



**To:** Chairman of the Housing, Finance and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee

**From:** Cabinet Member for Housing Services

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019

**Subject:** Response to recommendations of the CityWest Homes Task Group

**Context:** The responses to the 36 task group recommendations mainly focus on service improvements to increase tenant satisfaction from 71% in September 2018 to 86% in 2019/20 and leasehold satisfaction from 37% in March 2018 to 65% in 2019/20. Progress against these targets will be monitored through the quarterly Resident Tracker Surveys which are due to commence in January. Improving performance against these measures represents the primary outcomes when the improvements are implemented. There are specific recommendations below where there are indicators for those activities which can be used to measure the outcome.

#### Recommendation 1

Change the culture at all levels of CityWest Homes. If CityWest Homes is to succeed then it needs to be a more resident friendly organisation committed to clearer and fairer communication with all residents.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

The culture change programme has been accelerated by the decision to move the services in house. CWH and WCC have agreed a programme of activities on the Westminster Way. This started with the WCC people conference on 3rd December with the majority of activities taking place in April and May once the transfer has taken place. The contact centre structure has been reviewed and improvements are ongoing. The review of resident engagement has opened up many more opportunities to residents to participate in decision making so that housing services are more resident focussed, transparent and increase trust.

The service will measure its success through an annual Councillor survey on their experience of communicating with the Housing Service. This can be achieved through a simple one question email with a response button at the top.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 2

Ensure that all CWH employees understand and accept ownership of issues in all resident engagements.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

The contact centre have been trained in customer care using the Gober Method, which is an established model of customer care, to improve empathy and quality in call answering rather than speed. The responsibilities of frontline services have been clarified to ensure they take forwards all reports from residents and own problems and can establish links with wider Council and public sector services to improve outcomes for residents. The current Local Offer is seeking to increase the level of resident engagement. This is an ongoing process that will be kept under review.



The service will measure its success through an annual Councillor survey on their experience of communicating with the Housing Service.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 3

Change the approach to answering calls and emails from residents and councillors to ensure this is done in a timely manner and that ownership is accepted by the recipient of the contact.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Central Members Enquiry team is performing well and reports to Cabinet Member regularly. The most recent performance shows 95% response against the 3 day target and 72% of calls answered in less than 30 seconds. Further work is being carried out to improve the categorisation and quality of responses to Members from queries going directly to staff. KPIs are set and monitored by the Executive Team and Cabinet Member for Housing on a weekly basis for resident call answering and responding to emails. This is also supported by the reduction in options on the IVR.

The service will measure its success through an annual Councillor survey on their experience of communicating with the Housing Service as well as:

70% of calls answered in 30 secs.

90% of emails responded to in 3 days.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 4

Provide clear points of contact for councillors that is not just the Chief Executive or Managing Director or their office.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Councillors have been provided with the mobile contact details of the Area Housing Managers. The AHMs will act as a triage and ensure the correct officer within the organisation deals with the query until both staff and members are familiar with the new arrangements and they are working effectively. The Councillor enquiry line is working well with queries from a range of stakeholders with Councillor queries making use of this channel.

The service will measure its success through an annual Councillor survey on their experience of communicating with the Housing Service.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 5

Ensure data on long-term plans is routinely shared with councillors.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

An executive report is going to be produced on long term plans for housing services on a quarterly basis for the Residents Council. This will be circulated to all Councillors and other key stakeholders to ensure they are clear on the ongoing changes to the service going forward.



The service will measure its success through an annual Councillor survey on their experience of communicating with the Housing Service.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 6

Adopt an approach of reviewing all mass resident communications with councillors prior to its issue.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

All City wide communications relating to policy changes are now discussed with the Cabinet Member for Housing ahead of distribution. Local operational updates are emailed at least 24 hours ahead of distribution to ward Councillors. This includes information relating to meetings with contractors enabling the local Councillors to voice concerns ahead of the correspondence being issued or to attend any meetings arranged. The exception is emergency correspondence which is copied to councillors as it is distributed to residents.

This work will be successful if no complaints are received from Councillors relating to communication on major works or material operational changes.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 7

Review clienting relationship between WCC and CWH.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

The functions of client and contractor will end on 1st April to be replaced by a small performance and quality assurance function monitoring standards delivered by the in house housing teams.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 8

Greater emphasis and interest should be shown in 'Block inspections' by CWH. Residents should be allowed to access all areas including stairwells and roofs. (subject to normal health and safety concerns).

