

Subject:	Emergency accommodation inspection and satisfaction reports		
Date of Meeting:	15th March 2017		
Report of:	Executive Director, Neighbourhood, Communities & Housing		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 In September 2016 Housing & New Homes Committee agreed that the outcome of inspections of emergency accommodation and customer satisfaction surveys be reported to committee twice a year.
- 1.2 The outcome of these is set out in the report below.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Housing and New Homes Committee note the performance outcomes and trends.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following concerns being raised about the standard of emergency accommodation that is managed on behalf of the Council by providers, Housing & New Homes Committee requested that inspection outcomes and satisfaction surveys of this type of accommodation are reported to Committee twice a year. This is the first such report.
- 3.2 Emergency accommodation was procured under a competitive process with details specifications for the accommodation and management standards. This was through a Framework procurement agreement or a Dynamic Purchasing System depending upon whether the accommodation is self contained or has shared facilities.

- 3.3 Each block of emergency accommodation is inspected at approximately 6 weekly intervals with as many individual units being inspected as possible plus the common ways. Reasons for not being able to inspect every unit on each inspection is due to a number of factors e.g. some individuals may present threatening behaviour presenting a risk to officers at that time; the room may have been recently inspected and there were no reported issues raised.
- 3.4 The findings of these inspections are recorded, each issued with a priority as per the contract and the proprietors sent a copy of same, with a target date for remedy. A summary is contained in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 At the beginning of our inspection regime, providers were still familiarising themselves with the requirements of the new contracts. Following regular inspections and contract management, standards are improving. Providers have demonstrated they are willing to work with us and are improving standards to reach those set out in the specifications. The challenge is to maintain standards which are difficult given the high turnover of households who often have complex needs and chaotic behaviours.
- 3.6 As a result of feedback from officers from observations noted at inspections Providers are currently undertaking the following works/improvements follows:
- Communal areas (kitchens, bathrooms and hallways) being somewhat outdated and in need of replacing / re-decorating.
 - New carpets are soon to be fitted in communal areas at Grand Parade; the basement, which was particularly dilapidated, has been re-plastered and re-decorated.
 - All residents are being provided with new dining tables and chairs in their rooms where they want them and where room size permits. In addition to appropriate storage for clothes and belongings.
 - At Percival Terrace:-
 - Proprietors are replacing and updating radiators throughout the building with thermostat controls being fitted to each radiator. This is being rolled out to every room, and in those rooms where the work is yet to be completed separate electric heaters are supplied.
 - Deeper shower lips are being fitted in all rooms to prevent leaks into rooms below; this has already taken place in the majority of rooms with the work being rolled out to all rooms.
 - A new system for storing and delivering hot water has been ordered, which will remedy the issue of inconsistent hot water supply.
 - New halogen cookers are now supplied to residents, replacing microwaves / baby belling – halogen cookers are a more versatile and healthy way of cooking food.
 - There are plans to re-roof the building and renovate the exterior of the property including draught proofing all windows.
- 3.7 Feedback forms have been given to occupants since mid-November 2016. The majority of forms have been collected by council staff when inspecting rooms and a smaller number collected by the accommodation providers. To date the number of occupants returning the forms has been low, and we have been reliant on staff from either the Council or proprietors completing the forms with occupants.

Approximately 14% of all households in emergency accommodation have completed forms and this low figure is likely due to a combination of factors :

- that households may have other pressing priorities and are often in crisis when in emergency accommodation and so completing a feedback form is a low priority. .
- Some individuals are very vulnerable suffering with a range of physical and mental health problems and/or substance misuse issues and this is may impact on their ability to respond. See Appendix 2.

3.8 However feedback received so far is largely positive. The majority of occupants who have responded so far state that their rooms and the accommodation generally are good; they report that staff, particularly at Percival Terrace are very helpful, caring and responsive.

3.9 At Percival Terrace a monthly newsletter is produced for the residents (to which Housing Needs contribute any developments in our service), educational classes are arranged (for example First Aid for new mothers) and a residents Christmas party and breakfast was held.

4 ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Not applicable.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

Feedback from occupants as per Appendix 2.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 Inspections of emergency accommodation, the subsequent reporting to proprietors of issues and monthly contract monitoring meetings are resulting in improvements to standards in emergency accommodation. This is reflected in the customer satisfaction surveys.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 The cost associated with inspecting temporary accommodation and operating tenant satisfaction surveys is being met from current housing general fund temporary accommodation budgets

Finance Officer Consulted: Monica Brooks

Date: 03/03/17

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no significant legal implications to draw to Members' attention arising from this report for noting.

Lawyer Consulted: Liz Woodley

Date: 15/03/17

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 None

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 None

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.5 None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Inspection reports
Appendix 2: Customer feedback.

