



## The Gateshead Housing Company Resources and Audit Committee

Tuesday 30 October 2012 at 10am  
Board Room 1, The Gateshead Housing Company, Keelman  
House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Fifth Avenue, Team Valley  
Trading Estate, Gateshead NE11 0XA

### *Agenda*

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Item	Business
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>
2.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
	<b><u>ITEMS FOR DECISION</u></b>
3.	<b>Minutes (Pages 3-8)</b> To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of the committee held on 31 July 2012
4.	<b>Matters Arising</b>
5.	<b>Operational Risk Register – Customers and Communities (Pages 9-30)</b> Report of Acting Chief Executive
6.	<b>Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2011/12 (Pages 31-50)</b> Report of Acting Chief Executive
7.	<b>Carbon Monoxide Detectors (Pages 51-54)</b> Report of Director of Customers and Communities

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Contact: Stuart Gibson Tel: (0191) 433 5308 Date: 23 October 2012

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**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

8. **Management Accounts – Second Quarter 2012/13 (Pages 55-69)**  
Report of Head of Finance
9. **Sickness Absence and Human Resources Update (Pages 70-82)**  
Report of Head of Support Services
10. **Health and Safety Update (Pages 83-87)**  
Report of Head of Support Services
11. **2012/13 Internal Audit Update – Progress Report (Pages 88-90)**  
Report of Chief Internal Auditor, Gateshead Council
12. **Items for Future Agendas**
13. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**  
The committee may wish to consider excluding the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with categories 1 and 4 of the company's Access to Information Rules.



# The Gateshead Housing Company

Working with Gateshead Council

## RESOURCES AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

31 July 2012

### PRESENT:

#### Directors

John Hamilton (Chair)  
George Clark  
Peter Mole

#### Advisers

Jon Mallen-Beadle	Acting Chief Executive
Neil Bouch	Director of Customers and Communities
Sarah Thompson	Head of Finance
Phil Gallagher	Head of Support Services
Kevin Johnson	Head of Customer Services
Stuart Gibson	Governance and Risk Officer

#### Apologies

Richard Armitage  
Stan Dawson  
Joachim Mouanda Moussounda  
Sara Woolley

### 21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were declared.

### 22 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the committee held on 10 May and 10 July 2012 were approved as a correct record.

### 23 MATTERS ARISING – FITTING OF CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

The committee will receive a report at its next meeting on the fitting of carbon monoxide detectors, the resource implications and the company's legal obligations.

### 24 OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER – CORPORATE SERVICES

An updated Operational Risk Register for the Corporate Services Directorate was submitted.

A number of future actions have been implemented and these are now identified as controls within the register. In addition, some new further actions have been identified for some of the risks.

The risk around failure of finance system has been deleted as it is identified in the Business Continuity Plan.

RESOLVED – That the Operational Risk Register for the Corporate Services Directorate be approved, subject to the Governance and Risk Officer ensuring that all the risks are the correct colour.

## **25 TGHC PROBITY POLICY**

The Board, at its meeting held on 15 March 2012, approved a company policy on the prevention of bribery. At that meeting, the Board requested that an overall probity policy be produced for consideration by this committee.

A TGHC Probity Policy was submitted which is intended to outline the behaviours required to maintain the highest standards of probity and provide assurance that any relationships entered into lead to a clear benefit for the company and represent value for money.

The policy incorporates the following existing procedures in place within the company around probity: -

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Prevention of Bribery Policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees/Directors – Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality

RESOLVED – That the Board be recommended to approve the TGHC Probity Policy.

## **26 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – FIRST QUARTER 2012/13**

The committee received an update on the management accounts for the first quarter 2012/13 including the income and expenditure in relation to both revenue and repairs.

The Council initially agreed to pay the company fees totalling £31.429m for the 2012/13 financial year, consisting of £13.334m for the management fee and £18.095m for the repairs fee. As detailed in the budget report, the proposed budget initially provided a deficit of £609,000 however, following a review of current vacancies and by including some of these in the budget at zero cost this has been reduced to £9,000.

Following further meetings with the Council, potential savings of £318,000 were identified, reducing the management fee to £13.017m. However, it was agreed with the Council that should these savings not materialise then negotiations would be held with the Council around any changes to the fee.

One of the efficiency savings identified within the £318,000 relates to the closure of Felling Housing Office. The estimated savings during 2012/13 associated with the office closure were £107,000. Subsequent agreement with the Council on the level of service to be provided has resulted in a reduced level of saving. The savings are currently being discussed with the Council to ensure that the management fee can be increased to reflect this change.

The accounts shows an under spend to date of £10,000. Repairs is under spent based on forecast budget, however, the income is matched against expenditure in repairs and so no under spend is shown. The under spend against forecast is due mainly to repair invoices not yet being received from Mears due to issues with the interface between computer systems.

- RESOLVED – (i) That the information be noted.
- (ii) That the gas servicing budget update in future reports include details of properties that have not had a service within the last 12 months.

## **27 SICKNESS ABSENCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

The committee received a report for the period April to June 2012 on the sickness absence levels.

The total sickness absence for the period equates to 3.01 days per person compared to 2.56 days for the same period last year. This equates to a 15% increase in days lost compared to the same period last year.

Short term absence equates to a period of less than 15 working days in duration and long term absence is greater than 15 days in duration. In the period, short term absence was 0.87 days per person and long term 2.14 days. This compares with 1.09 days short term absence and 1.47 days long term absence in the same period last year. This is a 20% decrease in short term absence and 31% increase in long term absence.

In the period, the biggest cause of absence was stress related with 378 days lost. This compares to 160 days lost in the same period last year and 103 in 2010.

Of the 378 days of stress related illness, 69% was related to stress in an employee's personal life, the remaining 31% was recorded as work related. 93% of stress related absence for the same period last year was of a long term nature.

It is often difficult to control outside stressors, however the company has developed a programme of wellbeing training for employees and managers that will equip employees and managers with the skills, knowledge, behaviours and ownership to improve attendance and performance. The company continues to investigate initiatives that will help it to better understand the causes of depression, anxiety and stress.

The company has held 12 sickness absence review meetings (short term) and five sickness absence review meetings (long term) in the period. No cautions have been issued in the five cases.

Details of work life balance applications, investigatory and disciplinary, grievances, bullying and harassment allegations and Whistleblowing during the period were reported.

Details of the learning and development activities during the period and planned activities were also reported.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

## **28 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE**

The committee receive an update on health and safety activities for the period April to June 2012.

A number of policy reviews were concluded during the period but no gaps in policy or significant changes have been identified.

MEARS health and safety processes and safe systems of work were reviewed prior to the repairs contract starting and found to be suitable and sufficient. The key area of working currently being reviewed is management of asbestos.

Details of reported accidents and verbal abuse/threats to staff were reported.

The Health and Safety Team have been commended by the Health and Safety Executive on its approach and support given to the investigation following the significant gas explosion at Marion Court which resulted in one of the bungalows being completely destroyed and extensive damage to the neighbouring bungalows.

During the period, requests were made for asbestos surveys to support a number of different areas of work within the company. The Keystone Asbestos Asset Database live is now completed and will be used as the main point of reference for all asbestos information.

Discussions have taken place with LES to ensure that there is clarity and a shared understanding about how asbestos information can be accessed. In addition, asbestos registers that are located in all non-domestic areas of residential blocks are being reviewed.

Fire safety improvement works are continuing to multi-storey blocks and the company is on target to achieve the Fire Service's December 2012 deadline for all 28 blocks. In addition, a bespoke sprinkler solution is being tendered for Regent Court.

Through the insurance inspections, two immediate actions were identified during the period with timescales for remediation action to a lift at Adelaide Court and at Brisbane Court which will be picked up as part of the lift refurbishment programme.

RESOLVED – (i) That the information be noted.

- (ii) That the Board be advised that the committee felt that ways of making contents insurance compulsory should be explored.

## **29 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY – UPDATE**

The committee received an update on equality and diversity work during the first quarter 2012/13.

The company has continued to raise awareness of its Single Equality Scheme and what its commitments are to ensure it is improving equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination for both customers and employees.

The company is continually working to ensure its procurement practices reflect its commitment to equality and diversity.

The company plays an active role in a range of partnerships to ensure its practices in relation to delivering housing management services reflect its commitment and that it also contributes to tackling inequality in the community as a whole. This has included supporting the Council's 'Gateshead Together Week' and national Refugee Week.

The company continues to use existing methods available to collect and update information it holds on tenants and leaseholders. During the quarter, customers' records were updated on around 1,718 occasions. The company has also collected 22.81% of sexuality information and 25.18% of religion.

The company continues to look at ways of ensuring it is an inclusive employer and most recently signed up to the 'Gateshead Carer Friendly Employer Charter' at an event hosted by the company during National Carer's Week.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

## **30 2011/12 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE – END OF YEAR REPORT**

The committee was informed of the work undertaken by the Internal Audit Service for 2011/12 and received an overall assessment of the adequacy of the company's internal control systems based on this work.

The position as at 31 March 2012, showed the completion of 109% of the audit plan, in terms of actual audit hours against planned hours (94% for 2010/11).

The 2011/12 Internal Audit Plan agreed 26 audits to be carried out in the year. All audits have now been completed with the exception of one which was deferred until 2012/13.

The Chief Internal Auditor has in place a quality review process and the only issues raised by the reviews related to minor administrative procedures and training has taken place to address these.

Based on evidence arising from the internal audit activity during 2011/12, the opinion of the Chief Internal Auditor is that the company's internal control systems are considered to be effective.

For 2011/12, 23 audits (96%) concluded that systems and procedures in place were operating well or satisfactory and only one audit area (4%) was found to contain significant weaknesses.

All audit recommendations will be followed up by internal audit in line with approved timescales based on an assessment of risk. For those audits with significant weaknesses this will be within the next twelve months.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

### **31 2012/13 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE – PROGRESS REPORT**

Progress made by the Internal Audit Service against the audit plan for the financial year 2012/13 was reported. As at 30 June 2012, one draft report had been issued and a further five audits were currently in progress. 23% of the audit plan in terms of actual audit days against planned days were achieved by the Internal Audit Service.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

### **32 FORWARD PLAN**

A forward plan of reports that will be presented to meetings of this committee during the next year was submitted.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

### **33 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with the indicated categories of the company's Access to Information Rules.



## Report to Resources and Audit Committee

30 October 2012

**Title:** Operational Risk Register – Customers and Communities

**Report of:** Acting Chief Executive

### Purpose of Report

1. To agree an updated Operational Risk Register for the Customers and Communities Directorate.

### Background

2. The Board has previously approved an updated Risk Management Policy and one of the requirements within the Policy is that this committee will scrutinise an operational risk register for a directorate at each meeting as well as any critical/high risks that require any attention. The committee will also recommend to the Board any risks to be escalated to the strategic risk register.
3. The committee agreed, at its meeting held on 27 October 2011, an updated operational risk register based around the two broad areas of the new organisation structure: -
  - Corporate Services
  - Customers and Communities.
4. The committee also agreed that given how low they were, the green risks be removed from the register and monitored internally. Should the score increase for any of these risks in the future, they would go back on the register and be reported to committee.

### Operational Risks

5. Operational risks are those which are encountered during the day to day running of the company.
6. The following four scale matrix has been used for impact and likelihood: -

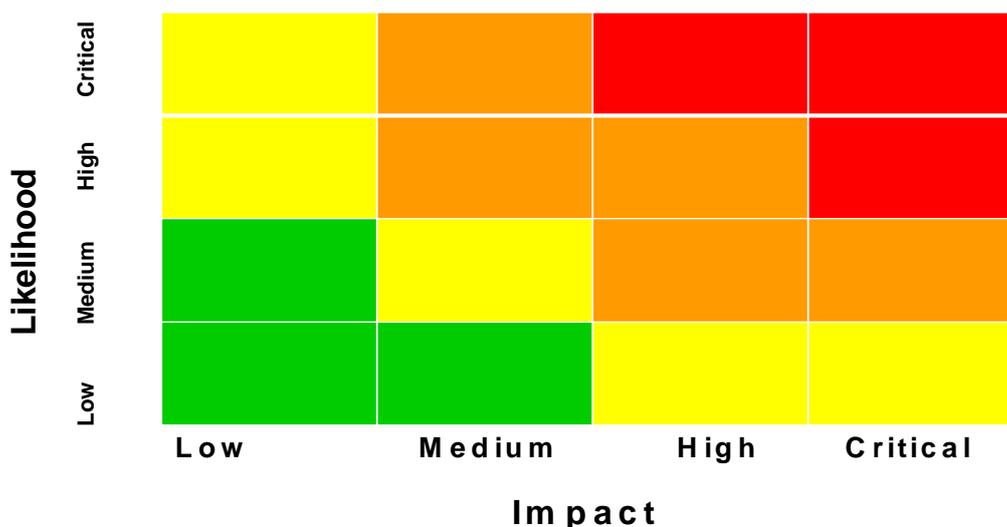
### Likelihood

Scoring	Definition	Timing of occurrence
4	Almost certain	Less than 3 months
3	Likely	3 – 6 months
2	Moderate	6 – 12 months
1	Unlikely	In excess of 12 months

### Impact

Scoring	Definition	Example of impact
4	Critical	Total service loss for significant period Fatality Financial loss over £200,000 Government / Council intervention
3	High	Significant service disruption Major/disabling injury Financial loss over £50,000 Adverse national media coverage
2	Medium	Service disruption Loss time injury Financial loss over £25,000 Adverse local media coverage / lots of service user complaints
1	Low	Minor service disruption / short term inconvenience Minor injury Financial loss under £25,000 Isolated service user complaints

7. The following four scale matrix demonstrates how the risks will be assessed using a traffic light system: -



### Operational Risk Register

8. The Operational Risk Register for the Customers and Communities Directorate has been reviewed and an updated Register is attached at the Appendix to this report. Any changes to the register are highlighted in red.

9. A number of future actions have been implemented and these are now identified as controls within the register. In addition, some new further actions have been identified for some of the risks. These are also highlighted in red.
10. The following new risks have been identified within tenancy and estate management: -
  - Failure to tackle anti-social behaviour cases effectively
  - Reduction or removal of partnership work placements from ASB cases

#### **Link to Values**

11. This report links to the following company values: -
  - Being a listening and learning organisation
  - Being honest, accountable and transparent
  - Being motivated, trained and committed
  - Being customer focused, innovative and professional

#### **Risk Management Implications**

15. The risk management implications are identified throughout this report.

#### **Financial Implications**

16. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

17. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

#### **Health Implications**

18. Although there are no health implications directly arising from this report, the successful implementation of the recommendations will have a positive impact on the health and well being of Gateshead residents.

#### **Environmental Implications**

19. There are no environmental implications directly arising from this report.

#### **Value for Money Implications**

20. There are no value for money implications directly arising from this report.

#### **Consultation carried out**

21. The Risk Management Group have scrutinised the risks in detail before presenting the updated register for the Customers and Communities Directorate to the committee for approval.

### **Impact on Customers**

22. An effective risk management process will maintain the delivery of services to customers.

### **Recommendation**

23. The committee is recommended to approve the updated operational risk register for the Customers and Communities Directorate.