**Cabinet Member comments:**

The new Local Offer sets out CWH approach to delivering local services and the Estate Inspection regime that is now in place. On a monthly basis all estates are inspected for cleaning, H&S and communal repairs. Work with Communications to agree a clear and simple format for publishing inspections is nearing completion and the results will be published for estates in Q4. In addition, on a quarterly basis Councillors and residents are invited to accompany staff on walkabouts. The location of these walkabouts are set by the Councillors and residents and they can access all areas of the block during those walkabouts, subject to safety requirements. The actions from these walkabouts will be published on the website and followed up by staff.



The initiative will be successful if all blocks are inspected monthly and there are quarterly walkabouts attended in each Area by one or more Councillors and two resident representatives.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 9

Reform CWH board. This needs to consider the purpose of the board and the skill mix that is required to meet that purpose.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

The CWH Board will effectively cease from 1st April when the functions it is responsible for are taken back in house. This will be replaced by the WCC cabinet and the Policy and Scrutiny Committee and that the final details of this are yet to be agreed. A detailed consultation process is underway to understand more about resident views on the approach to formal resident consultation and engagement. A report on the consultation and options will be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Housing in March.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 10

Review CityWest Homes staff organisational structure to make clearer who is responsible for repairs and major works.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

Arrangements have been reviewed and the CWH repairs surveyors, major works resident liaison officers, Morgan Sindall repairs managers and repairs teams are all aligned to the area offices. This ensures that they work together as one team, are accessible to residents when queries aren't resolved by the contact centre and they are familiar with the specific challenges of individual blocks and estates. This is improving the service, and further work is in progress to ensure the service meets resident expectations. The first point of contact on repairs and major works after the contact centre, is the CWH surveyor and then the Area Repairs Manager.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 11

The relevant Policy and Scrutiny Committee should review CityWest Homes at least annually.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

The Housing, Finance and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee will continue to be the lead group for scrutinising performance in housing and will agree the frequency of meetings. The current board meets quarterly. Consultation is being carried with the Area Panels, Residents Council and wider residents to understand how they would like to contribute to the ongoing policy consultation and scrutiny of the housing service. The results of the consultation and options are due to be reported to the Cabinet Member for Housing in March.

Recommendation is **AGREED**



### Recommendation 12

Provide estate management contacts for residents/councillors. These contacts should be officers that are responsible for looking after a block or an estate and who are empowered to act on concerns that are raised.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Tenants are encouraged to use the contact centre to report any estate issues. However, Tenant Association Chairs and Councillors have been provided with the contact details of their Housing Service Assistants. The Area Housing Managers will pick up on important issues.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 13

Remove the current call centre interactive voice response (IVR) menu. Changes should be made immediately even if further improvements are then planned in the near future as part of wider improvement work.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Implemented. There are now only clear 4 options, where previously 26 existed, plus an option to speak to an adviser. There is work being completed to implement further improvements to the IVR.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 14

The distinction of lessee vs tenant should not be the first IVR question. This enables block or estate queries to be raised and understood. The current IVR and call centre approach is too prescriptive.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Implemented. There are now only clear 4 options, plus an option to speak to an adviser. There is work being completed to implement further improvements to the IVR.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 15

Ensure all locations where residents have contact with CityWest Homes staff have areas private areas for where personal information can be discussed.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

All the area offices have interview rooms where private discussions can take place. Staff have been briefed about recognising the instances where issues cannot be discussed in the reception area. As for surgery locations, it may not be possible where the surgeries take place in locations off the estate. However, in such instances an appointment will be arranged for either a home visit or for the resident to attend the area office. Staff have been provided with additional training and guidance on dealing with sensitive issues.



The service is aiming to receive no complaints regarding a lack of privacy received in 2019.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 16

Introduce an improved CRM system for all customer contact points, and ensure it is fully integrated with repair contractors to allow for better interaction and sharing of data between call centre and repairs contractor.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Several short-term service improvement IT projects are already underway within CWH. Where appropriate these will continue to be progressed, whilst aligning increasingly with Council systems and data. As part of the transition, the Council will develop a longer term strategic roadmap for Housing IT including the potential to implement a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution.

