



Our vision is
"Delivering excellent Housing Services"

DRAFT ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN 2019/20

Newark and Sherwood Homes Limited

Introduction

The Annual Delivery Plan is a requirement within the Management Agreement between the company and its shareholder, Newark and Sherwood District Council.

The Annual Plan is required to dovetail with the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (HRABP) and to cover:

- a) Vision and Outcomes
- b) Governance
- c) Service Delivery
- d) Procurement and Capital Programme
- e) Finance
- f) Resources
- g) Performance Management and Regulation

Whilst the scope of services delegated to the company is laid out within the Management Agreement, this plan sets out the main activities, targets and standards which the Company will deliver in the 2019/20 financial year.

The review of this plan for the 2019/20 period has been undertaken at a time when housing is high in the public conscious and political arena. In the last 18 months the sector has made headlines following the tragedy at Grenfell Tower – with increased spotlight on safety, consumer standards, tenure, stigma, regulation and tenant engagement. The sector has also had three Housing Ministers, a Housing Green Paper and White Paper all within the same period.

At a local level, the plan has been written under new Council Leadership, with a new Leader and Chief Executive within the last six months and a new Chair of Newark and Sherwood Homes' Board due in November 2018. Universal Credit has been rolled out within the district in May 2018 and the Council has advised, in September 2018, of a change in direction of travel with focus moving forward on core services, whilst maintaining regional and national influence:

- Cleaner - cleanliness improvement
- Safer – reducing crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Greener – protecting and enhancing parks and open spaces

And with an expectation that front line service becomes more responsive:

- Easy access, quality, quicker, slicker and more effective
- More enforcement including fixed penalty notices
- More visible presence – to provide reassurance
- Re-instilling pride in local neighbourhoods – including responsibility of individuals, tenants, owners and other organisations

This focus sits alongside the ongoing ambitious plans for Yorke Drive regeneration, delivery of the HRA Development Programme and a new Extra Care facility at Ollerton.

This plan therefore reflects changing national and local priorities and recognises that our strength as a company lies, both in our core vision: 'Delivering excellent Housing Services', with tenants at the core of service delivery and with the agility, resilience and foresight to embrace future circumstance and opportunity.

Vision and outcomes

The council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020 set its vision and priorities for Newark and Sherwood:

Vision:

'We want Newark and Sherwood's urban and rural communities to take pride in being vibrant, sustainable and having a high quality of life. To achieve this we want to deliver excellent, appropriate services and value for money.'

Strategic priorities:

The Council has four strategic priorities; **Homes; Economy; Safety and Cleanliness; and Healthiness** which are framed through the themes of **People, Prosperity, Place** and **Public Service**.

The company's vision, mission and service delivery, support the council vision for Newark and Sherwood, particularly delivery within the priorities of Homes, Economy, Safety and Cleanliness.

The company's vision is 'Delivering Excellent Housing Services' and this will be delivered through our mission:

- Managing and maintaining homes to agreed standards and offering services to support vulnerable people in the community and their own homes
- Engaging with our customers, tenants, residents, the public, and staff to get the best possible service for every pound spent
- Building homes for local people and providing opportunities for people to access the housing they need
- Encouraging tenant involvement in the management of their homes

Vision and outcomes

Key activity in 2019/20

The company's vision and mission in 2019/20 remain the same, with an increased focus on delivering to the councils 'Safety and Cleanliness' priority aligned with the 'Cleaner, Safer and Greener' Campaign

Governance

The company has a robust governance framework in place headed by a Board with equal representation from tenants, council nominees and independent members.

During 2017/18 the Board opted to reduce its number from 12 to nine (to be enacted in November 2018) and to provide remuneration for Board Members. As the company evolves and grows, it is important that governance remains effective and meets the advancing requirements of the company. Changes in 2017/18, along with the recruitment of a new Chair in November 2018, support the Board to have the skills, experience and commitment to effectively govern, shape and lead the company.

The governance guide sets out the standards of operation of the Board as whole and for individual Board members. The Board's role is defined as:

'...to determine strategic direction, deliver the terms of the management agreement, and approve overall expenditure and policies.'