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Contact: Stuart Gibson, Governance and Risk Officer

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## Customers and Communities Operational Risk Register

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
	<b>VOIDS</b>						
VO1	<p><b>Not achieving the agreed Lettable Standard for voids (safe, secure, clean, in good condition). Or – not achieving in required timescale.</b></p> <p>Impact on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer satisfaction</li> <li>• Customer safety (injury could lead to a claim)</li> <li>• Offer refusals / increased void rent loss / increased relet period</li> </ul>	<p>Safe to view procedure / Lettable Standard training / 'Check and Test' final inspection.</p> <p>Weekly <b>update</b>/operational meetings with Contractor. <b>Including weekly fails discussed with Mears and Void Officers.</b></p> <p>Monthly performance review meetings, <b>including fail trends.</b></p> <p>Satisfaction monitoring</p> <p>Monthly budget monitoring / monitoring level of work requests compared to notional programme for annual budget</p>	2	2	Phil Hogg	<p>Letting standard satisfaction year end results</p> <p>Relet performance year end results</p> <p>Relet budget monthly meeting</p>	<p><b>April 2013</b></p> <p><b>April 2013</b></p> <p><b>Ongoing monthly</b></p>

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
		Joint training with new contractor MEARS on lettable standard					
VO2	<b>Vandalism / damage to void properties</b> leading to additional expenditure, and damaging the reputation of an estate.  Risk includes damage to properties held for options appraisal or awaiting demolition	“Security matrix” showing for every street if security would be needed – and what type (Reviewed April 2012 at Repairs Tender Stage)  Void Security management brought in house for closer monitoring  Demolition properties: – decommissioning process, including drain down of heating system, removal of meters.	2	2	Phil Hogg	Matrix reviewed annually	April 2013
<b>LETTINGS</b>							
LE1	<b>Reduced availability of properties</b> due to property demolition and increased numbers on Housing Register.  (Including risk of not achieving timescales for tenant rehousing in clearance areas)	Chandless Demolition  Clasper Village demolition  Bleach Green demolition  Monthly monitoring of housing register / lettings and priority ratios.	4 3	2	Jackie Armstrong	Complete rehousing of Chandless tenants  Complete rehousing of Clasper Village tenants  Bleach Green – complete rehousing of phases 1 & 2, and any further phases to be agreed by Council Monthly information supplied to council on lettings by category /	Throughout 2012/13  Throughout 2013  Throughout 2013  Next meeting 11/05/12

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
		<p>'Best use of stock' (under-occupation incentive) to help free up properties</p> <p>Annual lettings activity report to committee (summarises demand, supply, best use of stock)</p> <p>Quarter HomeChoice Board Meeting with Council</p>				<p><del>property type reported to Housing Services to inform any review of ratios. Report also covers numbers / categories on Housing Register. (Monitoring of this information included on agenda of quarterly HomeChoice meeting with council.)</del></p> <p>2012/13 lettings activity report</p>	Jun/July 2013
LE2	<b>Potential loss of functionality and ability to cross reference data due to change to a sub-regional lettings scheme across Tyne and Wear</b> , with a new (Abritas) IT system to manage lettings that is separate from our Northgate Housing IT system	<p>As part of the sub-regional scheme development a system of daily data transfers will be implemented using NDL Metascybe software to create and update records in Northgate – and therefore maintain essential data in Northgate</p> <p>Tyne and Wear Homes – went live September 2012</p>	2	2	Jackie Armstrong	<p>Abritas Choice Based Lettings system implementation</p> <p>Development and implementation of data transfers with NDL Metascybe software</p>	<p><del>Final testing of Abritas system Mar 2012. Data Issues raised with Abritas about 3 files that form the daily feed – to be resolved before system goes live (proposed end May 2012)</del></p> <p>Tyne &amp; Wear Homes live, but work on automatic transfers still being developed by ICT</p>
LE3	<b>Loss of / damage to furniture packages by tenants</b> Leading to additional	<p>Recharges</p> <p>Programme of Home Visits to furnished</p>	2	2	Jackie Armstrong	<p><del>Annual Review of furnished Service</del></p> <p>Service to be reviewed in light of</p>	<p><del>End year 2011/12</del></p> <p>2013</p>

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
	expenditure and efforts to recover from tenant	tenancies End year review  Annual Review of furnished service				welfare reforms, and new tender to be drawn up.	
	<b>RENT &amp; INCOME</b>						
RI1	<b>Reduction in customers' Housing Benefit entitlement due to government reforms</b> – may lead to increase in arrears  (Links to Strategic Risk around failure to maximise rental income via Financial Inclusion initiatives)	Analysis of impact carried out and reported to Board Sept 2011 and updated Jan 2012  Arrears prevention / income maximisation advice  Programme of information to customers on impact of welfare reform	3 4	3	Kevin Johnson	All tenants (c 3,000) who would be affected by Bedroom Tax if it were already in place will receive a joint letter from Gateshead Council Benefits and from TGHC advising of the impact for them.  A programme of visits and contacts to those affected (to discuss options) will then take place	Nov 2012      By March 2013
	<b>IMPROVEMENT TEAM</b>						
IM1	<b>Risk of complaints not being managed and used effectively</b> – leading to reduced satisfaction and missed opportunities to learn and improve services	Management of complaints IT system with prompts to respond  Complaint timescale monitoring and monthly reporting  Bi-monthly meetings of Complaints Panel to review performance and	2	2	Andrea Foreman	Monthly complaint monitoring and reporting  Review of complaints process in Mears	Monthly throughout 2012/13  October 2012

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
		learning  Ongoing surveys are conducted with customers to establish satisfaction with complaint handling					
IM2	<b>Risk of not achieving service standards</b> - leading to reduced satisfaction	Knowledge of standards - "A guide to the service you can expect from."  Quarterly performance reports for service standard indicators  Service Standards reviewed for 2012/13 Annual report to tenants	2	2	Kevin Johnson	Year end Performance Report to Board  Annual Report to Tenants	May 2013  October 2012
IM3	<b>Risk of not maximising use of customer data</b> - leading to missed opportunities to provide efficient, customer focused services.	Northgate housing system contains unique person record for all customers which is linked to all areas of service.  New version of Northgate (v6) brings relevant customer data together on a front screen	2	2	Kevin Johnson	<del>Working Group on Northgate data – first meeting</del>  Rollout of Northgate v6  Training on Customer data	<del>17 April 2012</del>  All users – Mar 13  " "

## Customers and Communities - Gas Servicing Operational Risk Register

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
GS1	<p><b>Customers sleeping temporary/permanent in a room with a open flued gas appliance, including overcrowded property</b></p> <p>Fatality due to Carbon Monoxide Poisoning incident. Spillage of fumes in domestic properties while sleeping in the same room as the gas appliance</p>	<p>TGHC GAS SAFE Registered</p> <p>Risk Assessed Procedure initiated Carbon Monoxide detector Every three month a gas service is initiated</p> <p>Records/Data kept. All contractors are GAS SAFE competent registered</p> <p>All contractors and employees are checked for registration annually. Raise Awareness to employees, contractors and customers e.g. Press, company magazines etc. Work Closely with general hospitals/care workers/social services</p>	2	4	Gary Stirling	<p>Raise Awareness of risk to customers.</p> <p>Working with family relatives social services, local hospitals, care workers, Raising awareness through customer forums</p> <p>Monitor Regulations for any changes</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Review January 2013</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
GS2	<p><b>Failure to comply with gas safety legislation and</b></p>	<p>Gas safety policy with employees briefing to</p>	2	4	Gary Stirling	<p>Monitor Regulations for any changes</p>	Ongoing

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
	<p><b>regulation in non-residential buildings</b> This will result in exposure to dangerous conditions which may lead to fatality, loss of company reputation and insurance claims</p>	<p>communicate changes. Register of trained engineers renewal of registration</p> <p>Audit checks for compliance. Reported accidents investigated. All properties inspected to gas SAFE standards</p> <p>Court injunctions for the hard to reach residents</p> <p>Dangerous appliances isolated and meter capped in all instances</p> <p>Liaising with Carers and other agencies for access to the properties as required from a care plan assessment</p>					
GS3	<p><b>Non-compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 for all flues to</b></p>	<p>All pre-assembled concealed flues in voids risk assessed during a gas repair, service or survey</p>	2	4	Gary Stirling	<p>Tender to renew new boilers where flue access is denied</p> <p>Maintenance and surveys through risk assessments</p>	<p>To be completed by end 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
	<p><b>be suitable for the appliance concerned and to be in a proper condition for the safe operation of the appliance by 31 December 2012</b></p> <p>resulting spillage of fumes from gas appliance due to concealed flue pipe and a potential fatality due to carbon monoxide poisoning</p>	<p>Risk assessed as per new gas regulations to determine if flue pipe is installed and connected in a safe manner</p> <p>Void structure has access panels fitted for inspection of gas appoint flue joints</p> <p>If panels are not viable, the flue must be repositioned to allow access for inspection</p> <p>If flue is not repositioned, gas boiler and flue are repositioned or renewed to give access to flue connections</p>				<p>Inspections to install access panels</p> <p>Gas boilers which fail risk assessment to be classed as 'AT RISK' and to be replaced / renewed to new gas regulations</p> <p>Asset Management to initiate contract to change all "at risk" boilers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>End 2012 If not completed by date, gas appliance will be classed as 'IMMEDIATELY DANGEROUS' and disconnected</p> <p>End December 2012</p>
GS4	<p><b>Fatality due to gas related incidents or Carbon Monoxide Poisoning incidents</b></p> <p>Explosion ignited by gas escapes in properties and surrounding properties</p>	<p>TGHC GAS SAFE Registered</p> <p>Annual gas service initiated</p> <p>HETAS solid fuel registered</p>	1	4	Gary Stirling	<p>Raise awareness of risk to customers through customer forums, local newspapers, company booklets and magazines.</p> <p>Change customer's actions and views to allow us to initiate an annual gas service.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Review January 2013</p>

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
	from installation pipe work, gas appliances and all domestic ancillary gas fittings. Spillage of fumes from solid fuel or gas appliances in domestic properties, including surrounding properties	<p>contractors initiate work</p> <p>Annual solid fuel service initiated. Risk Assessed Procedure for No Access Properties</p> <p>Records/Data kept. Weekly and Monthly performance audits</p> <p>5% of all Gas Servicing Audited. Yearly performance audit initiated for solid fuel appliances</p> <p>All contractors are GAS SAFE competent registered</p> <p>All contractors and employees are checked for registration annually Raise Awareness to employees, contractors and customers e.g. Press, company magazines etc</p> <p>Carbon Monoxide detectors installed to 98% of Council</p>				<p>Initiate zero tolerance to no access. Manage risk in accordance with Best Practice. Continue to install Carbon Monoxide detectors to remaining high risk gas appliances of Council properties. Continue with programmed replacement of open flued boilers. A programme of works to change all existing solid fuel appliances to Gas appliances</p> <p>Continue to install Carbon Monoxide detectors to remaining high risk gas appliances of Council properties.</p> <p>Change out of date detectors to high risk boilers only, best practice and VFM</p>	<p>Review Jan 2013</p> <p>Review Jan 2013</p>

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
		properties with gas appliances. Carbon Monoxide detectors installed to all properties with solid fuel appliances installed					

## Customers and Communities – Improvement Works Operational Risk Register

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
IW2	<b>Injury / fatality to public</b> – potential litigation, HSE investigation and criminal investigation.	Health & Safety plan in place for every site  Method statements for work to mitigate risk to public  Regular site inspections by partner and TGHC	1	4	Jim Charlton	Adequate controls in place.	
IW3	<b>Increase in complaints from customers, Councillors and other stake holders</b> resulting in a loss of confidence / public image for TGHC and partners.	Targeted <del>70%</del> 85% satisfaction survey <del>returns</del>  Quarterly performance reporting  Dissatisfaction Survey to explore negative feedback  Early intervention and discussion with partner	2	2	Carole Nicholson	Learn from satisfaction /dissatisfaction and implement changes to improve future delivery	Ongoing

## Customers and Communities – Repairs Operational Risk Register

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
RE1	<b>Inclement weather</b> resulting in increased property defects and delay in delivering reported repairs – repair costs / customer dissatisfaction / litigation and associated costs (S 11 Cases) / poor KPI performance	<p>Winter contingency plan now a formal part of Contractors BCP.</p> <p>Staff and contractors have increased awareness and proactively review resources accordingly to meet increased service demand.</p> <p>Specification change implemented for external condensate.</p> <p>Winter working group developed to review plans/controls while also managing working methods during winter periods.</p>	3	2	Russell Urwin	<p>Reassessment of internal / contractors procedures, staffing and contacts in preparation for seasonal change.</p> <p>Ensure winter contingency plan is built into Mears Business Continuity Plan and reviewed annually</p>	<p>September 2013</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
RE2	<b>Overspending repairs budget</b> resulting in an inability to carry out core function - asset degradation / customer dissatisfaction	<p>Live variations process in place. Provides enhanced clarity of works in progress and contract expenditure.</p>	2	4	Russell Urwin	<p>Weekly financial review of orders raised /variations applied to identify patterns.</p>	Ongoing

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
RE3	<b>Inability to manage Cyclical Maintenance</b> Resulting in inability to meet legislative requirements/ inadequate control of contractor outputs and quality/ asset degradation or closure / financial loss.	Principal management undertaken by LES on behalf of client.	3	3	Russell Urwin	Review management arrangements  Development of SLA with LES and other service providers required.  Review of existing management systems and data. Assessment of tendered/non tendered maintenance agreements and warranty availability/requirements.  Introduction of a Cyclical Manager and Electrical Auditor via restructure.	June 2013  June 2013  Ongoing  March 2013
RE4	<b>Unsafe working practices</b> resulting in injury and death of persons - loss of key personnel / litigation and associated costs / negative corporate image	Annual review of H&S risk assessments and method statements for all works and associated activities	1	4	Russell Urwin	Further review of H&S procedures in required in line with appointment of Mears  Additional training and briefs to follow structure changes	June 2013
RE5	<b>Principal contractor liquidation</b> resulting in inability to carry out core function - asset degradation / customer dissatisfaction / litigation and associated costs / negative corporate image / financial loss	Close links with Local Environmental Services will provide a contingency and the use of additional contractors for specialist works to ensure that essential services can be provided Ongoing contract	1	4	Russell Urwin	Development of a company wide approved contractor register in conjunction with Asset and Procurement.	April 2013

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
		register review to identify the extent to which the service could be covered Evaluation of new principal contractor financial management and invoicing procedures					
RE6	<b>Loss of contractor office / depot facilities</b> resulting in inability to carry out core function - asset degradation / customer dissatisfaction / litigation and associated costs / negative corporate image / financial loss	Contractor staff are able to operate from multiple locations therefore ensuring a continuation of service provision.	2	2	Russell Urwin	Development of Mears Business Continuity Plan with regular reviews built in	April 2013 then ongoing
RE7	<b>Financial disputes</b> resulting in escalation of unresolved disputes – litigation and associated costs / negative corporate image	Enhanced contract conditions as part of repairs re-tendering.  Live variations process in place. Provides enhanced clarity of works in progress and contract expenditure.	2	2	Russell Urwin	Monthly financial review meeting with Mears to evaluate variations process.	Ongoing monthly
RE8	<b>Failure to deliver repairs to published standards and timescales</b> resulting in customer	Weekly performance meetings for first 3 months to evaluate Mears' performance.	2	2	Russell Urwin	Scheduled performance meetings and reporting criteria to be developed by Core Group.	Ongoing

<b>Risk No</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Future Actions</b>	<b>Timescale for implementation</b>
	dissatisfaction / negative corporate image	Enhanced performance information available on demand through contractors repairs interface enables closer monitoring.				<p>Review repairs policy with Gateshead Council including changes to repairs Categories agreed by Mears as part of their tender</p> <p>Implement quarterly monitoring for repairs and voids</p>	<p>April 2013</p> <p>April 2013</p>

## Customers and Communities – Tenancy and Estate Management Operational Risk Register

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
TE1	<b>Risk of fires/tripping hazards/safety in communal areas in multi storey accommodation, low rise and sheltered accommodation</b> resulting in risk of injury or fatality to staff and customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi storey check system in place to remove hazards</li> <li>Furniture replacement programme in place to remove non compliant furnishings in sheltered accommodation</li> <li>Fire Safety works programme in progress</li> </ul>	2	4	Julie McCartney	<p>Develop an approach to safety checks in medium and low rise</p> <p>Complete fire safety works in MSB's</p> <p>Develop and complete fire safety work in sheltered schemes</p>	<p>November 2012 January 2013</p> <p>July 2012 March 2013</p> <p>December 2012 March 2013</p>
TE2	<b>Reduced customer satisfaction with living in neighbourhood due to lack of funding for estate &amp; environmental projects</b> resulting in reduced customer satisfaction in neighbourhoods could lead to increase in tenants moving out and reduced demand for properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established partnership arrangements in place</li> <li>Access to funding via community groups in place</li> <li>EO toolkit outlining current resources available to maximise implementation of schemes.</li> <li>Neighbourhood Pride budget allocated and schemes in development</li> </ul>	3	2	Neighbourhood Services Managers	Explore & Identify other external funding resources	Ongoing
TE3	<b>Grounds Maintenance Service not delivered to agreed published standards</b> resulting in customer and councillor satisfaction with neighbourhoods and reduced demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint working arrangements established and in place</li> <li>Monthly and quarterly</li> </ul>	2	2	Julie McCartney	Annual review of Grounds Maintenance Service Agreement with customer	June 2013

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
	for homes due to visual look of estates	performance monitoring meetings held with customers and partners to scrutinise performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual review of Service Agreement with customer involvement is undertaken</li> </ul>				involvement  Update customers on revised service standards	June 2013
TE4	<b>Not reporting Safeguarding Adult or Children issues</b> resulting in risk of serious injury or fatality to a child or adult and potential risk of legal challenge if we are found to be at fault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy and procedures in place &amp; reviewed annually</li> <li>Staff training is reviewed annually &amp; refreshed every 3 years through appraisals</li> <li>Referrals and cases are monitored through NRT</li> <li>Training is provided through multi agency Safeguarding Boards &amp; through TGHC</li> <li>Specialist housing safeguarding children training for company held Jan-March 2011 &amp; has been included in annual training directory</li> </ul>	1	4	Deborah Ewart	Develop safeguarding briefing for new Repairs contractor  <del>Mears to rollout safeguarding training by end of June 2012</del>  Safeguarding alerter training rolled out to staff  Develop Safeguarding Adults procedure	March 2013  <del>30 June 2012</del>  <del>September 2012</del> Ongoing  January 2013

Risk No	Risk	Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Owner	Future Actions	Timescale for implementation
TE5	<b>Failure to tackle anti-social behaviour cases effectively</b> resulting in reduced customer satisfaction, impact to community and risk to reputation if issues are not effectively resolved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer Estates agreement in place</li> <li>• Training for staff; procedure and policy guidance in place</li> <li>• Attendance by NRT at MAPPA and multi agency meetings</li> <li>• ASB procedures reviewed annually and updated training carried out</li> <li>• RESPECT scrutinised by TALISMAN</li> <li>• Anti-social behaviour internal audit</li> </ul>	2	2	Deborah Ewart	Delivery of RESPECT Action Plan	March 2013
TE6	<b>Reduction or removal of partnership work placements from ASB services</b> resulting in lack of multi agency specialist services leading to less support for customers and cases taking longer to resolve. In turn will impact on customer satisfaction and performance reducing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular partnership meetings and protocols in place</li> </ul>	2	2	Deborah Ewart	Discuss replacement Menial Health Worker with PCT	December 2012



## Report to Resources and Audit Committee

30 October 2012

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**Title:** Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2011/12

**Report of:** Acting Chief Executive

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To provide the committee with a draft of the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2011/12 for approval.

