

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet 18 March 2020
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Report title	Wolverhampton Homes Business Plan Action Plan 2020-2021	
Decision designation	RED	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Louise Miles Resources	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Accountable Director	Ross Cook, Director of City Environment	
Originating service	City Environment	
Accountable employee	Lynda Eyton	Client Relationship Manager
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Report to be/has been considered by	Housing and Assets Leadership Team	26 February 2020

Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet recommends that Council:

1. Approves the Wolverhampton Homes Business Plan Action Plan 2020-2021.
2. Approves new arrangements for monitoring the delivery of the Wolverhampton Homes Business Plan Action Plan to Council scrutiny.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet acceptance of the Wolverhampton Homes Annual Business Plan Action Plan (WHBPAP) 2020-2021 and its monitoring arrangements and to recommend approval of the plan by Full Council.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Under the terms of the management agreement between the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) and its arm's length management organisation (ALMO), Wolverhampton Homes (WH), the Council is required to adopt an annual Delivery Plan. The schedules to the management agreement were revised and adopted by Cabinet on 12 September 2018, with 'Schedule 3 - Annual Delivery Planning Process Timetable' amended in support of WH developing an overarching business plan allowing for longer term service and financial planning.
- 2.2 Full Council adopted WH's four-year Business Plan in April 2019, which ends in 2023, aligned to the next break clause in the management agreement.
- 2.3 To set out how this longer-term vision will be achieved, working with CWC, WH are required to provide an annual update by way of an annual action plan, which sets out how these strategic priorities will be operationalised over the coming year.
- 2.4 Whilst remaining aligned to the Business Plan, the annual WHBPAP has been developed in the context of the Social Housing Green paper, 'A new deal for social housing' and the changing operating environment, particularly in relation to regulatory requirements. This includes:
- Aligning WH to CWC corporate objectives, strategic plans and local policies; the Council Plan, Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy;
 - National Economy – impact of Brexit and Welfare Reform;
 - Legacy of the Grenfell tragedy and any potential regulatory changes that arise from the National Building Safety Programme, Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards and the Housing Ombudsman;
 - The anticipated White Paper to the Social Housing Green paper.

3.0 Annual Action Plan 2020-2021

- 3.1 The contents of the WHBPAP 2020-2021 has been negotiated between WH and Council employees led by the Housing Strategy Team. It supports the Council Plan priority of 'Better Homes for All' and in so doing aims to contribute to improving housing across the City by offering better quality housing choices and safe and secure housing for all.
- 3.2 The Action Plan is set out at appendix 1 and is organised by WH service areas: Housing, Housing Options, Asset Management, Building Services and Corporate Services. It focuses on WH's core service offering and how they will transform the delivery of services to ensure they continue to:
- Enhance their community and customer focus

- Provide safe and secure homes
- Support people to sustain their tenancies and homes

3.3 The Action Plan includes some detail on how the plan will be achieved within the financial and human resources available.

4.0 Monitoring

4.1 The Council currently maintains the WH Delivery Plan Quarterly Monitoring Group, chaired by the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing it provides the opportunity to the Council (including officers from Housing and Finance) and Wolverhampton Federation of Tenants Association to have oversight and scrutiny of the progress WH are making in the achievement of the Action Plan.

4.2 These monitoring arrangements have been in place for a number of years and in light of improvements the Council is making to customer insight and tenant scrutiny, following the findings of the social housing green paper, 'a new deal for social housing' and the requirements of the Social Housing Regulator's Consumer Standards, it is recommended these arrangements are reviewed to ensure ongoing assurance is provided to the Council and tenants on WH performance.

4.3 Whilst a wider review of tenant engagement is underway, which will bolster the role of tenant scrutiny of WH in the delivery of housing management services, it is recommended that the progress made against the annual Action Plan is reported by WH, with the support of Housing Strategy and Policy and input from Wolverhampton Federation of Tenants Association to Council Scrutiny.

