing a safety net where necessary and working with people and organisations to meet different needs.
- Ensure the existing housing stock in the district (private sector and council owned) is maintained to a high standard.
- Support households with complex needs to secure suitable accommodation.

This report provides members with details of Housing Ombudsman determinations made against the council and our complaints performance for the second quarter of 2023/24 (July to September).

### **DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:**

The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code sets out that landlords should provide their governing bodies with information on their performance on complaint handling, to include showing that we have complied with any orders made by the Ombudsman.

As a landlord we have to ensure compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code as failure to do so could result in a complaint being referred to an appropriate regulator.

### **FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**

The average amount of compensation paid as part of our Stage 1 and Stage 2 responses for Q2 was £68.20, this is down from an average of £187.00 in Q1. The main driver for compensation is work being carried out late by our contractors and poor communication.

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present to committee an overview of Housing services complaints performance for Q2 (July to September)

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Housing and Wellbeing Committee

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report
- 2.2 Note the improved performance in complaint response times for quarter 2

## **3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1 This report provides members with an overview of our complaint handling performance in quarter 2 for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023.
- 3.2 There are no new determinations made by the Housing Ombudsman to report on to committee.
- 3.3 The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code sets out that landlords should report to their members regular updates on their complaint handling performance and their compliance with Ombudsman orders.
- 3.4 For the period 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023 105 formal complaints were received, the highest volume of complaints was seen in our repairs service which accounted for 71 of formal complaints received. In quarter 1 we received 97 formal complaints.
- 3.5 On average for quarter 2 we responded to 63% of Stage 1 complaints within agreed extended timescales this is an improvement on quarter 1's performance which was 50%. For Stage 2 complaints we responded to 42% of complaints within agreed extended timescales this is an improvement on quarter 1's performance which was 31%.
- 3.6 When benchmarking our performance against other housing providers we remain in quartile 4 for complaint response times but based on quarter 2's performance we are close to moving into quartile 3 if the upward trend continues.
- 3.7 Whilst performance still falls below our targets for response times it has improved compared to Quarter 1 and the improvements are as a direct result of the changes implemented to our processes, of which more detail is set out in the main body of the report.

- 3.8 For quarter 2 we received 27 compliments which are set out below, this is an increase on 5 for quarter 1.

## 4 **DETAIL**

### 4.1 **Complaint performance**

- 4.2 Appendix 1 sets out our performance for quarter 2 and reports on key measures such as response rate, volume of complaints, and root causes.
- 4.3 Compared to Q1 the volume of complaints has increased, with 105 complaints being received in Q2 compared to 97 in Q1, this is only a slight increase and is due to an increase in stage 1's for the month of August where we received 14 stage 1 complaints which was higher than the months of July and September. We will be monitoring any trends with the volumes of complaints and analysing what might be causing a spike in complaints in certain months.
- 4.4 The response time set by the Housing Ombudsman for Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints is 10 and 20 working days. Appendix 1 shows the percentage of complaints responded to within time has increased compared to Q1.
- 4.5 As a service our target percentage for complaint response times is 94% for Stage 1's and 96% for Stage 2's. This target is driven by the top performing providers in the sector and is provided by Housemark as part of the benchmarking data we give them.
- 4.6 Performance is improving at a gradual rate, and we anticipate this upward trend will continue, and we can move into the next performance quartile when our performance is benchmarked against other housing providers in the sector.
- 4.7 Over the last four months we have implemented and continued to embed the following changes to improve our complaint handling.
- 4.8 Our complaints and compliments tracker is now fully embedded within the service, and has allowed us to have greater oversight of complaints, identify gaps in our performance and areas for improvement.
- 4.9 The complaints co-ordinator holds weekly meetings with service managers and team leaders to keep oversight on the level of complaints, communication with residents and to ensure we respond within time.
- 4.10 Weekly meetings with Infomanagement to keep track of any outstanding complaints

- 4.11 The central mailbox for housing complaints is improving the speed in which we allocate complaints out which is giving officers more time to investigate and respond to complaints.
- 4.12 The Interim Head of Housing has weekly meetings with the Repairs and Maintenance Manager to keep track of repairs complaints.
- 4.13 Regular meetings are held with Osborne Property Services Ltd to resolve repairs complaints.
- 4.14 All of these changes have resulted in improved performance for quarter 2.
- 4.15 Appendix 1 shows that our repairs service has received the largest number of complaints in Q2 which continues the same trend as the previous quarter
- 4.16 This is still due to the performance of our main repairs contractor which is being addressed by the implementation of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), and improved performance monitoring.
- 4.17 We will be placing a tender for repairs orders over £500 onto the DPS, this is due to the poor performance to date on these orders. By tendering this piece of work, we hope to see improved repairs times for our residents, increasing their satisfaction with the service and reducing the level of complaints.
- 4.18 We have awarded the voids contract to Westons which will result in improved quality, and improved re-let times, again increasing satisfaction when new residents move into their homes.
- 4.19 We have recently recruited new technical officers who will be visiting residents to inspect repairs and check the quality of the work done, which should reflect into improved satisfaction with our service.
- 4.20 Further steps are being taken to ensure performance continues to improve each quarter which are set out below.
- 4.21 Over the next quarter several actions will also be taken to improve communication with our residents as this is one of the top root causes for complaints.
- 4.22 This includes call response time monitoring, updating our website, reviewing the repairs handbook and focus groups with residents to understand how we can improve communication.
- 4.23 We have introduced a monitoring phase to our complaints tracker to ensure that any actions committed to in complaint responses are monitored through to completion, and that regular updates are provided to residents.

- 4.24 We have also used the root causes data to produce information for the housing management team on the lessons that be learnt from complaints, this is then used to put in place actions to resolve any systemic issues that are contributing to complaints.
- 4.25 The housing management team also meet every week and will be reviewing all actions committed to, and ensuring they are monitored through to completion.
- 4.26 Continue to monitor the performance of our main repairs contractor, and explore further options through the DPS for are responsive repairs service.
- 4.27 **Compliments**
- 4.28 For quarter 2 we received 27 compliments, this is an increase on 5 for quarter 1. Some of these compliments are set out below.
- 4.29 "Time keeping, cleared up well. Police and done a great job"
- 4.30 "I just wanted to say thank you again for all your help and making sure that me and X stayed together, means so much to me. I can't thank you enough for all your support over the last year"
- 4.31 "Thank you so much for your help in getting this done"
- 4.32 "Thank you for the work you have done to help, a chance of a decent life for the first time thanks to you"
- 4.33 "I can't thank you enough for your prompt input into supporting us as a family with the repairs of our wet room, your actions and understanding and I honestly feel that my voice has been heard"
- 4.34 "I would like to thank you and your team for helping me in such a difficult situation, I'll always remember it and I wish you all the best."
- 4.35 "Many thanks for all you have done for us we can't thank you enough. We both want to thank you for all the work and time you have put in to help us get the issues sorted and that it was so nice to be able to communicate and talk with a caring person"

## **5 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 None required

## **6 OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERS**

6.1 This report is for noting only

## **7 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1 The financial implications outlined in this report are comparatively minor and can be funded within the existing housing revenue budget.

## **8 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 Not applicable.

## **9 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1 Compliance with the Complaint Handling Code is a requirement of the membership of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme and failure to comply with the Code entitles the Ombudsman to take action through its determinations and other avenues. There are no direct legal implications associated with this report, but the report forms part of the Council's ongoing work to adhere to the Code and to improve its complaints performance.

## **10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

10.1 No impact identified.

## **11 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

11.1 There are no direct health and safety impacts associated with this report. However, reporting on complaint performance and Ombudsman determinations helps to highlight improvements to service areas which include repairs and compliance, which will help support the effective management of health and safety risks.

## **12 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

12.1 The recommendations of this report have no impact on the Councils General Fund Portfolio or the delivery of Property, Estates, and Facilities functions.

## **13 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

13.1 Not required for this report

**14 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

14.1 No impact identified

**15 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

15.1 No impact identified

**16 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

16.1 There are no implications identified.

**17 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

17.1 There are no implications identified

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**CONTACT OFFICER:**

**Name:** Sasha Hawkins

**Job Title:** Interim Business Improvement Manager

**Contact Number:** 01903 737656

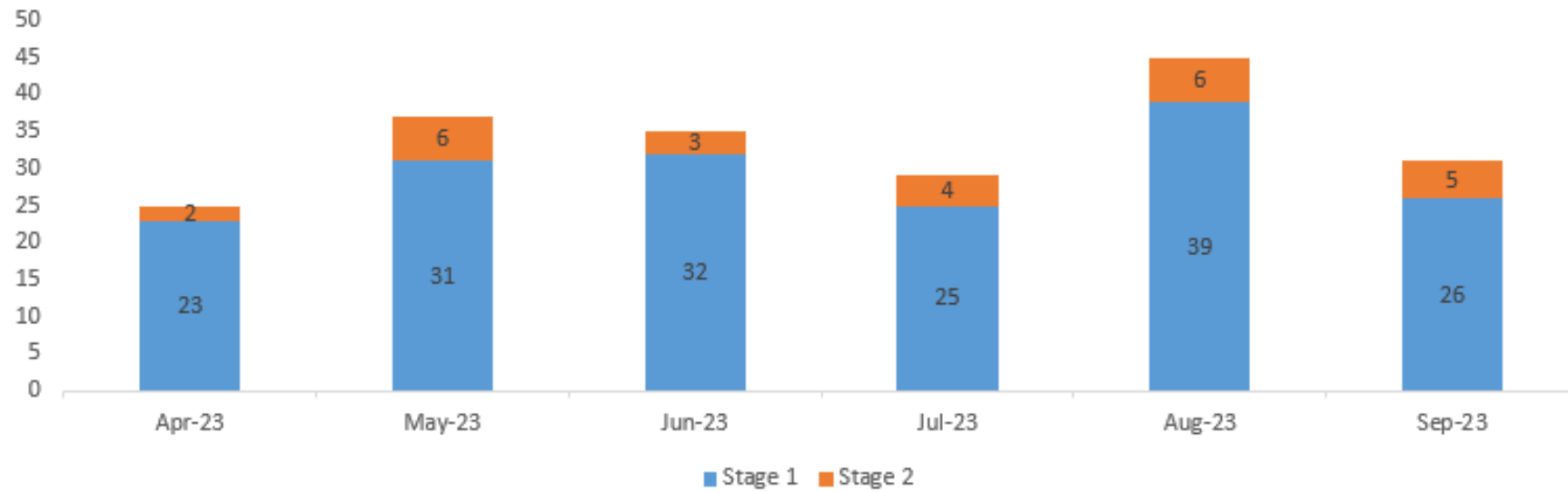
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Appendix 1 – Complaints performance figures

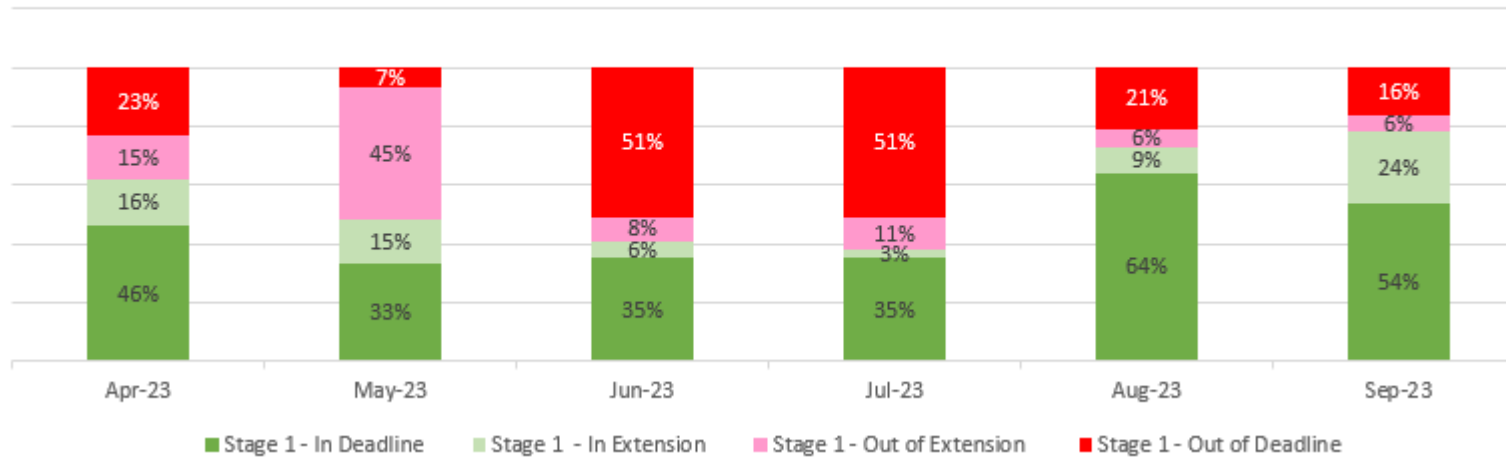
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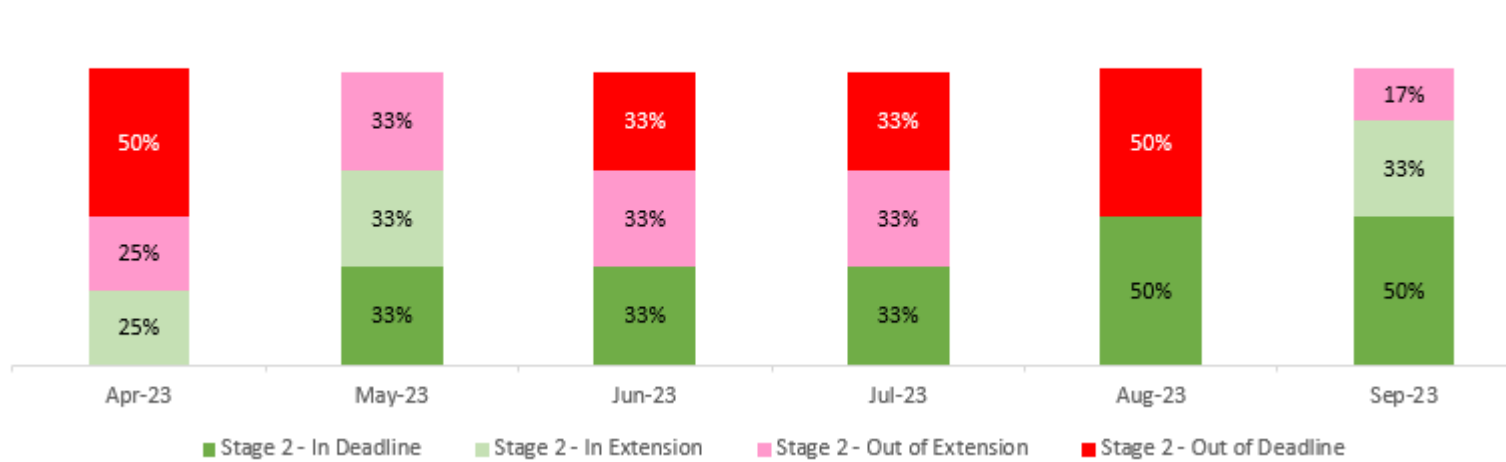
Complaints Received by Month