**Short Term:** A range of existing initiatives are being progressed as below. These will continue, except where solutions risk divergence from longer-term strategy and Council integration :-

1. **Contact Centre Telephony:** The contact centre has requested a facility to have a single conversation with customers where all issues relevant to that customer will be on view to the customer services officer. This would mean the staff can see an email a resident has sent and any replies at the same time as they call in. This would enable them to deal with more issues at a single contact to understand a customer's contacts. An improved contact centre telephony solution will be implemented following the current evaluation of solutions.
2. Some current CWH Digital projects will deliver better customer services like self-appointing repairs, online complaints, digital payments and knowledgebase.
3. The repairs contractor (MorganSindall) is in the process of switching over from their old CRM to Microsoft Dynamics. Whilst this offers no immediate benefit to the contact centre, it creates the base to integrate to them better as the Council adopts a full CRM in the future.
4. **Contact Centre transition:** Options are being explored to transition some of contact centre operations to Agilisys which handles Westminster's contact centre function to streamline and make systematic improvements.

**Long Term:** On the strategic view various options are being evaluated to identify a best fit CRM solution for housing. The intention is to deliver CRM capabilities to Housing at the earliest possible time to bring much desired service improvements.

1. The Orchard housing management system's CRM functionality is being evaluated to improve customer services, whilst considering the benefits of a generic CRM. This could offer a wider set of services to help residents seen as an individual regardless of whether or not they are contacting the council for housing or other Council services.
2. Extending the Council's existing MS Dynamics CRM solution is being considered, which can provide a global view of the customer, allows the customer portals to manage cases, offers self service capabilities, call centre integration and integration to the field force



management. Opportunities to extend WCCs new mobile solution for field force management into on-site repairs are also being reviewed.

3. There is close working with Kensington and Chelsea to determine whether synergies can be derived from combining the technical provisions. Kensington and Chelsea have an Microsoft CRM which has been increasingly developed over the past two years and is well integrated with their housing management system (HMS) as well as their front-line services. Whilst that HMS is not the same as CWH's, consideration is being given by Kensington and Chelsea to move onto the same platform as CWH. If such a hook-up materialises this could potentially give each organisation a jump start in the areas where they are currently lacking.

The service is aiming to have an operational CRM by June 2020.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 17

Monitor as a KPI repeat calls and put in place an action plan to avoid repeat calls.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

A draft KPI has provided to the CWH executive team on repeat calls. This KPI has shown a reduction in the number of repeat calls but further analysis of the data is needed. The repairs operatives have been given a higher threshold for completing works without seeking client approval. This has reduced administration, delays and the need for repeat visits. This greater freedom has been balanced with an increase in the auditing of reactive repairs to ensure effective controls are in place on spend.

This initiative will be successful if repeat calls are reduced to 15% of all calls received.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 18

Continue to monitor call wait time, longest wait time and length of calls and report exceptions to CWH management and to the CWH board.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

Implemented. Weekly data is provided to the Cabinet Member and the executive team. This indicator is showing improvement.

The service is aiming to achieve 70% of calls answered in less than 30secs and the longest wait time to less than 4 minutes.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 19

Review the arrangements for surgeries, including location and current usage, to ensure they meet the needs of residents.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

As part of the Local Offer, the surgery service will be publicised during December to increase the footfall of residents. In January a review of the take-up will be carried out to





see if there has been an increase. The review will cover the location, frequency and services on offer. Residents attending the surgeries will be asked to provide their views on the future of the housing service and the surgeries. In addition to the surgeries the service is seeking to increase the time staff are spending visiting residents and understanding the challenges of individual blocks and estates to proactively address issues before they require increased resources to address them.

**Measures of success:**

Report on use of surgeries with recommendations on next steps presented to Cabinet Member for Housing in March.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

**Recommendation 20**

Establish, outside of the complaints procedure, clear communications channels for residents to discuss works not being carried out or other 'questions'.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

A detailed review of resident engagement is currently underway with recommendations on the proposed approach due in March. One proposal is that from the 1st April, the Cabinet Member for Housing could hold quarterly Open Forum events before the Residents Council. Residents would be able to submit questions to the Cabinet Member in advance of the meeting. This would provide a direct link between the decision makers for the service and the residents receiving the service. Residents can also attend the surgeries and area offices to receive support in addressing their concerns.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

**Recommendation 21**

Undertake a data mining/interrogation exercise and analysis of IVR and calls logged to produce intelligent data on repeat calls/missed appointments with a view to identifying causes and reducing incidents.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

This exercise has commenced with some information starting to inform decisions on the allocation of resources. Further work is being completed and the learning from this will be fed through to decisions in January and February and progress will be reported through to this committee.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

**Recommendation 22**

Ensure a higher proportion of repairs are inspected upon completion to rebuild residents' confidence that repairs are done correctly. Special attention should be given to leaks.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

There has been an increase in the level of post inspections since the Task Group report resulting in the following predicted output for the year:

These figures are pro rata to March 2019.





