

Item No. 5	Classification: Open	Date: 29 February 2024	Meeting Name: Housing, Community Safety and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission
Report title:		Rouel Road Heating Project and Heating/Hot-water Outages	
Ward(s) or groups affected:			
From:		Asset Management	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission notes the responses provided against each of the questions posed at the meeting held on 6 February 2024.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Rouel Road and Four Squares estates are served by a district heating system. The heat ultimately comes from the South East London Combined Heat and Power (SELCHP) facility in Lewisham with gas boilers at the Clements Road boiler house providing backup. There are nine plant rooms around these two estates which convey heat from the district system to the blocks. These plant rooms were refurbished by the council between 2020 and 2023 and this unfortunately caused disruption to residents heating and hot water provision on several occasions.
3. At Scrutiny meeting held 6th Feb 2024 residents and ward councillors requested the points listed below are responded to and information provided:
 - **Question 1** - Rouel Road residents customer data collection (lack of records for customers calling for issues)
 - **Question 2** - Communication process with residents after first contact and post repairs
 - **Question 3** - Call Centre process for reporting issues and collection of data
 - **Question 4** - Repeat callers and escalation process
 - **Question 5** - Contract Management process for monitoring service providers at Rouel road estate
 - **Question 6** - Performance data of repairs (heating & hot water) over the past 5 years
 - **Question 7** - Assessment of reliability issues with heating network at

Rouel Road estate.

- **Question 8** - Process for assessing issues; plant room checks for block wide issues and individual properties.
- **Question 9** - Maintenance and planned works for heating and hot water outages at Rouel Road
- **Question 10** - Incongruence (inconsistent) of data, between report provided to scrutiny and resident feedback at scrutiny meeting held on 6 February 2024.
- **Question 11** - Action Plan for short and long term solutions at Rouel Road estate.

RESPONSES TO WARD COUNCILLOR AND RESIDENTS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

4. Response to question 1 - Rouel Road residents customer data collection (lack of records for customers calling for issues):

There is a call centre improvement plan now in place that has picked up the concerns and feedback from residents and Councillors.

5. Response to question 2 - Communication process with residents after first contact and post repairs:

Circa. Four hundred customers per month complete post completion customer surveys to assess customer satisfaction and quality of work.

6. Response to question 3 - Call Centre process for reporting issues and collection of data:

If the person reporting an outage is the TRA chair or a ward councillor, the call centre raises a job directly with the relevant maintenance contractor (in this case OCO) for attendance. If the person reporting an outage is not a TRA chair or ward councillor, the call centre verifies if an outage is a block outage by calling other residents in the same block. This is to prevent individual outages being erroneously reported as a block outage. Once verified the same process is followed of raising a job with the maintenance contractor.

In terms of data collect, the call centre only collects call waiting and call handling times. Heating availability data is tracked by the maintenance contractor attending the job and engineering admin, based on jobs reported via the call centre (or other route as applicable).

7. Response to question 4 - Repeat callers and escalation process:

There is a call centre improvement plan now in place that has picked up the concerns and feedback from residents and Councillors.