### **Background**

2. Equality and diversity is at the heart of everything the company does, as highlighted in the company value of 'Embracing Equality'.
3. The company's Single Equality Scheme brings together all areas of our approach to Equality and Diversity in one document, providing a clear outline for all employees, customers and Board Members.
4. The company has produced a report annually providing a public account of how we are progressing equality and diversity in relation to tenants, leaseholders, employees and stakeholders.

### **Summary**

5. The report covers the financial year 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 and is attached at the appendix to this report. This sets out a number of areas: -
  - Highlights from 2011/12
  - Key information on the legislation and regulation on equality and diversity which affects the company
  - How we have progressed during the year against the three goals set out in the Single Equality Scheme
  - Performance framework providing details of the customer profile, customer satisfaction and employee information.
  - Focus for 2012/13
6. Subject to approval of the draft report at this committee, it will then be designed and made available on our website and on request.

## **Link to values**

7. This report relates to the following company values: -
- Being a listening and learning organisation
  - Being motivated, trained, and committed
  - Being customer focused, innovative and professional
  - Caring and respecting
  - Embracing equality
  - A commitment to all our employees.

## **Impact on tenants**

8. Equality legislation expects public organisations to ensure that tenants have access to clear and transparent information to understand how we are working to progress equality. This report provides supplementary information to what has been provided to all tenants and leaseholders via the Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders, issued in October 2012.
9. Through access to clear information, tenants are able to hold us to account and challenge us where appropriate to improve services.

## **Risk Management Implications**

10. Not meeting the requirements of current and new diversity legislation has been identified as an operational risk for the company, which if breached could lead to significant financial loss and risk of reputation.
11. The annual report fulfils the requirements of the specific duties contained within the Equality Act to provide certain equality information to demonstrate that organisations have complied with the general duty. Although as an arms length management organisation, the company is not considered a listed body, it is considered good practice for us to follow these principles.

## **Financial Implications**

12. The Acting Chief Executive confirms that any costs arising from this report can be met from existing budgets. There is an allocated budget to progress equality and diversity work within the company. Any future financial implications will be reported to this committee.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

13. The Single Equality Scheme provides a focus for our approach to being an equal opportunities employer and service provider, promoting equality in relation to access to goods, facilities and services and helping us to ensure that no individual or group experiences direct or indirect discrimination. The annual report sets out how we are currently achieving this and how we plan to progress it in the future.

## **Value for Money Implications**

14. The actions outlined in this report help us to understand the specific needs of

our customers and employees and respond accordingly. This results in value for money savings by getting things right at the outset rather than having to amend or correct service provision in the future.

15. With specific reference to this report, it is proposed that rather than printing a stock of copies, it is made available via our website and then printed on request.

### **Health Implications**

16. The annual report outlines highlights the wellbeing initiatives the company has embarked on during 2011/12 for employees. It also identifies the activities of the partnership officers specifically supporting customers with alcohol and mental health needs.

### **Environmental Implications**

17. There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report, although it is proposed to prevent wastage, the report will be promoted and made available on the website and printed by request.

### **Consultation carried out**

18. The draft of this report will have been reviewed by operational managers within the company. It will also be reviewed by the Involvement Service Improvement group prior to being formally designed and published.

### **Recommendation**

19. The committee is recommended to approve the draft Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2011/12.

## Foreword

Welcome to the Equality and Diversity report for 2011/2012. This year we have continued to put our company value of 'Embracing Equality' at the heart of what we do.

This report will talk about some of the actions we have been taking this year to progress our equality priorities. These will show how we have focussed on working with our partners on some key objectives in our communities as well as undertaking a number of initiatives to improve the wellbeing of our employees.

This is not something that is new to the housing company; for a number of years now we have been working to deliver services tailored to our customers needs, and to create a workplace where employees are valued and supported to deliver excellent services to our tenants and leaseholders.

This year there has been some wider concern that due to changes in regulation, equality may take a back seat or may not get the focus it has previously received. However our perspective on this is clear, equality is not just a legislative requirement, or something we have a moral reason to take seriously; it also makes good business sense. If we can create a workplace where people are treated fairly and feel supported in their work, they will perform better. If we deliver services based on what our customers need and in a way which creates fair access to them then they will be more satisfied.

Last year we told you about some of the actions we had already put into place to make sure we met the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. We have continued our focus in this area and will talk about some of the work we have been doing, in particular in relation the Public Sector Equality Duty launched during this year.

This report is an opportunity to show what we have achieved and also to highlight some of the things we will be focussing on for the next year.

**Jon Mallen Beadle – Acting Chief Executive**

## Introduction

Equality is at the heart of the way our organisation operates in policy making, governance, service delivery and employment practices.

Our Single Equality Scheme, which was developed with customers, employees, partners and stakeholders, sets out our overall approach to equality. This scheme brought together everything we were previously doing to promote equality, whilst also recognising that there were other groups or people who we needed to consider, who might not previously have been recognised by our equality schemes.

Since the scheme was first introduced in 2009, there has been an action plan associated with the scheme ensuring that some key tasks and activities take place to meet our priorities for equality. This was reviewed annually and new actions developed as priorities changed or emerged. However the fundamental objectives remain the same and are as follows:

- Maintain a corporate commitment to equality issues
- Work in partnership with customers and stakeholders to deliver equitable services and improve social cohesion in the borough

- Be an equal opportunities employer with a workforce that represents the community it serves and is committed to equality and diversity.

Our Resources and Audit Committee have responsibility for making sure that we are meeting our equality requirements. Reports are taken to each meeting of the committee to demonstrate our work and identify where our areas for improvement are. This helps committee members to monitor, challenge our approach and drive us to continually improve.

We were pleased to win the National TPAS Award for Equality and Diversity for our scheme and our associated work as this recognises the efforts we continue to make in this area.

## **Legislation and Regulation**

### **Equality Act**

Last year's report provided an update on the introduction of the Equality Act in October 2010, strengthening and simplify existing legislation to protect individuals from unfair treatment and create a fairer, more equal society.

The act set out a number of 'protected characteristics' afforded protection from discrimination which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civic Partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

We consider these protected characteristics as part of our equality impact assessments, whenever we are introducing a new policy or proposing a change to the way we deliver a service. This helps us to identify and minimise any potential impact and put any necessary actions in place. The assessment prompts the service manager to consider whether the policy or decision contributes to any of the three requirements of the General Duty of the Public Sector Equality Duty which are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### **Example: Felling Housing Office**

In 2011, due to large scale redevelopment of Felling town centre, the building within which the local housing office was situated was due to close. As part of this process an equality impact assessment was carried out to understand the potential impact on different groups of both the housing office closure itself and the consultation process about how a housing service should be provided in Felling after this time. The assessment considered the profile of the customers currently accessing the office and their reasons for doing this, as well as their location and proximity to other offices. As a result of the assessment and consultation with tenants and leaseholders a number of arrangements were put in place for when the original office closed. This includes delivering housing service activity through surgeries at Felling's Children's Centre, providing a freephone service within the reception area and provision of interview rooms within the centre to offer appointments with officers as well as implementing a communications plan to make customers aware of the changes and how they can access the service now.

Following the opening of the new office, a monitoring exercise is underway for 6 months to assess the impact of the new approach to service delivery, including types of enquiries made and by which method, profile of customers accessing the service and the impact on payment patterns.

### **Tenant Services Authority (TSA) Regulatory Framework**

2011/12 was the last year of the Tenant Services Authority acting as the Social Housing Regulator in England. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012, the Homes and Communities Agency took over this role implementing a revised regulatory framework.

This framework continues to place an expectation on landlords to understand and respond to the diverse needs of tenants, specifically requiring that we:

- treat all tenants with fairness and respect
- demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs

Under the previous framework and in the revised one, there is a requirement for landlords to produce an Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders setting out how we meet the required standards. The third report was produced and distributed to all tenants and leaseholders in October 2012.

### **What happened in 2011/12?**

**April** – Issued prepopulated customer profile forms to tenants and leaseholders to check and update the information currently held.

**June** – Achieved Investors in People Gold Status and the Health and Wellbeing Award.

**July** – We were successful in winning the TPAS National Award for Equality and Diversity

**August** – Attended the Older Persons Assembly Information and Advice Day in Felling

**September** – Recruited members to the TALISMAN panel to provide tenants and leaseholders the opportunity to scrutinise our services

**October** – Our partnership officers supported events for Alcohol Awareness Week and Mental Health Awareness Week.

**November** – Employees were invited to complete a staff survey as part of the company's first entry into The Sunday Times Best Companies accreditation. The organisation was placed in the category of 'One to Watch'

**December** – Through our partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau we delivered 'How to Manage your Money' supporting tenants on budgeting, benefits entitlement and maximising their income.

**January** – We issued our Money Matters guide to all tenants and leaseholders including information about welfare reform, downsizing, debt advice, budgeting, jobs and training.

**February** - We supported a Polish event held in Gateshead to inform and engage with the Polish community on a range of issues including rehousing.

**March** – We were successfully reaccredited in Customer Service Excellence highlighting strengths in our customer insight work and our preparation and identification of the potential impact of welfare reforms for our more vulnerable tenants and leaseholders

## **How are we doing?**

The next sections of this report show the work we have been carrying out and how this fits with progressing our three overarching goals.

## **Maintain a corporate commitment to equality issues**

We know that we need to maintain a commitment and send clear messages from the top to ensure that equality remains at the heart of how we deliver services.

Our Board play a key role in ensuring that we fulfil our responsibilities with every report being presented including any equality implications. The Resources and Audit Committee receive a report at each meeting which informs them of our progress on our equality priorities and agree any associated action plans.

### **LGBT Equality**

The external review of Equality and Diversity carried out in 2010 identified Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) equality as an area of improvement for the company, suggesting that we needed to have an ongoing plan in this area rather than ad hoc events. In response to this in 2011 we signed up to be Stonewall Diversity Champions for the second year and entered the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index for the second year. We increased our performance from a score of 79 out of 200 in 2011 to 89 out of 200 in 2012. We also increased our placing from being 299 out of 378, to 212 out of 363. This demonstrated the impact of some of the small steps we had taken to create a more LGBT inclusive workplace such as including information in HomeWork, supporting local events and carrying out LGBT specific training for some employees. We are continuing with this into 2012/13 with plans to provide some awareness raising for all employees on LGBT awareness as both an employer and service provider.

### **Leadership**

Another area identified in the 2010 report was the need to reinforce the clear leadership and direction on equality and diversity within the company and make sure all employees know who to contact for support and guidance. To do this we have included equality information in each edition of the Homework magazine which reaches all employees. These articles gave information on a range of issues including the importance of collecting customer profile info, our support of Northern Pride and provision of the Multi-faith calendar for employees.

### **Work placement programme**

The company has recently supported three people on work placements. The aim of the programme is to increase the transferable skills of individuals who are under-represented in our workforce, help people gain experience of a working

environment, increase confidence and provide a valuable learning opportunity for the housing company. Placements have taken place in our Human Resources, Involvement and Housing Management teams. One person has already gained paid employment as a result of the experience they have obtained working in the company.

### **Working with contractors**

We have recognised that whilst we are clear on our remit and focus on equality and diversity, we have a number of contractors working directly with our customers on our behalf. In particular, any organisation undertaking public functions is required to demonstrate how they meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. We ensure that when tendering for any works, there are specific equality and diversity questions to ensure that the organisations who will potentially work for us meet their legislative requirements and train their employees to understand what is expected of them. These sections of the Pre-qualification questionnaire are scored on a pass/fail basis. This means that if any organisation fails to meet the requirements then they would not be invited to take part in the tendering stage of the process.

#### **Example: Repairs and Maintenance Retender**

In the last year Gateshead Council and the housing company worked together to procure a contractor to deliver the repairs and maintenance service from April 2012. As part of this process a working group of tenants, leaseholders and front line officers were involved in the retender. This included visiting different organisations to see how their contracts were delivered, preparing customer service questions for the PQQ and tender documents, assessing responses and being part of the interview panel for the final tendees.

Specifically organisations were required to demonstrate how they would respond and tailor their services to the different needs of our tenants and leaseholders and how they would ensure that their employees were fully trained to understand and deliver the service.

This process led to the appointment of Mears who began delivering the service from 1 April 2012.

Further to our work at the commissioning stage, we continue to send clear messages to potential contractors through supporting local events such as the Equality North East Annual Awards. These awards recognise the work carried out by organisations across the North East to promote equality and diversity either as employers or service providers. In 2011, the company co-sponsored the Equality and Diversity in the Housing Sector award and Millbank Architects were successful in winning this award for their work with the housing company to improve areas and communities such as High Lanes.

## **Involvement, partnership and access**

### **Knowing our customers**

We know that having up to date information about our customers helps us to make sure we are providing the right services in the most appropriate way for our tenants and leaseholders.

We have continued to collect and update this information in 2011/12 to expand the information we hold. In order to make sure that there continues to be a continued focus on collection of customer information, this is one of our Key Performance Indicators.

The information people provide is used in different ways from being able to contact a customer specifically in their preferred method such as telephone or email, or to monitor trends in satisfaction or service take up and help us identify where we need to target our resources.

At the end of this year (31 March 2012), we knew that we had 20308 tenancies with:

- 514 tenants being BME, with the majority being Black African.
- 5689 tenants declaring they had a disability, with the highest proportion being mobility issues and people identifying they have a mental health disability.
- 810 tenants were under 25.
- 3542 tenants were over the age of 75.
- 4681 tenants had told us their faith or religion with the highest proportion being Christian.
- 4372 tenants had declared their sexuality with 78 stating they were Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual
- 1165 people had stated they require communication with us in a particular format, of which large print is the most common with 840 people requesting this

We will continue to collect and update this information on a regular basis to make sure that we are delivering the services our customers need in the way they require it.

### **Involving customers in shaping and scrutinising our services**

Tenants and leaseholders are central to decision making within the organisation and in 2011/12 we reviewed and republished our Guide to Getting Involved setting out the range of ways people can get involved.

One of our service standards for involvement is to work to ensure that our involved customers represent the communities we serve. Our Disabled Persons Housing Forum and BME Housing Forum provide regular opportunities for customers to discuss the issues affecting them and how they access housing services. In the last year the group have contributed to housing company and council responses to national consultations such as DWP's Fulfilling Potential Disability Strategy. The forums were also involved in developing the new Customer Assessment Tool used where people report incidents of anti-social behaviour to make sure that victims and witnesses receive appropriate and tailored support.

