

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Final Internal Audit Report

Housing Repairs

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Limited Assurance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Local authorities with housing stock need to ensure that they maintain those homes in good repair and that they meet relevant standards such as that for Decent Homes. Revenue repair costs are debited either directly or indirectly (via a housing repairs account) to the HRA.

2. OBJECTIVES & SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

- 2.1 The purpose of the audit was to review the processes for ensuring that responsive repair work was prioritised in order to meet national and local targets and make efficient use of resources. It also reviewed the systems in place for Housing Repairs around budget monitoring and to ensure that job costs were accurately recorded and accounted for. In addition, it also reviewed the system in place to record what materials were used on jobs and reconciling material charges to records of work performed.
- 2.2 The audit only included the delivery side of Housing repairs for Reading Borough Council and did not include a review of the contract in place with Wokingham Borough Council for the provision of Housing Repairs.
- 2.3 This audit (and report) was undertaken in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards ([PSIAS](#)).

- 2.4 This report is confidential and has been prepared solely for use by officers named on the distribution list and if requested, the Council's External Auditor and its Audit and Governance Committee to meet legal and professional obligations. It would therefore not be appropriate for this report, or extracts from it, to be made available to third parties before it has entered the public domain. It must not be used in response to FOI or data protection enquiries without the written consent of the Head of Internal Audit. We accept no responsibility to any third party who may receive this report, in whole or in part, for the reliance that they may place on it.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The audit identified several key issues relating to reactive repairs.
- 3.2 There was a lack of a formal, overarching repairs policy, although there were various documents in place such as the tenant agreement, the service level agreement for responsive repairs and maintenance and an Ohms¹ repairs procedures guide.
- 3.3 There was also a lack of a live system for sub-contractors or out-of-hours jobs. Sub-contractor jobs were not completed or closed on the relevant systems until an invoice had been received. The out-of-hours process was carried out manually and then the relevant systems were updated retrospectively. Supporting evidence for these jobs was located in a team Outlook mailbox.
- 3.4 Overall, data quality was poor, with over eight thousand open jobs on Total² as at mid-February 2023, more than half of which were overdue. Sufficient and/or appropriate detail was not being requested and/or recorded when tenants reported a job, which then made it difficult in some instances to determine whether a job was valid and its urgency.
- 3.5 There was a lack of compliance and inconsistencies with various processes. A number of open jobs were on status 25 ("stop the clock"), with some on this status for a considerable amount of time (up to half a year in several instances sampled), often awaiting parts. A significant number of both open and overdue jobs were held on status 55 (full completion) awaiting supervisor review and approval, again sometimes for several months. This then led to delays in invoicing of jobs, impacting the income and expenditure reflected in the finance system. In addition, no charge to tenants was made for aborted or unable-to-obtain-access jobs nor was a deposit routinely taken from residents.
- 3.6 A number of sub-contractor contracts had expired and were due for renewal. Regular updates and performance review meetings were not being held with all sub-contractors.

¹ Housing Management System

² Field Service Management software

- 3.7 A split had been introduced between the client and contractor sides (DLO). There did not always appear to be clarity between the two and a repetition of roles in some instances, for example, both the surveyors and the performance team (client side) carrying out performance monitoring of the contractor. Similarly, there was a lack of consistent understanding between the client and contractor in relation to the carding process (how many times a trade should attempt to gain entry to carry out a job before the job was closed).
- 3.8 Ohms¹ declarations of interest were not always completed and had not been retained for housing repairs officers. There was a lack of common understanding between housing repairs and rents as to whose responsibility this was.
- 3.9 There was also an underlying assumption within the service that any balance at the year-end would be charged back to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 3.10 Internal audit found it difficult and time-consuming to obtain certain performance data, which then impacted the ability to carry out testing and identify issues. It should be noted that the audit was unable to review all areas and therefore there may be other issues that have not been identified. It should also be noted that no review was conducted in relation to stores as this was reviewed in a separate audit in August 2020.
- 3.11 A total of 14 recommendations have been made in respect of this review, of which two are considered high priority. The recommendations and corresponding management action plan are attached at Appendix 1.