- 13% of 35,000 in-flat repairs will have been post inspected
- 30% of 6,200 communal repairs are post inspected, and these communal and in-flat repairs include 100% of all repairs more than £500.
- 100% of all voids will have been post inspected – forecast 550 voids for 2018/19
- 10% of the work arising from electrical in-flat testing is post inspected – approx. 250 from 2,500 tests
- 100% of major Aids & Adaptations are post inspected currently 205 projected to be 290 year end.
- Gas servicing, 100% is checked for valid certification remotely to confirm the operative has serviced the boiler – 7,000 per annum.

A review of the surveyors' role and function was completed in September. Surveyors have been allocated responsibility for specific geographic areas and set targets for post inspection.

This along with the decentralisation of Morgan Sindall's surveyors, who now work alongside them, has improved the speed of addressing issues identified and better joint working.

From the volume of repairs CWH complete annually, the resources required to post inspect all repairs would be prohibitive. The post-inspection regime in place does provide reassurance that repairs are completed and is consistent with industry norms, which provide acceptable confidence levels of workmanship and quality of repair.

2,147 postal surveys April – November (inclusive) have been returned from tenants who have received an in-flat repair from Morgan Sindall. This is approximately 10% of the total sent to residents. Where residents record dissatisfaction with the service, these are followed up individually.

Where we have a current mobile telephone number on the Orchard system, Morgan Sindall have an automatic texting facility. They send a text immediately after the repair has been completed, asking the tenant to record the satisfaction levels of the repair, as well as the functionality to add some text to explain the experience received from Morgan Sindall. From April – November 9,595 texts were sent with 2,584 responses (27%).

A Work Group are working on before and after photos of completed work in communal areas, maximising the use of smartphones to create a record of the work completed. This will facilitate a 100% immediate desktop post inspection regime and provide a record for any service charge queries. This work should reduce follow up customer satisfaction phone calls, repeat calls and complaints.

The success of these initiatives will be measured by an increase in tenant satisfaction with the repairs service from 82% in September 2018 to 90%.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 23

Produce clear information for all residents on what is allowed with regards to short term letting (e.g. through Airbnb).

**Cabinet Member comments:**



Information and guidance for residents has been published on CWH website to increase understanding of subletting rules for tenants and leaseholders. CWH and WCC IT are developing software to assist with identifying potential sublet properties being advertised via the internet. There is closer cooperation with planning in relation to enforcement action for breach of the 90 day short-let rule. This is the key method of enforcement where there are minimal levels of anti-social behaviour to justify action under the tenancy or lease.

The success of this initiative will be measured by maintaining the number of reported unauthorised AirBnB type properties to less than 10 per annum.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 24

Develop a clear protocol for dealing with tenants/lessees who will not allow access to their properties. Engage in legal proceedings at an earlier stage if emergency access is needed to enter a property to stop damage to other properties.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

Implemented. There is a process for responsive repairs and a separate one for leaks. This is one of the changes implemented by the leaks team, which has resulted in a reduction in reported leaks.

The success of this work will be measured by having no situations where damage to property from leaks has been exacerbated by no access issues.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 25

Review engagement activity and produce a strategy that ensures residents can be empowered to scrutinise CityWest Homes' activity and performance.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

The Housing, Finance and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee will be the lead group for scrutinising performance in housing after 1st April. Consultation is being carried with the Area Panels, Residents Council and wider residents to understand how they would like to contribute to the ongoing policy consultation and scrutiny of the housing service. The results of the consultation and options are due to be reported to the Cabinet Member for Housing in March.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

#### Recommendation 26

Improve the feedback system for residents on the progress of issues they have raised (e.g. repairs or major works). This would include a formal escalation procedure within CWH to track such issues and the use of technology to provide updates.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

The major works issues will be addressed by implementing the revised consultation plan, as outlined below in Recommendation 28.