The Board should:

- *Set the Vision and Mission – where does the organisation want to operate or what does the organisation want to do.*
- *Define the strategy – the details of how the organisation will deliver its Vision and Mission.*
- *Define the Core Values – how should the organisation act and behave.*
- *Management, that is the implementation, of the above, should be delegated to paid staff.'*

The governance structure is supported by relevant training, induction and appraisal of Board Members. The Board has adopted Langland's Good Governance in Public Services Standard and during 2018 undertook an additional self-assessment against the HCA Governance Standard to provide further assurance.

Governance - Key activity in 2019/20

Key for governance in 2019/20 will be the consolidation of Board following the new Chair being appointed in November 2018

Service Delivery

Core service delivery is measured against nine service standards which have been designed and agreed in partnership with tenants. These are:

- Repairing Your Home
- Your Rent and Other Charges
- Getting Involved
- Finding a Home
- Customer Care
- Helping You to Live Independently
- Making Your £ Go Further
- Looking After Your Local Area
- Involving Everyone

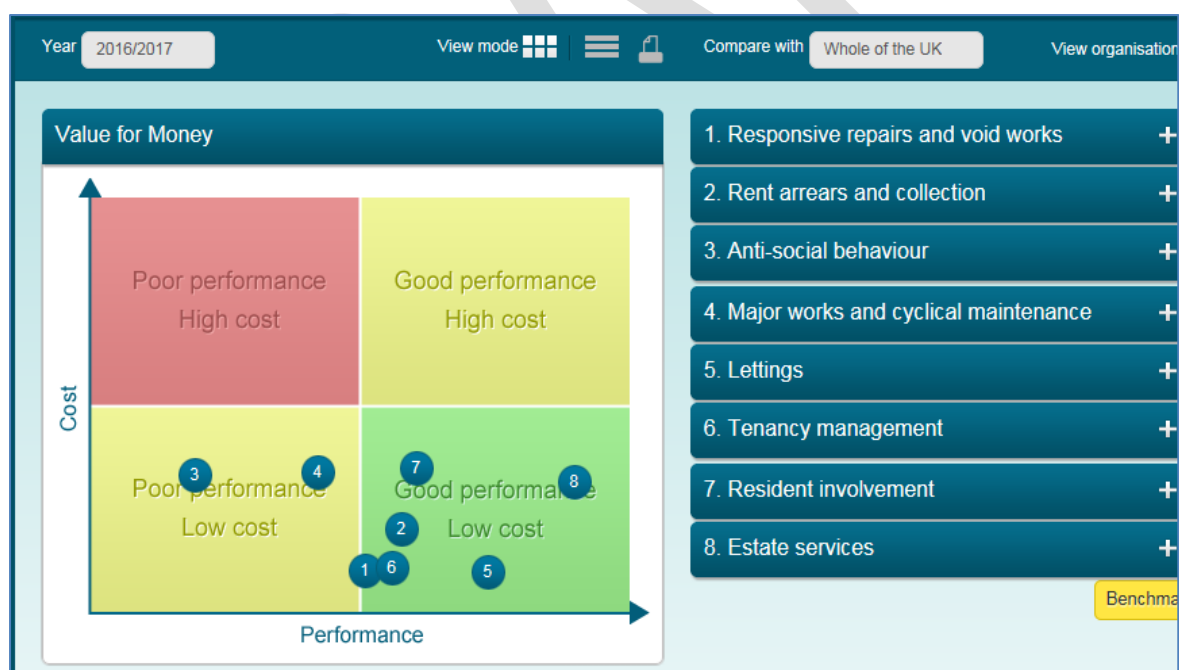
Quality and Value for Money

The company is proud of its service delivery, with tenant satisfaction and value for money acting as key drivers.

Overall tenant satisfaction with services is 90% (STAR report July 2018) and annual benchmarking (below) shows that services currently provided are provided at low cost when compared with other housing providers, with the majority also performing well.