Management Action Plan					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES					
<i>RISK: There is a lack of consistency in carrying out key processes, which may result in a lack of compliance, for example with relevant legislation</i>					
1	<p>a. There should be accurate and complete documented policies and procedures for all reactive repairs processes, which clearly show roles and responsibilities and the split between the client and contractor side.</p> <p>b. Policies and procedures need to be regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate, including ensuring that all processes are fully documented and reflect the current structure (i.e., client and contractor).</p> <p>c. A review of access should be conducted to ensure it is appropriate and that all relevant staff can both access policies and procedures and are aware of their existence and location.</p>	Priority 3	<p>a. We currently operate a reactive repairs service according to statutory responsibility within Sections 8-11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 as a social landlord. The overarching policy for repairs is the Tenancy Agreement, as this sets out the landlord and tenant responsibilities in relation to repairs performance in a legal document.</p> <p>b. There are several repairs-related policies; however, a number of these are due for review, and these will be reviewed, amalgamated & published in a combined document to provide staff and residents with a clear policy guide with clear review dates</p> <p>c. Procedures will be reviewed for trade staff and managers across the client and contractor split, amalgamated in procedure guides available in one access point.</p>	Head of Housing Property Services	31/12/2023
2	<p>a. There should be current contracts in place with all repairs/maintenance sub-contractors, with extensions agreed as per the Council's documented processes and prior to the initial contract expiring.</p> <p>b. There should also be regular monitoring of jobs allocated to sub-contractors to ensure they are being carried out in a timely manner, invoiced once completed and the job closed down on Ohms and Total.</p>	Priority 1	<p>a. The current construction climate has made it difficult to get suitable contractors on board. A Quantity Surveyor role is being recruited to, to provide the focussed resource to work with our legal and procurement teams to prepare and prioritise tender documents to retender expired contracts. Legal and procurement teams will work with the service to prioritise this area of work. There are currently a number of managers/supervisors in secondment/interim positions; the service will seek to get permanent managers/supervisors into position.</p> <p>b. Managers and supervisors will be set clear objectives to ensure that performance management of subcontractors is treated as a priority to include regular contract and finance meetings as well as ensure that jobs are managed, closed and invoiced in a timely way.</p>	Head of Housing Property Services/ Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager	31/12/2023

Management Action Plan					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
3	a. There should be clear audit trails to support all reactive repairs saved in a central location.	Priority 3	a. The main place for audit trails in relation to jobs raised through the system in working hours is - OHMS/Total/Mobile. The process will be reviewed where requests are coming from non-standard routes i.e., call outs, webforms to ensure these are stored appropriately as the current systems do not manage these effectively. The NEC Housing IT system is due to be implemented in September and should provide a clear audit trail on these moving forward.	Quality and Business Assurance Manager / Managers	30/09/2023
STAFFING					
<i>RISK: There is not an adequate number, level and skill of Officers, leading to over-reliance on sub-contractors (and associated increased cost) and inability to deliver jobs on time and to the required standard.</i>					
4	a. Further review of staffing levels needs to be undertaken, including a review of the balance of employees versus sub-contractors, an appropriate split of trades, replacement of leavers/succession planning particularly in relation to apprentices and officer sickness levels. b. Information from key systems e.g., iTrent and the finance system (currently Oracle Fusion) needs to be readily available and able to be reported on.	Priority 1	A full review has taken place with HR colleagues in terms of a staffing action plan including updating the relevant finance and HR systems. The plan is being worked through with the priority on filling vacant posts and managing sickness levels in the service.	Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager/ Managers	30/09/2023

Management Action Plan					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Further consideration needs to be given to the full implementation of a pay and rewards scheme. b. It should be ensured that the time recording system for jobs is used correctly. Trades will need to use their PDAs correctly to accurately record the time taken on each job for example, to record the time when trades accept a job, are on the way to it, arrive and start the job and complete it. This will also help to ensure that residents are notified when the trade is on route to them. 	Priority 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The pay and productivity scheme is to be reintroduced. b. In September 2023, implementation of the new NEC Housing IT System will introduce a change to the way that the work is allocated. Currently, trade staff receive their full day's work the previous evening. From September, jobs will be allocated one at a time; this will enable closer monitoring of each task from allocation to completion. Residents will be notified when the job is allocated to the operative that they are then on route - Management will continue to monitor Except, Depart, Arrive, Complete reports and staff that are highlighted through this will be challenged. 	Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager/Managers	30/09/2023
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Roles and responsibilities both within and between the client and contractor need to be clarified to avoid roles being repeated or not fulfilled. Also, consideration needs to be given to the roles of the Finance and Quality and Business Assurance teams to avoid replication of roles/meetings, for example having a joint meeting with both teams. b. Declarations of interest should be made at the start of employment and then on a regular basis, with declarations retained in a central, secure location for future reference, together with associated clarification of roles and responsibilities for this between rents/repairs teams. c. Appropriate safeguards should be put in place for related staff - for example, they should not be arranging systems access for each other. 	Priority 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It is recognised that there needs improved clarity of roles and responsibilities between the client and contractor split. However, a wider exercise will now take place to consider the best solution for future service delivery. a. A restructure for the Housing Repairs and Maintenance section is under review with clarification of roles and responsibilities b. Declarations of interest are completed by all new starters. Further consideration will be given to implementing a review period and as to where those records are stored. c. Appropriate safeguards will be put in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Head of Housing Property Services b. Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager c. Managers Quality and Business Assurance Manager 	31/10/2023