In September 2011, we launched a new opportunity for people to be involved in scrutinising our services through the TALISMAN. This panel of tenant and leaseholders were recruited to carry out scrutiny reviews of our services and make recommendations which they present directly to our Customers and Communities Committee. The group agreed an overall basis for any reviews they will carry out which specifically includes asking if the service is inclusive.

We are also committed to ensuring that our involved customers understand and embrace our values of respecting others, embracing equality and valuing the diversity different people bring. To support this in 2011/12 we delivered the Recognising Differences in People training course to customers covering topics such as the equality act, stereotyping and discrimination. This course supports the principles set out in the ground rules for our involvement activities to ensure that all tenants and leaseholders feel they have the opportunity to take part and contribute to discussions.

## Partnership working

We recognise that we are not able to achieve our goals and objectives for equality and diversity alone and are active members in a range of partnerships. In particular we work closely with Gateshead Council through a range of working groups to align our approaches and activity to support the overall objectives for Gateshead Council's plan Vision 2030.

During 2011/12 the company contributed to the review of Gateshead's Community Cohesion and Community Development Strategy 'Gateshead Together' and supported events as part of Gateshead Together Week in June.

Through our partnering arrangements, this year we have been able to identify customers who require support and have been able to either provide this ourselves or refer them to the relevant service. This included 128 referrals to our Mental Health Link Worker, 65 referrals to the Brief Intervention Alcohol Work and 89 referrals to Victim Support.

The BI Worker has also been involved in delivering a tailored action plan of support in Allerdene to tackle alcohol related disorder including a fortnightly surgery for people to receive support and advice.

In addition to this we actively encourage the reporting of hate crime incidents, where someone perceives the behaviour inflicted on them to be caused because of discrimination due to Race, Sexual Orientation, Disability or Religion. This can include verbal abuse and harassment, graffiti, physical abuse and damage to property. This year employees from the Neighbourhood Relations Team and Housing Offices attended a course called Kick Hate Crime Into Touch which addressed the key types of hate crime, how to investigate claims and build a successful case for court.

All of our housing offices are hate crime reporting centres and we are an active member of the Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring Working Group. This group meets monthly to discuss cases and provide a joined up approach to investigating and responding to hate crime reports. In 2011/12, there were 49 hate crime cases reported and investigated.

### Example: Summer of Fun

In July 2011, the company launched the Summer of Fun competition. This was an opportunity for local community groups to enter a prize draw to win a range of prizes to support their groups ranging from kitchen crockery for luncheon clubs to sports equipment for sports teams.

The aim of the initiative was rather than providing cash to organisations we already do through the Community Fund, to supply some of the smaller items that can make a big difference.

Comments from the groups receiving the items included:

**"The prize has helped out mini-soccer group, aged six to 10 boys and girls. The new equipment has helped our coaches and volunteers to improve sessions, which has attracted new members. This in turn is helping the local community with its fitness and increased confidence."**

**"We are using the vouchers to buy ingredients for our social afternoon. Members will be baking biscuits and scones and will be inviting friends and family to come along."**

**"We used the vouchers to buy biscuits for our more vulnerable members who have limited mobility and were unable to attend our Christmas parties. The small amount left was used to provide refreshments for volunteers. As funding is in short supply it was a great help. Thank you."**

**"We have used the vouchers to buy gardening equipment to tidy the area up."**

## **An equal opportunities employer with a workforce that represents the community it serves and is committed to equality and diversity**

In the last year we have continued to implement a range of initiatives and plans to be a positive employer and support the health and wellbeing of employees.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

In June 2011, we were reassessed for Investors in People and were successful in being in the 1% of organisations in the UK who have achieved the Gold level. Comments from the assessors included:

***"the vast majority of people interviewed were positive and enthusiastic; they demonstrated a genuine understanding of the purpose, aims and objectives of the company and could relate to these without difficulty."***

***"the Company is in the midst of a major restructure and there are lots of uncertainties regarding the future, however, the vast majority of people are happy and enjoy working for the company, believing it to be a good place to work because the people are friendly, supportive and caring."***

At the same time we also achieved the Health and Wellbeing Award with the assessors commenting:

***"The company has a well-established commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of all staff and have a wide range of activities available in the form of employee benefits. The approach to work life balance is to be commended and all employees spoke very positively about the flexible working arrangements and the family friendly policies in place within the Company. There is an established health and wellbeing policy, a working party and resources made available in accordance with the needs of individuals and the company"***

We also carried out a wellbeing project, inviting all employees to undertake a wellbeing questionnaire to understand the wellbeing of our staff and gain a better understanding and management of absence. 243 out of our 353 employees completed this questionnaire and the results have been used to put a wellbeing plan into place. This has included a series of 'Wellbeing at work' sessions being delivered for employees. The sessions covered what is meant by wellbeing, an understanding of what causes people stress, signs and symptoms of poor wellbeing and how to make a plan to combat stress.

### **Training**

Whilst we make sure that all employees understand the overall principles of equality and diversity through our e-learning training programme, we have also provided training or access to events to increase awareness in specific areas including some of those described below.

As part of our ongoing activity to improve LGBT equality this year we delivered a pilot LGBT Awareness course for operational managers provided through Gay Advice Darlington (GADD). This course was aimed at giving employees an understanding of LGBT history, stereotyping, barriers faced by LGBT people as

employees and customers and how to overcome these. Learning from this combined with other engagement with the LGBT community will be used in the new financial year to deliver more awareness raising across the business tailored to case studies and real life experiences.

Representatives from the Rent and Income team attended a 'Mindful Money' event delivered by Washington Mind. This was intended to help officers understand the detrimental impact that debt can have on a person's mental health.

We also worked with Warm Zone to deliver training to 80 employees on fuel poverty, energy efficiency and switching energy provider.

We continue to run an accreditation programme for Recruitment and Selection to ensure that officers involved in this process behave in a fair and open way, following the company's policy. In addition to this, all interview panels continue to have a member of HR present to ensure that recruitment decisions are fair and in line with our policy.

### **What will be our focus in 2012/13?**

There will be a number of challenges for us to face in 2012/13 and we have identified some key actions to be taken this year to help us achieve our priorities. A number of these actions, as set out in our Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders specifically impact on equality and diversity and are set out below:

- Support Safer Gateshead priorities for 2012/13 and further develop our approach to antisocial behaviour in consultation with our customers and partners, delivering on the RESPECT Charter.
- Work in partnership to support Gateshead Council in the delivery of Safeguarding Adult and Children's services, which aims to protect the borough's most vulnerable people.
- Support the delivery of the Gateshead Strategy for Older People.
- Shape services to be in line with self-financing and proposed welfare reforms, so that resources are focused on:
  - Maximising income
  - Preventing arrears
  - Increasing financial inclusion
  - Tackling fuel poverty
  - Preparing and educating employees and customers around the impact of welfare reforms.
- Continue to support our employees' health and wellbeing and ensure that The Gateshead Housing Company is a great place to work.
- Support and embed co-regulation involving customers in looking at the services we provide now and helping us to shape them in the future.

**In addition we have also identified some additional actions we need to take to continue to meet continue to drive equality and diversity forward:**

- **Equality Objectives**

Although not specifically required as an ALMO, we will follow the requirements of the specific duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty and look to introduce some measurable objectives for equality. To decide these we will focus on how we can support the objectives set out by Gateshead Council for the borough as a whole whilst including some which are specific to the company.

- **Keeping Up to Date**

This continues to be a focus to ensure that we have correct and up to date information about our customers. We will continue to collect information about our customers via the 'Tell us about you' forms to make sure that we have the most current details. This helps us not only respond to individuals more effectively but also plan future service provision based on the profile of our customers.

- **Respect and Dignity**

To ensure that we continue to be clear about our values and what is expected from employees, all employees will receive training on dignity and respect.

- **Procurement**

Although we have processes in place through our procurement procedure to ensure that equality and diversity is considered and included as part of any tender process, we also recognise that there is work to be done with our current contractors. We will focus on ensuring our contractors understand the principles of the Equality Act, specifically the Public Sector Equality Duty and what it means for them.

## **Contacts**

For further information please visit: [www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/equality](http://www.gatesheadhousing.co.uk/equality)

If you would like to discuss anything in this document or have an issue relating to our approach to equality and diversity please contact:

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## Performance Framework

### Customer Profile of main tenant as at 31/03/2012

Gender	Total	%
Female	11821	58.21
Male	8487	41.79
<b>Total</b>	<b>20308</b>	

Age	Total	%
No Date of Birth	5	0.02%
16 - 24	810	3.99%
25 - 39	4191	20.64%
40 - 49	3644	17.94%
50 - 59	3333	16.41%
60 - 74	4783	23.55%
75 and over	3542	17.44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20308</b>	

Ethnicity	Total	%
Asian Or Asian British Bangladeshi	12	0.06%
Asian Or Asian British Indian	16	0.08%
Asian Or Asian British Other	99	0.49%
Asian Or Asian British Pakistan	15	0.07%
Black Or Black British African	184	0.91%
Black Or Black British Caribbean	5	0.02%
Black Or Black British Other	30	0.15%
Chinese	18	0.09%
Mixed Other	17	0.08%
Mixed White & Asian	17	0.08%
Mixed White & Black African	9	0.04%
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	4	0.02%
Other	88	0.43%
Refused	16	0.08%
Unknown	33	0.16%
White British	19467	95.86%
White Irish	17	0.08%
White Other	233	1.15%
Blank	28	0.14%
<b>Total BME</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>2.53%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20308</b>	

People of a disability	Total	%
<b>N</b>	14531	71.55%
<b>ND</b>	5	0.02%
<b>R</b>	4	0.02%
<b>Y</b>	5689	28.01%
<b>Unknown</b>	80	0.39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20308</b>	

Special Requirements	Total
3RD_PARTY	22
AUDIO	44
BRAILLE	5
LARGE PRINT	840
LIP READING	6
INTERPRETER OTHER_LANGUAGE	16
BSL INTERPRETER	16
TRANSLATION	19
TYPE TALK	19
<b>Total</b>	

Faith or Religion	Total	%
Blank	15229	74.99%
Buddhist	6	0.03%
Christian	3651	17.98%
Hindu	3	0.01%
Humanist	15	0.07%
Jewish	1	0.00%
Muslim	52	0.26%
No Religion	899	4.43%
Other	216	1.06%
Prefer Not To Say	235	1.16%
Sikh	1	0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20308</b>	

Sexuality	Total	%
Bisexual	34	0.17%
Blank	15305	75.36%
Gay Man	24	0.12%
Gay Woman / Lesbian	20	0.10%
Heterosexual / Straight	4294	21.14%
Prefer Not To Say	631	3.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20308</b>	

Language line calls	Total calls
Albanian	0
Arabic	1
Bengali	0
Cantonese	2
Chinese	0
Czech	8
Farsi	1
French	0
Hindi	0
Korean	0
Kurdish	2
Latvian	1
Lithuanian	1
Mandarin	4
Polish	23
Portuguese	0
Punjabi	0
Russian	3
Serbian	0
Slovak	5
Sorani	0
Somali	0
Spanish	0
Swahili	0
Tamil	0
Thai	0
Tigrinya	5
Turkish	2
Urdu	0

<b>BSL Interpreters</b>	13
<b>Face to Face Interpreters (other language)</b>	9

## Satisfaction in Annual Survey 2012

		Response rate	% of response	Satisfaction with overall services	Satisfaction with neighbourhood	Satisfaction with home	Satisfaction that rent and service charges are VFM	Satisfaction with opportunities to participate	Satisfaction with views are taken into account
	<b>Overall</b>	<b>3341</b>		89.20%	86.60%	87.50%	83.60%	73.10%	73.60%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>White British</b>	<b>3208</b>	<b>96.02%</b>	89.22%	86.92%	87.54%	83.85%	73.12%	73.63%
	<b>White Irish</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.12%</b>	100.00%	75%	100%	75%	75.00%	50.00%
	<b>White Other</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1.11%</b>	77.78%	83.78%	89.19%	81.08%	81.08%	78.38%
	<b>Non BME</b>	<b>3264</b>		88.91%	86.87%	87.57%	83.81%	73.21%	73.65%
	<b>BME</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>2.30%</b>	90.91%	74.03%	84.21%	77.63%	72.37%	72.00%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3341</b>							
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>1640</b>	<b>49.09%</b>	87.98%	85.31%	88.24%	81.97%	71.92%	73.54%
	<b>Female</b>	<b>1701</b>	<b>50.91%</b>	90.31%	87.84%	86.84%	85.20%	74.25%	73.72%
		<b>3341</b>							
<b>Disability</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>37.88%</b>	89.82%	86.97%	89.02%	87.38%	72.87%	75.87%
	<b>No</b>	<b>2038</b>	<b>60.98%</b>	88.82%	86.28%	86.62%	81.33%	73.20%	72.26%
	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1.14%</b>						
		<b>3342</b>							

	<b>under 25</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1.38%</b>	84.78%	73.90%	78.26%	78.26%	63.04%	62.22%
<b>Age</b>	<b>25-39</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>7.81%</b>	85%	74.33%	75%	70.11%	66.67%	58.24%
	<b>40-49</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>12.27%</b>	85.71%	80.24%	79.27%	72.84%	66.50%	65.76%
	<b>50-59</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>14.90%</b>	85.98%	83.20%	83.47%	78.99%	70.12%	69.39%
	<b>60-74</b>	<b>1171</b>	<b>35.04%</b>	91.20%	87.92%	90.57%	86.42%	75.30%	75.93%
	<b>75+</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>28.52%</b>	91.15%	93.45%	93.34%	91.23%	77.11%	81.28%
	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3342</b>						

\*Currently as we hold less than 30% of sexuality and religion information, the satisfaction results have not been broken down by these categories. As we continue to increase the level of information we will break down results.



		% of company employees	% of Board members	% of top five per cent earners	% of new employees	% applications received (external)	% of employees ending their employment
Gender	Male	43.64%	61.54%	70%	23.07%	34.57%	47.17%
	Female	56.36%	38.46%	30%	76.93%	60.29%	52.83%
	Not known					5.14%	
Disability	Yes	11.56%	15.38%	10%	11.54%	7.41%	30.19%
	No	88.44%	84.62%	90%	88.46%	86.63%	69.81%
	Not known					5.96%	
Age	under 25	5.49%		0%	19.23%	22.63%	7.55%
	25-39	45.66%		45%	61.54%	38.07%	20.75%
	40-49	23.41%	23.08%	40%	15.38%	16.46%	7.55%
	50-59	21.39%	30.77%	15%	3.85%	14.40%	30.19%
	60-74	4.05%	46.15%	0	0	1.65%	33.96%
	75+			0	0	0	
	Not Known					6.79%	
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual	0.58%		0		0	
	Gay man	0.29%		0		0	
	Gay woman/lesbian	0.29%		0	3.85%	0	
	Heterosexual/Straight	50.58%		65%	80.77%	0	67.93%
Religion or Belief	Prefer not to say	3.47%		10%	15.38%	0	11.32%
	Not known	44.79%	100%	25%		100%	20.75%
	Buddhist					0	
	Christian	30.35%		45%	23.07%	0	49.06%
	Hindu	0				0	
	Humanist					0	
	Jewish					0	
	Muslim	0.58%			3.85%	0	
	Sikh	0.29%				0	
	Other				3.85%	0	
Transgender	No religion	14.74%		15%	19.23%	0	16.98%
	Prefer not to say	8.96%		15%	46.15%	0	13.21%
	Not known	45.08%	100%	25%	3.85%	100%	20.75%
Transgender	Not collected						50



## Report to Resources and Audit Committee

30 October 2012

**Title:** Carbon Monoxide Detectors

**Report of:** Director of Customers and Communities

### Purpose of Report

1. To inform the committee of the company's legal obligations to fit carbon monoxide detectors and the resource implications as a consequence.

### Background

2. The committee, at its meeting held on 10 May 2012, discussed the Customers and Communities Operational Risk Register. During that discussion, the committee requested a report at a future meeting on the fitting of carbon monoxide detectors, the resource implications and the company's legal obligations.
3. This report has also been discussed by Asset Management Committee on 15 October 2012. It has requested that Officers look into whether alternative carbon monoxide detectors are available on the market that do not requiring replacing as often.

