

Service & Performance Panel (SPP)
Thursday 12 December 2024



Present:

Nigel (N) (Chair)
 Princess (P)
 Dylan (D)
 Theresa (T)
 Gillian Douglas (GD) (Executive Director of Housing)
 Chris Brown (CB) (Director of Housing Quality & Investment)
 Clare Hopkins (CH) (Head of Housing and Communities)
 Alys Exley-Smith (AES) (Community Relations Manager)
 Kemi Ojutalayo (KO) (Head of Stock Investment & Asset Management)
 Emilio Scozzafava (ES) (Senior Community Relations Officer) - minutes

NB: Technical difficulties due to hybrid meeting- meeting began at 18.51

| Item Ref | Item | Owner |
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| 1 | Welcome and introductions | |
| 1.1 | Chair's welcome, introductions, declarations of interest completed. | |
| 1.2 | Chair noted need for recruitment for SPP to ensure quoracy doesn't become an issue. | AES |
| 2 | Minutes and action log | |
| 2.1 | Minutes' accuracy agreed, no matters arising. | |
| 2.2 | N asked whether we're self-assessing on the HHSRS [Housing health and safety rating system]? GD: weren't using until the last few months, driven by stock condition survey which are flagging Category 1 & Category 2 housing. (Prior to these alternative categorisations/ frameworks were being used). CB: more emphasis on damp and mould management to come. | |
| 2.3 | N: scope of the [Awaab's] law is still to come, residents would find it interesting to know what impact Awaab's Law compliance will have on LBLHS' services. CB: our presentation includes slide on this point, which will follow this item. | |
| 2.4 | On the Action Log, N asked why aren't we members of Association of Retained Council Housing? GD: not a hugely active/well-resourced group in experience, London Councils serve our needs, we are joining other pan-LA authorities. N accepted this guidance and thanked GD. | |
| 2.5 | N: Some parts of the action log (6,7,8,9, 11) where there are no updates. AES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 6: included in the performance report o 7: been covered and CB can update tonight | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8: covered in this meeting ○ 9: done but not contacted by caretaking ○ 11: copies were sent in time but not received. T offered to collect them in future, AES offered to find another way to get them delivered in future. | AES |
| 2.6 | Jargon buster needs to remain an open item as we recruit new members. | AES |
| 3 | Performance overview | |
| 3.1 | GD: This report focused on Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) but we have other metrics we use and can provide info on these if needed. | |
| 3.2 | Presented paper. Notes not covered in the paper: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decent homes standard wasn't included in our government-published data as it wasn't being recorded for the full year, neither was lift certification as not recorded for the full year. ○ Highlighted that overall satisfaction stats have dipped, clearly work to be done on repairs and overall satisfaction, but ASB satisfaction has improved. ○ LBLHS drives about 50% of enquiries/complaints LBL gets as a whole. Expecting regulator to visit to discuss complaints handling in the New Year. The volume is a challenge. | |
| 3.3 | T asked what percentage of residents are included in the STAR survey? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GD: 10%, enough to base on but not many. Quarterly data is harder to rely on, 5% and up for it to be statistically significant. | |
| 3.4 | Why are we doing this and why is it important link to Consumer standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process of consultation with residents – emphasis on the efforts made and the great results • Changes proposed and why • Points made during consultation on proposals • Any risks/steers – I would say only TRA issues and possible LTF push back but so far there has not been much at all, risks capacity within the organisation to deliver in the financial context of the HRA | |
| 3.5 | T asked why external surveys don't involve conversations with tenants, why wasn't there an opportunity for me to raise my concerns? N: need to keep things generalised. CB: when surveys are done it's important they're done without influence, they look at what they need to look at from their professional perspective. Dialogue with tenants is essential to understand what tenant priorities are, but surveys need to be completed from a surveyor's point of view, not residents. Further information on balancing these two needs in the stock condition survey. P: in defence of the council, over the last 2 years, I've had 2 external surveyors and both times I had advance notice via letter. N: also received a letter about the survey done on my property. | |
| 3.6 | NB: Piece of work or conversation needs to be had on intersection between tenants living in properties and the results of the stock condition survey. | |