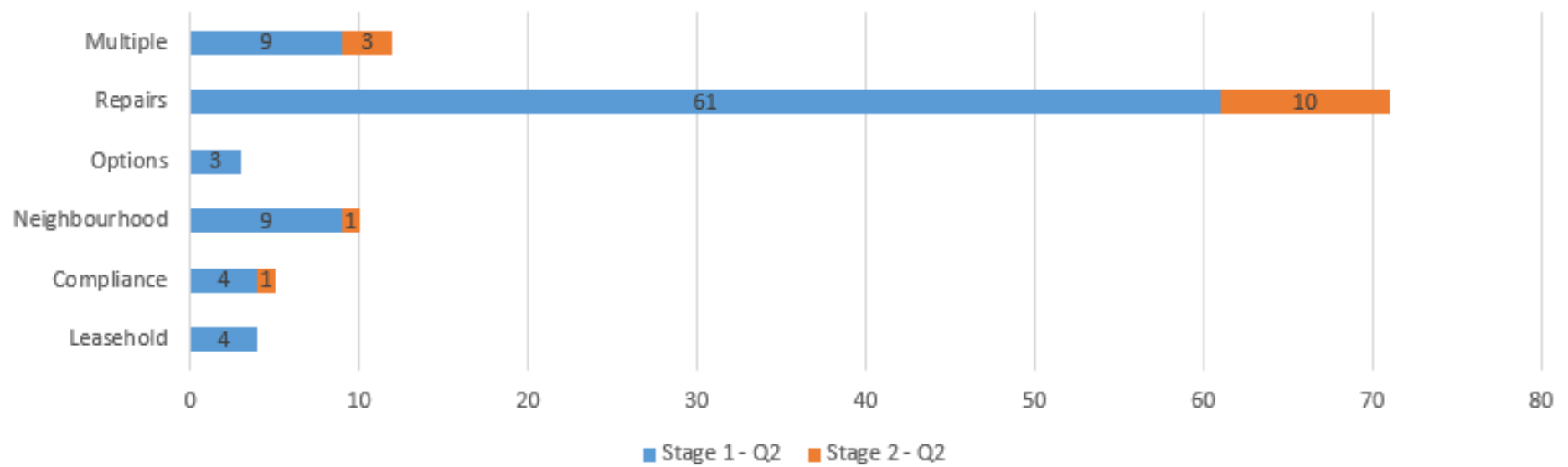
Stage 1 Response Times - %



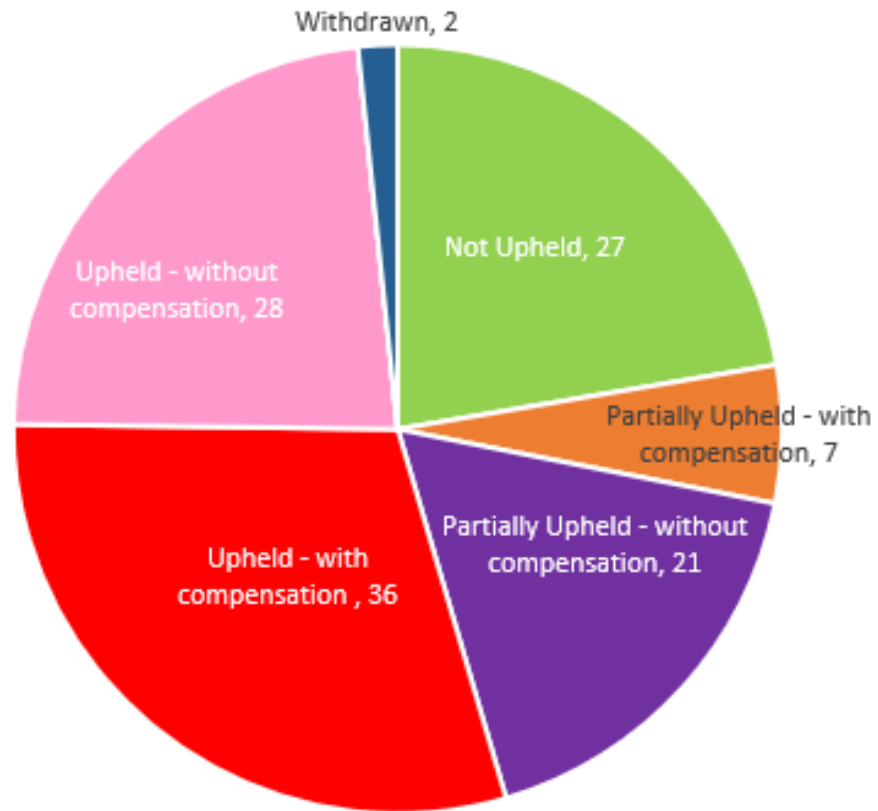
Stage 2 Response Times - %



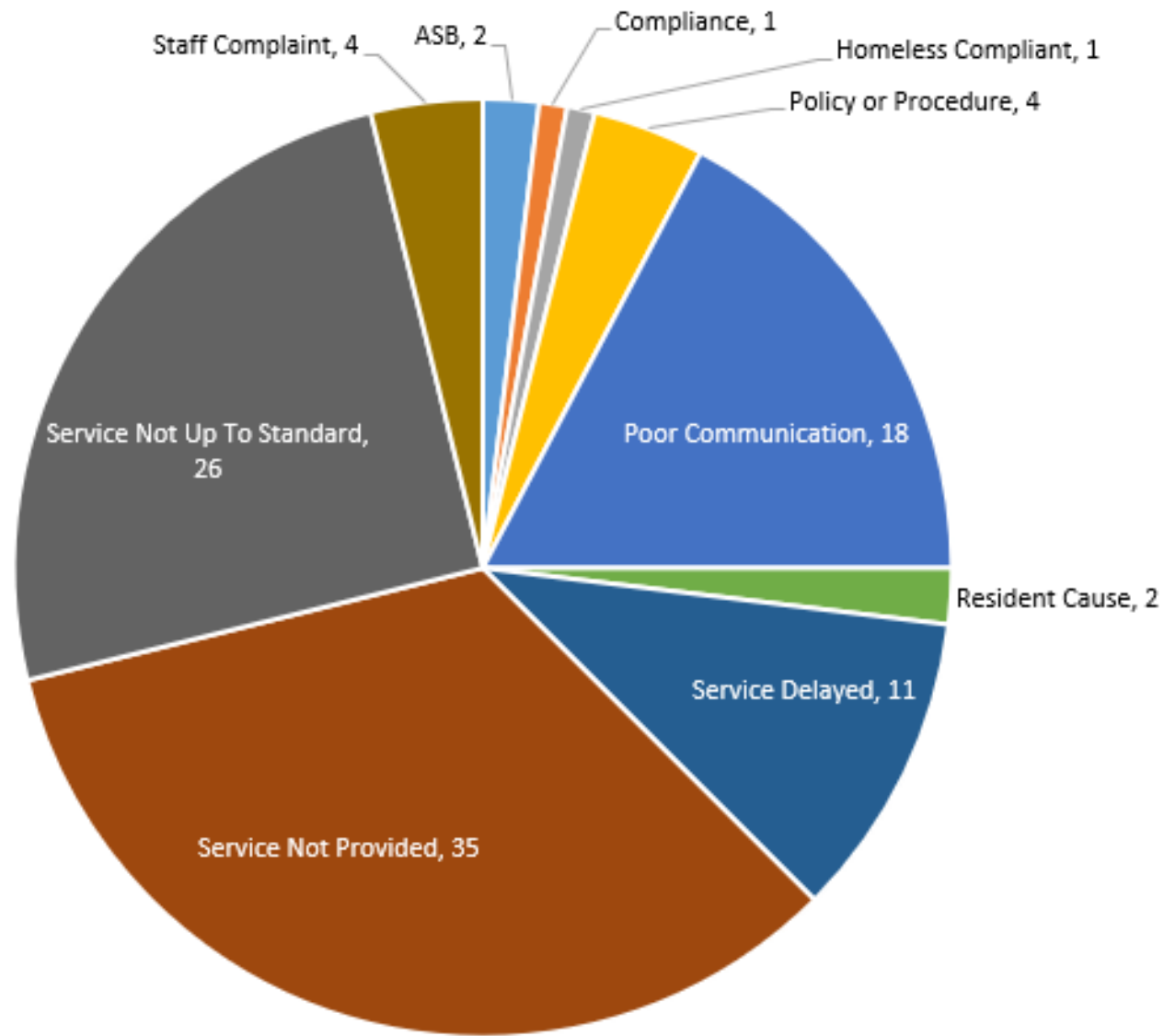
Q2 Stage 1 & 2 Complaints Received, by Team



## Q2 Complaint Decisions



## Q2 - Root Causes of Complaints



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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Housing and Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Resident Engagement Strategy 2022-2026 annual update</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Sasha Hawkins – Interim Business Improvement Manager</b> <b>Kat Rance-Shilbach – Interim Resident Engagement Officer</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>

### **CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:**

The resident engagement strategy was adopted in October 2022 the strategy supports the following areas in the corporate vision:

Improving the wellbeing of Arun

- Working with partners to provide advice, support and activities that promote community wellbeing where it will have the greatest impact.

Delivering the right homes in the right places

- Support those in our community that most need help, providing a safety net where necessary and working with people and organisations to meet different needs.

### **DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:**

Our Resident Engagement Strategy is in place for the period 2022 to 2026 it sets out five key aims that support the council in meeting the requirements set out in the Social Housing Regulation Act.

The aims of the Resident Engagement Strategy inform the work we do in Housing services to engage with our residents and ensure they can influence and shape the services we provide. This includes the development of directorate policies and strategies.

This strategy was developed in response to the changes announced in the Social Housing White Paper to ensure compliance with all current legislative and regulatory requirements. The Regulator of Social Housing has also released the proposed amended Consumer Standards and conducted a full consultation period on the proposals, and whilst we do not have an outcome of consultation, we are now much better informed on the direction of travel.

### **FINANCIAL SUMMARY:**

The community grant fund has a budget of £10,000 and is due to launch soon.

We have only used £151.95 of our £3,000 budget for community events due to negotiating with our contractors to donate their time and materials for free on many occasions.

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members with an update on the progress against the aims of the Resident Engagement Strategy following its adoption in October 2022.
- 1.2 To provide members with an overview of the engagement carried out with residents since the adoption of the Resident Engagement Strategy.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Housing and Wellbeing Committee

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report
- 2.2 Note the progress against the aims of the strategy

## **3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 3.1 This report provides members with an update on the progress of the aims of the Resident Engagement Strategy following its adoption in October 2022
- 3.2 It sets out the year 1 priorities and achievements, looks ahead to the year 2 priorities and details any changes we envisage because of the new Consumer Standards.
- 3.3 We are on target to achieve the year one aims set out in our action plan and have already started progressing year 2 priorities. By the end of the financial year, we will have launched a range of new ways for residents to get involved and influence our service. This will ensure we are meeting the aims of our strategy and the requirements set out by the regulator.
- 3.4 Our resident engagement officer continues to embed the strategy throughout housing services and works with residents to ensure they can influence and shape the services they receive.
- 3.5 From the period October 2022 to October 2023, we have delivered a range of initiatives and events to ensure we are involving our residents and making a positive contribution to the areas in which they live.
- 3.6 Some of the highlights from the past 12 months include:
  - Coffee breaks across 11 of our sheltered schemes, carried out every 4 months.



- Estate clean up days, to make a positive contribution to the communities our residents live in
- Working with Osborne Property Services Limited and Tivoli to deliver social value work to benefit residents.
- Completion of various surveys including the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey, a leaseholder satisfaction survey, a “Getting Involved” survey, and transactional surveys after a service is received.
- We continue to be members of TPAS, a not-for-profit organisation that champions resident involvement and empowerment.
- Customer journey mapping across the areas of anti-social behaviour, repairs and complaints by carrying out interviews with residents who received these services and learning about their experiences.

## 4 **DETAIL**

- 4.1 At committee on 6 October 2022 members adopted the councils Resident Engagement Strategy to cover the period 2022-2026. This strategy set out five key aims and what the council would do to meet these. An action plan was created to set out priorities for each year, and this report will detail the progress we have made against these priorities. Set out below are the five aims and the work we have done in year 1 of the strategy.
- 4.2 **Aim 1 – Make engagement easier** - With our residents, we want to develop a wide range of opportunities to ensure their views are heard and that they can influence and help shape our services.
- 4.3 A draft framework and menu of opportunities for residents along with a visual aid have been designed. We aim to have this launched by April 2024. Using the feedback from the getting involved survey conducted in March 2023, we will be introducing new ways for residents to influence the services they receive. We are aware that most residents prefer “ad-hoc”, quick methods of involvement and we have considered their preferences when creating this, as we want their involvement to be convenient and accessible.
- 4.4 A centralised housing complaints process has been established. We completed a customer journey mapping exercise to understand where the process could be improved. A cohort of customers that had made a complaint in the past 12 months were interviewed and their comments were used during the journey mapping session to formulate an improvement plan. This has already reduced complaint response time

- 4.5 We have arranged regular coffee breaks at our sheltered schemes and regular clean up days on our highest populated estates, where residents can raise concerns and direct us to problem areas. The coffee breaks are generally well attended with in the region of 12 residents attending each time. See Appendix 1 for feedback from the cleansing team from one of the estate clean up mornings.
- 4.6 **Aim 2 – Be Accountable:** We are committed to working with residents to give them greater opportunity to influence, and to ensure they have the information they need to hold us to account for our performance.
- 4.7 We have completed the first tenant satisfaction measures survey with over 1100 tenants and 145 leaseholders responding.
- 4.8 The report findings have been utilised to guide service planning and delivery and we plan to publish the results by the end of the financial year.
- 4.9 A full suite of measurable performance indicators has been developed with our residents and are being monitored. We asked our residents to prioritise the services most important to them, so we knew we were focussing on improving the areas that mattered to them. These indicators have been designed to ensure transparency about our performance.
- 4.10 A performance board within the housing team is being created to monitor service improvement commitments and actions agreed.
- 4.11 Our complaints performance was published for residents to review in the latest edition of Arun at Home.
- 4.12 **Aim 3 – Engage digitally:** We want to maximise our use of digital technologies to improve our customer experience. Making it as easy as possible for residents to connect with us and share their views to shape and improve the services they receive.
- 4.13 We have conducted various digital ad hoc feedback surveys with residents, including new lettings, complaints, ASB and satisfaction with the LMA at Nightingales. (See Appendix 3.)
- 4.14 We have gone out to tender with companies to undertake these on a regular basis.
- 4.15 The website has been improved and includes performance information that residents can access, enabling them to hold us to account.
- 4.16 We held 8 weeks of digital skills classes at Arun Court and Compton Court to help residents engage digitally. Residents fed back that the sessions were helpful and improved their confidence using laptops and tablets.

- 4.17 Arun at Home is available online, via PageSuite, which creates a professional, easy to read, digital edition for residents to access from home on their preferred device.
- 4.18 **Aim 4 – Improving Communication:** Communication is critical, and it is important that we know who our residents are, how they want to be involved, informed, and contacted.
- 4.19 We have implemented an 8-step process which ensures that we consult with residents prior to submitting policies, strategies, or projects to committee. Together, relevant team members identify any impact on our residents and communicate with the effected parties to gather feedback, prior to submission. (See Appendix 4)
- 4.20 The resident's newsletter has released its fifth edition and is a collaborative project delivered to residents twice a year, with a small panel of resident readers reviewing and providing feedback before publication. (Appendix 5).
- 4.21 Housing officers and repairs officers both attend coffee breaks so residents can talk to the right people regarding their concerns.
- 4.22 **Aim 5 – Working with our communities:** We believe we have a key role to play in working with our residents, stakeholders, and other partners to create thriving and sustainable communities. Each community has a unique set of skills and strengths, and we want to work with them to make a positive contribution to the areas they live and help facilitate their capacity to address local issues.
- 4.23 Our community grant fund (CGF) is ready to launch providing funding of up to £500 to groups of residents. The focus of the CGF is to provide financial help to provide resident-led estate improvements, wellbeing activities that boost mental and physical health, reduce anti-social behaviour, improve safety or work with our communities to build and improve relationships. If the plan involves work or improvements, we will try to source an internally approved competent contractor in the first instance. For other events and activities, we will pay invoices.
- 4.24 We are aiming to introduce Engagement Champions across the whole housing team who will help promote community engagement objectives within their service areas.
- 4.25 We have continued to work with our contractors to deliver services with social value, including gardening projects, community days and green space improvements. (See Appendix 6).

