

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Wednesday 15 January 2020

7.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room G02B - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1
2QH

Supplemental Agenda

This Scrutiny Meeting will be Live Streamed

List of Contents

Item No.	Title	Page No.
5.	Cabinet Member Interview - Cabinet Member for Social Regeneration, Great Estates and New Council Homes - Councillor Leo Pollak	1 - 9
6.	Housing Repairs Report - Draft The Chair to present the draft report.	10 - 24

New Build Programme Dashboard Q3 2019/20 (End of December 2019)

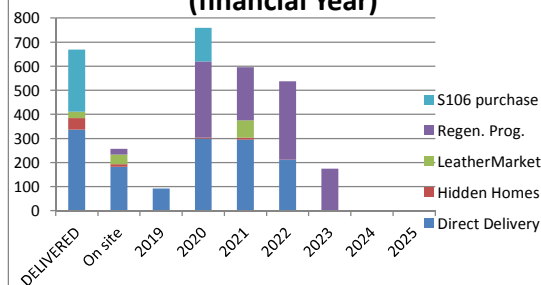
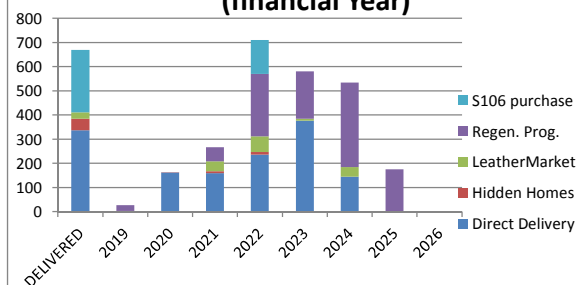
Highlights Oct - Dec 2019 (Council Homes)		Highlights Jan - March 2020 (Council Homes)	
Completed:		Completing:	
Dawes House Drying Rooms Ph 1 & 2	5	1-62 Redbridge Gardens & 1-62 Marchwood Close (incl Bent	3
Bentley House (Glebe Estate) (in with Redbridge)	1	Copeland Road car park, SE 15 (Lot B) [Direct Delivery]	24
Started on Site:		Starting on Site:	
Daniels Road	19	Goschen Estate	17
Ivy Church Lane Garages (Kingleake Street)	21	Haddonfield Garages	14
		Rye Hill Park Garages	23
		Welsford Street Garages	10
		Thaxted Court / Damory House (Rooftop Homes)	28
Planning Approvals:		Planning outcomes expected:	
66 Linden Grove	27	Heaton House	8
Bassano Street (Garages)	4	Rennie Estate	49
Henslowe Road (Garages)	3	Tissington Silverlock Estate underground garages	35
Jepheson House (Ground Floor)	2	Kean House (with Jefferson)	2
Flayard site, Sumner Road SE15 (Lot B) HZ [Direct Delivery]	96	21/23 Parkhouse Street (Lot B) [Direct Delivery]	16
		Cator Street Extra Care Phase 2	50
Planning Submitted:		Expected submissions to planning:	
Heaton House	8	Abbeyfield Former Area Housing Office	18
Tissington Silverlock Estate underground garages	35	Rennie Estate	49
		Rotherhithe New Road 213-219	17
		Sceaux Gardens (Florian and Racine inc some garages)	80
		Vestry Road (Lettsom T&RA Hall)	11
		Balin House	4
		Land at Angel Oak Academy, Chandler Way SE15 (Lot B) HZ]	26
		ASC facilities - Day Centre, 345 Southwark Park SE16 [A3] [D	22
		Styles House	24

Council Homes in the Programme

Categories	Delivered	On site	Planning Approved	Pre-Planning	TOTAL
Direct Delivery	337	183	372	543	1435
Hidden Homes	47	10	3	10	70
LeatherMarket	27	40	0	112	179
Regen. Prog.	0	24	143	1650	1817
S106 purchase	258	0	0	140	398
UNKNOWN	0	0	0	0	0
THIS TOTAL	669	257	518	2455	3899
Quarter 2 2019 Total	654	223	539	1426	2836
Change from Quarter 2	↑ 15	↑ 34	↓ -21	↑ 1029	↑ 1063

Starts

CATEGORIES	DELIVERED	On site	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Direct Delivery	337	183	92	299	295	211	0
Hidden Homes	47	10	0	4	8	1	0
LeatherMarket	27	40	0	0	72	0	40
Regen. Prog.	0	24	0	317	221	325	175
S106 purchase	258	0	0	140	0	0	0
TOTAL	669	257	92	760	596	537	215
RUNNING TOTAL	669	926	1018	1778	2374	2911	3126
Quarter 2 2019 Total	654	877	1212	1937	2563	2772	2802
Change from Quarter 2	↑ 15	↑ 49	↓ -194	↓ -159	↓ -189	↑ 139	↑ 324

Council Homes starting on site
(financial Year)Council Homes completing
(financial Year)

Completions

CATEGORIES	DELIVERED	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Direct Delivery	337	0	0	162	160	236
Hidden Homes	47	0	3	1	8	11
LeatherMarket	27	0	0	0	40	65
Regen. Prog.	0	0	24	0	59	258
S106 purchase	258	0	0	0	0	140
TOTAL	669	0	27	163	267	710
RUNNING TOTAL	669	669	696	859	1126	1836
Quarter 2 2019 Total	654	683	859	1276	1939	2651
Change from Quarter 2	↑ 15	↓ -14	↓ -163	↓ -417	↓ -813	↓ -815