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| | CB: we can touch on it but can always come back to it another time if we don't have enough time today. | |
| 3.7 | <p>N: why has the satisfaction among Asian residents dropped so significantly? Response can come later. Volume of work means complaints are hard to deal with, servicing of failure.</p> <p>GD: noted the problem that underinvestment causes.</p> <p>N: what are the mitigations that are going to be put in in the meantime though? GD: it's a matter of prioritising level of hazard, length of wait, tenant vulnerability.</p> <p>N: is there a tenant triage process on the way or is that too aspirational? CB: real opportunity to use triaging in damp and mould (a critical area), if we can make it work there it can work elsewhere. Papers can be provided in future on progress of this work. N: would be welcome.</p> <p>N: lifts not working are very significant things, Happy to leave that as an action. CB: agreed.</p> | <p>AES</p> <p>CB</p> <p>CB</p> |
| 3.8 | <p>N: response rate for emergency responsive repairs seems to have significantly dipped, on par with normal repairs, why isn't it better than normal repairs, is it the contractor? GD: largely a problem with recording – a year ago too many jobs were treated as emergency out of hours due to out of hours call centre, we have done a lot of work to make the criteria a lot stricter so that more can be treated as urgent rather than emergency. The percentage in the report is too low but recording is a key issue, both in terms of classifying and reporting jobs as complete. D: no access can sometimes be a fig leaf, they don't always try very hard as they're paid per call out, perhaps need more contract control. GD: agreed. P: fully supported D's point. N: agreed rigorous contract management is needed to ensure contractors deliver quality service to residents as well as the Council.</p> | |
| 3.9 | <p>T: concerned about performance of heating subcontractor, cited example of disabled tenant spending 8 weeks without hot water/heat, parts ordered but not fixed – how many visits are needed? N: clarified that isn't strictly relevant to the metric he cited, but asked if it could be escalated T: escalated it herself and it should be fixed tomorrow GD: Peter Whittington is Head of Service and he is very responsive, if it's in his hands it will be getting done. T: clarified that gas contractor misinformed Peter as they said they'd offered heating and it had been rejected, which isn't true. N: agreed that has happened in the past; clarity on what residents can expect would be helpful, stating it will depend on an individual residents 'needs' is only helpful if residents know what is possible and what isn't, this may be determined by the Contract..</p> | |
| 3.10 | <p>N: better IT system needed, going to be addressed in 25/26 – is procurement underway for that system and if so when will it be implemented? CB: HMS is in, asset management upgrade is almost complete but next step is to integrate it with HMS, Total Mobile is likely to be implemented in spring. With these together we expect to be tighter.</p> | |
| 3.11 | <p>N: how are Savills performing? CB: likely covered in presentation.</p> | |
| 4 | Stock condition survey update and relationship to repairs transformation, including how residents can influence this (CB & KO presented slides) | |

