

## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday 31 March 2025

6.30 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London  
SE1 2QH

## Supplemental Agenda No.1

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6.	<b>Governance and Oversight of Housing Services</b> To hear from Councillor Sarah King, Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Hakeem Osinaike, Strategic Director of Housing on the Governance and Oversight of Housing Services, including sub-topics but not limited to <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Managerial Oversight/Procedures to deal with estates such as Canada Water/Devon Mansions.</li><li>• Procurement and supply chain management for Housing Services, (Plentific)</li></ul>	5 - 9

### Contact

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Webpage: [www.southwark.gov.uk](http://www.southwark.gov.uk)

Date: 25 March 2025

<b>Meeting Name:</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	31 March 2025
<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Governance and Oversight of Housing Services – Electrical Inspections Certificate Reports</b>
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>	All wards, Southwark Council Tenants & Leaseholders
<b>Classification:</b>	Open
<b>Reason for lateness (if applicable):</b>	N/A
<b>From:</b>	Strategic Director of Housing

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note and comment on this report that sets out the background to the self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) regarding Electrical Inspections Certificate Reports (EICRs), and details the new governance and oversight arrangements now in place for housing services to prevent repeat failure.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2) The failure to ensure that all council homes have a current EICR in place became apparent following an internal audit urgently commissioned in March 2024 to prepare for the new Consumer Standards prior to them coming into force in April 2024.
- 3) Under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, the RSH has adopted a proactive regulatory approach to health and safety of social housing with new consumer standards. Registered providers must identify and meet all legal requirements that relate to the health and safety of tenants in their homes, including electrical safety.
- 4) As awareness of such issues is a major plank of the new regulatory approach a decision was made in consultation with members and senior officers, to self-refer to the RSH on that basis that over 50% of Southwark council homes had not undergone an EICR in the past five years.
- 5) To provide assurance to OSC that there are clear and improved managerial and political monitoring systems in place, with Cabinet members and senior officers now effectively overseeing service delivery, legislative compliance, and risk mitigation, the following has been implemented:

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENTS

- 6) The following structure is now in place:

- a) Heads of Service and Directors report actions and progress to their own Departmental Management Team (DMT).
- b) All DMTs report weekly to Housing Senior Management Team.
- c) The Housing Improvement Board, led by the Strategic Director of Housing, coordinates operational delivery.
- d) Weekly performance reporting to the Chief Executive on safety and compliance.
- e) Specific Lead Member Briefings as required.
- f) Chief Executive's Housing Assurance Board reporting to Members Oversight Board.
- g) Strategic Housing Oversight Board, chaired by the Leader of the Council, to provide political scrutiny.

## **PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING**

- 7) A new monthly reporting model to all internal governance structures and the RSH includes:
  - a) Highlight reports for each workstream
  - b) Milestone tracking
  - c) Performance dashboards with KPIs
  - d) Risk and issue logs for early detection and escalation

## **SERVICE TRANSFORMATION AND INVESTMENT**

- 8) Staff changes across the service, in particular Repairs and Maintenance, including:
  - a) a new leadership structure and new directors and assistance directors with strong housing expertise.
  - b) Cross-council support involving Finance, HR, IT, Public Health, and Strategy teams.
  - c) Creation of a transformation programme team for programme management and analysis.
  - d) Over £250 million investment has been committed over 3 years to improve safety and quality.
  - e) An independent review of housing safety and compliance is also being commissioned to be supported by senior officers.

## HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 9) This plan targets critical areas such as safety and compliance, repairs, damp and mould management, and fair housing allocations. The approach is structured around ten core principles, emphasising not only immediate remediation actions but also longer-term systemic changes.
- 10) These principles include enhanced data management systems, digital integrations, and more robust governance structures to ensure continuous monitoring and transparent reporting to residents, Members, the RSH and other stakeholders.
- 11) Key Plan Principle 7: All Homes Meet Health & Safety Standards, focuses on:
  - a) Completing all outstanding electrical condition reports (EICRs).
  - b) Analysing the root cause of past failures to ensure long-term solutions.
  - c) Implementation of the new True Compliance system for real-time monitoring.
  - d) Regular reporting and performance dashboards for accountability.

## CURRENT STATUS

- 12) Despite notable progress in several workstreams, there have been challenges in some areas including electrical testing, and to address these gaps, a rapid programme of work is underway.
- 13) As a foundational element of service transformation considerable work is being undertaken to cleanse and analyse our data to ensure we have assurance on all data going forward.
- 14) There are 24,256 of our 33,430 homes still needing an up-to-date EICR ,as there have been issues in delivering changes of scale with contractors, which are now mostly resolved with revised contracts and new procurement underway.
- 15) Despite these delays, progress with the completion of EICRs is still on track for full compliance by March 2026, and currently rated amber.
- 16) The migration of data to the new True Compliance IT system is also an area being addressed, and the Chart below compares the True Compliance migrated data with the service estimate of the Numbers completed each month.
- 17) The Consumer Standards, although less than one year old, are the roadmap to follow as a good landlord with safe homes, and we are satisfied that we now have a clear programme in place, including of proactive electrical testing, with robust governance and oversight to ensure we meet the outcomes that the standards require.