With regard to repairs, Morgan Sindall surveyors have been relocated directly to the area offices working alongside CWH staff, which assists in resolving issues efficiently and can be picked up at the weekly operational meetings with Area Repairs Managers. In addition, there are now 12 Morgan Sindall staff located at the Contact Centre, working closely with the team in resolving follow-on works, the correct categorisation of repairs and any technical matters. The operatives are also based in area teams and working as one team with the MS managers and CWH area surveyors to flag up emerging issues for proactive intervention and communication with the resident without the need for further calls to the contact centre. This structure has been designed to support the established feedback systems of the contract centre, complaints system, Councillors and post inspections.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 27

Improve the way that customer satisfaction information is collected. Use different milestones during projects and by using a greater variety of methods aimed at increasing the amount of feedback received. Improving data collection should be a KPI.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

When major works schemes complete, tenants and lessees are now surveyed by e-mail and telephone call by Kwest, an independent market research company. Previously postal and e-mail surveys were carried out. We require a minimum response rate for each scheme of 25% and the change in approach and introduction of telephone surveys has resulted in the response rate doubling to around 35%. The survey includes questions on the consultation process and the quality of works. Going forwards, for all new schemes, satisfaction with consultation will be measured when the consultation is complete. Work to agree further appropriate milestones for satisfaction measurement is underway and will be in place for new schemes delivered under the new term contracts.

The survey are aiming achieve a minimum response rate of 25% and satisfaction on leaseholder consultation to increase from 45% in September 2018 to 64%.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 28

Commence consultation with lessees in advance of issuing s20 notices on all major works projects.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

CWH has implemented a revised consultation plan consisting of an introductory meeting of all new major works projects ahead of the formal s20 process. This meeting is held with all residents (within a particular project) and attended by CWH representatives from Asset Strategy, resident communications and lessee services teams. The purpose of this meeting is to talk through the new way of working under the term partnering contracts.

The meeting also provides details on how the overall programme and the actual detail of the specific projects are developed. This is then carried out well in advance of any billing taking place and enables residents to contribute towards the 'planning' stages of a project, as well as escalating any issues they have in relation to the works being carried out, at an early stage.



The service is aiming to achieve consultation on all schemes before issuing section 20.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 29

Investigate the possibility of appointing a quantity surveyor who would act for residents to assist them with evaluating major works schemes.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

CWH acts on behalf of the 'Client' – WCC, as the custodian of the budget and needs to ensure that any money spent from the housing revenue account is both justified and scrutinised from a value for money perspective. The suggestion to appoint a Quantity Surveyor to work on behalf of residents has been taken on board and a process is being developed which will be piloted with one of the first schemes under the new term contracts. The pilot will give residents the opportunity to feedback so that effective arrangements can be offered more widely.

The teams managing this work are qualified surveyors and will be assessing cost returns for value for money against both industry recognised costing standards e.g. Building Costs Information Service (BCIS) and against similar projects that have been delivered within the City of Westminster. This process is further discussed at item 35.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 30

Investigate the possibility of establishing a leaseholder-linked sinking funds and an improved flexible payment system with a view to introducing one or both of them.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Legal advice has been obtained on the options for a sinking fund, but further advice is being obtained on the regulations relating to the Housing Revenue Account's ability to hold sinking funds. A consultation paper is going to be considered by the leaseholders in the Area Resident Panels in January and February. The options and the feedback from the Panels will be provided to the Cabinet Member for Housing in March with a recommended approach.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 31

Produce a coordinated plan dealing with leaks that identifies necessary repairs and major works that are needed to address the issue.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Following an in-depth analysis, a number of Planned Preventative Maintenance programmes have been created which prioritises which roofs, drains and gullies require regular inspection and clearance.

6 blocks/estates have been cleared including Churchill Gardens, John Aird Court and Hallfield. Early feedback is confirming this is reducing repairs volumes.

Additional exploratory work is being undertaken in repairing downpipes, using inner sleeves or applying a waterproofing sealant and surface coating to drainage pipes which are encased with concrete floor slabs and walls. Once the backlog across estates has



been cleared an intelligence based approach to prevention will be adopted combining annual audits for some blocks with programmed periodic works for others to limit cost and maximise prevention.