Management Action Plan					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
SYSTEMS AND ACCOUNTING					
<i>RISK: The accounting system does not accurately reflect the cost of repairs leading to misstatement of the financial accounts.</i>					
7	<p>a. It is recommended that housing repairs charges be automatically transferred to the finance system (currently Oracle Fusion) with appropriate reconciliations to ensure the correct amounts have been transferred. Manual transfer processes should be avoided where possible as they are subject to errors and omissions and are time and labour intensive.</p> <p>b. It should be ensured that the correct schedule of rates is used for works carried out.</p>	Priority 2	<p>a. It is not possible to deliver automation based on existing systems; Oracle Fusion and Northgate OHMS are due to be replaced. The service will work with the Finance team to ensure as much integration as possible when the new systems are implemented.</p> <p>b. When the new NEC Housing IT System is implemented, staff will only be able to raise a job using the correct national schedule of rate per trade. This will drive up the accuracy of the order including, approx. time taken to deliver and description.</p>	All managers	30/12/2023
8	<p>a. There should be consistency and clarity as how costs are arrived at to recharge to tenants. If standardised costs are to be used, it should be clear when, and these should be reviewed and updated to reflect current prices.</p> <p>b. Tenants should be recharged costs where appropriate, an agreed deposit taken, and a clear audit trail should be maintained to provide a rationale where recharges are not made. Consideration should also be given to charging tenants for aborted/carded/unable-to-access property jobs.</p>	Priority 2	<p>a. Standard charges are in place & set by the Housing Management Service. There is a maximum charge set at £2000. The service will check the frequency of review cycles.</p> <p>b. Typical recharge jobs are blocked drainage, broken windows, and lock changes. This is identified to the tenant at the point the job is raised by the corporate call centre and a deposit is taken at that point.</p> <p>b. Consideration will be given to recharging tenants for missed or abortive calls.</p>	Housing Management and Income Recovery Service Manager	30/09/2023

Management Action Plan					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
9	<p>a. There needs to be a review of the appropriateness of the costs of jobs to ensure they are charged and at the correct amount for both internal and subcontractor work.</p> <p>b. Client and contractor representatives need to review call centre scripts to ensure a more efficient customer service experience and use of trades time.</p> <p>c. Clarity should be obtained in relation to the agreed process where trades were unable to gain access to a site and the number of attempts that should be made before a job is closed and shared with all trades.</p> <p>d. Supervisors need to challenge trades where jobs are not completed on the allocated day.</p>	Priority 2	<p>a. The costs are decided based on the use of the national schedule of rates, and they should be comparable for internal and external delivery. The charge based on the NSR is to cover RBC costs and not to make a profit. The national schedule of rates has only recently been introduced, and it will take time to establish if these schedules offer an over- or under-recovery. At that point, an adjustment can be made to +/-% the schedules so that the end-of-year recovery is broadly balanced.</p> <p>a. Regular review meetings are held monthly, and each area is looked at to determine if it is projecting an over- or under-recovery at year-end; however, % variations have to be managed on an annual basis.</p> <p>b. Call centre review to take place.</p> <p>d. Within the new NEC system, this will be easier to monitor, with one job at a time issued.</p>	Head of Housing Property Services / Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager / Quality and Business Assurance Manager	31/12/2023

MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
BUDGETING					
<i>RISK: The Budget does not accurately reflect the cost of repairs leading to overspending and financial pressure on the Council as a result.</i>					
10	<p>a. Consideration should be given to reviewing the budget build and the underlying assumptions as to whether they are still realistic/relevant. Some consideration should be given to setting an income budget that is realistic/achievable and including recharging relevant overheads.</p> <p>b. Consideration should also be given to phasing the budget going forward to better reflect any seasonality of repairs.</p>	Priority 3	The service will work with the Finance Strategic Business Partner to review the position	Head of Housing Property Services/ Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager	31/12/2023

MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
JOBS DATABASE					
<i>RISK: Jobs are not accurately and completed recorded, leading to poor prioritisation, lack of timely repairs being undertaken and completed and financial and reputational damage to the Council.</i>					
11	<p>a. Reports of key information need to be readily available to those who require them with an agreement reached as to what information is required, by whom and when.</p> <p>b. Time taken to complete jobs needs to be reviewed and issues identified and addressed where completion times do not fall within the agreed timeframe.</p> <p>c. Jobs need to be completed/closed down correctly to avoid jobs being raised twice/charged twice and completed on a "first time right" principle to avoid recalls and correct schedule of rates and time etc. charged to the jobs.</p> <p>d. Completed jobs should be reviewed and approved/rejected in a timely manner to ensure timely invoicing/recharge of repairs costs.</p> <p>e. Where possible, workflows/inputs should be automated rather than manual. Where manual input cannot be avoided, these should be entered and reviewed in a timely manner to allow meaningful review of completion times for jobs, to ensure jobs are closed in a timely manner and to allow appropriate analysis for example customer satisfaction.</p>	Priority 2	<p>a. It is recognised that key reporting data has not always been available since the client contractor split due to a key staff member leaving and priority of tasks for other staff leading on the implementation of the NEC Housing Management System, Repairs and Contractor Modules. A number of additional posts have been identified and this, along with the reintegration of the client and contractor services, should resolve this issue.</p> <p>c. Current performance of jobs completed on first visit is 93.66%.</p> <p>d. A review of performance reporting requirements is currently in progress. The newly appointed lead for the Housing Repairs Service has taken on board the comments within the report and is seeking to ensure that managers are furnished with the tools to monitor end-to-end job progress.</p> <p>e. Within the new NEC system, jobs will be issued one at a time and this will allow much closer real-time scrutiny of internal trade activity as well as have the visibility of external contractor workflow.</p>	Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager	31/9/2023 For performance reporting

Management Action Plan					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
12	<p>a. More detail needs to be captured on out-of-hours calls to help determine what the job was and its level of urgency.</p> <p>b. Relevant action should be taken on issues highlighted in reports for example closing of open out-of-hours jobs. Additional training should be considered for back office in relation to out-of-hours jobs to include immediately closing them once raised on Total.</p> <p>c. Key information/documents should be retained and stored centrally for easy identification/access where future queries arise.</p>	Priority 2	<p>a. Where insufficient information has been given by the Out of Hours Call Handling Service to support a call out, this will be referred back to them for clarification</p> <p>b. The Out of Hours call answering service is an externally procured service across multiple council services. At the start of each working day, the out-of-hours team send across the previous evening details. This information is loaded on the repairs system by a recently recruited dedicated admin support and closed immediately as a confirmation order.</p> <p>c. In conjunction with the requirements identified in REC 3, a central storage area to store documents will be put in place.</p>	Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager	30/9/2023

MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN					
Ref	Recommendation	Rec	Management Response	Responsible Officer(s)	Target Date
JOB ALLOCATIONS					
<i>RISK: Jobs are not carried out on a first-time right/agreed basis as detailed in the SLA leading to increased trade visits, a risk of reputational damage, jobs backlog and lack of delivery of value for money/best value.</i>					
13	<p>a. Consideration should be given to the customer survey process and whether this can be made more automated/online and less reliant on manual input/processes and analysis. Any hard copies of completed customer satisfaction surveys should be scanned and retained centrally in a timely manner, with any transportation being secure.</p> <p>b. Analysis of satisfaction forms should be carried out on a regular basis, recorded centrally, patterns identified, and any (recurring) issues identified and addressed. The central record should be readily available to those as and when they require it.</p>	Priority 3	<p>a. The service does not currently have an IT system in place to automate the way that customer feedback is received. Surveys continue to be sent to all allocated repairs. Within the NEC project, there are stated requirements to include automation of the end-to-end repair ordering process, with residents offered to self-service reporting a repair - order, amend, track, and cancel, similar to other frontline organisations. All paper surveys are scanned and maintained in a password-protected folder with paper copies destroyed confidentially.</p> <p>b. A Quality Assurance Officer is now in place who monitors customer satisfaction. Monitoring also includes dissatisfaction feedback, where a negative comment is reviewed and responded to by the team manager within seven working days of receipt to ensure that they do act upon feedback.</p>	Head of Housing Property Services / Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager	30/06/2024
14	<p>a. Post-work inspections need to be carried out on a regular basis and on an agreed sample size, outcomes recorded, and issues/common issues identified and addressed in a timely manner.</p>	Priority 2	<p>a. Our post-inspection target is 5% of all jobs completed from a range of sources, and a process is now in place to automatically record the outcome (not including notes). Trade Supervisors are tasked to monitor both the internal workforce and external contractors. Surveyors, the Clerk of Works & the Quality Assurance Officer all carry out work in progress and post inspections. A reminder will be issued to ensure post-inspections are recorded when on-site. A review will be undertaken to ensure that issues/themes are recorded & learnt from. All future procurement exercises will include contractor KPIs to ensure a minimum of 10% work post inspected, issues/themes with dissatisfaction recorded, and reported back.</p>	Assistant Repairs and Maintenance Manager & managers	30/09/2023