#### 4.26 **Year 2 priorities**

- 4.27 Work has already begun on our year 2 priorities in line with the resident engagement strategy.
- 4.28 Planning for a legislative and cultural training day is under way and is due to be delivered before the end of 2023 to ensure all housing staff are aware of the requirements from the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 4.29 We plan to launch a resident focussed induction session for all new starters, which aligns itself with the One Arun corporate objective to improve the new starters induction plan.
- 4.30 The website is continually under review, and we plan to have an updated, improved, and informative resident engagement webpage. Residents will be able to access our performance information quarterly. This will also involve the resident's access to the Civica housing portal.
- 4.31 Continue the "You Said, We Did" method of feedback and promoting our good news stories through a variety of methods.
- 4.32 The community grant fund will have a number of success stories in the coming months, and we plan to grow the scheme to enable approval of more applications for resident-led initiatives.
- 4.33 We will be making our first submission to the Regulator of Social Housing in accordance with the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard (TSM). We will also carry out the 24/25 survey.

#### 4.34 **Resident Engagement activities**

- 4.35 The activities undertaken over the last 12 months activities include:
- 33 coffee breaks across most of our sheltered schemes
  - Estate clean up days and litter picks in Wick, Bersted, Yapton, Rustington and the Bognor Trees estate.
  - Worked with Osbornes and Tivoli to deliver social value work to benefit residents such as raised vegetable beds, water butts, painting outdoor furniture, a community day, pumpkin carving, additional weeding and planting, handyman jobs and more.
  - Completed the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey via census for all residents to respond to.
  - Seasonal Easter, Christmas and Halloween events for families.
  - Digital skills classes at two sheltered schemes.

- Customer journey mapping across the areas of anti-social behaviour, repairs, and complaints by carrying out interviews with effected residents and learning about the experiences.
- We provided drop-in sessions with two members of staff and laptops to facilitate residents applying for the energy bill support scheme, helping them claim the £400 they were entitled to.
- We conducted a “Getting involved” survey to find out how our residents preferred to provide feedback.
- Transactional surveys with residents about their experiences with repairs, complaints, ASB and their moving journey.
- Ad-Hoc surveys for comments on a new tenant handbook and reviewing the communal facilities within our sheltered schemes.
- Improved website information.
- Supported the Local Management Arrangement at Nightingales for 12 months, and surveyed residents to ensure they were satisfied with the arrangements.

## **5 CONSULTATION**

5.1 None required

## **6 OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERS**

6.1 This report is for noting only

## **7 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7.1 This report is just for noting and the £10,000 mentioned is within the current budget, there are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

## **8 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 Not applicable.

## **9 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER**

9.1 The report recommends that members note the report. As the report is for noting there are no legal or governance implications

## **10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

- 10.1 There is one FTE resident engagement officer in post delivering the work outlined in this report with collaboration with the wider housing team. This remains the same as in 2022.

## **11 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT**

- 11.1 There are no direct health and safety impacts associated with this report. However reporting on resident engagement and the progress against the strategy can help to highlight improvements to service areas which include repairs and compliance, which will help support the effective management of health and safety risks.

## **12 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT**

- 12.1 The recommendations of this report have no impact on the Councils General Fund Portfolio or the delivery of Property, Estates, and Facilities functions.

## **13 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

- 13.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was conducted before the strategy was adopted in 2022. In Arun, we have a high proportion of residents over the age of 60 and we identified that these residents were more satisfied overall. The recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey indicates that this assessment is still accurate.
- 13.2 To address this, we have conducted a range of activities across the district to appeal to the younger demographic, including family events at Ellis Close, Bersted Green hub and Chilgrove hub. We have also undertaken more digital surveys this year, as this cohort of residents expressed that this is their preferred method of providing feedback and we have seen an increase in younger demographics taking part in the surveys.
- 13.3 We will also shortly be holding focus groups with residents from younger demographics to understand more about how they want to become involved with our service and how we can improve our communication with them.
- 13.4 We will continue to monitor the Equalities Impact Assessment each year to ensure that our range of opportunities are attractive and accessible to all.

## **14 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

- 14.1 There is no impact identified to climate change.

14.2 Many of the activities undertaken have had a positive environmental and social impact. We have undertaken regular litter picking and clean up events on our estates. We have also undertaken activities that have promoted health and wellbeing, such as gardening and exercise classes. A group of residents were also supported to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

## 15 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 Since the report was adopted in 2022, no impact has been identified. However, this remains under review as future initiatives could have a positive impact.

## 16 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 There are no implications identified.

## 17 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 There are no implications identified

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### CONTACT OFFICER:

**Name:** Kat Rance-Shilbach

**Job Title:** Interim Resident Engagement Officer

**Contact Number:** 01903 737635

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

*Appendix 1: Resident engagement strategy 2022-2026*

*Appendix 2: Photos and feedback from estate clean ups*

*Appendix 3: Nightingales LMA satisfaction survey results*

*Appendix 4: 8 steps to engagement process*

*Appendix 5: Arun at Home summer 2023 edition*

*Appendix 6: Photos of work with Osbornes*

*Appendix 7: Resident Engagement Strategy Action Plan*

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# Resident Engagement Strategy

## 2022 - 2026



# Foreward

Arun District Council is committed to delivering a high-quality service and to do that that we need to work in partnership with our residents and communities who are best placed to tell what is working well and how we can improve the services they receive.

We want to ensure the voice of our residents is heard throughout the organisation and that residents can influence and hold us accountable for our performance.

This strategy sets out five key aims on how we will deliver resident engagement and will ensure that there is a wide range of opportunities for residents to become involved.

Resident engagement will be an integral part of our culture and will mean residents are at the heart of everything we do, ensuring that we drive forward improvements with our residents.

I would like to thank everyone who helped contribute to this strategy and I look forward to starting work to bring about real change in the way we work with our residents.

**Moh Hussein**  
**Interim Head of Housing**

I have been involved with the Council for the last 10 years and I am now Chair of the residents group Your Voice a platform to have your say on how the council are performing and communicating, with their tenants and Leaseholders.

Resident engagement is necessary within all councils, as it is somewhere we can have our views heard, question staff, and hold the council to account for their performance.

I feel it is important, to have that relationship with your landlord, to have your voice heard, to point out what you think is right, or wrong, and what is working, or not working, this allows us to have better communication with the council.

This strategy is also a chance to get involved with other residents, and to see first-hand, what work goes on in the community and what you can also get involved in.

I personally feel that it is important to know what is happening in the areas we live, and to be part of growing communities. The platform which is being created is a have improved communication and a better understanding of how services are run and the improvements that are being made.

If you have any spare time, pop in to one of our virtual meetings, and have your voice heard, read the magazine Arun at Home, there just maybe something, that affects you, and the area that you live in, that you want to get involved in.

**Michele**  
**Chair of Your Voice**

# Introduction

Welcome to our latest Resident Engagement Strategy which presents a real opportunity to ensure that residents can directly impact and influence services and strategy at Arun District Council. This strategy will cover the period 2022-2026.

For the purpose of this strategy the term 'resident' refers to anyone living in Arun District Council owned properties or accessing the council's housing service. This includes tenants, leaseholders and shared owners.

Since our last strategy the housing and political landscape has changed a great deal. Following the publication of The Social Housing Green Paper in 2018, which set out proposals to rebalance the relationship between residents and landlords, the Government has now published The White Paper a new Charter for Social Housing Residents and introduced the Social Housing Regulation Bill into parliament.

The White Paper sets out a new seven-point charter which every social housing resident should be able to expect from their landlord and it sets out proposals of what the government will do to ensure that landlords live up to the new charter. The proposals in the White Paper mark the start of a major reform of social housing in England and how it is regulated. The paper sets out the aim of the Regulator to strengthen the formal standards landlords must adhere to. It proposes greater transparency between a landlord and its residents, to ensure they can hold their landlord to account when they are not performing well.

"If tenants are to be able to hold their landlords to account, they need information on how their landlord is performing, what decisions it is making and who is responsible." – quote from Social Housing White Paper

The government expects landlords to be transparent about their performance and decision making, put things right when they go wrong, and listen to their residents through effective engagement.

This strategy sets out our commitment to resident engagement and will ensure that it meets the engagement standards set out by the government. We will ensure our residents are able to express their views in a way that suits them and that those views are heard throughout the council and directly impact on services and strategy.

Further, COVID-19 has thrust digital engagement into the spotlight and has led to new ways of working across the sector. Many have had to adapt the way they engage with their residents and develop new and innovative ways of ensuring residents are still involved. We will continue to develop our use of technology to engage and ensure residents have the right information and opportunities to share their views in whichever way suits them and that there are resources in place to enable this.

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# Strategic priorities

In 'Our vision: A better future 2022-2026' we set out four key aims for the council.

- Improve the wellbeing of Arun residents
- Delivering the right homes in the right places
- Supporting our environment to support us
- Fulfilling Arun's economic potential

The Resident Engagement Strategy will support Arun District Council to achieve its vision.

The strategy is also very closely aligned and linked to the following organisational strategies and documents

- Council Vision
- Customer Services Strategy
- Digital Strategy

The strategy will also align to the following regulatory documents

- Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code

The following pages set out our vision for resident engagement and what we expect to achieve over the next four years.

## Our priorities...



**Improving the wellbeing of Arun**



**Delivering the right homes in the right places**



**Supporting our environment to support us**



**Fulfilling Arun's economic potential**

# Our vision for resident engagement

Our vision is that by 2026 our residents will have every opportunity to engage with us in the ways that suit them, delivering meaningful and outcome-focused resident involvement where they can influence and shape our current and future services.

Residents are at the heart of everything we do, and we want to make sure that we involve, communicate with, and listen to them effectively. We want to know and understand our residents and what they think about our services and their neighbourhood.

It is important that we ensure our residents voice is heard by involving them and capturing the valuable feedback they have so we can use these insights to improve and develop future services.

We will ensure we provide the right opportunities, in the right way and at the right time, and we will regularly review the way we involve residents to ensure it is effective and representative.

“Engagement can take many forms, but the crucial factor is that it is tailored appropriately. There will be tenants who want to proactively engage with the policies of their landlord, and others who simply want to know that their landlord is thinking of them in the way it implements change and is keeping them informed.” – quote from white paper

We will work to ensure that resident engagement is embedded across the whole council and ensure our involvement work is aligned with our governance and business improvement activities

To help us achieve this vision we have set five key aims, to:



Engagement can take many forms, but the crucial factor is that it is tailored appropriately.

# Make engagement easier

We recognise the value of residents engaging with us in different ways and that one size does not fit all when it comes to communicating. With our residents, we want to develop a wide range of opportunities to ensure their views are heard and that they can influence and help shape our services.

## We will do this by:

- 1** Co-designing a new resident engagement framework which involves our residents in a way that is accessible and attractive to the full, diverse resident group and allows them to give their views in the ways that suits them.
- 2** Providing training and support that has been developed with, and tailored to our residents to help further develop their skills and capacity to be involved.
- 3** Working with our residents to develop the ways we capture and record customer insights to ensure they are effective and representative, and lead to continuous learning and development. Customer Insights help us to know and understand our residents and we currently get this through a variety of sources.

## By 2026:

Our engagement framework will be closely linked to the governance of our organisation, allowing our residents to hold us to account. It will ensure meaningful and outcome-based involvement that delivers improvements across our service.

Residents will be able to engage with and influence the key groups and individuals who govern and manage Arun District Council, including our management team and the Housing and Wellbeing Committee.

We will have examples of new or existing services that have been developed with our residents.

An increase in satisfaction levels for listening to residents views and acting upon them.



# Be accountable

It is important that our residents know how we are performing and what decisions we are making, so that they can challenge us and hold us accountable when things are not working as they should.

We are committed to working with residents to give them greater opportunity to influence, and to ensure they have the information they need to hold us to account for our performance.

## We will do this by:

- 1** Having a resident-led process that has oversight of our compliance with the consumer standards and that can influence strategy, policy, standards, approaches, and performance measures.
- 2** Working with our residents to understand what performance measures are important to them and being open and transparent in information about our services.
- 3** Publishing information on the complaints we have received, the lessons learned, any trends and how these complaints have been used to improve our services. This will be done through a variety of channels to ensure all residents receive this information.
- 4** Annually reviewing, with residents, our performance against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
- 5** Using our data and insights to tailor how we develop and deliver our services, so that they offer value for money and deliver a great customer experience.

## By 2026:

Co-regulation will be embedded across our service, ensuring our residents can hold us to account and have clear routes into the governance of our organisation.

We will be able to give examples of residents providing recommendations that have directly led to helping us achieve our objectives of improving services.

We will have a set of performance measures that have been agreed with our residents, that are published on our website.





## Engage digitally

We want to maximise our use of digital technologies to improve our customer experience. Making it as easy as possible for residents to connect with us and share their views to shape and improve the services they receive.

### We will do this by:

- 1** Utilising and developing our digital platforms including our website, resident portal and social media to provide effective two-way communication with our residents.
- 2** Working with residents to help them access technology and offer support to improve their digital skills.

### By 2026:

There will be an increase in the number of customers engaging with us using digital platforms.



## Improve communication

Communication is critical, and it is important that we know who our residents are, how they want to be involved, informed, and contacted. As part of this strategy, we want to review and develop how we keep our residents informed and ensure we make it easy for them to tell us when things are not going well.

### We will do this by:

- 1** Using data and insights to understand the ways residents want us to communicate with them.
- 2** Implementing a 'you said, we did' approach to feedback and sharing this regularly on our website and in our newsletter.
- 3** Informing residents how they can raise a complaint, what they can expect and what support is available to them throughout the process.
- 4** Involving residents in the creation and development of our publications to ensure they are clear, easy to understand and meet the needs of our residents/or customers.
- 5** Regularly sharing the difference that resident engagement makes through our website, newsletter, social media, and Annual Report.

### By 2026:

We will have an effective and flexible range of tools for communicating with and informing our residents.

There will be an increase in satisfaction levels with keeping residents informed about things that matter to them.

We will have a clear method for measuring and demonstrating the impact of our engagement activities, enabling us to share the value of involvement and provide examples of what improvements have been made.

We will have a clearly stated plan, co-designed with residents for engaging them in building safety and compliance.





# Work with our communities

We believe we have a key role to play in working with our residents, stakeholders, and other partners to create thriving and sustainable communities. Each community has a unique set of skills and strengths, and we want to work with them to make a positive contribution to the areas they live and help facilitate their capacity to address local issues.

## We will do this by:

- 1** Promoting and facilitating engagement in the communities we serve, making sure that there are a range of ways for people with an interest in their local community to link with us and have their views heard.
- 2** Getting to know our communities better by regularly seeking their feedback about their neighbourhoods and local areas and using that information to help shape future priorities.
- 3** Establishing strong and sustainable links with our partners and local voluntary groups to deliver projects to the benefit of our residents and the wider community.

## By 2026:

There will be an increase in satisfaction with their neighbourhood as a place to live.

We will have examples of improvements made to our neighbourhoods and local areas as a result of the feedback and input received from our communities.

We will have a range of community initiatives in place, developed with our residents and partners, that enhance our communities and are clearly linked to our business and resident priorities.



Each community has a unique set of skills and strengths, and we want to work with them to make a positive contribution to the areas they live...by 2026 there will be an increase in satisfaction with their neighbourhood as a place to live.



# Resources and monitoring

## Over the life of this strategy we will:

- Monitor and continue to develop our strategic action plan and provide the support and resources required to deliver our aims. An annual update against the plan will be provided to the Housing and Wellbeing Committee and publicised in our annual report
- Assess the impact of our engagement activities and review the methods for engagement on an annual basis, ensuring we are offering effective ways for residents to engage with us. This includes developing new opportunities to replace those which do not work
- Increase the number of residents we connect with and the diversity of the voices we hear through informal engagement and insight
- Ensure our residents are informed of, and can take part in, national conversations

## To make sure that support and resources are available for effective engagement, we will:

- Ensure our residents have the right tools and information to effectively be involved
- Develop our training offer for residents
- Provide guidance and support to staff so they can involve residents in their work
- Work with residents to develop an induction programme for all new staff to raise the profile of resident involvement so that everyone is aware of the benefits that it brings
- Develop a clear expenses, incentives and rewards policy for engagement



## Involvement for all

We will ensure that we continue to be inclusive and representative of all and will provide the support needed to enable this.

Our approach to resident engagement is committed to equal opportunities for all and to respect the needs of our diverse communities. This is in line with the councils Equality and Diversity Policy and the expectations set out by the Regulator of Social Housing and within the White Paper.