### Legal Obligation

4. As a landlord in England we are not legally obliged to install carbon monoxide (CO) detectors, except to solid fuel appliances which is a legal requirement.
5. Gateshead Council was the first council in England to install detectors to all of its properties with gas appliances. It has set the benchmark in England for all councils, of which numerous Councils and ALMOs have now followed.
6. The company has received positive feedback from CORGI and Gas Safe for installing detectors. We were the only organisation in England to have a quality control inspection of CO detectors by the HSE and Gas Safe in 2011, in which we were congratulated for our foresight in safety for Gateshead Council tenants.

### Installation of Carbon Monoxide Detectors

7. As at 27 September 2012, there were 18,878 Council properties with gas appliances installed. Of these, 18,185 had CO detectors installed – the majority of these were installed during our decent homes programme.

8. 693 properties still require a CO detector. The fixed price to supply, install and complete certificate for a detector is £26.49. The cost to install the remaining 693 CO detectors would be £18,357
9. Detectors generally last approximately 5 years, after which point a new detector has to be fitted.
10. The cost of replacing carbon monoxide detectors is included in the Appendix, broken down by year. As part of our ongoing discussions with the Council around how the capital budget is spent, we will discuss whether provision can be made to install the remaining detectors and provide sufficient resources to adequately maintain them in the future.

### **Link to Values**

11. This report links to the following company values: -
  - Being customer focused, innovative and professional
  - Being a listening and learning organisation.

### **Risk Management Implications**

15. The highest risk appliances in a tenant's property are a mixture of open flued boilers/fires and the largest risk is the tenant's own cookers which are a tenant's responsibility to have serviced.
16. The risk of a fatality due to gas related incidents or carbon monoxide has been identified as an operational risk and the installation of detectors to the remaining high risk gas appliances has been agreed. The operational risk register is monitored quarterly by this committee.
17. Risk assessing a possible CO poisoning/prosecution is a much lower risk to the Council than prosecution for a CO fatality.

### **Financial Implications**

12. The fixed price charge to supply, install and complete a carbon monoxide detector is £26.49.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

16. There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

### **Health Implications**

17. Fitting carbon monoxide detectors will help to ensure that our tenants' health is not put at risk by carbon monoxide poisoning from faulty gas appliances.

### **Environmental Implications**

18. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

### **Value for Money Implications**

19. Given the potentially fatal consequences from not having a carbon monoxide detector installed, the relatively low cost of installing a detector offers value for money.

### **Consultation carried out**

20. No consultation has been carried out when compiling this report.

### **Impact on Customers**

21. Customers will receive a working carbon monoxide detector if the recommendations of this report are approved.

### **Recommendation**

22. The views of the committee are sought on the company's progress to date installing carbon monoxide detectors to every property in Gateshead.
23. The committee is asked to support the decision to discuss with the Council the completion of the programme and the allocation of sufficient resources to the future maintenance of the detectors.

**Cost to replace Carbon Monoxide Detectors in all properties over the next 5/6 years:**

Year end	Number of detectors	Cost	Percentage of high risk properties
2012/13	5,303	£140,476	96%
2013/14	5,937	£157,271	87%
2014/15	2,789	£73,881	78%
2015/16	2,327	£61,642	46%
2016/17	979	£25,934	53%
2017/18	1,543	£40,874	68%

All properties without a carbon monoxide detector would receive one in 2012/13.

This would be recurring costs over a 6-year cycle due to the battery life of carbon monoxide detectors.



## Report to Resources and Audit Committee

30 October 2012

**Title:** Management Accounts – Second Quarter 2012/13

**Report of:** Head of Finance

### Purpose of Report

1. To provide the Committee with an update on the management accounts for the second quarter of the financial year 2012/13.

### Background

2. The Accounts Team produces monthly management accounts which detail the actual charges for the month, the year to date charges and the budget year to date. This shows the variance and the forecasted budget. This report has been included in the Appendix to this report.
3. The Board agreed the budget for 2012/13 at its meeting on 15 March 2012.

### Management Accounts

4. The Council initially agreed to pay the company fees totalling £31.429m for the 2012/13 financial year, consisting of £13.334m for the management fee and £18.095m for the repairs fee. As detailed in the budget report, the proposed budget initially provided a deficit of £609,000 however, following a review of current vacancies and by including some of these in the budget at zero cost we reduced the deficit to £9,000.
5. Following further meetings with the Council, potential savings of £318,000 were identified, reducing the management fee to £13.017m. However, it was agreed with the Council that should these savings not materialise then negotiations would be held with the Council around any changes to the fee.
6. One of the efficiency savings identified within the £318,000 related to the closure of Felling Housing Office. The estimated savings during 2012/13 associated with the office closure were £107,000. Subsequent agreement with the Council on the level of service to be provided has resulted in a reduced level of saving. The Council have agreed that the management fee will not reduce by the initial amount in order to reflect the agreed level of service.

7. The agreed repairs fee was slightly increased by £70,000 to reflect the tendered price from Mears for the Repairs contract as well as the other repair costs budgeted for. The total repairs fee agreed was £18.165m.
8. The Management Accounts for the second quarter of the financial year 2012/13 are included within the Appendix to this report. The Management Accounts include the income and expenditure in relation to both revenue and repairs up to the end of September 2012.
9. The Management Accounts Revenue shows an over spend to date of £20,000. This is due to utility costs being greater than forecast.
10. The Management Accounts Repairs is under spent based on forecast budget, however, the income is matched against expenditure in repairs and so no under spend is shown. The under spend against forecast is due mainly to repair invoices not yet being received from Mears. Work has been implemented to improve the interface between Mears and TGHC. This should speed up the invoicing process during the third quarter.

#### **Link to values**

11. This report is in line with the following values of the company :-
  - Being honest, accountable and transparent
  - Being motivated trained, and committed across the company

#### **Impact on tenants**

9. Appropriate financial monitoring and control will ensure efficiencies are maximised and redirected to services that directly impact on tenants.

#### **Risk Management Implications**

10. Regular and accurate monitoring will ensure that the strategic risk within the business plan (Insufficient available financial resources) is effectively controlled.

#### **Financial Implications**

11. The financial implications are contained within the report and appendices.

#### **Health Implications**

12. There are no direct health implications arising from this report.

#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

13. There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report.

#### **Value for Money implications**

14. Regular financial monitoring and control will ensure efficiencies are maximised and then utilised in the most appropriate manner.

## **Environmental Implications**

15. Environmental consideration is given during the day to day management of financial resources through the drive to ensure that purchasing methods are sustainable and through the reduction of energy costs through energy efficient measures being introduced in working practices.

## **Consultation carried out**

16. None directly for this report.

## **Recommendations**

17. The Committee's views are sought as to whether it is satisfied with the financial management of the Revenue and Repairs budgets for second quarter of the 2012/13 financial year.
18. The Committee is asked to note the discussions being held with the Council regarding the reduction in efficiency savings for the year.

**The Gateshead Housing Company  
Management Accounts – September 2012**

**Revenue and Repairs Executive Summary**

1. The management accounts for the second quarter of the 2012/13 financial year are shown below:

	<b>YTD Actual £'000</b>	<b>YTD Budget £'000</b>	<b>YTD Variance £'000</b>	<b>Annual Budget £'000</b>
<b>Management Fee</b>				
Income	7,388	7,369	19	14,738
Employee Costs	4,718	4,721	3	9,441
Overhead Costs	2,690	2,652	(38)	5,305
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(16)</b>	<b>(8)</b>
<b>Repairs Fee</b>				
Repairs Management Fee	7,364	9,836	2,472	19,665
Repairs Costs	7,364	9,836	(2,472)	19,665
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Overall Annual Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(16)</b>	<b>(8)</b>

2. Overall, the second quarter position shows an overspend of £20,000; this has changed from an underspend at the end of the first quarter of £10,000. This is due mainly to utility costs being greater than forecast for the first six months of the year. This particularly relates to electricity and gas bills.
3. Repairs is under spent based on forecast budget, however, the income is matched against expenditure in repairs and so no under spend is shown. The under spend against forecast is due mainly to repair invoices not yet being received from Mears. Work has been implemented to improve the interface between Mears and TGHC, this should speed up the invoicing process in the third quarter.

## Income

	<b>YTD Actual £'000</b>	<b>YTD Budget £'000</b>	<b>YTD Variance £'000</b>	<b>Annual Budget £'000</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
Management Fee	6,508.5	6,508.5	0	13,017
Officer Costs	500	500	0	1,000
Management Fee from external bodies	9	9	0	18
Gardening Service Income	1.5	1.5	0	3
Rent	19	0	19	0
Performance Fee	350	350	0	700
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>7,388</b>	<b>7,369</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14,738</b>

4. Overall income for the second quarter is on target and is expected to come in on budget for the year. The Management Fee is in relation to the everyday management of Gateshead Council's properties. This was calculated based on the previous year's fee less an efficiency target of 2.38% savings.
5. The Officer Costs are for the work carried out in relation to managing the capital programme on behalf of the Council. This fee covers the staffing and overheads required to manage the programme. This fee equates to 4% of the overall capital programme.
6. The Management Fee from external bodies relates to the fee received by the company for undertaking the day-to-day management of properties on behalf of the company's subsidiary Keelman Homes and another local housing provider.
7. Gardening service income is an additional income amount agreed with Gateshead Council's Housing Options section. This income is received for the use of the Handyperson service to undertake grass cutting and other gardening services for the homeless section properties.
8. Rent relates to the rent received for the section of Keelman House that has been sub-leased. This was agreed post budget setting.
9. The Performance Fee is in relation to the work that the rent and income teams undertake in the collection of rent and service charges. We have reached an agreement with the Council that if the rent and income teams collect rent and service charges over and above the national collection rate target we have a profit sharing arrangement where we receive 50% of the income collected over and above this target. This is paid annually in arrears and this is the fee due for collection rates in 2011/12.

## Staff Costs

10. Staff Costs are broken down as follows:

	<b>YTD Actual £'000</b>	<b>YTD Budget £'000</b>	<b>YTD Variance £'000</b>	<b>Annual Budget £'000</b>
<b>Employee Costs</b>				
Customer Services	1,114	1,173	59	2,345
Neighbourhood Services - HQ	524	519	(5)	1,038
Property Services	597	584	(13)	1,168
<b>Customers and Communities sub total</b>	<b>2,235</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4,551</b>
Support Services	409	427	18	854
Finance	585	606	21	1,212
<b>Corporate Services sub total</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>1,033</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2,066</b>
Neighbourhood Services - areas	1,489	1,537	48	3,075
Efficiency Savings	0	(125)	(125)	(251)
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>4,718</b>	<b>4,721</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9,441</b>

11. Salary costs are largely on target. The staff budget is based on the current structure but a number of vacant posts have been held at zero budget and therefore, they will not be appointed to during the year. This was to enable budgets to breakeven. As service areas are reviewed, restructures will be brought to this committee for approval to ensure that any vacant posts which are not required are deleted.
12. During the first two quarter's we have spent £28,000 on agency staff; this is in comparison to cumulative spend to quarter two of 2011/12 of £95,000 on agency staff. The spend on agency staff this year has been partly offset in the month end figures due to a number of vacant posts being held.
13. The agency staff costs relate mainly to work in the Repairs Contact Centre and in Housing Offices whilst staff are seconded to posts elsewhere in the organisation.

## Overhead Costs

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000
<b>Overhead Costs</b>				
Customers and Communities HQ Total	172	172	0	345
Corporate Services Total	1,895	1,920	25	3,841
Customers and Communities Area Costs	623	573	(50)	1,145
Efficiency Savings	0	(13)	(13)	(26)
<b>Total Overhead Costs</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>2,652</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>5,305</b>

14. Overhead costs are overspent for the second quarter; this is due mainly to utility costs. Electricity and gas bills received during the second quarter have been higher than anticipated. However, we are actively working to reduce gas bills through monitoring of building maintenance systems to ensure that gas is not overused. We are also looking to fit energy efficient light bulbs in buildings. We expect that this budget overall will break even at the year end.
15. An analysis of overhead spend against budget is included within Appendix 1. Appendix 2 shows a pie chart of areas that the HQ Overheads have been spent on.
16. Budget holders are accountable for their budgets and receive monthly management accounts. This enables them to review spend in more detail. The finance section monitor all areas of spend and ensure that costs are controlled effectively. It should be noted that not all costs can be controlled especially in relation to utility costs and insurance claims. Finance monitors these costs on a monthly basis and highlights to the Management Team any areas causing concern.

## Repairs Summary

17. An analysis of the repairs costs is provided below.

	Budget £000's	YTD Actual £000's	Variance £000's
<b>REPAIRS</b>			
Fixed Costs (Contractors' Prelim's)	2,391	2,389	2
Responsive – Mears	1,998	1,164	834
Responsive – LES	500	392	108
Responsive – Other	400	352	48
Relets – Mears	1,742	1,137	605
Relets - Other	350	104	246
Cyclical Repairs – Servicing	250	147	103
Cyclical Repairs – Remedial Works	75	0	75
Water Hygiene Testing	75	16	59
Painting	320	287	33
Gas Servicing	1,278	914	364
Electrical Circuit Testing	70	0	70
Solid Fuel Testing	1	0	1
Lift Maintenance	68	48	20
Security	100	30	70
Environmental Works	113	83	30
Energy Performance Certificates	25	11	14
Aids & Adaptations	45	66	(21)
Contingency	35	224	(189)
	<b>9,836</b>	<b>7,364</b>	<b>2,472</b>
Insurance Funded Repairs	0	0	0
Repair Management Fee Income	9,836	7,364	(2,472)
<b>Income Total</b>	<b>9,836</b>	<b>7,364</b>	<b>(2,472)</b>
<b>REPAIRS TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Responsive Repairs

18. Responsive repair costs have been split between the spend with Mears, the spend with Local Environmental Services and the other costs associated with repairs. Mears are the new repairs contractor and they carry out all the repairs and maintenance at properties. LES carry out all drainage and highways repair works. Other costs are in relation to asbestos testing and removal works, batched Mears repair work, the repairs freephone number and postage for any postcards/letters, as well as other sub-contractor costs for works Mears are unable to carry out.
19. Overall the responsive repair costs are under budget for the second quarter. Interface systems which allow any variations to jobs completed did not work effectively until the second quarter and therefore there has been some delay in

receiving invoices. These interface systems are now in place and Mears are working to ensure that all completed works are invoiced.

20. Weekly operational meetings are held with Mears to discuss the repair works being undertaken and we are monitoring the number of repair requests sent to Mears weekly. The numbers are similar to those in previous years and therefore, we are confident that once invoices are received they will be consistent with our expectations.
21. There have been 20,828 repair orders invoiced to date and average repair costs within the second quarter are £62.86.
22. An analysis of the type of responsive repairs carried out is included within Appendix 3 and a comparison of responsive repairs costs and number of jobs is included in Appendix 4.

#### Relets

23. The relet budget is split between the costs of the works carried out by Mears and the other costs associated with relets. Other costs relate mainly to costs associated with asbestos works, security costs and decoration vouchers provided to new tenants.
24. Mears relet costs are under budget as jobs have not been invoiced due to the issues with the interface systems. Interface systems which allow any variations to jobs completed did not work effectively until the second quarter and therefore there has been some delay in receiving invoices. These interface systems are now in place and we are working closely with Mears to work through the void orders.
25. Weekly operational meetings are held with Mears to discuss the relet works being undertaken and we monitor closely the number of voids sent through to Mears to undertake relet works on.
26. Average relet cost for the second quarter was £1,936.31 and the number of relets for the second quarter is 545. In the second quarter of 2011/12, the average cost was £1,969.49 and 966 relets had been carried out and invoiced.

#### Painting

27. The painting programme is slightly under budget to the end of September. We expect the painting programme to come in on budget at the year end.

#### Gas Servicing

28. Gas servicing is under budget for the second quarter. This budget line includes both the budget for the Gas Care Plan which is a fixed monthly cost of £152,000 and the budget for gas repairs. However, we are in discussions with Mears as to whether the gas repairs just come within the responsive repairs line. If this changes we will amend the budget accordingly.

29. Gas appliances are required to have a gas service carried out every 12 months, at the end of the second quarter 99.25% of properties had a gas service within the previous 12 months. Of these 131 properties were out of date by 1 to 4 weeks, and 10 properties were out of date by 4-8 weeks.