New Homes Programme monitor

Current Stage	Scheme Name	Ward
Delivered	125 Peckham Park Road (costs in with ab	Old Kent Road
	14a-18 Firbank Rd	Nunhead & Queens Road
	169 Long Lane	London Bridge & West Bermondse
	46 Half Moon Lane (Non HRA)	Dulwich Village
	Cator Street Extra Care	Peckham
	Clifton Estate Garages	Rye Lane
	Crebor Street (Non HRA)	Dulwich Hill
	Gatebeck House	Champion Hill
	Good Neighbours House	St Giles
	Lakanal House (buy backs)	St Giles
	Ledbury Estate (buy backs to be added or	Old Kent Road
	Masterman House Garages	Camberwell Green
	Nunhead Site B	Nunhead & Queens Road
	Southdown House	Goose Green
	Sumner Road - Site B Private Sales	Peckham
	Sumner Road Community facility I (Sumn	Peckham
	Sumner road workshops	Peckham
	Willow Walk (GN)	South Bermondsey
	Willow Walk (SSA)	South Bermondsey
	35A Camberwell Road, SE5 0EZ (Appropra	Faraday
	Camgate Mansions 15 - 21 Camberwell R	Faraday
	1 & 3 Whaddon House	Champion Hill
	1 Bew Court, Lordship Lane, SE22 8PA	Dulwich Hill
	1 Juniper House, Pomeroy Street, SE14 5	Nunhead & Queens Road
	1-2 Wade House, Parkers Row, SE1 2DJ	North Bermondsey
	1-27 Falcon House, Lyndhurst Way, SE15	Rye Lane
	13 Dawson House	St Giles
	13 Dryden House	St Giles
	13a Beresford	Dulwich Wood
	15a Markham	Dulwich Wood
	16A Bodeny House	St Giles
	17a & 17b Kinsey	Dulwich Wood
	210A Jamaica Road, SE16 4RT	North Bermondsey
	23A Bew Court, Lordship Lane, SE22 8PA	Dulwich Wood
	24 Mayward House	St Giles
	28A Bodeny House	St Giles
	45 & 46 Mortlock Close, SE15 2QE	Nunhead & Queens Road
	45 Bodeny House, Peckham Road, SE5 8	St Giles
	5 Otford House	Chaucer
	6a Leconfield House, Champion Hill, SE5 8	Champion Hill
	8a Appleshaw	Champion Hill
8a Birdsall	Champion Hill	
8a Holderness	Champion Hill	
9 & 9a Pear Court	Peckham	

	Dawes House Drying Rooms Ph 1 & 2	North Walworth
	Dombey House, Wolseley Street, SE1 2BL	North Bermondsey
	Greystoke House, Peckham park Road, SE16 4UW	Old Kent Road
	Nickleby House, George Row, SE16 4UW	North Bermondsey
	Rowland Hill House, Nelson Square Garden	Borough & Bankside
	Sidmouth House, Commercial Way, SE15 2JL	Old Kent Road
	Swanmead SHACCA TRA Hall, Swan Meadow	London Bridge & West Bermondsey
	Tapley House, Wolseley Street, SE1 2BW	North Bermondsey
	Bentley House (Glebe Estate) (in with Redbridge)	St Giles
	Marklake Court, Weston St (with Leather Market)	London Bridge & West Bermondsey
	1-5 Odessa Street	Surrey Docks
	Churchyard Row (HighPoint)	St George's
	Dibdin Apartments, 128 – 150 Blackfriars	St George's
	Fisher Close, Block C	Surrey Docks
	Fisher Close, Block E	Surrey Docks
	Fisher Close, Block F	Surrey Docks
	Sylvan Grove	Old Kent Road
Delivered Total		
On site	Chilton Grove (Rooftop Homes)	Rotherhithe
	Daniels Road	Nunhead & Queens Road
	Ivy Church Lane Garages (Kinglake Street)	Faraday
	Lakanal New Build	St Giles
	Meeting House Lane [1-29 Lillac House, D	Nunhead & Queens Road
	Tenda Road	South Bermondsey
	Tustin Hidden homes	Old Kent Road
	Pelier Street (William Cuffy House)	Newington
	Comber House Drying Rooms	Camberwell Green
	Pinner House (with Comber)	Camberwell Green
	1-62 Redbridge Gardens & 1-62 Marchwood	St Giles
	LeatherMarket - Joseph Lancaster	Chaucer
	Copeland Road	Rye Lane
On site Total		
Planning Approved	35-41 Nunhead Lane	Rye Lane
	39-44 Rutley Close (Decant)	Newington
	66 Linden Grove	Peckham Rye
	Abbeyfield Estate - Bede Centre site	North Bermondsey
	Bassano Street (Garages)	Goose Green
	Commercial Way	Peckham
	Goschen Estate	Camberwell Green
	Haddonfield Garages	Rotherhithe
	Henslowe Road (Garages)	Dulwich Hill
	Maydew Building on Top	North Bermondsey
	Rye Hill Park Garages	Peckham Rye
	Salisbury Est Car Park (Balfour Street)	North Walworth
	Sedgemoor Place (TA)	St Giles
	Thaxted Court / Damory House (Rooftop)	North Bermondsey
	Welsford Street Garages	South Bermondsey
	Underhill Road	Dulwich Hill
	Breamore House	Old Kent Road
	Regina & Columbia Point (part of Canada)	Rotherhithe

	Albion St (Civic Centre site) SE 16 HZ [A2]	Rotherhithe
	Shops & Council Offices, Manor Place /St	Newington
	Workshops, 42 Braganza Street SE17 [A1]	Newington
	Penry Street New Homes (was petrol Stn)	South Bermondsey
	Flaxyard site, Sumner Road SE15 (Lot B) H	Peckham
	18 Blackfriars Road S106 purchase	Borough & Bankside
	Canada Water (Plot K1) S106 Purchase	Rotherhithe and Surrey Dock
	Planning Approved Total	
Pre-Planning	1 Ann Moss Way	Rotherhithe
	1-27 Rodney Place	North Walworth
	Abbeyfield Former Area Housing Office	North Bermondsey
	Bells Gardens Community Centre	Peckham
	Canada Estate	Rotherhithe
	Fenham Road Garages	Peckham
	Heaton House	Rye Lane
	Lindley Estate 157-177 Commercial Way	Old Kent Road
	Lomond Grove	Camberwell Green
	Rennie Estate	South Bermondsey
	Rotherhithe New Road 213-219	Rotherhithe
	Sceaux Gardens (Florian and Racine rede	St Giles
	Seavington House and Garages	Champion Hill
	Slippers Estate	North Bermondsey
	St Saviours St Vincent	London Bridge & West Bermondse
	Tissington Silverlock Estate underground	Rotherhithe
	Vestry Road (Lettsom T&RA Hall)	St Giles
	Woodville House	London Bridge & West Bermondse
	Ledbury Towers Phase 1	Old Kent Road
	Balin House	Chaucer
	Dowell House	Dulwich Wood
	Jepheson House (Ground Floor)	Newington
	Royston House	Old Kent Road
	Kean House (with Jefferson)	Newington
	Cluny estate (with LeatherMarket CBS)	Chaucer
	Elim Estate 1(a) (with LeatherMarket CBS)	Chaucer
	Elim Estate 1(b) Garages (with LeatherMa	Chaucer
	Elim Estate 1(c) triangle site (with Leathe	Chaucer
	JMB Office site (with LeatherMarket CBS)	Chaucer
	Lawson estate (with LeatherMarket CBS)	Chaucer
	Whites Grounds estate (with LeatherMar	Chaucer
	21/23 Parkhouse Street	St Giles
	ASC facilities - Day Centre, 345 Southwar	North Bermondsey
	Beormund School Crosby Row (& Bellend	London Bridge & West Bermondse
	Brandon Baptist Centre & Land Redcar St	Camberwell Green
	Cator Street Extra Care Phase 2	Peckham
	Cherry Gardens School, Macks Road SE16	South Bermondsey
	Land at Angel Oak Academy, Chandler W	Peckham
	South Dock Marina, Plough Way SE16 HZ	Surrey Docks
	Styles House	Borough & Bankside
	Talfourd Place & Curlew House	Rye Lane
	Wickway Community Centre, St George V	Peckham