We will monitor who is involved and work towards engagement which ensures we hear from the full, diverse range of our residents, and that these views are directly and positively impacting on the services we provide.

## Conclusion

This is fantastic opportunity for us to transform how we engage and work with our residents to create and deliver the best services we can.

How we will deliver this strategy is set out in our action plan and during the life of the strategy we expect to reconsider resident engagement to implement new regulatory requirements and best practice within the sector.

We're proud of the way residents and staff have shaped this strategy. It creates an exciting way forward for resident engagement at Arun District Council.





## Appendix 2:

Report from Daniel Cox, Cleansing Operations Manager

"Trees Estate – 9:45-11:15

### **Resources/Staff**

Biffa – 2 x Supervisors

3 x Litter pickers/Street Cleansing Staff

1 x EPA Crew – 2 men and a large caged vehicle to remove bulky waste

1 x Street Sweeper and Driver

Weed Whacker (machine to get rid of weeds)

Graffiti removal jet wash and wipes

2 x Community Wardens

1 x Housing Officer

4 x Cleansing staff members

Work was concentrated on the Tamarisk Close side of the estate with Car Park areas swept and weeds removed. A litter pick took place across the whole estate and the bin store at Sycamore/Larch Close were swept out. Bin stores need ongoing attention as residents throw bags in, often not putting directly in the bin.

A full load of waste on the caged vehicle was taken away, with the majority from Berghestede Open Space (as per other e-mail), there was waste from across the area.

Trial graffiti removal took place on bin sheds round the mini play area, the blue paint did come off when treated with chemical so only a small area was cleaned, probably better to have painted out. Graffiti was removed with wipes on green boxes and some dog/litter bins across the estate. Graffiti was also removed from side of compound at Tamarisk Close."

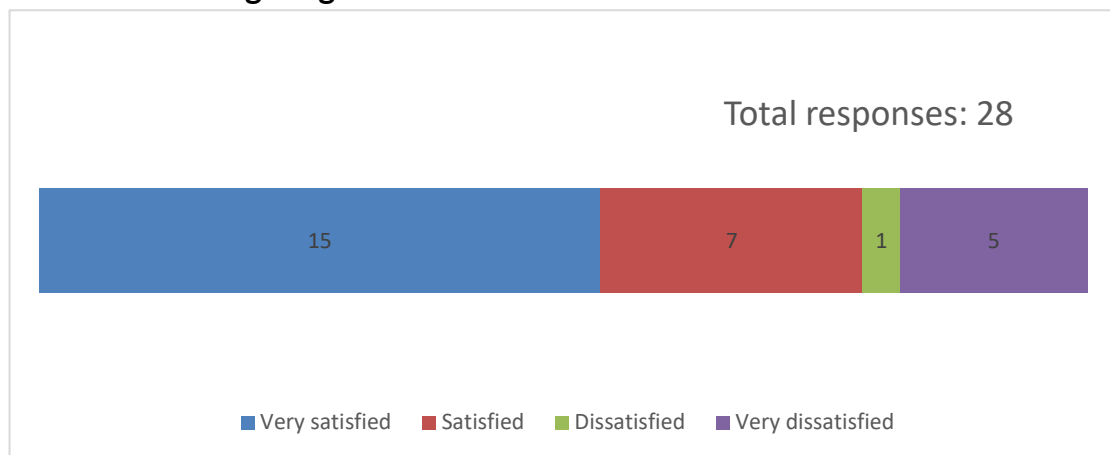


Estate clean and litter pick at Highfields, Wick

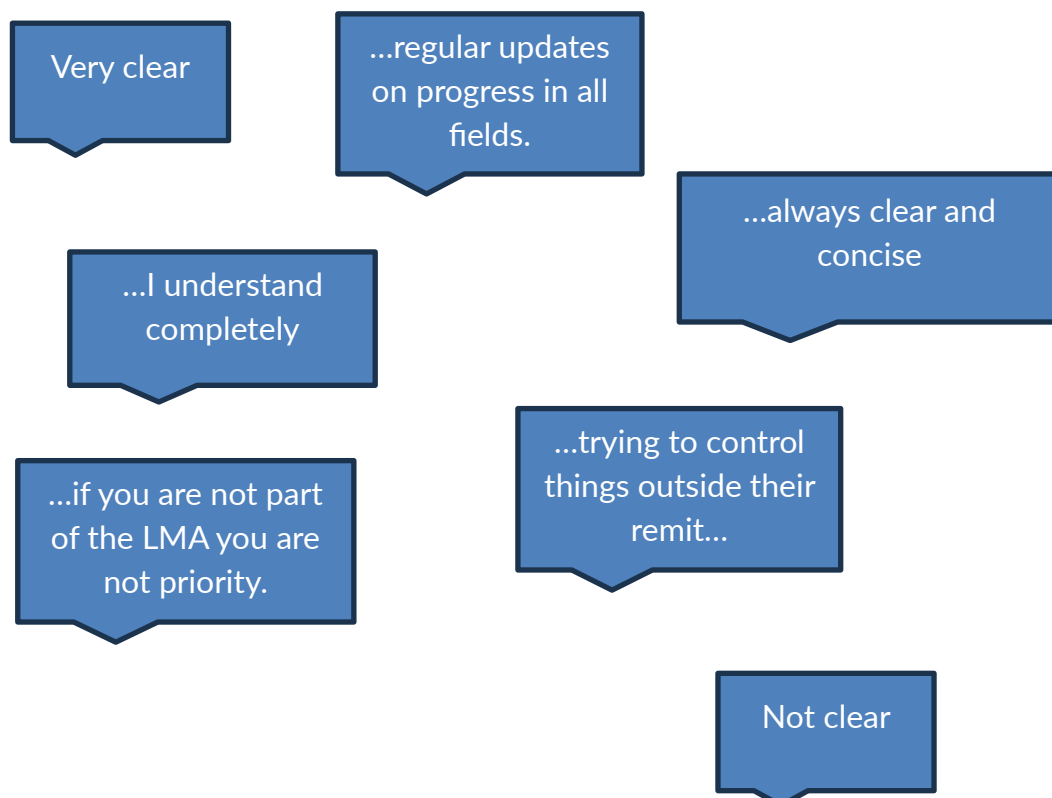
# Nightingales Tenants Association CIC

## Local Management Agreement feedback results

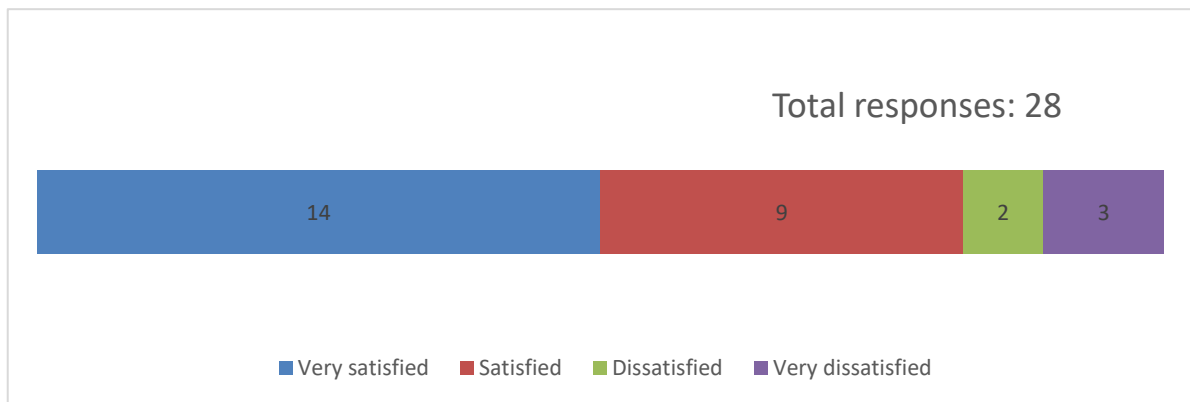
1. Taking everything into consideration, how satisfied are you with the running of the LMA at Nightingales?



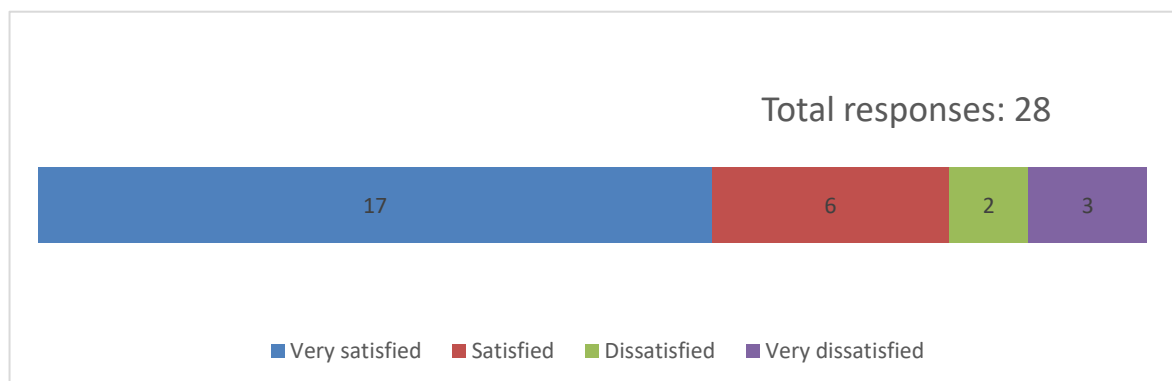
2. Thinking of the correspondence received in relation to the LMA, how clear is it as to what responsibilities are within the remit of the LMA and what still needs to be reported to the council?



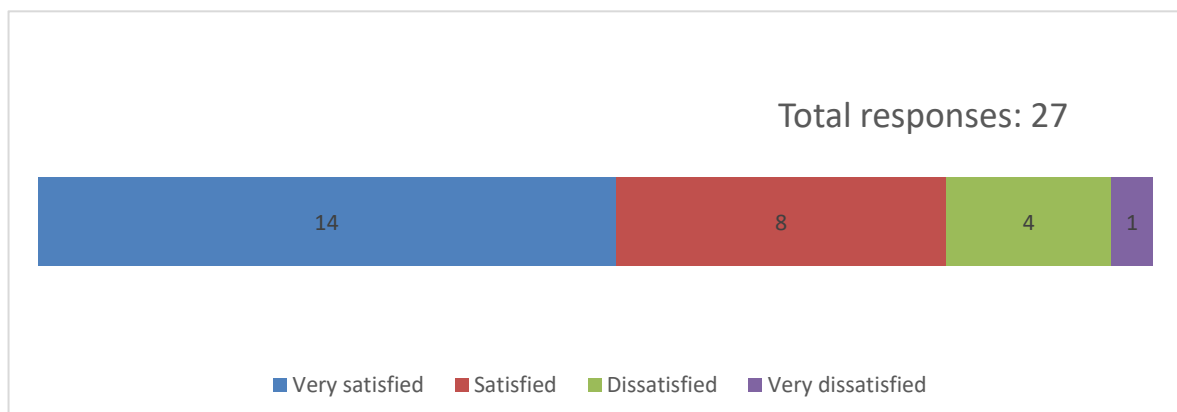
**3. Thinking of the communal cleaning, how satisfied are you with the service provided by the current cleaning contractor?**



**4. Thinking of the minor repairs, how satisfied are you with the service provided by the current maintenance contractor**

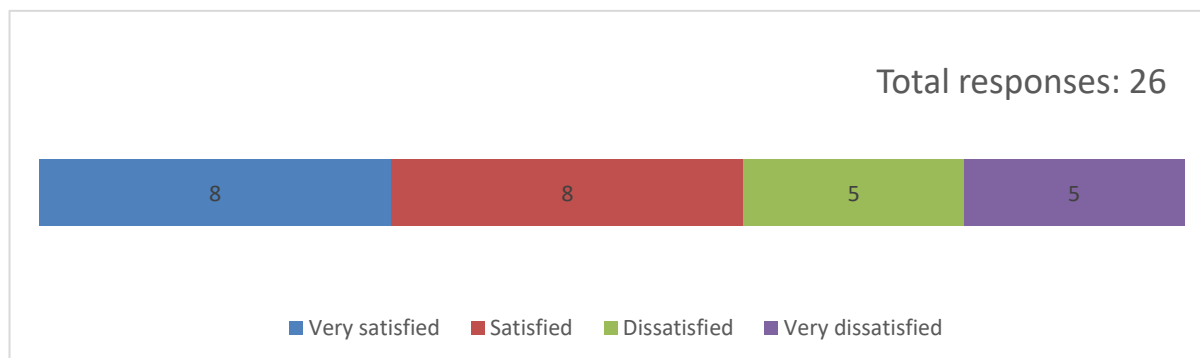


**5. Thinking of the communal gardening and grounds maintenance, how satisfied are you with the current contractors?**





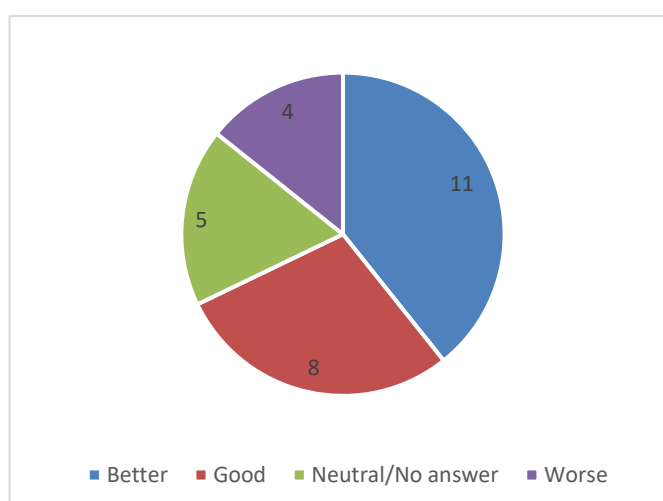
6. Thinking of the Local Lettings Plan which prioritises property allocation to local residents, how satisfied are you with the implementation of this?



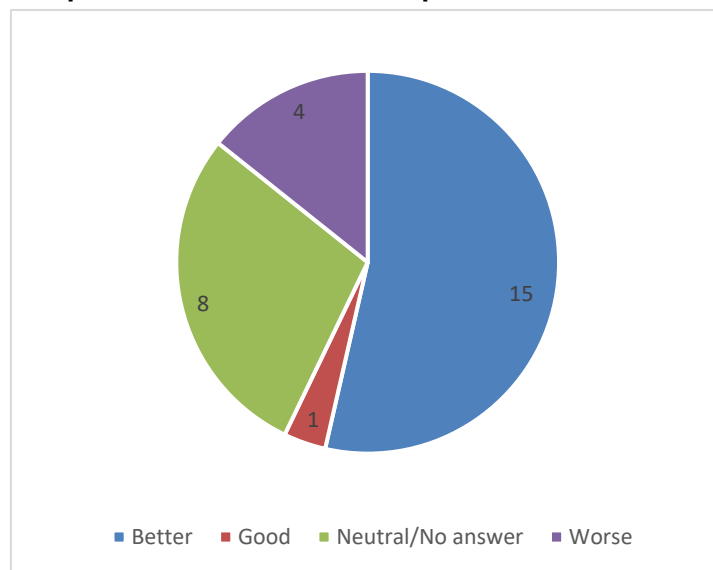
7. If you have answered “dissatisfied” in any of the previous 4 questions, please explain more here

“We want good allocation to flats who are clean and of good standards”
“Cleaning could be better was told there was going to be a deep clean 3 weeks ago”
“Does not work...”
“I have used Arun Repairs services and will do as have got no faith in the committee running this.”
“...the committee only thinks about themselves not Nightingales as a whole”
“...extremely poor medical condition ignored”
“Arun should be more careful who they let sheltered housing property to”
“The council are using Nightingales as a dumping ground for problem tenants”

8. Do you think the services provided under the LMA provide good/better value for money?



9. Do you think the services provided under the LMA provide the same/better level of service?



10. Thinking of communications received from Nightingales Tenant's Association CIC in relation to the LMA, how satisfied are you that you are kept informed about decisions made by them?