#### Cyclical Maintenance

30. There are a number of repair costs in relation to the cyclical maintenance programme which has been developed for our properties this is particularly in relation to cyclical repairs, water hygiene testing, lift maintenance, environmental works, electrical circuit testing and solid fuel testing. We have a programme of works for these areas of maintenance and we expect that these budgets will break even at the year end. We have separated out the cyclical works –remedial works as this is a responsive element of costs, so we can build up our ability to assess the expenditure.

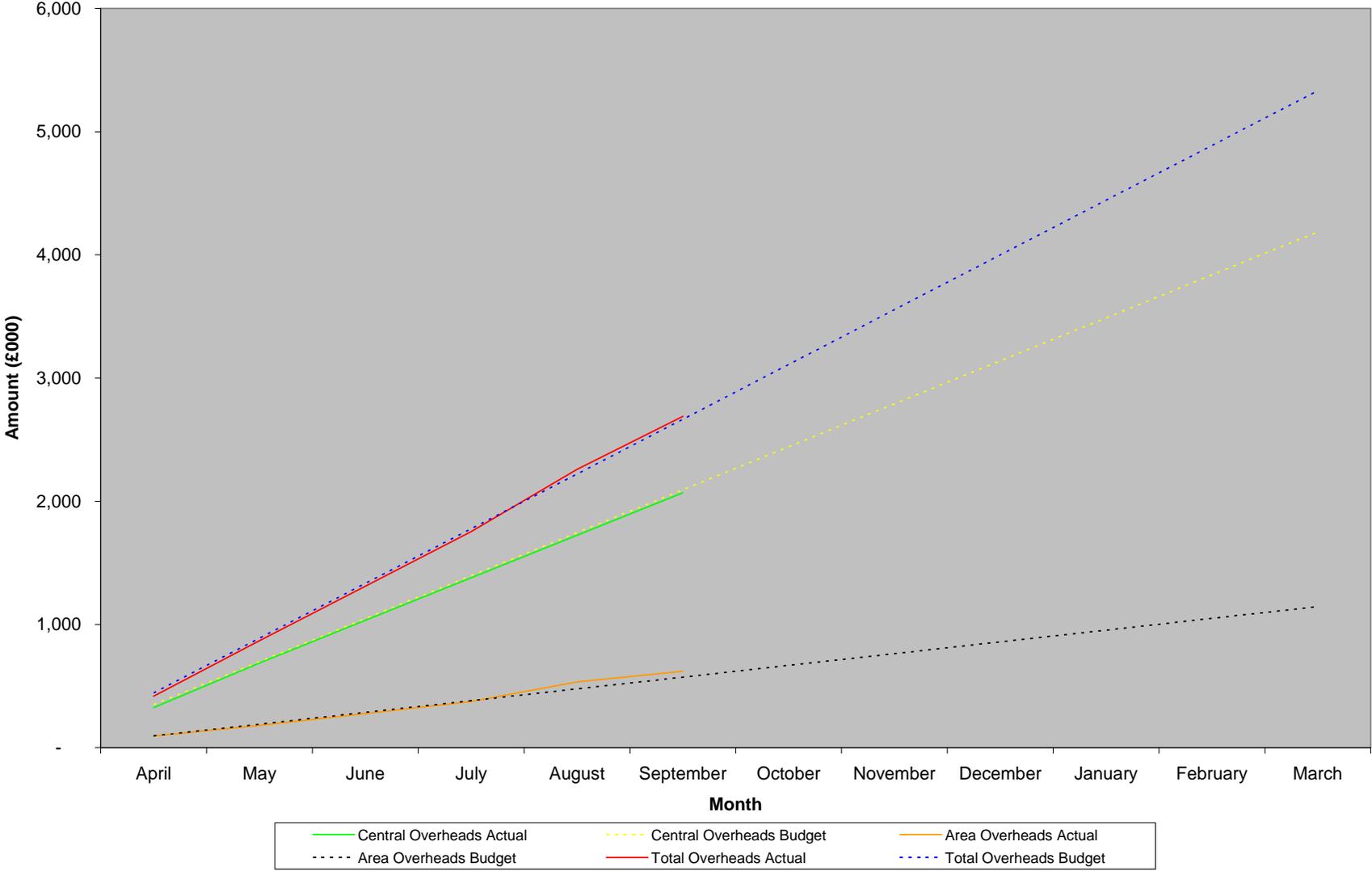
#### Contingency

31. The overspend against the contingency budget is in relation to the flooding caused by severe weather in June and August. The costs incurred are for repair works to the properties, drying of the properties and temporary rehousing and subsistence claims from tenants. The finance team are working with Gateshead council to submit a claim for costs via the Bellwin scheme. The repair costs will be claimed through the council's storm and flood damage insurance cover.

## Detailed Management Accounts

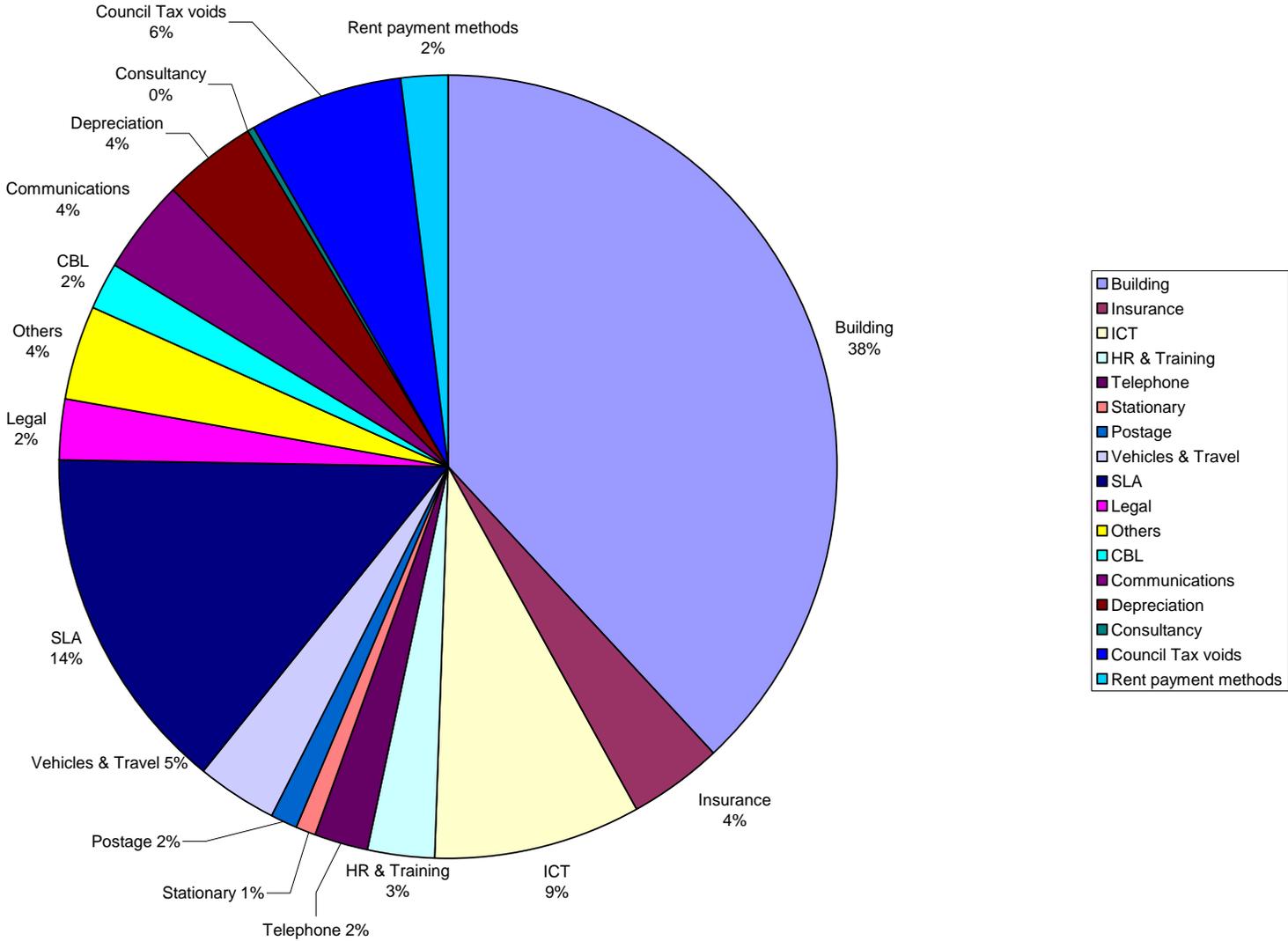
	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000
<b>INCOME</b>				
Management Fee	6,508.5	6508.5	0	13,017
Officer Costs	500	500	0	1,000
Management Fee from external bodies	9	9	0	18
Gardening Service Income	1.5	1.5	0	3
Rent	19	0	19	0
Performance Fee	350	350	0	700
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>7,388</b>	<b>7,369</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14,738</b>
<b>Employee Costs</b>				
Customer Services	1,114	1,173	59	2,345
Neighbourhood Services - HQ	524	519	(5)	1,038
Property Services	597	584	(13)	1,168
<b>Customers and Communities sub total</b>	<b>2,235</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4,551</b>
Support Services	409	427	18	854
Finance	585	606	21	1,212
<b>Corporate Services sub total</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>1,033</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2,066</b>
Neighbourhood Services - areas	1,489	1,537	48	3,075
Efficiency Savings	0	(125)	(125)	(251)
<b>Total Employee costs</b>	<b>4,718</b>	<b>4,721</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9,441</b>
<b>Overhead Costs</b>				
Customers and Communities HQ Total	172	172	0	345
Corporate Services Total	1,895	1,920	25	3,841
Customers and Communities Area Costs	623	573	(50)	1,145
Efficiency Savings	0	(13)	(13)	(26)
<b>Total Overhead Costs</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>2,652</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>5,305</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(16)</b>	<b>(8)</b>
<b>Repairs Fee</b>				
Repairs Management Fee	7,364	9,836	2,472	19,665
Repairs Costs	7,364	9,836	(2,472)	19,665
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Overall Annual Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(20)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(16)</b>	<b>(8)</b>

TGHC Overheads Budget 2012/13



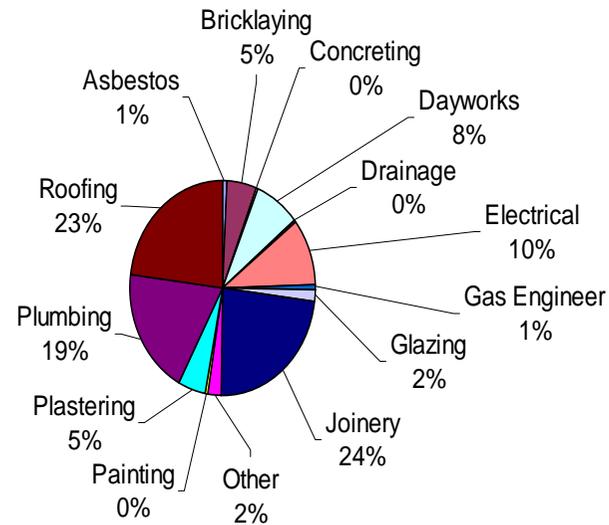
# Appendix 2

Central Overheads expenditure cumulative 30th September 2012



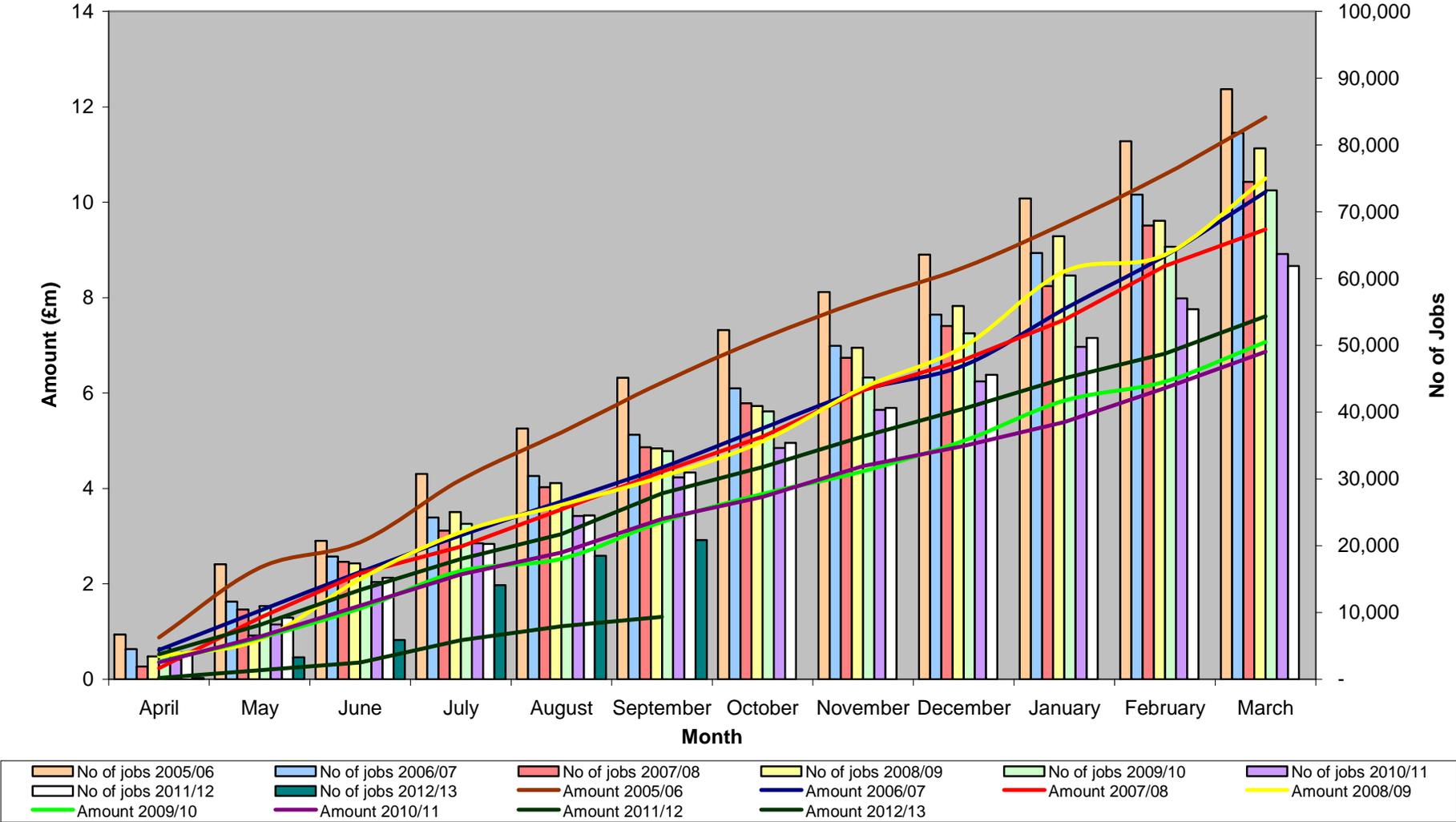
### Appendix 3

#### Mears invoiced Repairs by trade for the period April 2012 - March 2013



Trade	2011/12 (6 months)	2012/13 (YTD)
Asbestos	-	8,637
Bricklaying	306,006	55,622
Concreting	-	428
Dayworks	268,111	89,701
Drainage	-	283
Electrical	244,830	108,151
Gas Engineer	-	10,836
Glazing	94,316	16,910
Joinery	572,182	253,761
Other	115,054	24,271
Painting	-	3,900
Plastering	203,832	50,697
Plumbing	845,932	207,651
Roofing	354,658	250,318
Subcontractor	398,700	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,403,620</b>	<b>1,081,166</b>

Comparison of Responsive Repairs to Previous Years





## Report to Resources and Audit Committee

30 October 2012

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**Title:** Sickness Absence and Human Resources Update

**Report of:** Head of Support Services

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To provide the committee with an update on general HR initiatives and developments from April to September 2012.

### **Background**

2. This report provides the Committee with an update in sickness absence, general HR initiatives/developments and learning and development activity for the period April to September 2012.

### **Employee and HR Monitoring Digest**

3. Attached at Appendix 1 to this report is an analysis of the key employee data and HR monitoring to provide the Committee with an overview of the company's performance.