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| <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p> <p>4.4</p> <p>4.5</p> <p>4.6</p> | <p>Non-presentation notes:</p> <p>£70m set aside for Capital Programme each year which is a lot, but lots of work needed to be done with it. We are developing our capital plan to spend it well and make good choices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 212 projects at the moment but this could increase. ○ On the stock condition survey, properties we can't access are being analysed to see how we can get in to survey. 1/3 of hazards are around damp and mould, 1/3 are around carbon monoxide alarms, fixing these will significantly improve LBLHS' decent homes standards stats. ○ Trend: lots of hazards in the next 2-3 years to be resolved which will significantly improve our home decency, but kitchen and bathroom works will peak in about 5 years. ○ Approval process for this year has been a bit rushed, next year we'll be able to follow a more normal timetable of a 9-month development process for yearly capital programmes <p>D asked if this data refers to specific homes or is it whole-block condition surveys? KO: this is based on individual dwellings CB: photo files back up the categorisation given by the surveyor, which will help us prioritise the responsive repairs. GD: clarified that this is more of a leaseholder issue D is raising, namely how is communal condition noted? KO: repairs record, disrepair and complaints will also feed into this work which will cover communal repair issues, as well as surveyors reports. D: flagged but not prioritised I assume because of the volume of issues with dwellings. CB: when data shows block-wide issues we will respond on a block-wide basis.</p> <p>N: important in reporting to SPP to focus on the benefit to residents of work and why you're doing what you're doing. Useful to have explanations like that one provided by CB. External comms need to communicate what priorities for residents are and why they are your priorities. Praised information provided.</p> <p>N: if there's evidence of damp and mould in communal areas, there's likely to be issues in individual dwellings? CB: we have access to both, if you layer them you can see which buildings are failing and therefore need larger scale works. This has taken us a step further on insight and will significantly influence our capital works going forward.</p> <p>N: poor legacy of stock investment, so level of trust in delivery of works will be low. Don't overpromise and underdeliver.</p> <p>D: which blocks are being prioritised? Will that be public info? CB: will go to full council to approve in Feb but level of detail in first year will not be block-by-block. N: how will residents know which blocks are in scope and how much work is planned? CB: all will go through consultation and comms regarding works once they're in scope. Realistically not possible to publish schedule in advance due to lack of confidence in work being done on time due to changing priorities. Panel noted this as a practical issue but it will not help with trust unless explained to residents.</p> | <p>CB/ comms</p> |
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| <p>4.7</p> <p>4.8</p> <p>4.9</p> <p>4.10</p> <p>4.11</p> <p>4.12</p> <p>4.13</p> | <p>T: where do low rise blocks and street properties come in the priority levels for capital works? CB: stock condition is being assessed as a whole, high rise are more complex but there isn't usually a distinction between high and low rise in terms of investment – our priority is on what will resolve more problems quicker. T: feels like street properties have been neglected. CB: as an example, SDHF funding is often going into street properties which will be part of the capital programme, alongside work on low rise/high rise blocks. KO: 1/3 of 212 capital works projects are street properties.</p> <p>N: how will I know what work will be done to my home and when? T: have I been forgotten? Transparency will be key. CB: the 5-year plan allows us (assuming we get each year right) more confidence in forecasting what work will happen when and where. Panel noted sharing information the Council has confidence in builds resident trust and confidence.</p> <p>N: important to focus on capacity – do you have things in place to deliver on your aspirations? CB: we can do a lot better on contract management, 5-year plan helps our contractors work better as well. P: who are the contractors and have lessons been learned from previous contractors? KO: Mulalley and United Living, lessons learned from things like leasehold contracts to ensure estimates are clear, punctual and reliable.</p> <p>P: on street properties, if there are leaseholders/freeholders occupying whole building are you planning to do any work there? CB: Our primary focus is on decent homes standard for tenants, but we do have a responsibility to our leaseholders. There would be a dilemma if we were faced with a property with 2 leaseholders v 1 tenant/1 leaseholder.</p> <p>N: put yourself in a resident's shoes when communicating these things.</p> <p>D: when are we likely to know which buildings/works will be prioritised in the coming year? CB: by the end of Jan we'll have to have those answers and we expect to. N: will need effective/timely comms on this.</p> <p>P: does the money roll over? CB: we will have a surplus which will likely roll over in some form, we won't lose it when we get to the end of the budget.</p> | <p>CB</p> |
| <p>-</p> | <p>GD excused and left the meeting</p> | |
| <p>5</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> | <p>Update on Anti-Social Behaviour</p> <p>CH presented ASB report.</p> <p>P: what kind of cases account for the increase in cases since COVID? CH: Cat A and Cat B which are defined in the appendix, both categories have increased significantly since COVID which is being mirrored in other organisations.</p> | |

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| 5.3 | P: how is delegation of ASB work to Housing Officers (HOs) going? CH: it's a challenge as it's additional work, we've changed sign-up responsibilities to Lettings to free up HO time. We've also been very specific about what type of cases HOs take on. | |
| 5.4 | N: case study demonstrates amount of work and complexity per case, concerned about number of HOs being able to deliver the work they're being asked to do, and concerned about the number of people in the ASB team given regulatory interest, and concerned that residents' definition of ASB isn't necessarily that of LBLHS; needs consistent and clear messaging and improved focus on delivering acceptable outcomes for residents. LBLHS has always done as much as it can under very difficult circumstances and it seems from the report that things are more difficult than ever. | |
| 5.5 | N: how can residents access professional witnesses? CH: during the service's opening hours it can be requested directly by residents, contract runs until September, reviewing use as costs are significant so needs to be used sufficiently. N: perhaps awareness isn't there? CH: it is mentioned a lot to residents. It's currently more confirming where there aren't problems than where there are problems. Have we asked residents what kind of ASB 'support' service(s) they would like to be commissioned by the Council? The sort of things that would help them manage the impact of ASB on their lives. | |
| 5.6 | N: reiterating concern about increased demand on service. | |
| 5.7 | N: what happens if people behave poorly? Are they denied services? CH: case by case basis, some mitigations mean excluded from resident engagement or specific conditions on repairs/service delivery. | |
| 5.8 | D: as a recent ASB service user, ASB doesn't seem linked up to range of services that it ought to be (e.g. mental health services, police) – sense we got was that relevant services aren't speaking to each other. Was only dealt with once a sexual assault happened, despite many complaints from multiple sources. Vulnerability assessments also need to be done. N: very sorry to hear of this situation, everyone is short of resources, the bar for intervention keeps rising with many services. CH: really sorry that's happened, we do have information sharing protocol with the police, but there is limited control over how quickly that comes back. Housing works with other teams in the Council on ASB issues. Regular bi-monthly meeting with mental health services about high-risk concerns where we can flag things agencies might be missing. MH and/or addiction is often a part of the problem, where we'd like a MHA to happen due to consent concerns it can't move forward in a legal setting. N: it seems that it's often the case that threshold is a serious crime. | |
| 6 | Staffing and recruitment update -impact on residents and mitigation in place | |
| 6.1 | Not covered. | |
| 7 | Any other business | |
| 7.1 | None | |