The areas identified as 'Low Cost/ Poor Performance' below are: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Major Works and Cyclical Maintenance. This performance is resultant from satisfaction with the outcome and handling of ASB cases. Enhanced resource and focus is planned in 2019/20 and the commensurate service amendments and resources are identified as adjustments within the overall fee proposals (increasing resource to deliver tenancy and estate enforcement and support and releasing resource temporarily aligned to local offices).

Detailed investigation into the performance of 'Major Works and Cyclical Maintenance' identified that our reporting mechanisms for two key indicators '% Gas safe certificates and 'Average SAP' led to performance in these areas falling into 'poor'. In line with industry practice we will now report our '% Gas safe certificates' as at the end of the rolling programme (our performance being 100% for all properties through the rolling programme). We expect our SAP ratings to reflect improvement as our Asset Management System, Keystone, is updated with data on property improvements. It is anticipated that both these areas will move into 'good' performance within the next 12 months.



Accessibility

We ensure that all services to tenants are accessible. The company offer includes: face to face delivery at one of three offices (Hawtonville, Ollerton and Castle House); phone; web chat; email; and self-service through a 'MyAccount' feature. Our aim is to provide services that are accessible to everyone and we tailor our services as necessary to meet the individual needs of tenants.

Service Delivery

The company and council work together to ensure service delivery reflects emerging local and national priorities. In 2019/20 the following additional activity will be undertaken:

Key activity in 2019/20

- i. Alignment of tenancy sustainment and income collection activities to synergise support for tenants and address the anticipated impacts of Universal Credit.
- ii. Review the approach to tenancy audits, to maximise the impact of tenancy management interventions of support and enforcement
- iii. Increase our presence in our neighbourhoods and on estates; increasing the quantum of visible presence to deliver cleaner, safer, greener communities with refreshed service delivery vehicle branding.
- iv. Scrutinise the increased level of tenancy turnover to identify required actions that ensure the ongoing viability of the asset.
- v. Support the delivery of the Yorke Drive Regeneration project through effective engagement with tenants and the provision of asset management and financial planning advice.
- vi. Review the effectiveness of the tenancy agreement to ensure it is fit for purpose in supporting the delivery of the Company's tenancy management and the Councils broader community focussed Cleaner, Safer, Greener campaign
- vii. Project Manage delivery, implementation and ongoing operation of the Councils Extra Care facility – Ollerton and Boughton
- viii. Undertake a review of the first year of operation at Gladstone House
- ix. Support the Council in delivery of Councils Housing Needs Study
- x. Monitor and analyse the impact of Universal Credit upon rent recovery to enable effective resourcing of core service delivery – protecting the Councils income and maximising support for individuals to ensure tenancy sustainment.
- xi. Implement and embed the Company's wider affordable housing offer, supporting the overall Council priorities.

- xii. Review the current delivery of services at local offices to ensure the most efficient and effective model continues to be adopted.
- xiii. Work with the Council to meet the expectations of the National Housing Agenda.
- xiv. Work within the company's performance framework to drive continuous improvement, in particular driving improvement in any areas found to be underperforming.

Procurement and Capital Programme

Procurement

The company adopts the principles of fairness, transparency and accountability in all procurement processes, with a clear policy and procedure framework to guide and ensure consistency and control across all procurement activity.

Driving value for money, quality, social value, equality and supporting local suppliers are integral parts of our approach.

The company utilises procurement frameworks where appropriate to maximise buying power and drive efficiency.

Capital Programme

The Company delivers a Capital Programme for the Council to maintain its housing stock:

- to the agreed Newark and Sherwood Standard
- to maintain an asset base to support a viable Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (HRABP).

The Capital Programme is set in accordance with the Council's approved Asset Management Strategy. The elements of investment required to be delivered annually are detailed in the Asset Management Programme which is reviewed annually to maintain a five year rolling programme.

Effective Asset Management also includes proactive reviewing of land, communal and general sites as well as individual properties to determine viability and support the strength of the overall HRABP.