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Background Papers	Held At	Contact

**APPENDICES**

No.	Title

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Strategic Director of Housing		
<b>Report Author</b>	Head of Strategy & Business Support		
<b>Version</b>	Draft		
<b>Dated</b>	24 March 2025		
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No		
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>			
<b>Officer Title</b>		<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and Assurance		No	No
Strategic Director, Finance		No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>		No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>			25 March 2025

<b>Meeting Name:</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
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<b>From:</b>	Strategic Director of Housing

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note and comment on this report that sets out the governance and oversight arrangements for housing services, and the comprehensive programme of transformation work underway.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2) To ensure that the council can effectively respond to the recent inspection of the housing service by the Regulator of Social Housing we have reviewed and enhanced our governance and oversight arrangements.
  - a) A new permanent top structure for the housing directorate has been established with a programme of Department Management Meetings reporting into Senior Management Team and Programme Boards.
  - b) A new Housing Improvement Board, chaired by the Strategic Director of Housing. Membership includes all relevant Directors and Heads of Service. The Board meets monthly and is responsible for delivery of a new Housing Improvement Plan.
  - c) A Resident Engagement Board is being established that will be chaired by the Director of Landlord Services and report into the Housing Improvement Board.
  - d) The Chief Executive is now receiving weekly performance reporting on fire remedial actions.
  - e) Lead Members are specifically briefed on updates through Lead Member Briefings
  - f) We are also establishing a Chief Executive Housing Assurance Board which will oversee the Housing Improvement Plan and report into a Members Oversight Board and the council's formal governance.

g) In addition, a broad range of support has also been mobilised from teams across the council to support the plan.

3) The chart below provides an overview of the governance arrangements in the housing service.

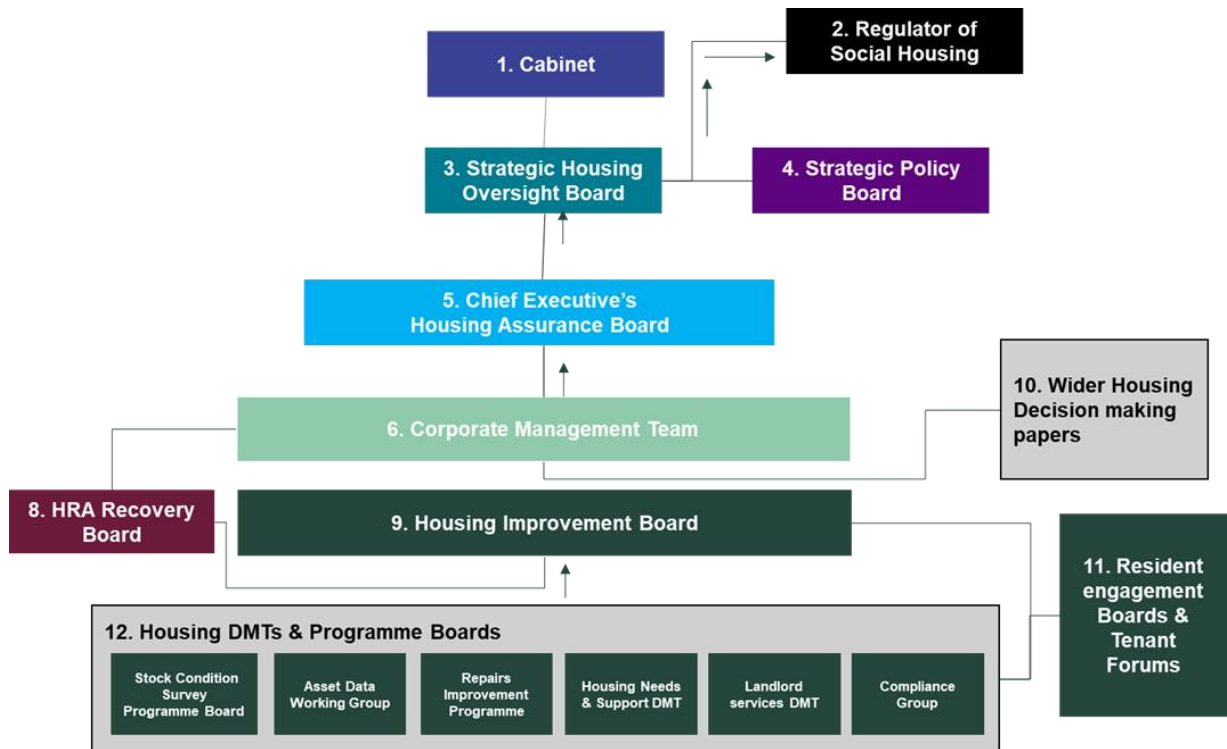


Figure 1: Housing: High-Level Governance Map

- 4) The Housing Improvement Board brings together senior officers from across the council and is chaired by the Strategic Director of Housing. This Board meets monthly and to date has focused on key areas requiring immediate progression, including compliance, procurement of a new stock condition survey, delivery of new enabling systems, structural changes and additional recruitment.
- 5) The board has recently been extended to include senior representation from across the council and members of the Housing Improvement Programme team.
- 6) The Programme team work to the Board and have responsibility for the improvement programme reporting. The team have refined its approach by focusing on delivering a planned and systemic approach to change, with existing plans having been stress-tested and amended with a full review and refresh of the existing plan incorporating:
  - a) Scoping of each individual workstream