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| 8 | Date of next meeting/s and location/virtual | |
| 8.1 | Thursday 13 March (6.30pm) | |
| 9 | Close N thanked everyone for staying late, recommended everyone read AES' report on the new Resident Engagement Strategy and either watch live or on Webcast the proceeding of Housing Select Committee and take a look at the reports presented to it on the Councils website Meeting closed at 20.35 | |

ACTION LOG

| No. | Mtg. Date | Item | Lead | Due date | Status | Update |
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| 1 | 12/12/24 (1.2) | Recruit more members to the SPP | AES | 13/3/25 | | <p>We have sent out comms to recruit and will continue to promote the opportunity. We had interest from 3 residents so far who have been contacted.</p> <p>Other residents continue to come forward to request details on how they can volunteer and details of the SPP are shared, alongside other opportunities for engagement.</p> <p>All participants and residents who are interested in the CIH training have been invited to register to join the panel.</p> |
| 2 | 12/12/24 (3.5) | Possible future agenda item- communication around next steps in relation to the stock condition survey and how this influences works. | NB/ KO | 13/3/25 | | To be discussed at agenda setting meeting for SPP. |
| 3 | 12/12/24 (3.5) | Respond to 'why satisfaction across Asian residents is so low'. | AES | 13/3/25 | | |
| 4 | 12/12/24 (3.6) | Provide information on mitigation to manage damp & mould issues ahead of the implementation of Awaab's law. Information shared to include progress of work- <i>'to use triaging in damp and mould (a critical area), if we can make it work there it can work elsewhere'</i> . | CB | 13/3/25 | | |
| 5 | 12/12/24 | Provide information: How many lifts were out of action across the stock | CB | 13/3/25 | | |

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| | (3.7) | over the last 12 months, how long did it take to fix them and what were the issues faced when trying to fix them? | | | | |
| | 12/12/24 (4.3) | Important in reporting to SPP to focus on the benefit to residents of stock condition/ capital investment work and why you're doing what you're doing. Useful to have explanations like that one provided by CB. External comms need to communicate what priorities for residents are and why they are your priorities. | CB/ KD | 13/3/25 | | |
| 6 | 12/12/24 (4.12) | Share information on which buildings/works will be prioritised in 2025 and ensure communication is effective and timely to residents. | CB | 13/3/25 | | |
| 7 | 20/5/24 (2.9) | PU and TR declared an interested in being involved in shaping the resident side of the software. NB declared there is likely to be more interest on this from panel members | AES | March 2025 | | Residents will be invited to be involved in shaping the resident side of new software. This has been feedback to the transformation leads. |
| 8 | 2/10/24 (9) | Send physical copies of papers to TR in advance of next meeting. | AES | 1/03/2025 | | |
| Ongoing actions | | | | | | |
| 9 | 13/12/23 (1.3) | To resume the comments section within the papers whereby panel questions can be answered and included in the papers. This will save time in meetings. | AES | N/A | | To include comments section in future papers |
| 10 | 13/12/23 (3.12) | To update the panel on the impact of the implementation of 'Awaabs Law' on the responsive repairs service, with the 'worst' and 'best' case scenarios identified. | TBC | TBC | | This will be a future update once further information is known on impact |
| 11 | 14/5/24 | To include a jargon buster for acronyms/ technical language to accompany the future SPP papers | AES | N/A | | |