Improved linkages between asset strategy and repairs have been created, with prioritisation of roof renewals being programmed in future years major works programmes.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 32

Set a KPI for CWH that prioritises bringing management and professional fees in line with industry to give value for money.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

Housemark will be commissioned to manage a benchmarking project for Major Works 'on-cost'. The intention of the benchmarking project is to compare CWH costs to other similar organisations who provide Major Works to council property. The new term contracts will reduce the operational management resource needed to administer Major Works which cost approximately 16% under traditionally procured contracts. CWH's strategy has targeted 12% for Major Works project management costs and we are confident that this target can be achieved and improved as the contracts mature.

This initiative will be successful when the fee percentage is reduced below 12% by the end of 2019.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 33

Review the information provided to leaseholders to ensure that there is complete transparency on how costs for major works are calculated.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

The information was reviewed with the leaseholders from the Area Resident Panels 12 months ago, but further changes have been implemented in the autumn following the task group recommendation. Consultation on the changes is taking place with the leaseholders from the Area Resident Panels and is due to end in January. The revised format subject to any further changes will be issued in February and March 2019.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 34

Establish an appropriate review mechanism within CWH to ensure that major works projects provide good value for money for residents and are appropriate based on the condition surveys carried out.

#### **Cabinet Member comments:**

CWH have introduced two governance boards for Major Works being Project Board (operational) and Programme Board (strategic) who are responsible for ensuring any



proposed projects deliver value for money.  
Client Briefs are prepared by the Asset Strategy team and define the scope of works which is informed by independent condition surveys and site walkabouts where they consult with interested stakeholders.

Detailed surveys are conducted by both the Service Providers and the Major Works team and at least three competitive prices obtained for business cases where these are relevant. Proposals received from Service Providers detailing strategies, pricing, designs and the like are scrutinised by the Major Works team before notices are prepared and issued to leaseholders and works commence on site.

The new contracts are very specific about the scrutiny process and ensuring value for money for both the HRA and Leaseholders.

The Major Works team have introduced an Operational Excellence framework that identifies the activities and best practice necessary to ensure projects within the Investment Programme provide value for money and meet the expectations of all and any stakeholders affected by any works. It's the team's aspiration to consistently deliver 5 Star Operational Excellence on all its projects and in doing so improve performance and satisfy the objectives set out in the CityWest Homes Strategy to improve satisfaction and reduce the cost of delivering our service.

Leaseholder satisfaction with major works schemes to increase from 53% in September 2018 to above 64%.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 35

Produce a plan for reducing costs on major works projects.

**Cabinet Member comments:**

Following the procurement of the Major Works term contracts, the only remaining variable components of costs are as follows:

- Project duration (Preliminaries).
- Business cases for second tier supply chain.

All other pricing components are fixed except net profit which both Service Providers priced at 2% but is subject to variation based on performance against four KPI's.

A working group has been mobilised to maximise value from the second tier supply chain by driving down cost and improving life cycles of products employed in the works. The agreed plan of action will be agreed early in 2019.

Leaseholder satisfaction with major works schemes to increase from 53% in September 2018 to above 64%.

Recommendation is **AGREED**

### Recommendation 36

Review why certain blocks or estates are not currently planned for major works to ensure that all buildings are maintained in a timely fashion.

**Cabinet Member comments:**



The strategic approach to stock investment is set out in the council's Asset Management Strategy. It is currently being refreshed and a new strategy will be in place in spring 2019.

The starting point for investment decisions is the stock condition survey. CWH commission surveys to all blocks and houses on a 3 yearly cycle. This consists of an inspection by an independent and qualified surveyor to assess the broad condition of a block this is then input to a centralised asset management system named Keystone. The information on all stock is then assessed to produce the programmes for both 5 and 30 years.

A new internal referral system has recently been implemented whereby component replacement or small projects can be referred to the asset team for review. A review of the works is then undertaken to understand if works packages should be brought forward, completed as a standalone project or if there are other works that could also be prioritised at the same time. Not all blocks are on the 5 year programme as they don't require works beyond day to day maintenance. Seeking to identify works beyond 5 years can cause unnecessary anxiety for some leaseholders or raise expectations that works will be completed in a certain year, when they don't prove necessary when a more detailed survey is carried out.

Recommendation is **AGREED**