- b) Clear definitions of each project
  - c) Further and agreed specific milestones
  - d) Benefit and risk mapping
  - e) Programme tracking and monitoring
- 7) Reporting arrangements have been strengthened to begin establishing full programme reporting, timely performance reports and governance arrangements that help to strengthen accountability across the service and ensure that all strands of the Housing Improvement Plan are delivered at pace and with quality in a manner that can provide assurance to tenants, Members, the organisation and the regulator.
- 8) The Housing Improvement Plan targets critical areas such as safety and compliance, repairs, damp and mould management, and fair housing allocations. The approach is structured around ten core principles, emphasising not only immediate remediation actions but also longer-term systemic changes. These include enhanced data management systems, digital integrations, and more robust governance structures to ensure continuous monitoring and transparent reporting to residents, Members, the RSH and other stakeholders.

Meeting/Board	Members
Housing Improvement Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hakeem Osinaike (Chair): Strategic Director of Housing</li> <li>• Rhona Cadenhead: Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy &amp; Communities)</li> <li>• Stuart Davies: Managing Director of Southwark Construction</li> <li>• Abi Oguntokun: Director of Landlord Services (Acting)</li> <li>• Candida Thompson: Director of Housing Needs and Support</li> <li>• Perry Singh: Head of Strategy and Business Support</li> <li>• Jerry Austin: Assistant Director of Responsive Maintenance</li> <li>• Timothy Jones: Director of Corporate Finance</li> <li>• Dominic Cain: Director of Exchequer</li> <li>• Eddie Townsend: Director of Communications</li> <li>• Kevin Heslop: Programme Lead - TDS</li> <li>• Oluwatosin Apata: Strategic Human Resources Business Partner</li> <li>• Alice Granville: Head of Special Projects</li> <li>• Sonia Omojola: Programme Manager</li> <li>• Michael Clark: Programme Manager</li> </ul>

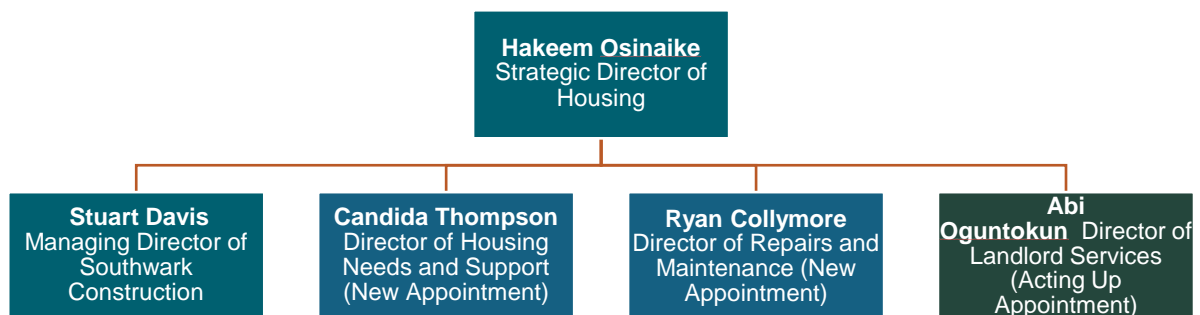
- 9) The Housing Improvement Board now reports into a new **Strategic Housing Oversight Board**, chaired by the Leader of the Council and including several Cabinet Members. This Board meets every two-months to ensure members have full oversight of the Housing Improvement Plan.



Meeting/Board	Members
<b>Strategic Housing Oversight Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Keiron Williams: Leader of the Council</li> <li>• Cllr Helen Dennis: Cabinet Member for New Homes and Sustainable Development</li> <li>• Cllr Sarah King: Cabinet Member for Council Homes</li> <li>• Cllr Stephanie Cyran: Cabinet Member for Equalities, Democracy &amp; Finance</li> <li>• Althea Loderick: Chief Executive</li> <li>• Clive Palfreyman: Strategic Director of Finance</li> <li>• Hakeem Osinaike: Strategic Director of Housing</li> <li>• Rhona Cadenhead: Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy &amp; Communities)</li> <li>• Timothy Jones: Director of Corporate Finance</li> <li>• Head of Housing Transformation</li> <li>• Members of Housing Leadership Team as required</li> </ul>

Figure 2: Strategic Housing Oversight Board

10) A new top structure for the Housing Service has been completed.



11) In order to strengthen and enhance our approach to repairs, maintenance, and compliance, 3 Assistant Director posts have been created:

- Assistant Director of Planned Maintenance
- Assistant Director of Building Safety and Compliance
- Assistant Director of Repairs

12) An experienced Head of Housing Transformation has also been recruited and will start with the council in May 2025.

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