4.4 Housing Strategy and Policy will continue to monitor WH' performance against agreed key performance indicators which are reviewed and updated on an annual basis and reported to Cabinet (Performance Management) Panel quarterly.

5.0 Evaluation of alternative options

5.1 The Council entered into a 15-year management agreement with WH in 2013 to continue to deliver housing management services on behalf of the Council. It is a requirement of this management agreement that the Council and WH work to develop and adopt an action plan which sets out how WH will deliver the services delegated to them and help to deliver the Stock Maintenance and Improvement Programme. In so doing WH in conjunction with CWC aim to contribute to improving housing across the City by offering better quality housing choices and safe and secure housing for all.

5.2 The alternative option would be not to adopt an annual action plan. Where an action plan cannot be agreed, the management agreement sets out that it will be determined in accordance with its dispute resolution process.

6.0 Reasons for decision

- 6.1 It is recommended that the WHBPAP at appendix 1 is adopted. It is accompanied by draft performance indicators to be finalised between the Council and WH for 2020-2021, at Appendix 2, both have which have been developed in conjunction with the Council. Appendix 3 sets out WH's procurement plan for 2020-2021 as required by the management agreement.
- 6.2 Additionally, the Council continues to monitor and review WH to ensure that the organisation remains high-performing, well-governed and delivering a housing service in line with the Council's strategic objectives.

7.0 Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications from this action plan. Wolverhampton Homes receive an annual management fee from the Housing Revenue Account as approved by Council in the 'Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2020-2021 including Rents and Service Charges' on 29 January 2020, to deliver services as contracted in the Management Agreement and receive additional income from trading activities. A balanced budget to deliver the annual delivery action plan is approved by the Wolverhampton Board on an annual basis.
[JM/28022020/L]

8.0 Legal implications

- 8.1 The Action Plan forms part of the contractual management agreement between the Council and WH.
[DC/05032020/J]

9.0 Equalities implications

- 9.1 WH Action Plan has equalities implications in terms of the workstreams that the plan describes. As appropriate these have been or will be the subject of equality analysis within WH, with a schedule of equality analysis presented to its Equality Circle Forum which informs their equality agenda and provides a platform to assess the impact of planned service delivery. As a result of these considerations and analyses Councillors can be assured that they have complied with the requirements of the General Equality Duty as created by Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

10.0 Climate Change and Environmental implications

- 10.1 There are no direct climate change or environmental implications for this report, however, the delivery of estate and property based programmes will contribute to the improvement of living conditions and enhance the visual appearance of neighbourhoods. WH will develop plans throughout the year to develop a strategic asset investment proposal for Housing in relation to achieving Affordable Warmth and Carbon neutrality, which will contribute towards reducing carbon emissions over the course of the Business Plan.

11.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications

11.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications for the report, however WH account for and work to improve the health and well being of the tenants whose homes they manage, as part of their day to day delivery of housing management services and their interactions with the Council and other statutory organisations with whom they may work in partnership, make referrals to and sign post tenants to.

12.0 Human resources implications

12.1 There are no direct human resources implications emanating from the annual Action Plan for the Council. The Action Plan sets out in broad terms WH' human resource implications for delivery of the plan.

13.0 Corporate landlord implications

13.1 This report deals in the main with the Council's housing stock. Consideration of the availability of development sites will be given to support the delivery of the Capital Programme for new build.

14.0 Schedule of background papers

14.1 27 March 2019, [Wolverhampton Homes Business Plan 2019-2023](#), Cabinet

14.2 12 September 2018, [Wolverhampton Homes Management Agreement Update](#), Cabinet

14.3 22 January 2020, [Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2020-2021 including Rents and Service Charges](#), Cabinet

15.0 Appendices

15.1 Appendix 1 – Wolverhampton Homes Action Plan 2020- 2021

15.2 Appendix 2 – Wolverhampton Homes Suite of Key Performance Indicators 2020-2021

15.3 Appendix 3 – Wolverhampton Homes Procurement Plan 2020-2021