APPENDIX 1

Emergency accommodation – results from recent inspections			
Name of property	Dwellings occupied by TA tenants	Inspections that raised issues about the room or the provider	Examples of issues raised
Pavilion Parade (visited 25/01/17)	6 flats (excludes one empty)	33% (2 of 6)	Damp in living room; damaged door frame.
Westbourne Villas (visited 15/12/16)	13 rooms	64 (7 of 11)	Hot water in kitchen not working; fit electric towel heater in bathroom; items cluttering living areas; external damp works; condensation due to overcrowding; damp in kitchen.
Brunswick Place (visited 01/12/16)	18 rooms	33% (6 of 18)	Replacement of old heaters to modern units; lack of storage in rooms
Portland Road (visited 15/12/16)	2 flats	0% (0 of 2)	
North Road (visited 22/12/16)	8 flats	87% (7 of 8)	Repairs to windows; damp repairs; rendering/plastering repairs.
Wellington Road (visited 27/10/2016)	4 flats – wheelchair accessible	0%	.
Norfolk Terrace (visited 17/08/2016)	9 flats	33% (5 of 9)	Repair to radiator and kitchen canopy fixtures; water leaking from ceiling; intercom not working.
Kendal Court (visited 11/01/2017)	40 flats	15% (6 of 40)	Gap in window; leaks behind toilet and sink; no running water in kitchen.
Richmond Place (visited 01/09/2016)	12 flats	42% (5 of 12)	Fill in holes in walls; repair to radiator fixture; repair broken door frame; boiler making noise.
Windsor Court (visited 12/10/2016)	52 flats (excludes one empty)	33% (17 of 52)	Cracked glass in door windows; holes in bathroom wall; contractor to change mattress and cooker; water leaking from toilets; messy rooms; lounge heater not working; repair damaged plug socket; intercom receiver not working.

Emergency accommodation – results from recent inspections			
Name of property	Dwellings occupied by TA tenants	Inspections that raised issues about the room or the provider	Examples of issues raised
Percival terrace (visited 16/12/2016)	60 flats	58% (11 of 19) (excl. 41 previously inspected)	Radiator needs replacing; damp due to historical leak; minor leak from radiator; water leaking through window; shower too hot/cold; damp in common way.
Richmond Place (visited 05/12/2016)	18 flats	89% (16 of 18)	Repair kitchen extractor fan; replace shower units; repair window frames; change lights in bathrooms; repair intercom receiver; replace external light; repair gap in downpipe.
Grand Parade (visited 25/01/2017)	35 rooms	43% (10 of 23) (excl. 12 previously inspected)	Repairs to windows; replace light bulbs, repair to sink.
Westbourne Gardens (visited 02/11/2016)	2 flats	50% (1 of 2)	Water spots/damp marks in bedroom and ceiling leaks water when it rains.

APPENDIX 2

Results from TA feedback tables

Feedback from occupants has been collected from a number of properties asking such questions as:

- What improvements need to be done and how should we go about doing them?
- What have been some of the good things about staying where you are?
- In general, do you think things have improved over the time that you have been here?

The responses to these questions led to a range of anecdotal comments that are unfortunately difficult to quantify and to extract sound qualitative information. However, the results have been extrapolated into the table below through considering comments as either largely positive or negative.

Property	Survey responses	Breakdown of positive/ negative comments	Examples of comments	How complaints have been addressed
Percival Terrace	22	76% positive (32 positive, 10 negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly and helpful staff • Damp and water leaks 	Damp in rooms has largely been rectified through a rolling programme of remedial works. Water leaks were largely as a result of the shower trays in rooms being too shallow. This has now been rectified in all rooms
The Heathers	15	43% positive (18 positive, 24 negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good and responsive staff • Noisy, smelly, water leaks 	Discussions with the accommodation provider to address these problems ongoing
Kendal Court	18	61% positive (19 positive, 12 negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good staff, new, clean s/c rooms • Expensive electricity 	The provider has stated that the electricity rates are set at standard rate.
Brunswick Place	10	68% positive (15 positive, 7 negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpful staff, clean facilities • Lack of bedding provided and lack of clothes storage 	All rooms have now been provided with clothes hanging rails. Bedding is available on request.
Grand Parade	15	71% positive (22 positive, 9 negative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpful and responsive staff • Shared bathrooms toilets on different floors – not always clean and small. 	Cleaning of commonways and shared facilities has been increased to 3 times weekly.

Feedback regarding Windsor Court/Lodge was collected slightly differently as the provider themselves used a different method of collecting the information.

Property	How helpful have the staff been with any repairs/ issues reported?	In comparison to other emergency/ temporary accommodation you have been placed in, how happy are you with your current accommodation?
Windsor Court	39% extremely helpful (9) 35% very helpful (8) 13% moderately helpful (3) 9% slightly helpful (2) 4% not very helpful (1)	4% very happy (1) 35% happy (8) 30% in between (7) 9% unhappy (2) 9% very unhappy (2) 13% didn't answer (3)

Because of the difficulty we have experienced in collecting consistent feedback we are re-thinking how this could be improved upon .