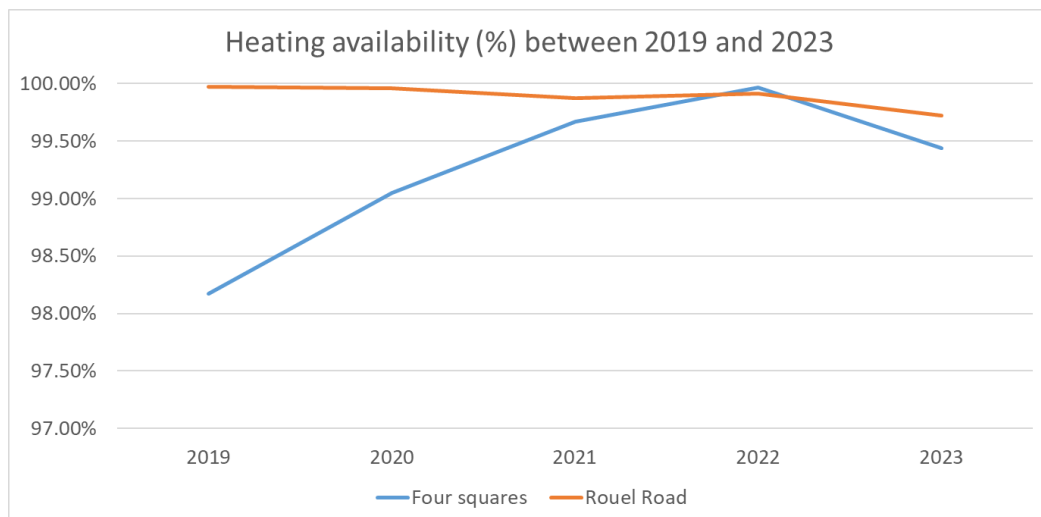
8. Response to question 5 - Contract Management process for monitoring service providers at Rouel road estate:

The Major Works team initially would manage and monitor the Rouel Road and Four Squares plant room refurbishment contract through Monthly Contract Meetings. More recently the transformation change was to undertake internal client reviews called 'Scheme Updates' with the inclusion of the Engineering Colleagues as the M&E Experts. This has provided more challenge of the design and performance of consultants and contractors.

9. Response to question 6 - Performance data of repairs (heating & hot water) over the past 5 years:

The engineering department previously provided this information for 2022 and 2023. A wider data set covering the last five years is now provided in the table and graph below. See also the response to question 10 regarding how this data should be interpreted.

	Four squares		Rouel Road	
	Availability (%)	Average days of impact	Availability (%)	Average days of impact
2019	98.17%	6.66	99.97%	0.09
2020	99.05%	3.47	99.96%	0.14
2021	99.67%	1.22	99.87%	0.46
2022	99.97%	0.12	99.91%	0.31
2023	99.43%	2.06	99.72%	1.01



Council wide averages were 95%-98% though 2016 -2018 (Paragraph 17 Chart), from 2018-2023 that has increased to above 99%* due to change in

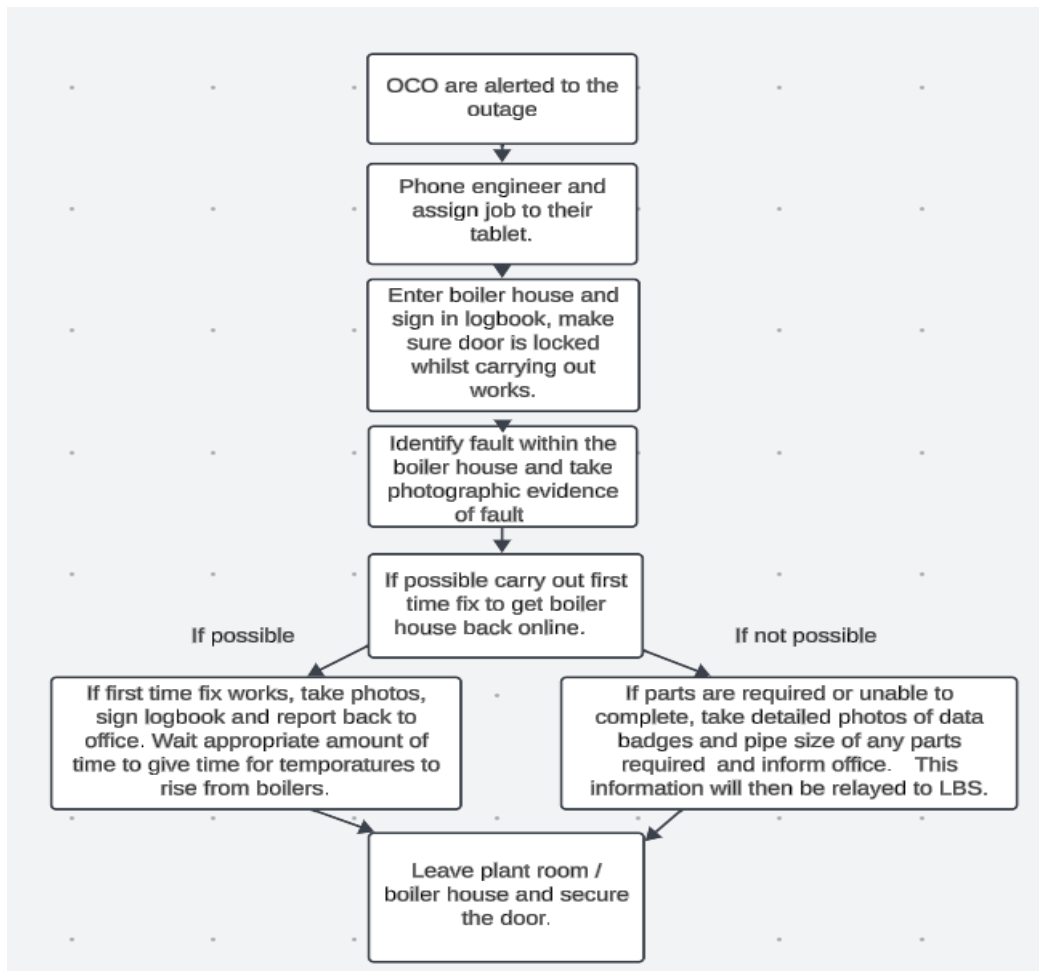
strategy and increased investments.