### **Sickness Absence Update**

4. Attached at Appendix 2 is an analysis of the sickness absence levels for the period from April to September 2012.
5. Appendix 3 provides in a graphical format the reasons for absence within each directorate of the company for the period April to September 2012.
6. The total sickness absence for the period April to September 2012 equates to 4.22 days per person compared to 4.67 days for the same period last year. This equates to a 10% reduction in days lost in the period April to September 2012 compared to the same period last year.
7. Short term absence is defined as a period of less than 15 working days in duration and long term absence is defined as a period of absence greater than 15 days in duration. In the period April to September 2012, short term absence was 1.47 days per person and long term 2.76 days. This compares with 1.83 days short term absence and 2.84 days long term absence in the same period April 2011 to

September 2011. This is a 20% decrease in short term absence and 3% decrease in long term absence.

8. In the period July to September 2012, sickness absence was 1.21 days per person. In particular the month of September was worthy of note as sickness absence reduced to a record low of 0.29 days per person. Whilst the first quarter of this year showed an increase in the overall sickness figures, the sharp reduction during quarter 2 is very encouraging and would indicate that the revised absence management policy is having a positive impact on attendance. Trade Unions were consulted on the implementation of the revised policy and we continue to work with them on its application.
9. In the period April to September 2012, the biggest cause of absence was stress with 590 days lost. This compares to 469 days lost in the same period last year, which is an increase of 20%.
10. As reported to previous committees, it is often difficult to control outside stressors, however we have implemented a programme of wellbeing training for employees and managers that will equip our employees with the skills, knowledge and confidence to take ownership of sensitive cases and improve attendance and performance.
11. We continue to investigate initiatives that will help us to better understand the causes of depression, anxiety and stress. We endeavour to use the knowledge gained in this area to research new initiatives to assist employees to manage their condition and remain in work.
12. A personal support package continues to be provided to employees who are absent due to stress to include occupational health, home visits, counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and First assist 24/7 helpline for employees and their families.
13. Managers are provided with monthly sickness information and guidance detailing sickness absence triggers, action required and the early intervention of human resources.

### **Managing Sickness Absence**

14. The company has held 29 sickness absence review meetings (short term) in the period April to September 2012 triggered in response to four periods of absence or two periods of 15 days or more in a rolling 12 month period.
15. As a result of the absence review meetings held, 13 employees were issued with first written cautions.
16. The company has held 10 sickness absence reviews (long term) in the period of April to September 2012 triggered in a response to four or more continuous weeks of absence.
17. The absence management review for long term absence considers an employee's health and future employability with the company. Options discussed at the absence reviews include phased return to work, redeployment, work life balance,

reduced hours, reasonable adjustments to the working environment and ill health retirement.

18. In the period April to September 2012: -

- 5 employees attended an occupational health physician's appointment as a result of absence review meetings.
- 53 cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)/counselling sessions were supported by the company.
- 1 employee attended physiotherapy sessions supported by the company.
- 32 employees were referred to occupational health for an initial assessment.
- 12 employees attended an occupational health review.

19. Eight employees returned to work on phased hours and duties in the period April to September 2012.

### **Information Sharing**

20. The company continues to work with Gateshead Council to more closely align our services through sharing information about measures and initiatives.

### **Other HR initiatives and developments**

21. The Chiropodist has attended Keelman House on six occasions in the period April to September 2012. Appointments were attended by 36 employees.

### **Work Life Balance**

22. In the period April to September 2012, the following work life balance applications have been approved:

<b>Number of Applications</b>	<b>Type of Work Life Balance Request</b>
4	Applications to reduce working hours
4	Application to change work pattern
2	Application for compressed hours

### **Formal/Informal Investigations**

23. In the period April to September 2012, there were: -

- One suspension which did not proceed to disciplinary.
- Three Stage 1 grievances investigated and not upheld.
- No allegations of bullying or harassment.
- One reported Whistleblowing incident

## **Other HR Initiatives and Developments**

### **Recruitment**

24. In the period April to September 2012, the company has advertised the following jobs: -
- Estate Officer – 18 applications
  - Customer Service Officer – 6 applications
  - Quantity Surveyor/Contract Administrator – 14 applications
  - Payments Officer – 5 applications
  - Accounts Assistant – 11 applications
  - Temporary Housing Management Assistant – 3 applications
  - Temporary Older Persons Housing Manager – 2 applications
  - Temporary Older Persons Admin Assistant – 0 applications
25. The Temporary Older Persons Admin Assistant was advertised internally to TGHC employees only. The other jobs were advertised internally to TGHC Gateshead Council employees.

### **Child Care Scheme**

26. The company continues to offer a salary sacrifice scheme. In September 2012 nine employees were in the scheme.

### **Learning and Development Activity**

#### **Absence Minded**

28. Managers attended a training session on the skills and techniques required to implement the absence management policy. Clarity was provided on team and individual responsibilities.

#### **Digital Switchover**

29. A number of front line employees attended a training session delivered by Digital UK which focused on the wider aspects of the switchover and its potential impact on the viewer. The aim of the training was to prepare employees for questions which customers may have about the switchover. Areas included help scheme, community outreach, public protection, environmental issues etc.

#### **SUMO (Shut Up –Move On) – Joint initiative with YHN**

30. The date for the two half day SUMO workshops has been confirmed and will take place on 21 November 2012. The event is about equipping attendees with skills for life to help master the challenges of work and life for the present and the future. The event will be jointly facilitated as proposed with Your Homes Newcastle.

#### **Data Protection & Absence Management e-learning**

31. Completion of these essential programmes will continue to be monitored and line managers informed of those employees who have yet to complete the programmes.

## **Applications to Study**

32. Head of Services have reviewed the qualification applications and feedback has been given to all the relevant employees. Including continuations there will be 16 employees studying for a qualification. Those that were declined have been given feedback and other opportunities explored.

## **Health and Wellbeing Support**

33. Managers attended a one hour session to inform them of their responsibility to support employee health and wellbeing. The session included dissemination of key findings from the employee health and wellbeing survey. The sessions were held in all local housing offices and Keelman House.
34. During the period April to September 2012, 11 one-hour “*introductory wellbeing at work*” session have been delivered. Employees who were interested in their own personal health and wellbeing were invited to attend. Four workshops were held in Keelman House and seven workshops were delivered within local housing offices and multi-story blocks throughout the borough.

## **Wellbeing at Work Workshop**

35. During April to September 2012, eight three-hour “*wellbeing at work*” workshops have been delivered and 68 employees attending. The aim of the enhanced workshop was to enable employees attending to build on the knowledge gained during the “*introductory wellbeing at work*” sessions.

## **Mental Health Training for Managers**

36. During April to September 2012, four mental health awareness for managers workshops have been delivered with 36 managers attending. The aim of the training was to help managers to recognise the symptoms of mental health problems, how to provide initial help and how to guide a person towards appropriate professional help.

## **Planned Activity**

37. As part of our commitment to deliver a full health and wellbeing service across the company, a number of Health and Wellbeing Advocates will be recruited on a voluntary basis. During November and December 2012, Health and Wellbeing Advocates training will be delivered over five days equipping advocates with the necessary skills to support and signpost employees. The aim of the training is to equip advocates with the necessary skills required to support and sign post employees with Health and Wellbeing concerns.

## **Health and Safety Training**

38. In the period April to September 2012, the following health and safety training has been delivered: -
  - Asbestos Awareness
  - Defibrillator training
  - Manual Handling

- Conflict Resolution and Personal Safety
- Stress Awareness
- First Aid

### **ICT Training**

39. In the period April to September 2012 the following ICT training and development has been delivered:
- Contributing to the Intranet, Creating Download Documents
  - Microsoft Excel, Filtering Data and Pivot Tables
  - Contributing to the Intranet, Managing Tenancies
40. An e-learning session has been created for the Keystone Asset Management Software – Asbestos Register. The link to this will be sent out during October to 40 users across the Company. A number of drop in sessions are planned for users to get 'hands on' with the system. The aim of this is to familiarise users with the software to enable them to interrogate the asset management database so they can find out the results of asbestos surveys carried out in properties.

### **Link to Values**

41. This report links to the following company values: -
- Being honest, accountable and transparent
  - Being motivated, trained and committed across the company
  - Being caring and respecting
  - A commitment to all our employees
  - Embracing equality

### **Impact on Customers**

42. Sickness absence impacts on the level of service provided to customers. Every effort is taken to keep this to a minimum. Managing absence and delivering in our commitment to have a well trained and responsive workforce will directly lead to improved services to customers.

### **Risk Management Implications**

43. Managers not managing sickness in accordance with Policy has been identified as an operational risk and controls and future actions are in place to mitigate the risk.
44. Absence due to an epidemic has also been identified as an operational risk and if there was a epidemic which significantly reduced the workforce, this would be addressed through the Business Continuity Plan once it has been launched and gone live.

### **Financial Implications**

45. The financial cost of sickness absence to the company for the period April to September 2012 was £146,981 as compared to £200,969 for the same period last year.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

46. The company's commitment to being an equal opportunities employer is an integral part of every aspect of the company's activities. All training is designed to meet the diverse needs of the community and employees.

## **Value for Money implications**

47. We continue to manage sickness absence in order to maximise service delivery to tenants and customers. Through an increased use of internal delivery and development value for money is being achieved. We aim to use the most beneficial methods of delivery to maximise the return for the benefit of the company and customers. Value for money principles are followed in all aspects of the service to include work life balance requests, recruitment and selection.

## **Health Implications**

48. The initiatives and prevention work that has been introduced over the past year have had a positive impact on the health of our employees. The clearest measure of this is the achievement Investors in People (IIP) Gold award and Health and wellbeing award.
49. The company's commitment to learning and development is embedded in the Investors in People award (IIP) and is applied consistently across the company. Our approach to provide tailored learning will have a positive impact on employee's health and overall wellbeing and will minimise any stress.

## **Environmental Implications**

50. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

## **Consultation carried out**

51. The company's HR consultants EEF Northern and Unions have been consulted on aspects of the report. A number of the courses delivered and developed were identified by employees, as part of the annual appraisal process.

## **Recommendation**

52. The views of the committee are sought on whether the committee is satisfied with the update on general HR initiatives and developments.

					
<b>Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13</b>					
<b>Performance Measure</b>		<b>Qtr 1</b>	<b>Qtr 2</b>	<b>Qtr 3</b>	<b>Qtr 4</b>
<b>Number of people employed by TGHC</b>					
Male		149	143		
Female		197	193		
Permanent Employees		331	324		
Temporary Employees		15	12		
Full Time		286	276		
Part Time		60	60		
Number of starters (since 01 April 2012)		4	10		
Number of leavers (since 01 April 2012)		4	11		
Ill health retirements		0	0		
Number of employees seeking redeployment		1	0		
<b>Diversity Monitoring</b>					
<b>Gender</b>					
Male		149	143		
Female		197	193		
<b>Age</b>					
Under 18		0	0		
18 – 25		24	21		
26 – 35		112	109		
36 – 45		81	77		
46 – 55		89	89		
56 – 65		39	39		
66 +		1	1		
<b>Disability</b>					
Perceived themselves as disabled		38	36		
Do not perceive themselves as disabled		308	300		

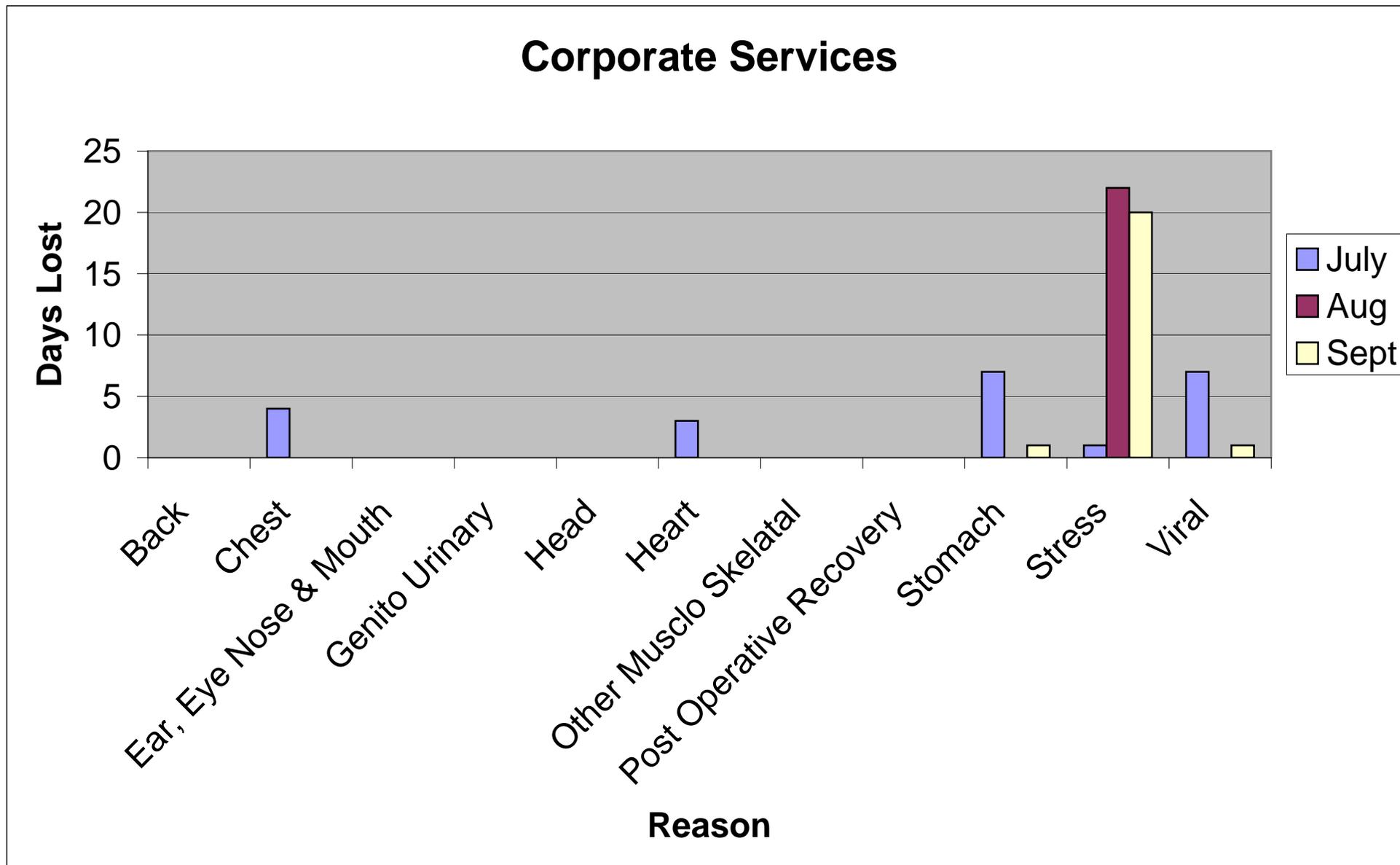
					
<b>Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13</b>					
<b>Performance Measure</b>		<b>Qtr 1</b>	<b>Qtr 2</b>	<b>Qtr 3</b>	<b>Qtr 4</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
	White British	330	322		
	White Irish	2	2		
	White Other	1	1		
	White and Black Caribbean	0	0		
	White and Black African	0	0		
	White and Asian	0	0		
	Asian or Asian British Indian	1	1		
	Asian or Asian British Pakistani	0	0		
	Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	3	1		
	Asian or Asian British Other	1	1		
	Black or Black British Caribbean	0	0		
	Black or Black British African	4	4		
	Black or Black British Other	1	1		
	Chinese	1	1		
	Other	2	2		
<b>Recruitment Monitoring</b>					
Number of BME applicants for posts					
	Application for employment	3	1		
	Short listed for interview	2	1		
	Offered post	0	0		
Number of disabled applicants for posts					
	Application for Employment	0	0		
	Short listed for interview	0	0		
	Offered post	0	0		
<b>HR advisory issues</b>					
	Investigations	0			
	Disciplinary	0	0		

 <b>The Gateshead Housing Company</b> Working with Gateshead Council					
<b>Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13</b>					
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Qtr 1</b>	<b>Qtr 2</b>	<b>Qtr 3</b>	<b>Qtr 4</b>	
Suspensions	1	0			
Oral Warning	0	0			
First Written Warning	0	0			
Final Written Warning	0	0			
Dismissals	0	0			
Appeals Submitted	0	0			
Stage 1 Grievance	0	0			
Stage 2 Grievance	0	0			
Bullying and Harassment	0	0			
Whistleblowing	1	0			
Capability	0	0			
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>					
Total number of working days lost per employee (target 7.50 April to March 2013)	3.01	1.21			
Total number of working days lost to sickness	932.70	371.30			
Number of Occupational Health appointments					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New referrals</li> <li>• Review appointments</li> </ul>	17 7	15 5			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surgery appointments</li> <li>• Home appointments</li> </ul>	25 0	20 0			
Number of employee counselling/CBT sessions	39	14			
Number of Absence Management Reviews					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short Term</li> <li>• Long Term</li> </ul>	12 5	17 5			
Number of employees who have had a phased return	5	3			
<b>Learning and Development</b>					
Number of new staff receiving induction	4	1			
Number of staff undertaking professional Qualifications (report in Qtr 2)					