Red Lion Boys Club, Hawkstone Road, SE1	Rotherhithe
133-137 Queens Road SE15 2ND	Nunhead & Queen's Road
Old Kent Road PC World Site 585-589 Old	Old Kent Road
Old Kent Road Gasworks, 709 Old Kent Rd	Old Kent Road
B M Supermarket, Old Kent Road 593 - 61	Old Kent Road
16 - 18 Verney Road SE16 3DH	Old Kent Road
Devon Street	Old Kent Road
Folegate Estates, 729 Old Kent Road SE15	Old Kent Road
Seven Islands Leisure Centre, 100 Lower	Rotherhithe
Tower Workshops, Riley Road- TBC	London Bridge & West Bermondse
Pre-Planning Total (indicative figures, subject to consultation and feasibility)	
Grand Total	

Start Year	Finish Year	Sum of Soc rent	Sum of Temp Acc	Sum of Int	Sum of Sale	Sum of Council Homes
No date	2013	16				16
No date	2012	3				3
2014	2016	21				21
2016	2017	0	8			8
2014	2016	42				42
2014	2016	8				8
No date	2015		3			3
2014	2016	9				9
2015	2015		37			37
2015	2017	7				7
No date	No date					0
2014	2016	15		1	9	15
2014	2016	8				8
2014	2017	10		8		10
2016	2019	0	0	0	42	0
2016	2019	0	0	0	0	0
2016	2019	66	0	4	0	66
2013	2015	21				21
2013	2015		54			54
No date	2019	3				3
No date	2019	6				6
2012	2013	2				2
2014	2014	1				1
2016	2018	1				1
2013	2014	2				2
2017	2018	6				6
2012	2013	1				1
2012	2013	1				1
	2010	1				1
	2010	1				1
2012	2013	1				1
	2010	2				2
2015	2016	1				1
2015	2016	1				1
2012	2013	1				1
2012	2013	1				1
2016	2017	1				1
2014	2014	1				1
	2010	1				1
2014	2014	1				1
	2011	1				1
	2011	1				1
	2011	1				1
	2010	2				2

2018	2019	5	0	0	0	5
2013	2015	1				1
2016	2017	1				1
2013	2015	1				1
2016	2017	1				1
2014	2014	3				3
2016	2017	1				1
2013	2015	1				1
2018	2019	1				1
2016	2018	27				27
2017	2019	19				19
	2017	43	36			79
2015	2016	56				56
2014	2016	8		0		8
2014	2016	16				16
2014	2016			10		0
2015	2017	80				80
		531	138	23	51	669
2019	2020	44				44
2019	2020	19	0	0	0	19
2019	2021	21	0	0	0	21
2018	2020	28				28
2018	2020	29	0	0	0	29
2018	2020	12	0	0	0	12
2018	2020	13				13
2018	2020	17	0	0	0	17
2018	2021	6	0	0	0	6
2018	2020	1	0	0	0	1
2018	2019	3	0	0	0	3
2019	2021	40				40
2019	2019	24		18	25	24
		257	0	18	25	257
2020	2021	12				12
2020	2021	25				25
2020	2023	27				27
2022	2024	69		18		69
2020	2021	4				4
2020	2022	74	0	35	0	74
2019	2021	17	0	0	0	17
2019	2021	14	0	0	0	14
2020	2021	3	0	0	0	3
2020	2022	24				24
2019	2021	23	0	0	0	23
2020	2022	26	0	0	0	26
2020	2022	13	0	0	0	13
2019	2021	28				28
2019	2021	10	0	0	0	10
2020	2021	3	0	0	0	3
2021	2022	1	0	0	0	1
2020	2021	2	0	0	0	2

2020	2021	14		12	0	14
2020	2022	20		8	28	20
2020	2022	0		5	28	0
2020	2021	13		0	11	13
2020	2022	96		24	48	96
2020	2022	61				61
2020	2022	79				79
		658	0	102	115	658
TBC	TBC	18				18
2022	2023	9				9
2021	2023	18				18
2021	2023	76		39		76
2021	2023	23		0	0	23
2021	2023	5	0	0	0	5
2020	2022	8	0	0	0	8
2021	2023	44	0	0	0	44
2022	2023	22	0	0	0	22
2021	2023	49	0	0	0	49
2021	2023	17	0	0	0	17
2020	2022	80	0	0	0	80
2022	2023	35	0	0	0	35
2021	2023	18	0	0	0	18
2021	2023	33	0	0	0	33
2021	2023	35	0	0	0	35
2021	2022	11	0	0	0	11
2021	2023	42	0	0	0	42
2020	2021					0
2021	2022	4	0	0	0	4
2022	2022	1				1
2021	2022	2				2
2021	2022	1				1
2020	2022	2				2
2021	2022	8				8
2021	2022	24				24
2021	2022	13				13
2021	2022	16				16
2023	2024	40				40
2021	2023	7				7
2021	2022	4				4
2020	2022	17		0	16	17
2020	2022	24		0	22	24
2021	2023	31		18	46	31
2021	2024	35		10	36	35
2020	2022	50			0	50
2020	2021	26		0	26	26
2021	2023	26		32	27	26
2021	2023	25			TBC	25
2020	2022	24			0	24
2022	2023	25			25	25
2020	2022	40			40	80

2022	2023	75			75	75
2020	2021	6				6
2022	2024	225			225	225
2026	2028	390			390	390
2026	2027	55			55	55
2026	2028	235			235	235
TBC	TBC	75			75	75
2023	2025	100			100	100
2023	2025	75			75	75
2021	2024	89			89	89
		2315	0	95	1636	2315
		3761	138	238	1827	3899

The Housing Repairs Service

Draft* Report from Southwark Housing Scrutiny Commission

December 2019

*A note on the draft. The Housing Scrutiny Commission is awaiting the results of the survey of tenants and leaseholders. The publication of the survey was delayed as a result of the purdah period at the General Election. This information will be a key part of the evidence gathering process. Consequently, this draft should be considered with this in mind. The draft is designed to give an indication to the Housing Scrutiny Commission as to the direction of travel of the report and of preliminary recommendations. We are also awaiting further information from tenants council.