## 8 Steps to engaging residents in policy, strategy and service decisions

- 1. Complete the assessment form to establish if engagement required.**

Completed by: Project lead

- 2. If required identify which residents need to be consulted**

Completed by: Project lead and Resident Engagement Officer (REO)

- 3. Identify which engagement method to use.**

Completed by: Project lead and REO

- 4. Carry out the engagement activity.**

Completed by: Project lead facilitated and supported by REO.

- 5. Collate feedback and provide a summary of recommendations.**

Completed by: REO

- 6. Confirm if the recommendations have been adopted, if not, explain why not and document.**

Completed by: Project lead

- 7. Share outcomes with the consulted group.**

Completed by: REO

- 8. Publicise consultation and outcomes.**

Completed by: REO

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# Arun *at home*

[www.arun.gov.uk/housing](http://www.arun.gov.uk/housing)

Issue no.5 Summer 2023



## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Water safety
- Tenant satisfaction measures
- Fire evacuation advice
- Consumer standards consultations
- Striving to become carbon neutral

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**T: 01903 737500**

**[www.arun.gov.uk/housing](http://www.arun.gov.uk/housing)**

# Welcome to Arun at Home

Your resident magazine from Arun District Council

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Welcome to the summer 2023 edition of Arun at Home. This is my first edition as I am currently in the interim position of resident engagement officer. I was previously a business improvement officer, so this edition features several articles regarding surveys and data – as I am very keen on learning from statistics! I hope this proves interesting. You will also find articles and information from other members of the team, from details about new neighbourhood housing officers to how we are striving to become a carbon neutral council.

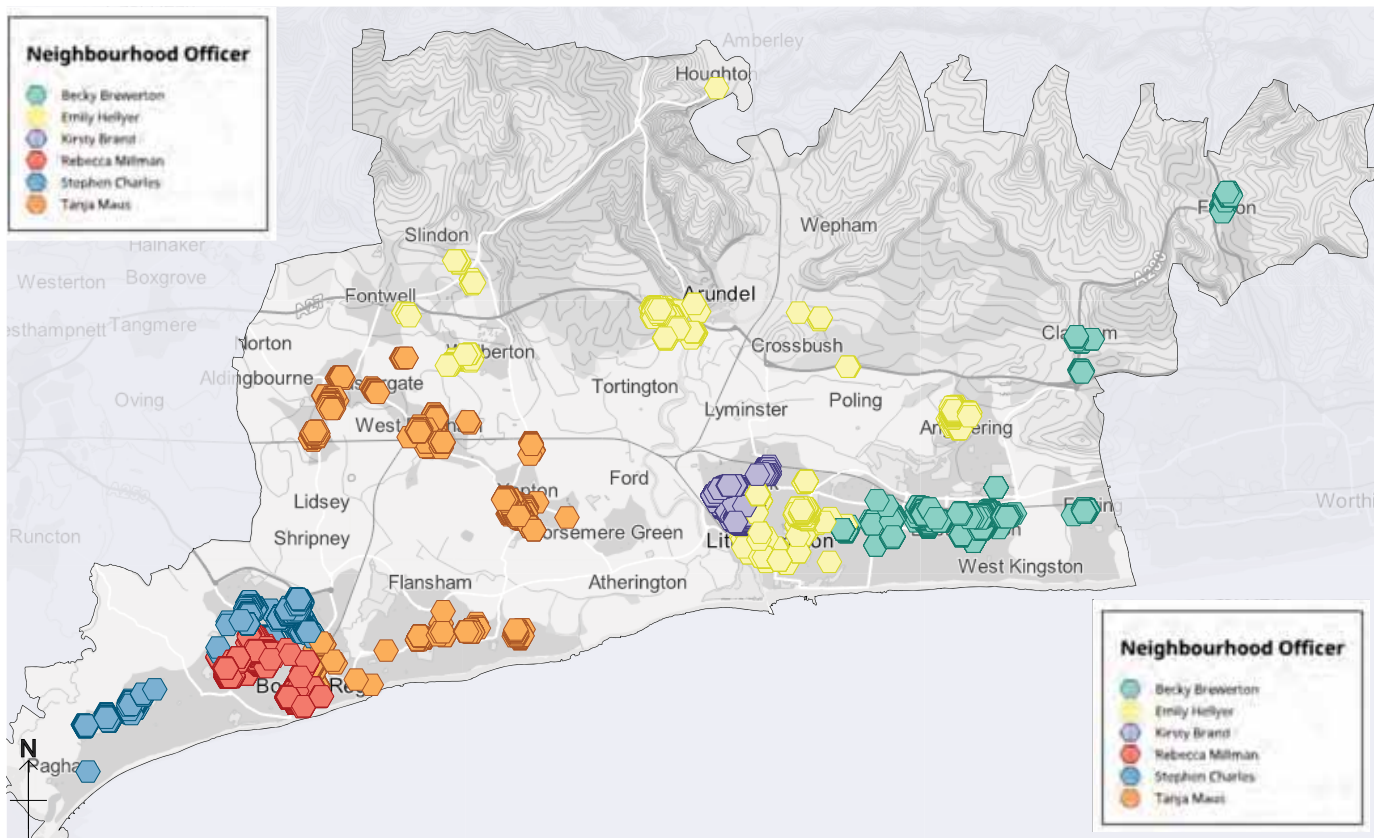
I would like to thank the residents I have had the opportunity to meet so far as it has been very informative. I would also like to thank the residents that have taken the time to review this magazine to make sure it meets the needs of our readers.

Kat Rance-Shilbach  
Resident engagement officer  
[residentengagement@arun.gov.uk](mailto:residentengagement@arun.gov.uk)

Arun at Home is produced by Arun District Council and is also available in large print. Please phone 01903 737500 for more information.



## Changes within the neighbourhood housing team



There have been some changes to our neighbourhood housing officers. You can find the name of your officer on the map below. Please be aware that you may be helped by any member of the neighbourhood housing team.

To contact the team please call 01903 737534 or email [neighbourhood.services@arun.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.services@arun.gov.uk). In case of an out of hours emergency, please call 01903 737500 where one of the on-call team will assist help you.

## Estate clean up mornings

We have started a new programme of estate clean up mornings around some of our highest populated areas. Our first two were held at the Trees estate in Bognor Regis and the Highfields estate in Wick during the week of 17 July. We were delighted to have the company of two Biffa supervisors, 3 litter pickers/street cleansing staff, 2 staff with a large, caged vehicle to remove bulky waste and a street sweeper and operator. There was also weed removal and graffiti jet washing as well as community wardens, cleansing team members and housing officers present. We will be contacting residents ahead of future dates. We plan to hold these more regularly throughout the year.



# Water safety

## Littlehampton beaches and the River Arun



Due to a rise in the number of people both jumping into or attempting to swim across the River Arun at Littlehampton Arun District Council, Littlehampton Town Council, Littlehampton Harbour Master, Littlehampton Coastguard Rescue Team, and the RNLI share serious concerns for the safety of those taking part in this dangerous activity.

The depth of water can be deceiving due to the varying tides and the shallower areas at the rivers' edge. Hidden dangers exist beneath the water line such as rocks, debris or abandoned equipment which could cause injury, paralysis or death if landed on.

The effect of cold-water shock, even on warmer days, can make it difficult to breathe and swim, and the notoriously strong tidal current of the river Arun can quickly sweep people away from a safe and accessible way of exiting the water.

The Littlehampton Harbour Master told us: "Whilst leaping into our beautiful river

may initially seem appealing in warm weather or an exciting way to blow off some steam, there are many serious hazards that are not always immediately obvious. Those tempted to participate in this sort of unsafe activity should also be aware that the harbour's regulations prohibit jumping or diving into the river from the river wall as well as any jetty, pier, pontoon, bridge or boat without permission. The same applies to swimming in the 'fairway' (the main channel where water remains at low tide) as well as around all pontoons and launching slipways. Swimmers are encouraged to stick to the designated bathing areas on local beaches where buoyed areas protect them from boats, and they remain under the watchful eye of RNLI beach lifeguards when they are present during the peak summer season". Educational resources can be found from the RNLI by following this link: <https://rnli.org/youth-education/education-resources/videos/safe-near-the-water>.



# Community activities



On 1 June 2023, Osbornes and housing officer Emily visited the former play area at Ellis Close in Arundel. Residents were invited to help paint the restored benches in bright colours and children were able to plant a sunflower to look after through the summer months. The grass in the area may be looking long, but as it was only reseeded recently, it needs longer to bed in. Eventually, the aim is for the area to support wildlife with many wildflowers and to be a pleasant community green space.



Vegetable beds and water butts were installed at Stanley Court with thanks to Osbornes for working with our residents!



Arun District Council staff had the pleasure of supporting the Osbourne recycling, wildlife and education initiative with the pupils of Bersted Green Primary school helping the Pupils make some useful additions to their outside area with bird boxes.

The flat packed bird boxes, made by the service users of the Mencap Riverwood Project, use recycled wood and were purchased by Osbourne and donated to schools and community groups.

During the session, the children were able to assemble the flat packed bird boxes and got to use a battery-operated drill and screws and then paint to finish off the boxes. The children worked as a team to complete the bird box task which can help improve confidence, team building and problem-solving skills. The children were able to name many birds and were confident that the new boxes would bring more birds to nest in their school grounds.

Osborne's also visited Mountbatten Court, where their memorial bench and outdoor tables were repaired and also replaced two benches that were un-repairable. Thank you to Neal for facilitating and working on all the projects throughout the year!





# Chilgrove House first birthday

**Saturday 22 April 2023**

On 22 April, the community hub located at Chilgrove House, Littlehampton celebrated their first birthday. It was a fun packed day for all involved and Neal from Osbornes provided some very welcome ice cream for attendees to keep cool! There was a magician, music, a bouncy castle and everyone had a good time! Many thanks to Belinda, Sarah and our community volunteers who made this possible.

The Chilgrove House Community Centre run a variety of activities including exercise classes, gardening activities and arts and crafts activities for children, family support groups, a community fridge, bingo and much more! You can find them on Facebook to find out about their activities or just pop in for a coffee!





## CX – a new housing management system

In the last issue of Arun at Home we told you about our new integrated housing management system called Civica CX.

This new system will improve your access to our services allowing more opportunities for you to self-serve through a customer portal.

We are making good progress with designing the new system and have been working on key areas such as

- anti-social behaviour
- complaints
- rents
- right to buy
- repairs
- customer portal

The new system is expected to go live in 2024, and we hope it will provide an improved customer experience to our residents.

### Testing, testing!

We want to know what you want to be available in a customer portal, and how you want to interact with us as a landlord. Look out for a survey coming out to you soon.

If you want to be involved in testing our customer portal, please get in touch with us now via [residentengagement@arun.gov.uk](mailto:residentengagement@arun.gov.uk).



## We need you for our Community Grant fund!

We need you! Arun District Council are launching a Community Grant Fund and we are looking for residents who are interested in helping to assess applications.

Arun District Council's Community Grant Fund (CGF) will award non-repayable grants of up to £500 to schemes and improvements that will benefit residents or a defined group of people.

The focus of the CGF is to provide funding or extra financial help to provide estate improvements, wellbeing activities that boost mental and physical health, reduce anti-social

behaviour, improve safety or work with our communities to build and improve relationships. A separate document describes how the CGF fits into the priorities and the relevant strategies of the council. Further information can be provided to anyone interested.

If you would like to get involved as a volunteer grant fund assessor, please contact [residentengagement@arun.gov.uk](mailto:residentengagement@arun.gov.uk) with "Community Grant Fund assessor" in the subject. Please tell us a little about yourself and why the project interests you.

# A note on complaints and complaints

## Complaints

We want you to live in safe, secure and well-maintained homes. If you are unhappy with our service, remember you can raise a complaint with us in whichever way is easiest for you.

Complaints could include:

- repairs and maintenance
- issues with communal areas
- health and safety issues
- anti-social behaviour
- customer service

Rest assured, you won't be penalised for making a complaint and it will not affect your tenancy.

If you need to speak to us regarding a complaint, you can contact us in the following ways:

☎ 01903 737500

🌐 [www.arun.gov.uk/compliments-and-complaints](http://www.arun.gov.uk/compliments-and-complaints)

✉ [infomanagement@arun.gov.uk](mailto:infomanagement@arun.gov.uk)

In writing or in person at the Civic Centre, Littlehampton or the Town Hall, Bognor Regis. There are two stages to our complaints procedure. At Stage 1, we will respond to your complaint either in full or with a progress report within 10 days.

If you are not happy after our investigation at Stage 1 you can ask for the Group Head of the service area to look at your complaint. You will have 28 days from the date of the stage 1 response to request a review.

The Group Head will conduct a further investigation of all documents and correspondence and will arrange to visit if the complaint is about something that needs to be seen. We will send a full response or a progress report, if we need more time, within 25 working days.

Throughout the process and once we've concluded our investigation, you can contact the housing ombudsman if you remain unhappy.

You can ask for more information via the following contact points:

☎ 0300 111 3000

🌐 [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

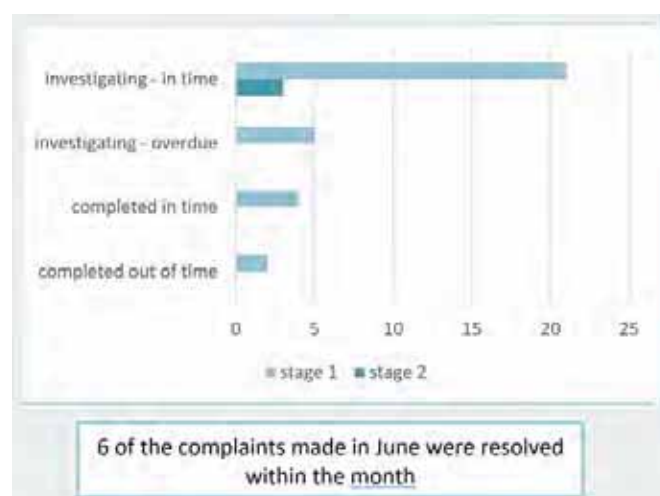
✉ [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

In writing: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

## Complaints performance

We know that we don't always get it right. So that we are being transparent with our performance, we are including some of our complaints data within Arun at Home.

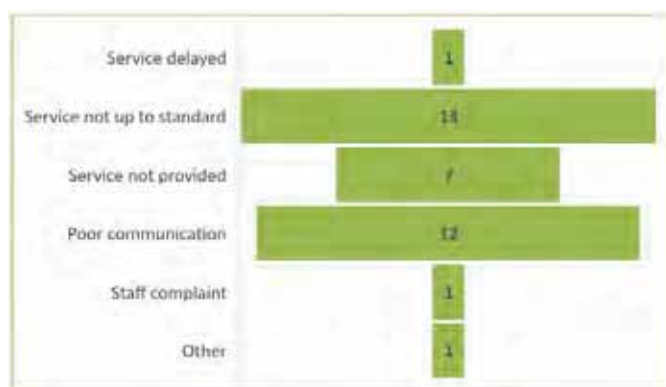
This is the status report for complaints made in June:



# performance



And these were the root causes of the complaints made in June:



We can confirm that the Housing Ombudsman is not currently investigating or determining any cases for Arun District Council. Complaints performance will be updated on our website quarterly starting from September.



## Tenant satisfaction measures

Many residents will have recently received a survey. We asked questions about Arun District Council as a landlord, such as satisfaction with repairs, complaints handling, our communication and more. A huge thank you from us as over 1000 residents responded so we will be busy analysing the responses over the coming months and making improvement plans.

Your views help us shape the service you receive, and we will be publishing the full results on our website, as well as doing a special article in the Winter edition of Arun at Home.



# Stonepillow - recycling white goods

Along with Osbornes and Stonepillow, Arun District Council are trialling a new scheme of recycling abandoned white goods from vacant properties. When the council or Osborne's identify suitable items in void properties, Stonepillow will collect, test and either re-sell at their shop, or repurpose in one of their schemes. This helps to reduce landfill and provides affordable white goods whilst raising valuable funds for the charity. Stonepillow are a homeless charity for the Chichester and Arun Districts, providing a recovery journey for their clients which focuses on the key areas of health, housing and work. Stonepillow operates hostels and hubs in Chichester and Bognor Regis, together with a recovery service, supported accommodation and rough sleeper team.