10. **Response to question 7 - Assessment of reliability issues with heating network at Rouel Road estate:**

Based on the Performance Data above. Engineering Services manages and monitors the day to day performance of Heat Network Systems across the Borough. Our BMS Dashboard (Building Management System) monitors the system and helps us to identify issues such as temperature or pressure drops that affect the residents experience of heating and comfort in their homes. This is a result of an targeted and ongoing investment in our Heat Networks since 2020 to enable improved monitoring and often allows us to recognise issues before residents even become aware.

11. **Response to question 8 - Process for assessing issues; plant room checks for block wide issues and individual properties:**

The diagram below shows the OCO process upon attending a boiler house following a reported outage.



12. Response to question 9 - Maintenance and planned works for heating and hot water outages at Rouel Road:

Please see Appendix 1 appended to this report “Vol 2 - Doc 6 - Tech Spec - Final - 100215 - Planned Maintenance Tasks.pdf” which lists and explains the various Planned and Preventative Maintenance activities undertaken.

13. Response to question 10 - Incongruence (inconsistent) of data, between report provided to scrutiny and resident feedback at scrutiny meeting held on 6 February 2024:

The availability data presented for the Rouel Road and Four Squares estates only relates to whole block outages. We recognise that other outages affective individual properties or small groups of properties but these are not reflected in the data. It is also worth noting that the number of properties on these large estates somewhat masks issues which affect only one or two blocks when statistics are presented as a percentage of the whole system.