Introduction

Southwark Housing repairs will always be a council service which attracts attention. Our borough provides more social rented housing than any other in London, and plans are in place build 11,000 new council homes across the borough by 2043. Southwark also manages the freehold for thousands of leasehold properties, purchased from the council under Right to Buy. Repairs to individual properties and communal areas are a crucial service delivery point for the council. When things go right, repairs can make a huge positive impact on the lives of tenants and leaseholders. When it goes wrong, the results can be devastating.

The history of the repairs service in the borough is chequered. In 2011, the housing scrutiny sub-committee produced a report which detailed widespread waste, inefficiency and financial gaming as part of a long-term private sector contract. The service has been the subject of split contracts, privatisation, partial insourcing and, latterly, brought back in-house, in October 2018.

This most recent development, alongside ongoing concerns about standards of service delivery prompted the Housing Scrutiny Commission to, once again, investigate the service.

Notwithstanding the criticism contained in this report, the Housing Scrutiny Commission would like to place on record our thanks for the hard work that staff who deliver the service do for Southwark residents. The challenges the service still faces are largely the result of long-term strategic decisions. We do not doubt the commitment of staff providing the service, whether they are answering phones, providing technical support or carrying out repairs in people's homes. We hope that the recommendations made in this report will make it easier for staff to deliver the high-quality service that we all want to see.

The Commission would also like to thank all the repairs operatives, senior officers, tenants, residents and councillors who provided information to this scrutiny. We hope they will agree this report provides a solid evidence base for our recommendations. This would not have been possible without the positive engagement of so many people.

We want our repairs service to be a beacon of best practice which other councils seek to emulate. The Housing Scrutiny Commission hopes that the Cabinet will consider the recommendations made here in detail and respond positively.

Gavin Edwards
Chair of Southwark Housing Scrutiny Commission
January 2020

Objective

Our objective for this scrutiny process was to investigate service delivery and methods of monitoring in the repairs service to establish how well it is performing since it came back in house, and to make recommendations to improve it. At all times we have prioritised the perspective of tenants and leaseholders who rely on the service.

Methodology

The scrutiny commission used the following methods and sources to gather evidence for this report.

- A written report on the status of the repairs service
- A report on Key performance indicators for the repairs service
- Formal Interview with senior officers
- Formal Interview with the Cabinet Member for Housing
- Councillors Edwards, McCallum and Dixon-Fyle spent a day with Housing Repairs
- Visit to Islington Council (who took Repairs back in-house in 2014)
- Informal interview with officers
- Cllr Bill Williams (member of the commission) attended Tenants Council to request views
- Repairs service user survey distributed via the council's online consultation hub
- Missed appointments statistics
- Complaints stats and member enquiry stats
- Examples from councillors' casework
- Follow up questions to officers

The insourcing and the structure of the relationship with SBS

The repairs service was insourced with effect from 1 October 2018 following the expiry of the contract with Mears for the south of the borough. All building repairs, not chargeable to leaseholders, are now undertaken by Southwark Building Services (SBS). SBS had previously undertaken repairs in the north of the borough only.

A service level agreement (SLA) is in place that includes a range of key performance indicators (KPIs) that measure the performance of SBS. The repairs & maintenance team is being reorganised to incorporate a 'light-touch' client role.

How Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to monitor the service

The SLA outlines performance indicators that the service is measured against. These are supplemented by a series of reports that look into the detail of service and are used as part of the monthly meeting undertaken within the service by officers from traded services and asset management.

Targets for the first six months of the new service were reduced for some indicators in recognition of the logistical issues that insourcing would bring, including the induction of more than sixty staff who transferred from Mears, transport requirements, materials and accommodation issues. The targets were revised from April 2019. It was recognised that the satisfaction target was difficult target to achieve for the service in the short term, having been set at 95%. 7.

Three of the indicators are measured by a customer survey of around 800 residents who have had a repair reported complete by SBS within the month. The survey is conducted either by telephone or by email.

The KPIs relating to the survey are overall satisfaction, right first time and appointments kept. Right first time has a few exclusions that recognise jobs that could never be completed first time e.g. water ingress into electrical fittings where disconnection and drying out are required before a full repair can be affected.

Other indicators are pulled from various IT systems and validated by performance team or quantity surveyors depending on the indicator in question. Officers noted that indicators still need system changes to enable the information to be extracted readily and these will be worked through over the coming year.

The full KPI methodology can be seen in the table in Appendix 1.

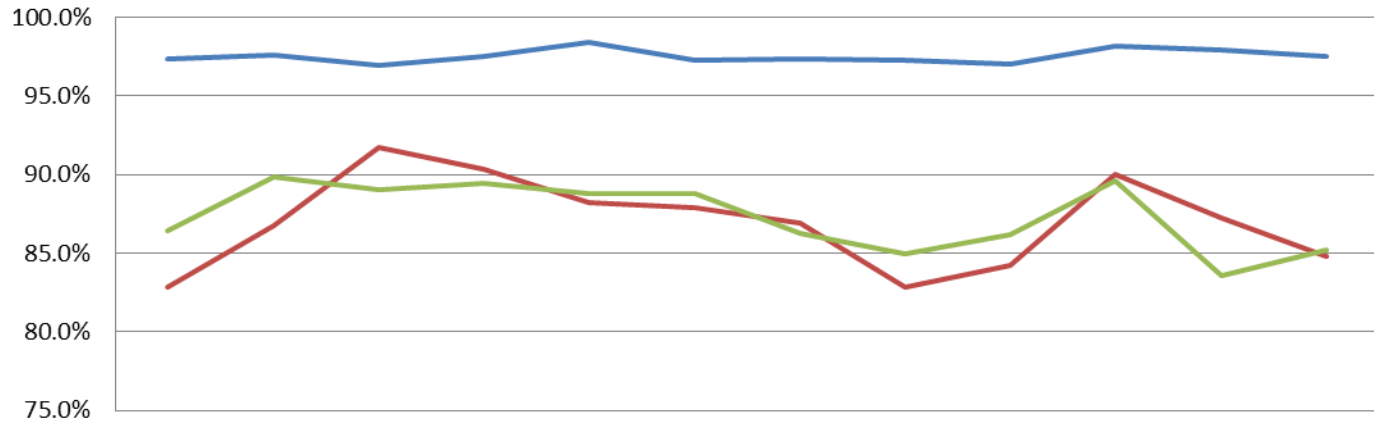
The latest KPI statistics are in the tables below.