## Energy bill support

Following the government's initiative to help people with rising costs of energy bills, we identified that some of our residents did not automatically benefit from the scheme. During April and May, our financial inclusion officer and our resident engagement officer visited the properties effected. They helped many residents complete the online application and we have been told that several have now received their grant. The scheme is now closed. If you applied but have not yet received your payment, you can contact the team the following ways:

- ✉ [alternativefunding@ebss.beis.gov.uk](mailto:alternativefunding@ebss.beis.gov.uk)
- ☎ 0808 175 3287  
Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

## Fire evacuation



Our Estate Officers come out and test the fire alarm systems in all our sheltered accommodation every week to ensure that we not only comply with the law, but to make sure that you are safe.

They also carry out a full fire evacuation exercise every 6 months. Our last tests showed that on average only 38% of tenants complied with the evacuation process by leaving the building. This does not include tenants that for mobility reasons are allowed to stay put in the event of a fire.

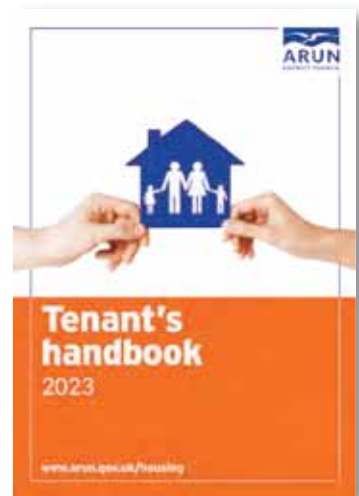
38% of tenants is a very low response when it is your health and safety that we are concerned about. As this only takes place twice a year, and is so important, when the next fire evacuation takes place, please leave the building as requested.

It doesn't take very long and helps us to identify any tenants who may have difficulties leaving the building in the event of a real emergency.



## Helpful information

We have been working on a new Tenant Handbook. Residents who expressed an interest in being involved in our processes were invited to review the handbook and we're pleased to say it's nearly ready for release. The new edition will be shorter, easier to navigate and, for those who can access it, available online, so that we are not creating additional recycling! We are also working on supplementary informative guides for repairs and compliance. These will be in a "Frequently Asked Questions" style and will hopefully be useful for most common issues.



## Arun and Chichester Food Partnership

Are you interested in getting involved in community food growing? The Arun and Chichester Food Partnership are supporting people to learn how to grow their own food and get out in nature by increasing opportunities for community gardening across the area. If you are part of a community group that could benefit from a regular group session at an allotment or an individual that is interested in learning more, please get in touch with them at [communitygrowing@arunchichestercab.org.uk](mailto:communitygrowing@arunchichestercab.org.uk). They are currently supporting to develop allotments in Wick and Angmering but hoping to find and develop new spaces for community food growing across the Arun district.



# Are your energy bills high because of essential equipment you need for your health?

Help may be available for West Sussex households who need to use:

- Ventilation machines
- Electric wheelchairs
- CPAP machines
- Electric beds
- Hoists
- Feeding pumps
- Dialysis machines
- Extra heating
- Frequent washing machine use
- Any other health-related electrical appliances



Contact Citizens Advice today on:

01243 974063 or email: [energy@arunchichestercab.org.uk](mailto:energy@arunchichestercab.org.uk)

for any issues with your energy usage or call

0808 278 7969 for any further support





# You said, we did

An article by business  
improvement officer, Chanelle

We carried out a survey with new residents who have moved into their homes between the end of May 2023, to mid-July 2023. Due to changes we are making in our processes and with our housing teams, we wanted to understand a residents' housing journey better, from their nomination for a property, to collecting their keys and moving in.

You told us that you weren't sure how to contact your local council office, and that you weren't clear on who your neighbourhood services officer is. Since receiving this feedback, we have made changes in our neighbourhood team, to ensure that there are three officers, and a team leader for both east and west of the district, and welcomed some new faces into our neighbourhood roles who will be introducing themselves during visits and community drop ins. We have made sure that all of our staff have the councils' building address and telephone number on our email signatures, and have clearly stated our opening times on our website and at the doors of Bognor Regis Town Hall, and Arun Civic Centre in Littlehampton. We have also updated our Tenant Handbook which outlines the various ways you can contact us.

You also highlighted the allocation, letting and sign up process and property standards. As a result we are exploring how we can move more of our tenancy procedures online, whilst maintaining vital face to face contact. This will enable us to provide a more streamlined service, which is also environmentally friendly. We are working with our repairs and compliance teams to create an improved document to replace the old repairs handbook, which will provide essential and factual information for your health and safety at home. We are also reviewing our standards and timescales, with the aim of reducing the delay in moving into a property and ensuring that doing so is as smooth and comfortable as possible.

Additionally, you told us that you would like more one-to-one interaction with us. We have offered to contact you following your responses to any of our recent surveys, to discuss any feedback you have for us. We have several housing teams who can meet with you at home to discuss any issues, whether it be the efficiency of your home and the cost of living, or to discuss changes in your neighbourhood. We also have a dedicated resident engagement officer who is responsible for making sure we are listening to your feedback and will be looking at new ways we can involve you. Throughout the new Tenant Handbook, we encourage residents to get involved and we hope you do!



# Consumer standards consultation

The Regulator of social housing has re-written the standards following many changes to the law. They are now conducting a consultation period where they are seeking views on the changes. There are four new draft consumer standards that set out the rules and the outcomes expected from social housing landlords. These are:

- the Safety and Quality Standard
- the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- the Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- the Tenancy Standard



The consultation represents an opportunity to influence the revised consumer standards and the Code of Practice. The Code of Practice helps landlords understand how they might achieve compliance to the new consumer standards.

For more information about the changes and for your chance to take part, visit [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-consumer-standards](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-consumer-standards). Any responses must be submitted by 6pm on 17 October 2023. It is expected that revised standards will be in place by April 2024.

## Chair Pilates at Bersted Green Hub

Each week, the Bersted Green community hub run a very successful chair pilates group. Those attending have a great time and are of various abilities and ages. It has a lovely warm atmosphere and the facilitator, Jenny Randolph, is very personable and really cares about the clients. The group use weights, elastic resistance bands, exercise balls and more to aid activities and keep it interesting and different each week. Sessions are just £2 on Thursdays 11.30am to 12.15pm. The group offers a warm social environment and



participants are welcome to stay for a drink and catch up afterwards. These sessions are also held at Chilgrove House community hub on Thursdays 10.00am to 10.45am.



## Striving to become a carbon neutral council

Hello everyone!

I'm Will Page, the Climate Change and Sustainability Manager at Arun District Council. My main focus at work is looking to help the Council reduce its Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

- **Scope 1** is the direct emissions from sources owned/controlled by the council. This includes the burning of fuels for heating and petrol/diesel for our fleet.
- **Scope 2** is the indirect emissions from the generation of energy purchased by the council.
- **Scope 3** is the indirect emissions that result from activities occurring in the supply chain of the council, both upstream and downstream. This includes things like purchased goods and services, business travel and employee commute.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges we face, locally, nationally, and globally. Tackling climate change is a key priority for the council and we have pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030 – 20 years ahead of the government target of 2050.

Following an audit of our own carbon emissions, we developed the Carbon Neutral Strategy 2022-2030 and have now also published our action plan for the last two years. This sets out in more detail how we will be reducing our emissions as a council. Both documents are available to review at [www.arun.gov.uk/climate-change/](http://www.arun.gov.uk/climate-change/)

Here is a summary of the projects we will be tackling to achieve our carbon goals.

- **Biodiversity** – protect and enhance biodiversity and habitats within Arun
- **Supply Chain** - encourage, support and educate suppliers to share our carbon-neutral goals and re-write the procurement strategy to favour contractors who are climate-aware
- **Staff** – train staff on the importance of sustainability and encourage them to become more environmentally friendly
- **Planning** - challenge planning requirements to encourage more sustainable homes and developments

### Some quick definitions:

**Carbon neutrality** – refers to achieving net zero carbon dioxide emissions.

**Net zero** – like carbon neutral and can often be used interchangeably.

**Emissions** – refers to greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide, that are emitted through human activity (For example burning coal or gas for heat).

**Global warming** – the increasing temperature of the planet caused by human activity.

**Climate change** – refers to wider effects, such as rising sea levels, caused by global warming.





## Budget-friendly family recipe!

### Tuna pasta bake

Serves 4

Cost - under £1 per portion!

### Ingredients

- 1tbsp oil
- 1 small red onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 5 medium-sized mushrooms, chopped
- 150g sweetcorn, canned or frozen
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 3tbsp tomato purée
- 300g penne pasta
- 185g can of tuna fish in sunflower oil, drained
- 25g pack of ready salted crisps
- 100g mature Cheddar cheese, grated

### Method

#### Step one

Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the onion and cook for five minutes over a medium heat, then add the mushrooms and cook for five minutes, until softened. Stir in the sweetcorn, tomatoes and tomato purée and simmer for a few minutes.

#### Step two

Meanwhile, stir the pasta into a pan of boiling salted water and cook according to pack instructions, until just tender. Drain, then put it back in the pan. Set the grill to hot.

#### Step three

Stir the pasta into the sauce, then break the tuna into large flakes and gently mix in. Spoon into the dish. Crush the crisps in the bag and sprinkle them over the top, with the cheese.

#### Step four

Put the dish on a baking tray and grill for about five minutes until the cheese has melted and turned golden brown. Serve hot with salad or greens.



## Appendix 7: Work with Osbornes and Tivoli



Ellis Close, Arundel – restored benches



Stanley Court, Middleton on Sea – veg beds and water butts



Mountbatten Court,  
Littlehampton – replaced and  
repaired benches





King George Court, Bognor Regis – gardening and communal lounge spring clean



Stanley Court (now established)

<b><u>Resident Engagement Strategy 22-26</u></b> <b><u>action plan</u></b>					
<b>Aim 1:</b>					
<b>Make engagement easier</b>					
Action	Year priority	Outcome	Who is responsible	How will we achieve the action?	Progress?
Co-design with residents a new menu of involvement	Year 1	An engagement framework that offers a variety of opportunities for residents to get involved in ways that suit them and be able influence the decisions made in housing.	Resident engagement	By co-designing this with involved residents. Using the surveys and data collected to identify how they want to be involved. Carrying out workshops with involved residents	In Progress
Create a visual aid to represent our new engagement framework	Year 1	To show how our engagement framework fits is linked to the governance of our organisation, creating a continual loop between residents and those that govern and manage ADC housing.	Resident engagement	Once framework is in place work with our Resident Readers group to design this	In Progress
Launch the new menu of involvement to all residents and staff - have a comms piece around this and develop literature for our website and to hand out, which staff can also use.	Year 1	Increased awareness of the ways to get involved, and the work done to give more opportunities for residents to have their voice heard. Staff to be able to promote these opportunities to residents.	Resident engagement	By working with comms, design and internal teams to promote.	In Progress
Create feedback mechanisms for the main areas of housing. (ASB, complaints, repairs, cleaning, grounds)	Year 1	To be able to gather real time resident feedback on our key service areas, so we analyse for trends to drive improvements forward	Resident engagement and service managers	Utilising Microsoft forms, having a tracker to capture feedback	In Progress
Create an induction presentation for all new staff on the importance of resident involvement and how they can involve residents in the work they do.	Year 2	To embed the culture of resident engagement across the service.	Resident engagement	Research on best practice, develop an presentation and then give this to all new staff.	To Start
Create a rewards and expenses policy for involved residents	Year 2	To have clear guidance on how we will incentivise our engagement, and how we will remove barriers to involvement by reimbursing for certain expenses such as travel.	Resident engagement	Research on best practice in the sector, then develop policy, consult with residents ahead of development to get information on incentives.	In Progress
<b>Aim 2:</b>					
<b>Holding us to account</b>					

Action	Year priority	Outcome	Who is responsible	How will we achieve the action?	Progress?
Create a residents group that will have oversight of our compliance with consumer standards. Residents will be able to make recommendations of areas that need to be improved, and will be reported back to on the engagement work undertaken and improvements recommended.	Year 1	Residents have the information they need to hold us to account for our performance and make recommendation to us of areas we need to improve on. We will then seek out engagement with the wider tenant base to gain further insight and identify how to improve and will then report back to our involved residents on the improvements we will make.	Resident engagement	Carry out research on best practice, amend Your Voice terms of reference if required, work on recruitment drive, ensure buy in from service managers who will be required to attend, training to be offered to involved residents on regulatory changes and performance monitoring	In Progress
Regulatory requirement to publish Annual Report on our performance which should include TSM's and information on how we have spent our income and executive remuneration.	Year 1	Meets regulatory requirements and also provides information to our residents on our performance, link to the report is published in our Arun at Home newsletter	Resident engagement and Service Managers	Service Managers should provide the data to Resident Engagement and key updates and things planned for upcoming financial year so this can be included	In Progress
Hold a satisfaction survey annually to be able to comply with the Regulators requirement of providing them data on 22 satisfaction measures.	Year 1	Annual survey will give us data on how we are performing as a service, this will also be uploaded by the Regulator so we can compare how we are performing against other landlords.	Resident engagement	Work with a third party provider to arrange the surveys in line with Regulators requirements	Complete
Annually review our performance against the HOS complaint handling code with residents	Year 2	Ensuring we comply with the code and involve our residents in ensuring our compliance.	Resident engagement and Service Managers	Resident engagement to facilitate sessions annually with residents who have recently had complaints dealt with, service managers to run sessions to review compliance with the code and how we can make improvements.	To Start
Co-design with residents a set of performance measures to be published each quarter through a variety of channels.	Year 2	Residents have information available to them to see how we are performing (White paper - To know your landlord is performing)	Resident engagement and Service Managers	We will publish the TSM's annually to comply with Regulators requirements but will also consult with residents to understand what other measures they want reported on. This will be through consultation through surveys and with Your Voice. This was completed by conducting a resident priority survey which informed the new performance measures.	Complete
Create a centralised place where all lessons learned from complaints across the service are recorded	Year 2	A process agreed across all areas to record outcomes of complaints and the lessons learned from them so that we can then track these to implementation stage, and report to staff and residents the improvements made as a result of the complaints we received.	Service managers	Service managers to work with business improvement to develop a place to hold this data.	Complete



Publish the lessons learned and improvements made as a result of complaints each quarter through a variety of channels.	Year 2	Residents have information available to them to be able to see how we are performing, and that we are listening to their views and acting on them.	Resident engagement	Need to ensure lessons learnt are accurately recorded in order to get this information, develop a web page to share this information in Arun at Home.	In Progress
Performance Panel to analyse feedback data quarterly for trends and monitor progress against any resident recommendations.	Year 2	Using data and insights to improve our services, offer value for money and deliver a great customer experience.	Service Managers	Reports on feedback data to be collated and service managers to report this to HMT for the data on their area and any improvements made as a result.	In Progress
Decide and then publish the named person responsible for compliance with Consumer regulations. (white paper requirement)	Year 2	Transparency for our residents on who is accountable in the organisation for ensuring compliance with consumer standards.	Head of housing	Look at the requirements of the Regulator and then decide on the named person	To Start
Decide and then publish the named person responsible for health and safety compliance. (white paper requirement)	Year 2	Transparency for our residents on who is accountable in the organisation for health and safety and compliance	Head of housing	Look at the requirements of the Regulator and then decide on the named person	To Start
Impact report to resident and committee each year on our progress against the strategy, and to share all the work done across engagement in the last year.	Year 2	Supports residents holding us to account as they can see how we have worked to involve them and the impact it has had. Cllrs can then also see the impact it has had and how we are meeting regulatory requirements for residents to have their voice heard.	Resident engagement	By collating all engagement work throughout the year and bringing together in a report. First committee report submission completed for November.	In Progress