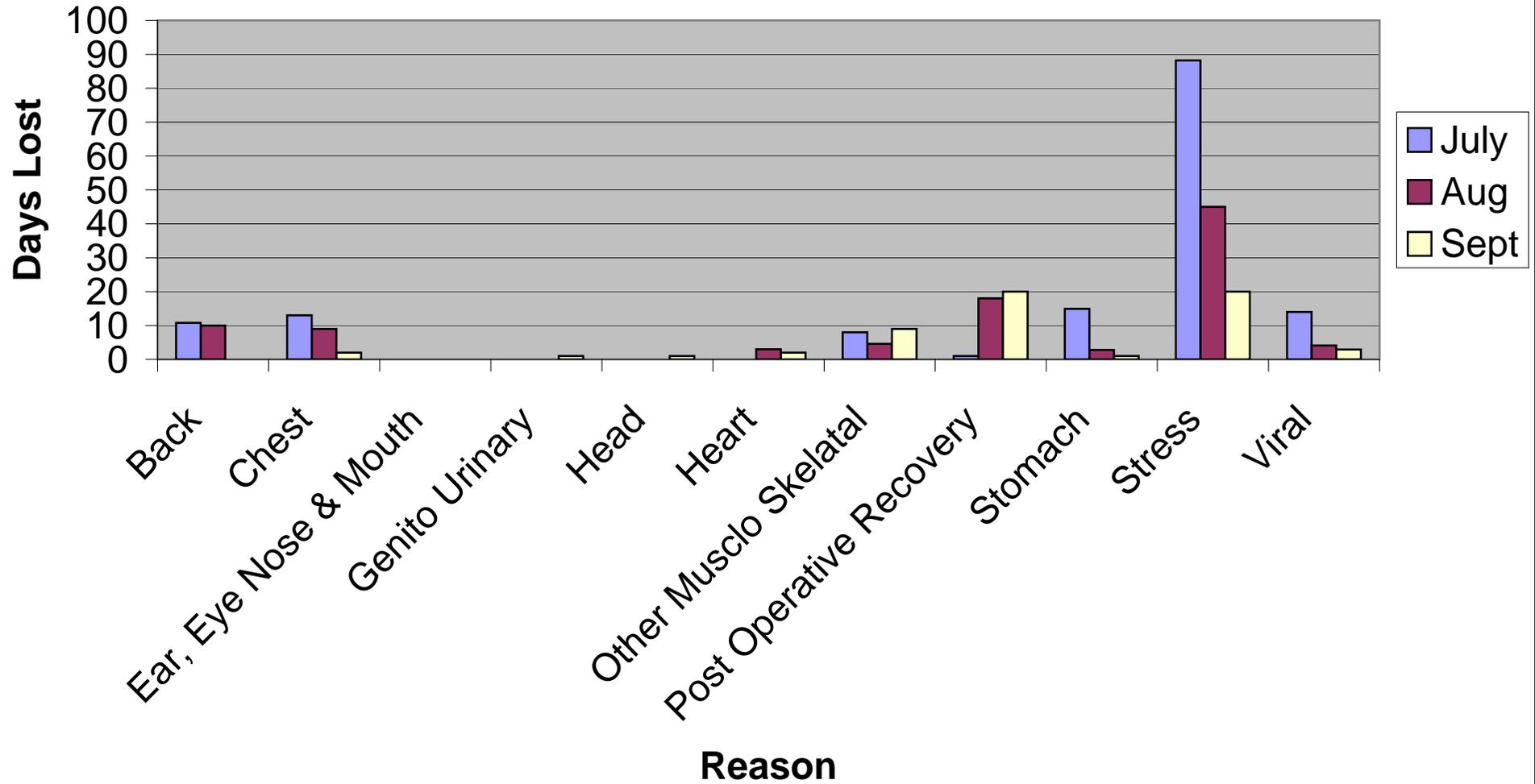
## Actual Days lost per employee per month to date

2012/2013	Customers & Communities Customer Services	Customers & Communities Neighbourhood Services	Customers & Communities Property Services	Corporate Services Finance	Corporate Services Support Services	All employees TGHC	TGHC cumulative	2011/12 TGHC Cumulative	Days Lost per month	Days Lost Short Term Absence	No of Occurences Short Term	Days Lost Long Term Absence	No of Occurences Long Term
April	0.96	0.96	1.79	0.07	0.71	0.95	0.95	0.62	294.70	0.35	29.00	0.60	10.00
May	1.16	1.23	1.70	2.26	0.04	1.11	2.06	1.47	344.00	0.34	36.00	0.77	11.00
June	1.02	0.78	2.48	0.00	0.71	0.95	3.01	2.56	294.00	0.18	16.00	0.77	13.00
July	1.02	0.23	1.06	0.69	0.17	0.56	3.57	3.27	171.90	0.34	26.00	0.22	3.00
August	0.30	0.30	1.02	0.00	0.92	0.39	3.96	3.94	118.50	0.19	14.00	0.20	3.00
September	0.45	0.01	0.68	0.04	0.88	0.26	4.22	4.67	80.90	0.07	11.00	0.20	3.00
October								5.18					
November								5.78					
December								6.09					
January								6.73					
February								7.56					
March								8.47					
Cumulative by Service Area	4.91	3.51	8.73	3.06	3.43	4.22			1304.00	1.47	132.00	2.76	43.00

\* Days Lost = No of days absence / FTE in the service



## Customers & Communities





## Report to Resources and Audit Committee

30 October 2012

**Title:** Health and Safety Update

**Report of:** Head of Support Services

### Purpose of Report

1. To provide the committee with a report on the company's health and safety activities for the period July to September 2012.

### Background

2. The Health and Safety team ("H&S team") are responsible for a number of activities designed to eliminate, reduce and mitigate accidents in the workplace and to ensure, safety of residents and members of the public who access our services and premises.
3. In addition to this the team act in an advisory role to ensure company wide compliance with a number of statutory and regulatory requirements including: -
  - Occupational Health and Safety
  - Health and Safety Training
  - Occupational Hygiene.
4. They also have responsibility for ensuring the company's compliance with statutory regulatory requirements as follows: -
  - Water Management - Risk assessments and water testing.
  - Electrical Safety - Cyclical electrical testing, fixed wire testing, portable appliance testing and emergency lighting testing.
  - Fire Safety - Risk assessment, maintenance, repair and testing of fire alarms and fire appliances.
  - Passengers Lifts Operations - Lift Repairs, maintenance, refurbishment and upgrade to DDA standard.
5. They are also responsible for the coordination and monitoring of health and safety on construction sites including:
  - CDM Coordination (Construction, Design, Management) and Control of Contractors
  - Site Waste Management Plans

## **Policy, Procedure and Safe Systems of Work Update**

6. As reported previously to this committee, a revised structure is being implemented (subject to union consultation) to assist with management of repairs. A key post within this structure is that of Cyclical Maintenance Manager. Historically the H&S team have been heavily involved in arrangements for cyclical maintenance but it is envisaged that this new post will assume responsibility for management and service delivery, leaving the team free to focus on providing support and monitoring compliance.
7. The above transition will require considerable input and support from the team and this is planned to take place over the coming months once recruitment has taken place.
8. An Internal Audit of H&S was carried out during the period, the findings of which will assist in focusing the team on priorities for the remainder of this year. In addition an external audit by Royal Society for prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) will take place during the third quarter.

## **Partner Activity**

9. As reported previously, the condensed mobilisation period for the Repairs and Maintenance contract has meant that all focus has been on ensuring service delivery and improving performance during the first 6 months of this year. Health and Safety site visits had been deferred until the contract was fully enabled.
10. MEARS health and safety processes and safe systems of work were reviewed prior to the contract starting and found to be suitable and sufficient. Site visits will commence during the second half of 2012 and the findings will be reported to future committee meetings.

## **Accident Reporting**

11. During the second quarter (July to September 2012) the following Accidents / incidents were reported: -
  - 14 Cases of Verbal Aggression
  - 1 case of intimidation
  - 1 Sprain / Strain
  - 3 Slip, Trips or falls (Includes a client who fell outside of the housing office and our employee gave First Aid)
  - 2 Cuts (Gateshead Council Employee & Visitor to Communal Lounge)
  - 1 Car Accident

All accidents are investigated by the H&S team and where appropriate follow up action is taken and amendments made to risk assessments.

## **Asbestos Management**

12. During the period July to September requests were received for Asbestos Surveys, to support the following areas of work; Void and Gas Sections, Maintaining Decency, Painting Program, Repairs, Adaptations and Maintenance and Fire Improvement Works.  
We have processed the following requests:

- Refurbishment & Demolition Surveys – 80 R&D surveys within domestic properties and 7 within communal areas of high rise blocks, Sheltered Schemes and Communal Lounges.
13. Previously we have utilised a database provided by MIS, our asbestos contractor. Our Keystone Asbestos Asset Database live system is now completed and has been tested and will be used as the main point of reference for all asbestos information. Training on Keystone is being rolled out to relevant staff and partners during quarter 3 with a view to finalising the transition to Keystone as the sole database in use.
  14. During the period there have been no incidents relating to the accidental disturbance of Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM's) brought to our attention.

### **Fire Safety Management**

15. Fire safety improvement works to Multi Storey Blocks are continuing. The works will tackle deficiencies identified in the 2010 fire risk assessments for all 28 multi-storey blocks. A deadline of December 2012 was imposed by the Fire Service and we are on target to achieve this.
16. A bespoke sprinkler solution is being tendered for Regent Court and we anticipate that the works will progress in line with Fire Service recommendations. Tenders have now been received and considered. The successful bidder has been identified and will be carrying out the works as a sub-contractor of LES, our main delivery partner on Fire Safety works. A separate report is going to Asset Management committee on this area of work.

### **Legionella Control**

17. Monthly meetings with our maintenance contractor are ongoing and no significant risks have been identified. Water testing is ongoing in all buildings to ensure safety.
18. No positive tests were reported in the period of July to September 2012.

### **Cyclical Repair and Maintenance Update**

19. Monthly meetings with our maintenance contractor Gateshead Council Local Environmental Services are ongoing. No immediate actions have been identified.

### **Lift Maintenance**

20. Our insurance company carry out lift inspections on a 6 monthly basis and reports are then submitted to the company with remedial action identified and timescales for completion.
21. Through the insurance inspections, immediate actions on both the odd and even lifts within Monk Court were identified these actions were completed on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2012

## **Update on Health and Safety Legislation Changes**

22. Since the last Committee meeting, no legislative changes taken place that will have an impact on TGHC.

## **Links to Values**

23. This report links to the following company values: -
- Being honest, accountable and transparent
  - Being motivated, trained and committed across the company
  - Being caring and respecting
  - A commitment to all our employees
  - Embracing equality.

## **Impact on Customers**

24. The improvements identified and actions carried out will help us to provide healthy and safe environments for employees, residents and members of the public.

## **Risk Management Implications**

25. Not meeting the requirement of current and new Health and Safety legislation has been identified as an operational risk for the company.

## **Financial Implications**

26. The Head of Finance confirms that a budget is available to support the activities mentioned in this report through revenue or capital budgets.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

27. Detailed Equality Impact Assessments are carried out on all Health & Safety policies and procedures to ensure that they do not adversely impact on any customers.

## **Value for Money Implications**

28. Value for money principles are followed in all health and safety activity.

## **Health Implications**

29. The company's approach to Health and Safety, embedded within everything that we do and the actions specifically mentioned within this report, ultimately will have a positive impact on people's health and overall wellbeing. By working to ensure that any services we provide meet the needs of the customers and of employees and do not cause undue stress to either party.

## **Environmental Implications**

30. The work detailed in this report will be carried out to ensure we meet our ISO 14001 standards and principles. We will make choices that reflect our social responsibility to improve the environment in which we work and live.

### **Consultation carried out**

31. In relation to the Fire Safety works, in particular the sprinkler system at Regent Court, the programme of work has been developed in consultation with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS), managers and residents.

### **Recommendation**

32. The views of the committee are sought on whether the committee is satisfied with the update on health and safety activities and developments.

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## Report to Resources and Audit Committee

30 October 2012

**Title:** 2012/13 Internal Audit Update – Progress Report

**Report of:** Chief Internal Auditor, Gateshead Council

### Purpose of Report

1. This report outlines progress made by the Internal Audit Service against the audit plan for the financial year 2012/13.

### Summary

2. The Audit Plan for 2012/13 was agreed by this Committee on 10 May 2012. Progress against the plan is detailed in the Appendix. As at 30 September 2012, five final and one draft reports have been issued and a further three audits are substantially complete. As at 30 September 2012, 56% of the audit plan in terms of actual audit days against planned days was achieved by the Internal Audit Service.

### Link to values

3. This report links to the following company values: -
  - Being honest, accountable and transparent
  - Being motivated, trained and committed.

### Impact on tenants

4. No impact directly from this report.

### Risk Management Implications

5. The perceived risk of each audit is based on a twelve point assessment taking into account such areas as materiality, complexity of the system, potential for fraud and sensitivity. Based on a score derived from the assessment, audits are categorised as high, medium and low priorities. This informs the frequency in which audits will be carried out.

### Financial Implications

6. The cost of the internal audit work plan is fully provided for in the 2012/13 budget.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

7. There are no Equality and Diversity implications associated with this report.

### **Value for Money implications**

8. The delivery of the 2012/13 audit plan and the implementation of internal audit recommendations will assist in identifying efficiencies and achieving value for money.

### **Health Implications**

9. There are no Health implications associated with this report.

### **Environmental Implications**

10. There are no Environmental implications associated with this report.

### **Impact on Customers**

11. Implementation of the recommendations will provide our customers with a better service in terms of customer care.

### **Consultation carried out**

12. The audit plan was developed following consultation with all relevant stakeholders within the company.

### **Recommendation**

13. The views of the committee are sought on whether it is satisfied with progress made by the Internal Audit Service against the audit plan for the financial year 2012/13.

	Internal Audit Plan 2012/13	Planned Days	Planned Report to Committee	Progress at September 2012	Opinion
	<b>CORPORATE SERVICES</b>				
1	TGHC Business Continuity Arrangements	5	Jul-12	Final Report Issued	Satisfactory
2	TGHC Insurance Arrangements	3	Oct-12		
3	TGHC Leaseholder Service Charges	7	Oct-12	Fieldwork Completed	
4	TGHC Risk Management	9	Oct-12	Final Report Issued	Satisfactory
5	TGHC VAT Procedures	4	Oct-12		
6	TGHC VFM and Efficiency Arrangements	9	Oct-12		
7	TGHC Budget Setting and Monitoring	5	Feb-13	Draft Report Issued	
8	TGHC Company Payroll	7	Feb-13		
9	TGHC Creditors	7	Feb-13		
10	TGHC Equality and Diversity	9	Feb-13		
11	TGHC Main Accounting	5	Feb-13	Fieldwork Completed	
12	TGHC Health and Safety	9	Jul-12	Fieldwork Completed	
13	TGHC Information Security Management	9	Jul-12		
14	TGHC Corporate IT	1	Apr-13		
		<b>91</b>			
	<b>CUSTOMERS &amp; COMMUNITIES</b>				
15	TGHC Gas Servicing	5	Feb-13		
16	TGHC Repairs	11	Feb-13		
17	TGHC Furnished Tenancies	9	Jul-12	Final Report Issued	Satisfactory
18	TGHC Rent Arrears	20	Jul-12	Final Report Issued	Satisfactory
19	TGHC Rent Collection	9	Oct-12		
20	TGHC Home Rewards	9	Apr-13		
21	TGHC Tenancy Allocation and Lettings	13	Apr-13		
22	TGHC Void Management	9	Apr-13		
23	TGHC Anti-Social Behaviour	7	Jul-12	Final Report Issued	Satisfactory
24	TGHC Housing Establishments	12	Apr-13		
		<b>105</b>			
	<b>GENERAL</b>				
	TGHC Audit Committee	4			
	TGHC General Advice, Consultancy and Systems Review	7			
		<b>11</b>			