Procurement and Capital Programme

Key activity in 2019/20

- i. Support the Council in delivering the Yorke Drive estate regeneration project.
- ii. Consider options for and implement parking solution at key sites across the district.

- iii. Review the approach to asset viability with relation to the districting aging demographic, the requirement for income generation and best management of void levels.

Finance

The company's approach to financial management is guided by transparency, assurance and fiscal control.

We have clear controls and procedures in place which are supported and tested by internal and external audit programmes.

The company has a shared responsibility in the management of the Housing Revenue Account, ensuring the ongoing viability of the financial business plan.

The company works hard to ensure that every pound spent is spent wisely; value for money is one of the core company values instilled in every service, process and member of staff.

The company will deliver a 3% efficiency on its management fee in 2018/19 and a further 3% in 2019/20.

Historic efficiencies have been generated through: agile working (reducing desk numbers, travel costs and printing); investment in technology; process redesign; upskilling and income generation.

The company is seeking to increase its income generation through delivery of 3rd party services, in accordance with the Management Agreement, in support of the viability of the HRABP and to further the joint company and council ambition to deliver additional homes for those who need them.

Finance

Key activity in 2019/20

- i. Work in partnership with the Council to support delivery of the Council's housing growth strategy, set against maintaining a viable HRA BP and specifically in the delivery of the HRA Development Programme.
- ii. Respond to the shareholder appetite for innovation in liaison with and through support from the council to realise opportunities.
- iii. Responding to the Councils commercialism agenda, enhance the company's contribution to income generation through delivery of 3rd party work and services

Resources

Our Staff

The company staff base is varied, from front line repairs operatives to accountants, housing professionals, customer service advisors, performance and risk officers, to name a few.

We invest in our staff, recognising they are our most important resource. Our investment is reflected in the achievement of the 'Investors in People Gold' Accreditation and 'One to Watch' in the Best Companies Annual Survey.

We have a professional, trained and experienced staff group and work to build capacity through professional qualifications, Post Entry Training, job shadowing, mentoring and coaching.

As a lean, low cost company we are conscious of the risk of limited resource, particularly at a strategic level and work to upskill existing staff, align resource and recruit as necessary to manage this risk.

Technology

Effective technology is a critical resource for the company and contributes directly to:

- i. Maximising productivity
- ii. Improved reliability of ICT infrastructure – resultant from investment in modern IT hardware and equipment
- iii. Reduced transaction costs
- iv. Effective information and data management and security
- v. Improved access for customers through self-service options
- vi. Increased ICT capacity of staff and customers

The company will continue to invest in technology to deliver the best possible and most cost effective services to tenants and customers

Resources

Key activity in 2019/20

The company will continue its approach to resource management through effective monitoring and control of risks and opportunities associated with staff and technology.

Performance management and regulation

The company's approach to Performance Management focuses on responsibility and accountability at every level, ensuring that individual members of staff recognise their contribution to the overall success of the company.

Our performance and delivery has been independently accredited through a range of standards and accreditations which we use as a tool for service improvement. These include:

- Investors in People
- ROSPA
- ISO9001 Quality Management Standard
- Customer Service Excellence,
- Investors in Excellence

Service Performance is measured through:

- Performance indicators
- Tenant satisfaction
- Number of complains and compliments

Performance is benchmarked using 'Housemark' to allow comparison with similar organisations and identify opportunities for improvement.

Within the company, performance is monitored at individual, service and Board Level.

Performance is formally reported to the shareholder annually and is reported to tenants via Home from Homes (our tenant magazine), online through our website and through our Annual Tenant Report.

Regulation

The company has a robust approach to regulation with different aspects of the business coming under different regulations e.g. Gas Safe, Financial Services Authority and Homes England.

Further to the governments Green Paper "a new deal for Social Housing" published August 2018 and following from the Grenfell Tower tragedy, it is expected that regulation in the sector will increase – specifically within safety and consumer standards and tenant engagement.

Performance management and regulations

Key Impacts on Service Delivery for 2019/20

Ensure compliance with emerging regulation and legislation post Grenfell Enquiry and progression of the Social Housing Green Paper