KPI Summary Table

KPI No.	KPI	Source	Target	July-19	Aug-19	Sept-19	YTD from October	Latest trend
1	Resident Satisfaction	Customer survey	95%	89.6%	83.6%	85.2%	87.2%	↑
1a	Resident Satisfaction - North	Customer survey	95%	90.2%	82.1%	86.8%	-	↑
1b	Resident Satisfaction - South	Customer survey	95%	89.1%	85.2%	83.9%	-	↓
2	Percentage of orders commenced and completed within stipulated time periods	System generated	95%	88.3%	87.7%	86.3%	87%	↓
3	Appointments Kept	Customer survey	98%	98.2%	97.9%	97.5%	97.5%	↓
4	Number of orders for which a default notice has been issued*	System generated	<30	0	15	17	-	↓
5	Average time to complete responsive repairs	System generated	9 calendar days	10.2	9.9	10.5	10.1	↓
6	Repairs completed Right First Time	Customer survey	90%	89.9%	87.3%	84.8%	86.8%	↓
7	Completion of quality control inspections per month and reports issued to contractor	System generated	90% pass	94.1%	93.4%	90.5%	92.5%	↓
8	Percentage of orders for non-specialist works completed by a subcontractor each month	System generated	<20% by volume	3.7%	9.8%	5.3%	7.2%	↑
9	Percentage of orders where further appointment made whilst on site	Customer survey	95%	27.5%	20.5%	7.5%	17.7%	↓

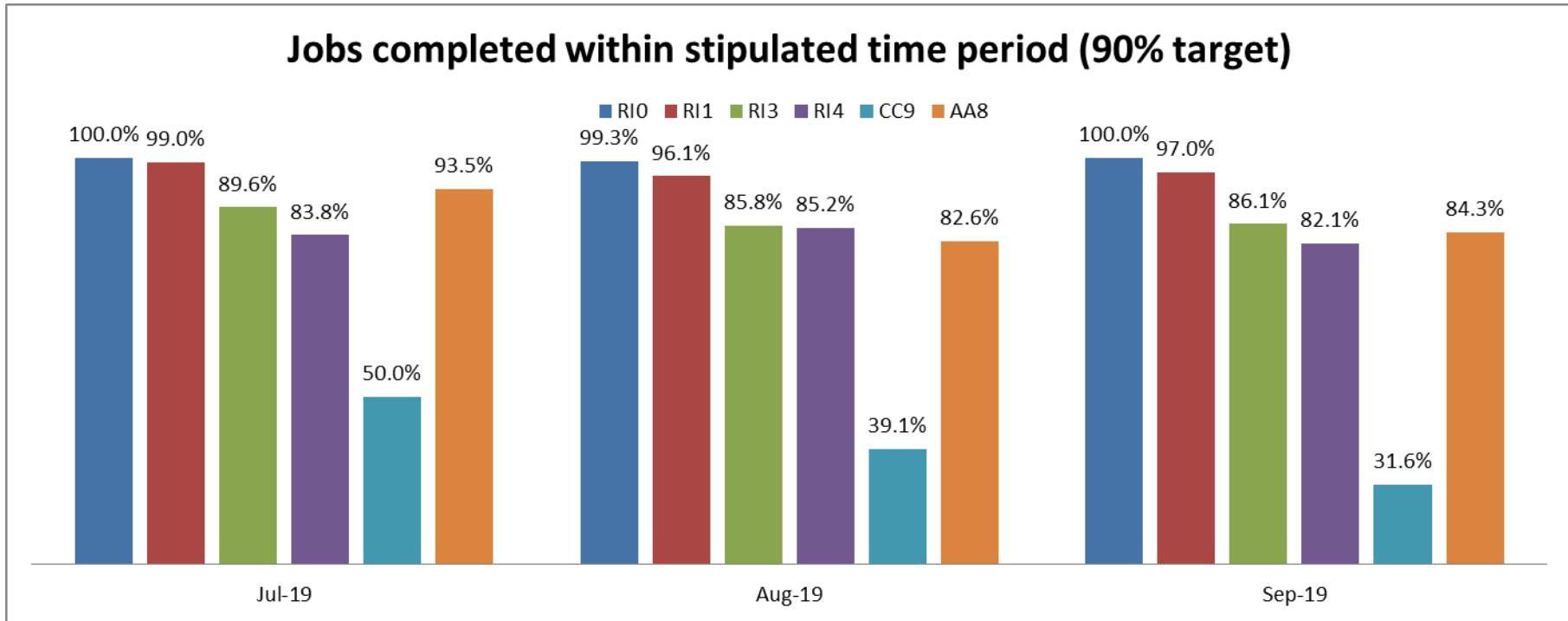
Customer Survey graphs (sample c.800pm from October 2018)

Customer Survey Responses



	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19
— Appointments Kept	97.3%	97.6%	96.9%	97.5%	98.4%	97.2%	97.3%	97.2%	97.0%	98.2%	97.9%	97.5%
— Right First Time	82.8%	86.7%	91.7%	90.4%	88.2%	87.9%	86.9%	82.9%	84.2%	90.0%	87.3%	84.8%
— Satisfaction	86.4%	89.8%	89.1%	89.5%	88.8%	88.8%	86.2%	84.9%	86.2%	89.6%	83.6%	85.2%

Completions within stipulated time periods



Total orders raised/completed on time

	RIO: out of hours complete in 4 hours: emergencies		RI1: in hours complete in 4 hours: emergencies		RI3: urgent up to 3 working days		RI4: routine up to 20 working days		CC9: Complaints and Casework		AA8: Aids and Adaptations	
	Raised	Completed	Raised	Completed	Raised	Completed	Raised	Completed	Raised	Completed	Raised	Completed
July-19	448	448	409	405	1330	1192	2378	1992	30	15	77	72
Aug-19	444	441	511	491	1180	1012	2261	1927	23	9	86	71
Sept-19	415	415	465	451	1303	1122	2209	1814	19	6	140	118
Q1	1307	1304	1385	1347	3813	3326	6848	5733	72	30	303	261

Formal Interview with senior officers

On the 8th July 2019, the Scrutiny Commission formally interviewed the following senior officers: (Head of repairs and maintenance), (Acting Director of Environment), (Acting Head of traded services), (Director of Asset Management). Members of the commission had the opportunity to question officers on various aspects of the repairs service and to interrogate further a written report which was provided prior to the meeting. Questioning at this meeting identified the following issues:

1. **Resident verification of completion of repairs is not in place:** One core recommendation of the 2011 scrutiny report was that residents should have a central role in verifying that their repair was complete. This followed an admission by the contractors that some operatives were systematically reporting completion of repairs, when they were not complete, or even without even attending the property. The question was asked: “. . . who decides that a job is complete? Who gets to verify that on Southwark's systems?