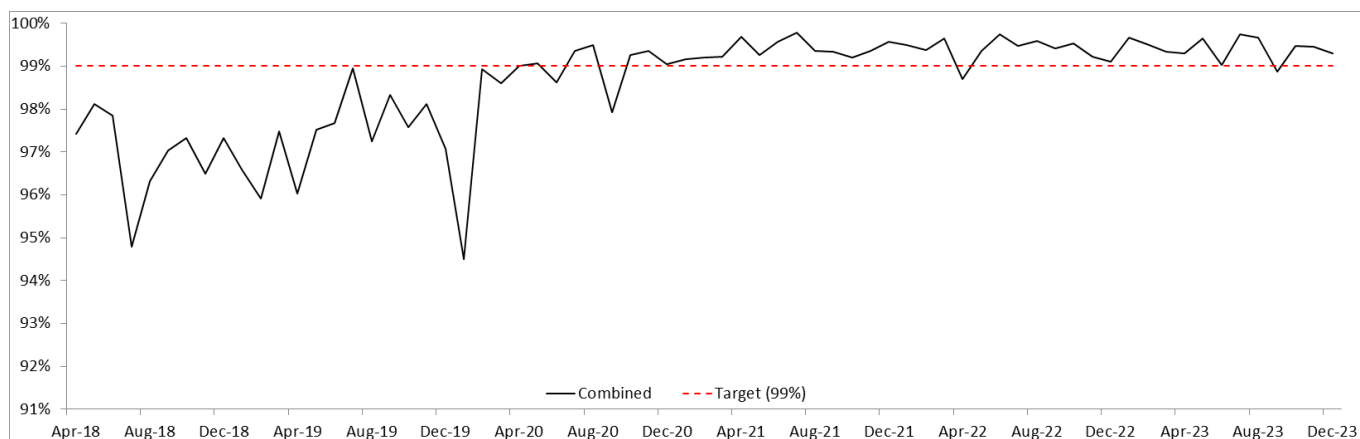
14. Response to question 11 - Action Plan for short and long term solutions at Rouel Road estate:

The plant rooms have now been handed back to the council's Engineering team and maintenance term contractor (OCO) for ongoing maintenance..

Further works to the estates' heat networks could include the underground mains, building distribution pipework and dwelling internal systems as these are mostly original to the construction of the estate. However, further investments would be subject to the usual prioritisation and resident consultation processes. It is also usual to allow one set of works to settle before making any further interventions.

FURTHER POINTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

15. As indicated above, all management of heating Contracts is now undertaken through the Specialist Engineering Team. We have removed the design of systems from Contractors and Consultants and brought that skill set back into the Council. This is demonstrated through the successful heating projects in progress (Newington Estate pipework replacement and North Peckham Estate boiler house works).
16. The successes of this new approach are evidenced by a positive ward councillor feedback which has been included as Appendix 2. We have also included a description of how a new microsite is being used on engineering department project to keep residents up to date as projects progress (see Appendix 3).
17. The HCSSC may also be interested to hear that wider Heat Networks Strategy approved by cabinet September 2021 is starting to be implemented. This includes using a data-driven approach to prioritise investments, undertaking options appraisals and feasibility studies, rolling out remote BMS visibility more widely, improving water quality and working to improve our communications. Efforts by the engineering team prior to this have also been having a positive impact on overall availability statistics across the borough, with the 99% target being hit in 34 out of 36 months between January 2021 and December 2023, which is a marked improvement on the preceding years.



18. The council is also considering new ways of gathering outage data that could provide more granular data. Under the Heat Networks (Metering and Billing) Regulations (2020), the council has a duty to retrofit heat meters in certain properties and is in the process of fitting around a thousand meters in different estates in the borough (this does not include Rouel Road or Four Squares yet). Heat meters within dwellings may eventually allow us to determine how long each individual property was affected by an outage (even if it was the only property affected). There are several technical complexities to this but we are actively looking into how the data collected by our new heat meters could be used to improve our outage data.

19. Lastly we have also introduced 'Micro Web Sites' as indicated here to better inform and update progress of Works on our estates. Link: [Have Your Say Today - North Peckham Boiler House Refurbishment - Commonplace](#)

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Title of document(s) - Previous HSCCS report (but I don't have a copy)	Title of department / unit Address	Name Phone number
(Insert hyperlink here)		
Title of document(s) (Insert hyperlink here)	Title of department / unit Address	Name Phone number
(Insert hyperlink here)		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Vol 2 - Doc 6 - Tech Spec - Final - 100215 - Planned Maintenance Tasks.pdf
Appendix 2	Ward councillor testimonial email
Appendix 3	Newington UG mains microsite screen shots

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Simon Holmes	
Report Author		
Version	Final	
Dated	21 February 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
List other officers here		
Cabinet Member	Yes/No	Yes/No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team / Scrutiny Team	21 February 2024	