**Aim 3:****Engage digitally**

Action	Year priority	Outcome	Who is responsible	How will we achieve the action?	Progress?
Redesign the resident engagement webpages	Year 1	Easier navigation and clearer information for our residents on the ways they can get involved.	Resident engagement	Working with webmaster to design these pages, getting together all the content, then asking the resident readers group to review.	In Progress
Develop our resident portal delivered by Civica	Year 2	Delivering opportunities for residents to self-serve, provide feedback through the portal and access key information.	Business Improvement	Business Improvement to work with Resident Engagement to involve residents to get information on what functions they want in the portal	In Progress
Develop a digital offer to deliver workshops to help residents access our digital services and self-serve, also include other basic digital skills such as banking, bills, video chat. (try some pilot workshops before rolling out)	Year 2	Removing barriers for residents to engage with us digitally, and an increase in the number of residents engaging with using different digital options.	Resident engagement	By working with IT and third party providers of digital skills classes. We have already delivered some digital skills classes but there is more work to do.	In Progress
Carry out a detailed analysis of the option of setting up a housing social media page to engage with residents. Considering - benefits, drawbacks, costs and resources.	Year 2	A decision on whether to set up a housing social media page as a way to engage with our residents.	Resident engagement	By consulting with our residents to get their feedback, by looking at best practice across the sector and what other providers do.	To Start

Offer a range of online surveys, polls and virtual question times to get feedback from our residents.	Year 3	More opportunities for residents to give feedback in ways that suit them, without attending meetings or sending e-mails. Which can be easily analysed for trends.	Resident Engagement and Service Managers	Service Managers to approach Resident Engagement when they need to facilitate engagement on their projects and want to gather information and views from them. They will also approach Resident Engagement to put forward ideas for virtual question times on projects they have such as planned works, de-carbonisation. We will then need to work with IT to deliver these.	In Progress
Carry out a detailed analysis of the option to install wi-fi in the communal lounges of our sheltered schemes.	Year 3	Keeps our residents connected, the communal lounges can then be used to deliver classes virtually, allow for residents to come and use the wi-fi and interact with one another.	Neighbourhood and repairs		To Start
Carry out a detailed analysis on the benefits of loaning out IT equipment to those residents who enrol in digital skills classes.	Year 3	Helps keep our residents connected, and learn new skills.	Business Improvement	Research best practice in the sector and what others do.	To Start

**Aim 4:****Improving communication**

Action	Year priority	Outcome	Who is responsible	How will we achieve the action?	Progress?
Promote how residents can raise a complaint, what they can expect and what support is available	Year 1	Meet HOS requirements on raising awareness.	Service Managers	Develop web pages on this, leaflets and posters.	Complete
Develop and publish a resident newsletter	Year 1	Ensure residents are informed on key updates and changes in the service, use to promote involvement opportunities.	Resident engagement	Content to be provided by service managers and team leaders. Resident readers then review before going out.	Complete
Create a residents group that will review and help create our publications	Year 1	Our publications are fit for purpose, easy to read and understand.	Resident engagement	Develop terms of reference and processes for the group, recruit for members.	Complete
Develop a method for capturing and reporting outcomes of all our engagement activities.	Year 2	Able to demonstrate the value of involvement and how this has improved services, and value for money.	Resident engagement	Look at best practice in the sector for recording and reporting outcomes,. Use Resident Readers to review any publications.	In Progress
Develop an effective and flexible range of tools for communicating and informing our residents, reviewing what methods work well and which don't. Capturing the preferences of our residents.	Year 2	We communicate with our residents in the ways they choose, and there is an increase in satisfaction with being kept informed.	Resident Engagement and Service Managers	By reviewing what methods work well, speaking to our residents to understand how they want us to communicate with them.	In Progress
Implementing a you said, we did approach to feedback and sharing this regularly on our website and in our newsletter.	Year 2	Residents able to see the improvements made as a result of their feedback. Increase in satisfaction with views being listened to and acted on.	Resident Engagement and Service Managers	Service managers to capture the feedback in centralised form so Resident Engagement can report on this.	Complete

Co-design with residents a plan on how we will engage with them on building safety and compliance matters	Year 2	Residents are able to easily access safety and compliance information relevant to their block/property. They know who to contact if there are problems and they are involved in decisions around safety and compliance matters.	Compliance and Resident Engagement	By holding workshops with involved residents, contractors and staff. Digging into what feeling safe in their home means to our tenants and what we can to improve communication.	To Start
Review and define our service standards and processes for all teams across residential services	Year 3	Ensuring are service standards are in line with best practice, and that are residents are aware of these timescales when contacting us. The options to contact us, review customer journey for key processes such as reporting repairs, ASB etc. Will increase transparency around communication timelines and expectations.	Service Managers	Large piece of work to co-create with our residents to review our processes and procedures, understanding the customer journey and how we can improve the service. Need to work with staff and residents, look at best practice.	To Start
Review any standard letter templates across all services to ensure consistency, consider reviewing with residents to ensure fit for purpose.	Year 3	Consistency across services on tone and style of letters, make sure letter easy to understand for our residents.	Service managers	Service managers to work with staff to review letter templates, consider involvement from Resident Readers group	To Start

**Aim 5:****Working with our communities**

Action	Year priority	Outcome	Who is responsible	How will we achieve the action?	Progress?
Develop a range of ways for residents to engage with us in the community, including community events and initiatives.	Year 2	Increase in satisfaction with us making a positive contribution to their neighbourhood.	Resident engagement	Work with partners to deliver initiatives, commitment from all areas of housing to deliver events and put forward ideas.	In Progress
Develop feedback mechanisms to gather residents views on their neighbourhoods and local areas	Year 2	Increase in satisfaction with their neighbourhood as a place to live.	Resident Engagement and Service Managers	Currently have estate walkabouts, surveys, polls, planned works consultation. Need to ensure we have process to record the feedback and then act on it.	In Progress
Estate improvement fund or community improvement fund.	Year 2	Enable Neighbourhood Officers to work with the community to improve the areas they live and to be able to take forward recommendation residents make on estate inspections or community events	Resident Engagement and Service Managers	Consider a panel of staff and residents that will assess applications for funding of improvement or community projects.	In Progress
Each neighbourhood housing officer to have a community engagement objective each year	Year 2	This will help to embed the culture of resident involvement across residential services, and will help the NHO's to build rapport with their residents.	Service Managers		To Start

Create strong and sustainable links with our partners and local groups to deliver projects each year	Year 3	We will have examples of partnership working to deliver projects that benefit our residents and wider community	Resident engagement	Regular meetings with partners and other departments on how we can deliver projects in the community. Work with our contractors to deliver social value through their contracts	In Progress
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## Arun District Council

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>HOUSING &amp; WELLBEING COMMITTEE</b> <b>23 November 2023</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Housing Revenue Account Forecast 2023/24 - Quarter 2 Update</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	<b>Moh Hussein, Interim Group Head of Housing</b> <b>Tony Baden, Group Head of Finance &amp; Section 151 Officer</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<b>Cllr Carol Birch – Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/CORPORATE VISION:</b> Delivering the right homes in the right places: Having a sustainable Housing Revenue Account enables the maintenance and growth of our social homes portfolio and supports the welfare of our residents.	
<b>DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:</b> A sustainable Housing Revenue Account supports the breadth of our objectives as set out in the Housing and Homelessness Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase housing supply across all tenures</li> <li>• Improve housing conditions across all tenures</li> <li>• Create sustainable communities to meet the needs of all residents</li> </ul>	
<b>FINANCIAL SUMMARY:</b> The Housing Revenue Account Reserve is forecast to have a balance of £902k by the 31 March 2024, which is £281k below the forecast position of £1,183k at the beginning of the year. This report sets out the reasons and actions being undertaken to improve the position.	

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee on the Housing Revenue Account "HRA" Forecast for 2023/24

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee makes observations on and notes this report.

## 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 Work has continued between Housing and Finance to assess the 2023/24 forecast outturn for the Housing Revenue Account and outline potential mitigating actions to address the budget gap. Revised forecasts have been prepared for Supervision & Management and Repairs along with an assessment of the changes in loan charges and interest on balances reflecting updated interest rates and forecast of income in consultation with Housing.

## 4. DETAIL

- 4.1 The forecast is summarised in the table below:

Housing Revenue Account - Budget Summary						
		Budget	Forecast	Variance		
		23/24	23/24	23/24		
		£'000	£'000	£'000		
Supervision & Management		5,865	6,261	396		
Repairs & Maintenance		5,956	5,908	(48)		
Rents, rates, taxes & other charges		186	186	0		
Depreciation		5,808	5,808	0		
Loan Charges		1,952	2,063	111		
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>19,767</b>	<b>20,226</b>	<b>459</b>		
Gross Dwelling Rents (current stock)		18,345	18,452	107		
Gross Non-Dwelling Rents (current stock)		479	462	(17)		
Voids		(272)	(342)	(70)		
Write-Offs		(96)	(61)	35		
Other Income		764	764	0		
Interest on Balance		207	330	123		
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>19,427</b>	<b>19,605</b>	<b>178</b>		
<b>(Surplus)/Deficit</b>		<b>340</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>281</b>		

Gain or Loss on sale of HRA Non current assets			0	0		0
<b>Net HRA (Surplus)/Deficit</b>			<b>340</b>	<b>621</b>		<b>281</b>
<b>Major repairs reserve</b>						
Financing of capital spend			2,931	3,763		832
Provision for debt repayment (HRA Stock)			1,454	1,454		0
Provision for debt repayment (HRA Leases)			89	89		0
<b>Total expenditure</b>			<b>4,473</b>	<b>5,305</b>		<b>832</b>
Depreciation for year (credit)			5,808	5,808		0
<b>Total income</b>			<b>5,808</b>	<b>5,808</b>		<b>0</b>
(Surplus)/Deficit			(1,335)	(503)		832
Balance Brought Forward			(3,884)	(3,884)		0
<b>Major repairs reserves Balance Carried Forward</b>			<b>(5,219)</b>	<b>(4,387)</b>		<b>832</b>
<b>HRA Reserve</b>						
<b>HRA Reserve - Balance Brought Forward</b>			<b>(1,523)</b>	<b>(1,523)</b>		<b>0</b>
Net HRA (Surplus)/Deficit			340	621		281
<b>HRA Reserve - Balance Carried Forward</b>			<b>(1,183)</b>	<b>(902)</b>		<b>281</b>
<b>In year (Surplus) / Deficit on HRA</b>			<b>(995)</b>	<b>118</b>		<b>1,114</b>

- 4.2 The Council has an established minimum threshold for the Housing Revenue Account reserve of at least £2M. There is a statutory requirement for our Housing Revenue Account balance to maintain a positive balance. The balance on the Housing Revenue Account reserve is forecast to fall to £902k by the end of March 2024. The budgeted position expected a reserve balance of £1,183k and so this forecast is £281k below the forecast.
- 4.3 The balance on the Major Repairs Reserve is forecast to reduce to £4,387k by the end of March 2024, which is £832k lower than the forecast position of £5,219k
- 4.4 The 2023/24 position will continue to be monitored by officers each month and updates will be provided to future Housing & Wellbeing Committee meetings. Looking forward, the 2024/25 budget will be presented to this Committee on 25 January 2024, which will give a clearer picture of the Housing Revenue Account's financial position and will also outline the effectiveness of any actions being taken to bring the Housing Revenue Account reserve back to an acceptable and workable level.

### Explanation of Variances

- 4.5 Supervision and Management - £396k adverse. The majority of this is the extra cost of agency staff. The number of agency staff has been progressively reducing. There are now seven agency officers remaining and by April 2024 it is anticipated all long-term agency postings will have ended.
- 4.6 Repairs and Maintenance shows a favourable variance of £48k although there are several significant variances, which are explained below.
- 4.7 The Responsive Repairs budget is spending above profile and projected to have an outturn of £3,512k, which is an adverse variance of £304k. The establishment of a Dynamic Purchasing System "DPS" framework has begun to reduce the cost of repairs, and as more tenders are awarded these costs are expected to reduce further. Increased capital spending on planned maintenance will also reduce responsive repair costs going forward.
- 4.8 The Repairs and Maintenance budget includes costs other than responsive repairs such as compliance and decarbonisation costs. The responsive repair and compliance budgets are forecast to overspend, but overall, the responsive repairs overspend of £304k is offset by the forecast underspend in other maintenance budgets of £351k.
- 4.9 Loan Charges are forecast to be overspent by £278k due to the increase in interest rates, (the budget assumption was 3.20% but the forecast average rate is 4.81%). However, this is partially offset by Interest on Borrowing (£167k) because no borrowing is required in 23/24 to fund decarbonisation works as the grant bid was unsuccessful and the review of Sheltered Accommodation has been delayed.
- 4.10 Gross dwelling rents are forecast to be £107k favourable. When a property becomes vacant, the rent charged to a new tenant is increased to the formula rent whereby the actual rent is below that level which generates a favourable forecast. This is offset by the increase in void properties and the current performance on void turnaround. Several new build properties have also become available at Water Meadows Way which were not factored into the budget and have contributed to the favourable position.
- 4.11 There has also been an increased focus on income recovery, and this is expected to see an improvement of up to 1%, (about £170k), in rental income by April 2024.

### Actions to Improve Forecast

- 4.12 The service has developed service plans to increase revenue and reduce costs as follows:
- General Repairs Budget - £400k (included in forecast above)
  - Void Dwelling Repair - £400k (included in forecast above)



- Cyclical Redecorations and Maintenance - £360k (included in forecast above)
- Fire Compliance - £100k (included in forecast above)
- Retrofit Inspections - £450k (included in forecast above)
- Introduce service charges to recover costs of services already provided but not charged £280k
- Increase income recovery by £300k employing a dedicated income recovery officer

4.13 Other actions being taken to reduce the deficit further are as follows:

- The DPS framework has now been established and tenders are starting to be awarded. The voids work has now been tendered to a different contractor, which has led to reductions in void times and repair costs.
- The mini-tender for works over £500 and major works are due to be out for tender by mid-November. Both will start to reduce our costs and improve timescales for residents
- Over 20 further mini-tenders will be advertised and awarded over the coming months, helping to reduce costs and improve performance.

4.14 Further actions being taken are set out within the (Exempt) Appendix to this report.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION**

5.1 Consultation with other stakeholders is not required for this report.

## **6.0 OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

6.1 Not applicable for this report.

## **7.0 COMMENTS BY THE INTERIM GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER**

7 It is sound governance to monitor spending against budget during the financial year. Such control allows the Council to take prompt corrective action if spending or income significantly varies from the approved budgets.

7.1 The Housing Revenue Account balance projection is a significant concern and is forecast to decline below the £2m recommended minimum balance approved by the Council. Further reports will be presented to future Housing & Wellbeing Committees on a regular basis.

7.2 Committee will note that the Group Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer will work throughout the financial year with the Group Head of Housing to mitigate as far as possible any overspends that have been highlighted in the report and to maximize income.

7.3 Members will also note that the 2024/25 Housing Revenue Account budget will be reported to the 25 January 2024 Housing & Wellbeing Committee, which will give a clearer indication as to its longer-term financial health.

## 8 RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Agency costs are not minimised	3	4	CMT to review remaining agency contracts monthly
Severe weather increases responsive repair costs	4	4	Continue planned programme of roof replacements and triage roof repair work
Damp and mould costs increase	4	3	Undertake inspections and pro-active repairs
DPS may not deliver any in year savings	4	2	The forecast does not include savings from the DPS except for voids, where the contract has already been awarded
The savings identified are not delivered	3	4	CMT to review savings and income projections monthly

## 9 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

9.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to maintain a Housing Revenue Account that is separate from its General Fund account. The amounts to be credited or debited to the Housing Revenue Account can only be in respect of items detailed in the Act or covered by regulations issued by the Secretary of State. Budgets must be prepared each year for the Housing Revenue Account which will avoid a debit balance on the account, and action must be taken if in any year it appears a debit balance may arise.