“So the contractor SBS says it's complete. One of the things that we do find where people are dissatisfied, that quite often the reason that they're dissatisfied, is that the job actually hasn't been completed. It's not as big a number as it previously was but it's still a number.”

2. **We are not surveying residents with overdue repairs:** Another recommendation from the 2011 scrutiny report was that the council should not only survey people who have had their repair reported as complete, but also those where the repair is overdue. The point was to ensure that the council wasn't simply patting itself on the back for completing repairs, but also seeking feedback from that group of residents who had not had their repair completed. Satisfaction levels will be disproportionately high among residents with newly completed repairs. It is important that others are included in the surveying process. At the time, the Cabinet undertook to implement this recommendation.

On questioning, it became apparent that this practice had been introduced but had since been dropped. *“We used to do a survey of people whose repair was overdue and not completed. We got very few people that would actually answer that service. And we've got exactly the same response every time, which was, we need to know what's happening, we don't know what's happening. So that was one thing we did. And that sort of fell away. And I think it might be something that we maybe should resurrect. I think things fell away for a while when we were demobilising the Mears contract.”*

3. **Southwark invests a large amount of time and effort surveying. We may not be getting the balance right.** Officers explained that the council monitors satisfaction, completion and a number of other KPIs via a telephone/online survey of residents who have had repairs completed. Each month they collect 800 responses to this survey. A large amount of effort goes into to compiling this information. The committee raised a question mark over the extent of this work. For example, would it be better to do 400 surveys, and then use the newly freed up resource to focus on resolving problem repairs which have been identified via other means (such as complaints or Councillor casework).
4. **More complex jobs can be notified as complete, when they are not complete:** Officers acknowledged a point made in the committee meeting that complex jobs seem to be an issue.

Anecdotally, a committee member stated that it is the more complicated jobs which seem to take disproportionately longer to complete.

One officer stated: *“The other point is actually when there's two parts to the job. I think you made the point earlier about actually someone going away thinking it's completed. Well, actually sometimes that's a that's just a misunderstanding on the operative's part, because he's actually the carpenter who's done the carpentry work and he thinks is completed, but actually it needs to be painted or something needs to be done around it. So it's managing the communications around that as well and making sure that we've got all of our planning and resourcing right. So if you do take a day off work, actually the carpenter comes in with the tiler.”*

Informal conversations with officers

The Chair of the committee spoke informally with officers during the scrutiny process to get a broader picture of the repairs service and identify some issues that it may have been more difficult to address in a public forum. Below, we outline the issues which came out of those conversations. There are some direct quotes used but these are not attributed.

Strategic and Cultural Changes in SBS: It was suggested that SBS have grown and expanded in a number of areas since taking on Mears' working in October 2018, but there has been not strategic review of how they should operate, nor of the cultural changes which need to take place in order to make the service more tailored to residents. One officer stated: “If I've got a criticism of SBS, it's that it doesn't focus enough on the customer.”

Pay systems in SBS: One of the reasons given for this is the way repairs operatives are paid, which encourages faster and sometimes short-term solutions, instead of focusing on longer-term wholistic approach. One officer was asked “Are there incentives in the pay system which cause perverse outcomes?” In response they said:

“In some ways yes, but the solution is not to not incentivise people. Because in the industry, it's normal to be incentivised. The incentive to do a job quickly means that the most skilled people at SBS can do a job quickly, but they won't necessarily do a complete job, . . . for an emergency repair, they will get paid just as much to stop the immediate problem, than they will for replacing the whole thing.”

For example, there's a leak in a property, they only want to spend 15 minutes in that property, it's an emergency. ‘Oh, I'll put some tape round it,’ whereas you could actually change the waste. ‘But oh, I haven't got that one on my van, so I'll do that and someone else can come back.’”

On missed appointments: Another example given related to missed appointments: An officer said:

“One of our managers is currently having a debate with them [SBS] about appointments, because although the survey is showing most of the appointments are kept, 98%, we are paying out much more for missed appointments to SBS than any of the other contractors.

This particularly relates is often no negotiation with the tenant over appointment time.

“There is a misunderstanding of what an appointment is . . . They believe that if they've not made an appointment at first contact, that they decide when they're coming and they just tell the customer, that's when they are coming.”

On the survey sample: With regard to the point made in the formal interview about surveying residents with overdue repairs, some of the reasons why this stopped were further explained:

“The stats on that were satisfaction levels were not even measurable. What came out of that was that we were annoying people in that we were phoning them about a job that wasn’t done. Most people said, I don’t know what’s happening.”

What happens next cards: So, in response to this, a solution was put in place:

“That’s why we introduced the ‘what happens next card’ which is routinely not used. The idea came from core group – The operative is supposed to phone back to their planner, say ‘I can’t do this now, but can you get the next appointment for me or this trade has now got to come’, and the card is then left with the resident which says, these are the things that will now happen, this is when . . . That process has been in place for a long time, but it is routinely not used.

Specialisation in the call centre: The level of specialisation in the call centres, levels of training and the fact that it does not sit with the repairs team were also issues raised.

One officer said “If there is a call centre, I like a specialist call centre. We can give the contact centre all the specialist diagnostic tools in the world, but we can’t give people that experience. It’s changed from being specialist before. It should be seamless between call centre and repair.”

One officer went and spent time in the call centre. They said: “The agent I sat next to, the first call she took was a housing application, and I was surprised. And I questioned that and she said, ‘Oh, yes, I’m going to take myself out of that que now’. That’s when I learned, it was no longer specialist in repairs.”

Turnover and training in the call centre: In relation to training and staff turnover, the following points were raised:

“It’s the churn in call centres, that’s the problem, low paid. When they first took on apprenticeships, they had six weeks training, they went out with repairs operatives, they were trained. That’s not happening anymore. They come in ... and I might be over-egging it . . .and it seems to me, they are on the phones . . .The ethos at the minute in the contact centre is to train them to answer everything . . .You do need some people with that expertise. Not following a script and pressing a button.”

One officer suggested that embedding a call centre with the repairs service, building up expertise among call centre operatives may be the solution. It was said that this could also enable the call centre staff to be more pro-active in regard to problem repairs.

Verification of complete repairs: On resident verification of the completion of repairs, the following was observed: “Mears used to let residents verify via text system. But SBS are trying to introduce this on appointments in advance. Multi-trade jobs and real completion is a problem So jobs can get closed down when they haven’t actually been done.”

The light client model: One officer was asked about the “light client” relationship with SBS and whether or not senior officers held accountable for the service actually had the ability to make changes needed.

“I think the answer is no . . . as the people running the service, as the person who comes to scrutiny, who has to come to SMT, CMH and say I’m responsible . . . I’ll make it better, I’ve got to do it through other people, but I’m responsible. I’m not sure I’m in that position anymore.”

The chair came away from these conversations that SBS is, to some extent, bureaucratically insulated and not accountable enough for the service it is delivering. This seems to be directly related to the “light client” model.

Committee members' day spent with Housing Repairs

Cllrs Edwards, Dixon-Fyle and McCallum all spent one day, going around the borough with repair operatives, finding out about how the repairs system works. We would like to place on record our thanks to those officers and operatives who helped to make this happen. It provided invaluable insight for this scrutiny report. The following issues were identified as a result.

Codes not matching the actual time spent – One repairs operative spoke about how the job codes allocated to each type of job do not accurately represent the amount of time needed to do these jobs. He spoke of the workforce describing some jobs as “golden codes”, because they could be done very quickly but might have half a day of work allocated to them. Another example given was that a repairs operative would get double the money for removing and refixing a toilet pan, rather than fully fixing the toilet, but the work is the same. Also, the code for a booster pump or gulper pump is completely wrong. They can be only a one hour job, but it is paid for 8 hours.

Appointment kept is not verified - Arrival for an appointment was confirmed by the repairs operative simply tapping a button on his phone app

Confirming completion: No role for the resident in confirming a repair is complete – completion was also confirmed by clicking on the App. There appeared to be no role for the resident in confirming it was complete.

Call centre information often a problem: One repairs operative stated that the information given to them via the call centre was often inadequate, meaning they might not have the right parts with them. He believed that training at call centre needs to be more intensive and specialist.

Quality of materials: One repairs operative spoke about the variable quality of materials used. It was his belief that Southwark had been put on stop by some suppliers because of non-payment, and this meant the council had to keep changing suppliers.

Visit to Islington Council

On the 18th September 2018, the Chair of the Commission visited Islington Council and spoke with Cllr Diarmaid Ward, Executive Member for Housing and Development and Simon Kwong, Service Director. The reason for requesting the meeting is that Islington had brought their Housing Repairs Service back in house in 2014. The Chair asked them a number of questions about their experience and how some of these lessons might apply to Southwark .

Both Councillor Ward and Simon Kwong confirmed that, with lots of hard work, the service in Islington was performing well since it came back in house. KPIS are being met and resident feedback is good.

They also said that there was no financial incentive scheme in place for repairs operatives. All staff have been moved onto LGPS terms and conditions.

‘Housing Direct’ take their repairs calls and these are operated by experienced officers who are expert in housing repairs. Their entire focus is to get the right people there, with the right equipment at the right time. No new operator is left on a phone by themselves for at least six weeks.

They said that the cultural shift in the organisation has been very important. It has taken years of “hard slog” but they are really seeing the results now. They said that on taking over the service they had to confront and change some “bizarre practices” which they had inherited from the old service. Staff now go direct to their first job, instead of coming to the office first.

They also referred to “Multi-skilling training” which is a programme introduced to build up the general skill levels across trades.

The Chair would like to formally thank Cllr Ward and Mr Kwong for taking to meet with him and speak about their repairs service.

Tenants and Leaseholder Survey

Note on the draft: The results from the survey are still coming in. The publication of the survey was delayed because of the purdah period at the General Election. The final version of the report will include full results of the survey and additional recommendations arising from evidence gathered.

The Housing Scrutiny Commission has carried out housing repairs service survey. This was developed in consultation with council officers and published using the new Southwark Consultation Hub. The survey can still be viewed at this address: <https://consultations.southwark.gov.uk/housing-community-services-department-community-engagement-team/housing-repairs-tenants-and-leaseholder-survey>

The survey has two main objectives. First of all, to test the data the council is gathering via its own survey methods and also to collect individual examples of problematic repairs which may be indicative of wider problems with the way the service is being provided.

The Housing Scrutiny Commission does accept that we may not have all of the background on each of the problems or issues reported in our survey. There may well be explanations for some of the negative experiences which are detailed in responses. However, we do believe that it is possible to discern patterns from these reports, especially when they tally with other evidence gathered as part of this scrutiny review. Below, we set out the high-level data from the survey and themes from the more detailed reports given. This helps to give a picture of the repairs service from the point of view of service users.

The Call Centre

There is a demeaning way they tell you something isn't an emergency. So quick to tell you what they don't deal with than how they can help

They are friendly enough but getting them to raise a job (particularly if it's an urgent one) is virtually impossible. They employ gatekeeping tactics and it's very frustrating. I don't feel like they genuinely care about people's stressful situations. They often speak very abruptly and give wrong information about legal right to repair, assuming that tenants don't know their rights. The call centre needs remote monitoring - like random listening samples of calls. Then you might get a taste of what really goes on. If you turn up to monitor them, or if they know or suspect they are being monitored then they'll be on their best behaviour. This is why it's important for you to monitor the calls when the staff are not aware that it's happening. I think you might be shocked at the way they speak to people.

I had to argue with the contact centre about the repair. The door entry system was not working and we couldn't get in the block, but it was felt this wasn't an emergency. After some arguing it was accepted that any inability to access our flats was probably an emergency.

The operator since to have something I would call a 'crib sheet' whereby the incoming call must fit into one of the categories listed and judged by the operators understanding. quite often the information input is incorrect and therefore the wrong repair person turns up - has to go away - another time of waiting and frustration until the correct repair person turns up. This is mostly the information given by quite a few tenants in my block.

It's always a struggle to get the job raised correctly, workmen turn up to do the job with the wrong information about the issue

Emergencies not being treated as emergencies

“Full electricity outage. We were without power for nearly 2 days and nights. It was a nightmare to raise the job . . . We had to involve the Cabinet member for Housing to get them to act. The repair team had to attend three times as the problem was so difficult to diagnose and kept being passed to and from U.K. power networks.”