## 10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

Not applicable

## 11 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

Not applicable

## 12 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

Not applicable

**13 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE**

Not applicable

**14 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE**

Not applicable

**15 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

Not applicable

**16 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT**

Not applicable

**17 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable

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**CONTACT OFFICERS:**

**Name:** Moh Hussein

**Job Title:** Interim Head of Housing

**Contact Number:** 01903 737718

**Name:** Antony Baden

**Job Title:** Group Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer

**Contact Number:** 01903 737558

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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**Councillor  
ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Report to Housing & Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023**

<b>Name of Meeting:</b>	Armed Forces Covenant in the Community Conference in Newcastle
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	Thursday 15 September 2023
<b>Report by:</b>	Councillor Mark Turner MBE Armed Forces Champion

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 1) Background. The Office for Veterans Affairs (OVA) is part of the Cabinet office and in conjunction with the Armed Forces Covenant Team from the Ministry of Defence sponsored the “Armed Forces Covenant in the Community Conference” in Newcastle.
- 2) Date and Place. The Conference was held in the conference suite at St James Park, Newcastle on Thursday 15 September 2023.
- 3) Attendance. There were more than 250 delegates drawn from numerous public bodies around the United Kingdom including Central Government, Local Authorities, Local Government Association, Charities, Housing Associations, Service Providers, and the National Health Service.
- 4) Programme. There was an extensive programme of briefs, presentations and seminars including a keynote address from the Rt Hon Andrew Murrison MP, Minister for Defence People, Veterans and Service Families. Much of the conference was centred on presentations and discussions relating to the impact of the Armed Forces Act 2021.

## **PURPOSE**

- 5) Purpose of the Report. This report is to provide committee members with an update on the Armed Forces Covenant and related matters as discussed at the Conference and attended by the Arun District Armed Forces Champion (Cllr Mark Turner MBE).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6) The Housing and Wellbeing Committee is asked to:
  - a) Note the contents of the report particularly the “legal obligation” now on specified<sup>1</sup> public bodies<sup>2</sup> shown at Para 10 below.

<sup>1</sup> Specified bodies that are subject to the Covenant Duty are listed in sections 343AA(3), 343AB(3), 343AC(3) and 343AD(3) of the Act.

<sup>2</sup> Including Arun District Council.

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**COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Report to Housing & Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023**

- b) Agree to the publication of the report on the Council's website member area.
- c) Agree to continue to receive reports and updates on the Armed Forces Covenant.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 7) The Strategy for our Veterans. The OVA is committed to delivering the Strategy for our Veterans<sup>3</sup>. Their priorities include:
- a) Transforming Services for veterans and their families to ensure they work better for those who need them and ensuring a high standard of support across the UK.
  - b) Recognising the contribution all veterans have made and address the historic disadvantage that some have experienced.
  - c) Ensuring better data for understanding and supporting the veteran community.
- 8) Delivery. The OVA's aim is to deliver on these priorities via the Veterans Strategy Action Plan and its second iteration, which will run up to 2028, as well as through being responsive to emerging issues and opportunities.
- 9) The Armed Forces Covenant. The Armed Forces Covenant<sup>4</sup> is a promise<sup>5</sup> by the nation that the Armed Forces Community should be treated fairly and face no disadvantage when accessing public and commercial services, with special provision made in appropriate cases for those who have sacrificed the most. The Covenant was established in its current form in 2011 and since then, thousands of different organisations – including businesses, local authorities, universities, and charities – have chosen to sign a pledge to honour the Covenant and support their Armed Forces Community. As a result of this there have been many examples around the UK of good practice to remove, mitigate, or prevent incidents of disadvantage from occurring.
- 10) The Armed Forces Covenant Duty. Building on this good progress, the Armed Forces Act 2021 amended the Armed Forces Act 2006 to create a legal obligation on specified bodies (see Footnote 1) in all four home nations of the UK. This legal obligation applies to specified bodies whether or not they have signed the Covenant Pledge. Specified bodies that are subject to the Covenant Duty are those responsible for providing local services in the areas of healthcare, education, and housing. Such as local authorities, governing bodies of schools, and NHS bodies. This is the Armed Forces Covenant Duty. When a specified body exercises a relevant function, **it must have due regard** to:
- a) The unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces.

<sup>3</sup> Office for Veterans Affairs "Veterans Strategy Action Plan 2022-2024" ISBN 978-1-5286-3024-5

<sup>4</sup> Signed by Arun District Council on 13 Jan 2016 and West Sussex County Council on 20 Oct 2017.

<sup>5</sup> [www.armedforcescovenant.co.uk](http://www.armedforcescovenant.co.uk)



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- b) The principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising from Service people from their membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.
- c) The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people by their membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.

**DETAIL**

11) Relevant Functions in Scope of the `Covenant Duty`. The relevant functions in scope of the Duty are functions under or by virtue of the legislative provision listed in the Act are summarised below:

- a) In the settings of NHS Primary Care, NHS Secondary Care, and local authority-delivered healthcare services, the following functions:
  - i) provision of services;
  - ii) planning and funding;
  - iii) co-operation between bodies and professionals.
- b) In compulsory education settings, the following functions:
  - i) admissions;
  - ii) educational attainment and curriculum;
  - iii) child well being;
  - iv) transport;
  - v) attendance;
  - vi) additional needs support;
  - vii) use of Service Pupil Premium funding (England only).
- c) The following housing functions.
  - i) allocations policy for social housing;
  - ii) tenancy strategies (England only);
  - iii) homelessness;
  - iv) disabled facilities grants.

**Councillor  
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**COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Report to Housing & Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023**

- 12) What is “Due Regard”? The Covenant Duty is about informed decision making and means that specified bodies should think about and place an appropriate amount of weight on the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when they consider all the factors relevant to how they carry out relevant functions. It is not prescriptive about the actions specified bodies should take in order to comply with their legal obligations, and it does not mandate specific public service delivery outcomes. Bodies might wish to draw on their experience and practice in complying with similar due regard duties.
- 13) Unique Obligations and Sacrifices. These include danger; geographical mobility, separation, Service Law and rights; unfamiliarity with civilian life; hours of work; and stress.
- 14) Removing Disadvantages. A disadvantage is when the level of access a member of the Armed Forces Community has to goods and services, or the support they receive, is comparatively lower than that of someone in a similar position who is not a member of the Armed Forces Community, and this difference arises from one (or more) of the unique obligations and sacrifices of Service life listed at Para 13 above. For particular relevance to Arun District Council is removing disadvantage in housing where veterans, Service personnel leaving Service, and service families might lack knowledge about housing services, have not built up sufficient “local connection”, not be prioritised to receive social housing, experience a lack of available social housing, find it more difficult to communicate with housing bodies, be reluctant to seek early help, or require adaptations to be made to their home when they re-locate.
- 15) Special Provision. Special provision is the taking of actions that go beyond the support provided to reduce or remove disadvantage. Special provision may be justified by the effects of the unique obligations and sacrifices of Service life, especially for those that have sacrificed the most, such as the bereaved and the injured (whether that injury is physical or mental).
- 16) Service People. The people who benefit from the Duty are defined collectively as “Service People” in the Act<sup>6</sup>, comprising: currently serving members of the UK regular and reserve forces; currently serving members of British Overseas Territories’ Armed Forces who are subject to UK Service Law; former members of the UK regular and reserve forces and British Overseas Territory Forces, who are ordinarily resident in the UK (“Veterans”) and the relevant family members’ of people in these groups.
- 17) HM Armed Forces Veterans’ Identity Cards (ID) Update. A new ID card for armed forces veterans, which will help them access specialist support and services, has started to be issued to service leavers. All those who have left military service since December 2018 will automatically be given one of the new ID cards as part of Phase 1), which will allow them to maintain a tangible link to their career in the forces. The cards allow veterans to easily verify their service to the NHS, their local authority, and charities, helping them to access support and services where needed. Phase 2 will extend the scheme to existing veterans

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<sup>6</sup> Section 343B(1) of the Act.

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**COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Report to Housing & Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023**

and this is due to commence at the end of 2023 as this roll-out had to be future-proofed, against a backdrop of mainly diverse paper records, to ensure that only those with verified service were able to get a card in order to guard against fraudulent use in accessing an increasing number of benefits and services.

18) Covenant Initiatives. There are an huge number of positive support initiatives in place which are sponsored and supported by various charities, agencies and government bodies or by partnerships between these groups. The following four initiatives are amongst the highest profile:

- a) **Op FORTITUDE**. Op FORTITUDE is the pathway for veterans at risk of or experiencing homelessness into supported housing or to keep them in their current home. At the centre of this initiative is a team dedicated to creating a pathway from the veteran at risk or experiencing homelessness to veteran supported housing or an organisation that can support them to keep their current home and avoid becoming homeless in the first place, as well as other unsupported veteran housing. Online referral form is at <https://riv.org.uk/opfortitude> or by Freephone to 0800 9520774.
- b) **Op COURAGE**. Op COURAGE is the Veterans Mental Health and Well Being Service providing specialist care and support for Service leavers, reservists, veterans and their families. The first call for help takes courage. If you or someone you know is struggling with their mental health or wellbeing, expert help is available from Op COURAGE. Visit the NHS website [www.nhs.uk/opcourage](http://www.nhs.uk/opcourage) or for services in Sussex call 020 3317 6818.
- c) **Op RESTORE**. Op RESTORE is the Veterans' Physical Health and Well Being Service (and replaces the Veterans Trauma Network) and is an NHS service that supports individuals who have served in, or are leaving, the UK Armed Forces and have continuing, physical health injuries and related medical problems attributed to their time in the Armed Forces. Working together with military and civilian medical professionals, along with Armed Forces charities, Op RESTORE teams understand military life and the longer-term care and support that may be required for veterans, Service leavers, reservists, families, and carers. For help your GP can get a referral by emailing [imperial.oprestore@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.oprestore@nhs.net) and for more information visit [nhs.uk/armedforceshealth](http://nhs.uk/armedforceshealth)
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- 20) Points of Contact; Some key points of contact are:
- a) Veterans' Gateway. The first point of contact for veterans requiring support at [www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk)
  - b) Drop in Centres. Association of Service Drop-In Centres (ASDIC) supporting veterans in the community across the UK. [www.asdic.org.uk](http://www.asdic.org.uk)
  - c) Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club. Meet with other veterans over a friendly cup of tea and breakfast sandwich. Every Weds & Sat 1000-1200. @ Café 72 High St, Littlehampton. [littlehamptonafbvc@gmail.com](mailto:littlehamptonafbvc@gmail.com)
  - d) Armed Forces Outreach Service (AFOS). Provides advice on housing, employment, accessing services, debt management, benefits and military pension, mental health referrals (Op COURAGE) and other local authority services. Tel 0191 433 5444 and [www.armedforcesoutreachservice.org](http://www.armedforcesoutreachservice.org)
  - e) Armed Forces Network. Tel 01273 403693
  - f) Soldiers' Sailors' & Airmans' Families Association (SSAFA). SSAFA South East Regional Hub Tel 020 4566 9126 or [www.ssafa.org](http://www.ssafa.org)
  - g) Forces Connect. Download the FORCES CONNECT mobile App. The App signposts users to help and support in just four clicks and it's completely free.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

2024 Exact Date, Location and Attendance to be confirmed.

**Councillor  
ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Report to Housing & Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023**

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**COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

**Report to Housing & Wellbeing Committee – 23 November 2023**

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**COUNCILLOR FEEDBACK REPORT FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

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- 19) Arun District Council Training. There are several training opportunities (both on Teams and Face to Face) for Council Members and Staff provided either by the NHS or through specialist provision organised by ADC. These courses are very worthwhile for both decision makers and those providing service delivery daily. The next internal ADC Course is on 28 February 2024. For details please contact Cathryn French of the Safeguarding Team at [safeguarding@arun.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@arun.gov.uk).
- 20) Points of Contact; Some key points of contact are:
- a) Veterans' Gateway. The first point of contact for veterans requiring support at [www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk)
  - b) Drop in Centres. Association of Service Drop-In Centres (ASDIC) supporting veterans in the community across the UK. [www.asdic.org.uk](http://www.asdic.org.uk)
  - c) Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club. Meet with other veterans over a friendly cup of tea and breakfast sandwich. Every Weds & Sat 1000-1200. @ Café 72 High St, Littlehampton. [littlehamptonafbvc@gmail.com](mailto:littlehamptonafbvc@gmail.com)
  - d) Armed Forces Outreach Service (AFOS). Provides advice on housing, employment, accessing services, debt management, benefits and military pension, mental health referrals (Op COURAGE) and other local authority services. Tel 0191 433 5444 and [www.armedforcesoutreachservice.org](http://www.armedforcesoutreachservice.org)
  - e) Armed Forces Network. Tel 01273 403693
  - f) Soldiers' Sailors' & Airmans' Families Association (SSAFA). SSAFA South East Regional Hub Tel 020 4566 9126 or [www.ssafa.org](http://www.ssafa.org)
  - g) Forces Connect. Download the FORCES CONNECT mobile App. The App signposts users to help and support in just four clicks and it's completely free.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

2024 Exact Date, Location and Attendance to be confirmed.

## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

HOUSING & WELLBEING SERVICES COMMITTEE	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Date of Meeting</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Full Council Meeting Date</u>
Meeting 1		20 June 2023	18:00	19 July 2023
Leisure Operating Contract	OH			
Housing Management System Programme Update	MH			
Amendments to new Allocations Policy	JK			
Safer Arun Partnership (scrutiny)	D o'C			
Performance Measures	SH			
<b>Exempt Items</b>				
<b>Council Tax Insolvency</b>				
<b>Council Tax Business Rates</b>				
<b>Housing Benefit Overpayments</b>				

## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

HOUSING & WELLBEING SERVICES COMMITTEE	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Date of Meeting</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Full Council Meeting Date</u>
Meeting 2		12 Sept 2023	18:00	8 Nov 23
Complaints performance and determinations	SH			
Performance measures for housing services – Q1 April 023- June 2023	SH			
Homeless Strategy extension	JK			
Housing Compliance Strategy	IH			
Public Facing CCTV upgrade	Carrie Reynolds			
LAHF – Local Accommodation Housing Fund	JK			
SHAP – Single Homeless Accommodation Programme	JK			
Budget 2024/25 Process	Karl Smith			
<b>Exempt Items</b>				
<b>Council Tax Insolvency</b>				
<b>Council Tax Business Rates</b>				

## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

Housing Benefit Overpayments				
<b>HOUSING &amp; WELLBEING SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Date of Meeting</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Full Council Meeting Date</u>
Meeting 3		23 Nov 2023	18:00	13 Mar 2024
Safer Arun Partnership (Scrutiny)	D o'C			
Resident Engagement Strategy Annual Update	SH			
Complaints Performance and Determinations Q2	SH			
Housing Performance Q2	SH			
Q2 Budget Monitoring Report	TB			
Q2 Performance Report for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which form part of the Council's Vision 2022-2026	JF			
<b>Exempt Items</b>				
HRA Forecast Update (part exempt)	MH			

## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

HOUSING & WELLBEING SERVICES COMMITTEE	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Date of Meeting</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Full Council Meeting Date</u>
Meeting 4		25 Jan 2024	18:00	13 Mar 2024
Sussex Police Precept				
Leisure Annual Report	OH			
SHAP	RT			
Housing Services Complaints Performance and Determinations Q3	SH			
Performance measures for housing services - Quarter 3 performance for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023	SH			
Committee Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/25 - Housing & Wellbeing	TB			
Q3 Budget Monitoring Report	TB			
Q3 Performance Report for the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) which form part of the Council's Vision 2022-2026	JF			
<b>Exempt Items</b>				

## Housing and Wellbeing Committee Draft Work Programme 2023-2024

<b>Council Tax Insolvency</b> <b>Council Tax Business Rates</b> <b>Housing Benefit Overpayments</b>				
<b>HOUSING &amp; WELLBEING SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Date of Meeting</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Full Council Meeting Date</u>
Meeting 5		26 Mar	18:00	9 May
Safer Arun Partnership (Scrutiny)  <b>Exempt Items</b>  <b>Council Tax Insolvency</b> <b>Council Tax Business Rates</b> <b>Housing Benefit Overpayments</b>	D o'C			

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