Jobs being marked as complete, when they are not

“In Nov 2019, I had a leak from the guttering across my living room ceiling and down the wall. I reported it, long story short, the job was marked as complete. I requested a Technical Officer attend to check the work was completed to a satisfactory standard. I have chased this repeatedly but heard nothing back. In the meantime, leaks started coming through again the week before Christmas. Again, I rang the call centre. I was told that an email would be sent and I would hear back in due course. Up to this point, I have not heard back. I have informed my housing officer and local Cllr as well.”

Not having the right parts

“Engineer came to repair my shower did not have shower head or hose said he would be back in two weeks no contact after eight weeks despite phone calls. I would not class this a good service.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Important note: These recommendations will be added to once the results of the tenants and leaseholder survey are received.

The light client model is not working

The light client model has serious weaknesses for a service which needs cultural, root and branch changes. The Commission has gathered substantial evidence that the contract/commissioner style relationship which has been preserved beyond insourcing is problematic. One of the major advantages of insourcing is supposed to be the direct management control it gives the council over a service. But the light-client model forces senior council managers to ask for changes to be made, instead of mandating them. This is holding back the rate of improvement in the repairs service. Islington Council, for example, has direct control over its service and appears to have made significant improvements since 2014 as a result.

Recommendation 1: The commission recommends that, following appropriate consultation with staff and stakeholders, serious consideration is given to dismantling the light client model so that Southwark takes direct management control over the repairs service.

Resident verification of completion of repairs

It is clear from the evidence gathered in the report that there is no role for residents in verifying if a repair has been completed or not. Indeed, there is some suggestion that repair operatives see “completion” of a repair in terms of completing their part of a wider problem, or even simply attending a repair appointment. At other local authorities, residents sign off on the completion of a repair.

Recommendation 2: Taking advantage of new systems being introduced, Southwark should introduce a system which requires a resident to confirm if a repair is complete, and the repair should not be marked as complete until the resident has done this.

Feedback on problem repairs

One issue which has been identified with the survey used to monitor satisfaction with repairs is that we are only surveying those people whose repairs are marked as complete. The outcome of this is that people who have longer-term issues which SBS has not resolved, are not being surveyed. This leads to a skewing of the statistics towards higher satisfaction. The Commission accepts the evidence given by officers that trying to survey this group was very difficult, because residents could not understand why they were being asked about an incomplete repair. However, the council needs to find a way of getting feedback from people who are “stuck in the system”, residents who have ongoing complicated repairs which have not been resolved.

Recommendation 3: A new Key Performance Indicator should be introduced defining the number of unresolved, incomplete repairs which are beyond their target completion time. Driving down this number should become a key priority of the service.

Resource allocation and the residents survey

The council carries out 800 surveys per month to monitor performance. There is a feeling among commission members that we may be putting too much resource into these surveys and some could be redirected towards problem solving more difficult and complicated repairs.

Recommendation 4: The council should halve the number of surveys done to 400 and then use the newly freed up resource to focus on resolving problem repairs which have been identified via other means (such as complaints or Councillor casework).

Pay incentives

The Commission recognises that it is not within our remit to make specific recommendations in regard to staff pay and terms and conditions. That should always be done through negotiation with recognised staff trade unions. Nonetheless, the evidence gathered here does support the conclusion that current some SBS pay incentives are promoting perverse outcomes in some cases, which are not focussed on completing repairs quickly, to a high standard at a reasonable cost. The evidence on “golden” job codes is particularly relevant to this. It is noticeable to that Islington has benefitted greatly from having a stable, equality proofed pay scheme which contains no perverse incentives.

Recommendation 5: Changes should be made to staff pay incentives in the repairs service, via negotiation with recognised trade unions, which ensure speedy, high quality repairs and remove perverse incentives to prioritise inappropriately.

“What happens next” cards

There will be times when operatives cannot complete a repair, but it important that residents know what is going to happen next and when. For this reason, the council introduced a system whereby operatives would phone their planner and arrange for a new appointment (or next step) whilst they are still at the resident’s home. The information agreed would then be shared with residents on a what happens next card. In the words of one manager “That process has been in place for a long time, but it is routinely not used.” (This a good example of lack of direct management control referred to in recommendation 1.)

Recommendation 6: “What happens next cards” should be re-introduced and properly implemented by managers so that they are used in all cases of incomplete repairs.

Specialisation in the call centre

Both repairs operatives and senior managers noted that problems were arising because of a lack of specialisation and training. We heard clear evidence that telephone operators handling repairs were switching between this work and handing other calls. One repairs operative stated that the information given to them via the call centre was often inadequate, meaning they might not have the right parts with them. He believed that training at call centre needs to be more intensive and specialist.

Recommendation 7: Consideration should be given to separating a specialist repairs call centre from the wider call centre operation and basing this team with a newly integrated repairs service. In addition, a review of training requirements for these roles should be carried out, to ensure staff responding to repairs requests have the skills and knowledge they need.

Multi-skilling training

During the visit to Islington Council, the Cabinet member and Director referred to the success of the introduction of “Multi-skilling training” which is a programme introduced to build up the general skill levels across trades. The Commission believes such a programme is not in place in Southwark and that our repairs service could operate in a more flexible way if it were introduced. It would reduce the number of call-backs and multiple appointments needed to complete repairs.

Recommendation 8: Working in partnership with staff trade unions and taking advice from councils such as Islington, Southwark should introduce a comprehensive multi-skilling training programme for repairs operatives

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2019-20****AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)****NOTE:** Original held by Scrutiny Team; all amendments/queries to Fitzroy Williams Tel: 020 7525 7102

Name	No of copies	Name	No of copies
Co-Opted Members			
Ina Negoita (Homeowners' Council)	1	Chris Page - Head of Cabinet Office and Public Affairs	1
David Eyles (Homeowners' Council Reserve)	1		
Cris Claridge (Tenants' Council)	1		
Member		Fitzroy Williams, Scrutiny Team SPARES	10
		External	
		Caroline Vicent	1
Electronic Copy			
Members			
Councillor Gavin Edwards			
Councillor Hamish McCallum			
Councillor Jack Buck			
Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE			
Councillor Jon Hartley			
Councillor Nick Johnson			
Councillor Bill Williams			
Reserves Members			
Councillor Anood Al-Samerai			
Councillor Helen Dennis			
Councillor Paul Fleming			
Councillor Darren Merrill			
Councillor Victoria Olisa			
Councillor Charlie Smith			
		Total: 14	
		Dated: June 2019	