4. FINDINGS

4.1 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 4.1.1 Discussions with Officers identified that there was no formal overarching repairs policy (Rec 1); the tenancy agreement set out roles and responsibilities including relating to repairs, together with the Looking after your home factsheet and the repairs handbook which were available to tenants and detailed likely timeframes for different types of repairs and repair responsibilities of the Council and tenant.
- 4.1.2 The Service Level Agreement (SLA) in place for responsive repairs and maintenance detailed that responsive repairs were carried out via the Council's responsive and gas and plumbing contracts for in and out-of-hours work, what constituted responsive and repairs work, client responsibilities, service provider responsibilities, guidance on works orders, use of a schedule of rates, details of prioritisation of work and associated timeframes for works, recharges and customers requiring additional support.
- 4.1.3 There was an Ohms Housing repairs procedures guide (dating from 2016) (Rec 1) that detailed repairs priorities and associated timeframes, including for vulnerable tenants and logging repairs. There was also a flowchart for raising a job, and back-office procedures (including out-of-hours and emergency calls and pre-inspection works and allocating to a trade - although it was noted that these were incomplete with some queries and processes not completely documented in all cases (Rec 1)). It was noted that there was a newly appointed Continuous Improvement Officer in the Quality and Business Assurance Team who would be considering service improvements including reviewing policies and procedures and updating them, including reflecting new processes once the new Housing Management System (HMS) was implemented. Back-office training was conducted on the job, together with monitoring of work to ensure jobs were raised correctly/to the right person, etc.
- 4.1.4 Policies and procedures detailed above were generally available on a SharePoint site (with tenant-related ones on the RBC website). A range of staff had access to them, mainly on the client side, although knowledge of them did not seem to be widespread and at the time of audit review, access was available to Officers who had either changed roles or left (Rec 1).
- 4.1.5 Some reactive repairs and maintenance work was carried out by sub-contractors on behalf of service delivery. These contracts should be awarded in accordance with RBC's standing orders and financial regulations. A repairs and maintenance contract was awarded to Pilon in October 2021 via a Framework agreement and found to be appropriately authorised. The framework contract was extended for one year in December 2022 (i.e., retrospectively), and again appropriately authorised. The stores contract had been extended for a further two years as detailed in the original contract after an Officer decision in consultation with the Lead Councillor, albeit after the original contract had expired. Other contracts awarded such as for glazing, roofing and windows were long-standing and understood to have expired with no formal extension agreed; signed final copies of the original contracts had been requested but not provided (Rec 2). The Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager was proposing using a Quantity Surveyor post currently vacant but recruitment was currently paused due to the service review being conducted to

create the capacity to retender, with a longer-term plan to tender for a larger generic building service-wide contract to encompass the majority of individual contractors used.

- 4.1.5 It was noted during the audit review that there were no clear, documented, centrally held (and timely saved) audit trails in all instances (Rec 3). Out-of-hours call-out sheets were only retained in the back-office Outlook mailbox and were unable to be located at all in some instances (Rec 3). Also, descriptions on Total did not always clearly detail what the job entailed and, in some cases, provided the action taken rather than detailing the initial problem (Rec 3). In addition, copies of completed customer satisfaction forms were also not readily available in the majority of cases sampled (Rec 3).
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4.2 STAFFING

- 4.2.1 The Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager had been on long-term sick leave and had now resigned; an interim had been covering the post. This contract had been extended into 2023, albeit on reduced hours (full-time to three days a week) (Rec 4). Discussions with the Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager and other Officers identified that there were a number of vacancies that were unable to be filled for trades, with shortages at both trades and manager/supervisor level (Rec 4). However, it was difficult to easily substantiate this and whether it related specifically to reactive repairs, both from iTrent and also salary monitoring (as all repairs staff had been moved to one Oracle Fusion cost centre) (Rec 4). Further discussion with the Finance Business Partner identified that as at the end of January 2023, there were 49 operatives and 11 vacancies (Rec 4). It was also noted that two apprentices had reached the end of their contract during the year and left the organisation (Rec 4).
- 4.2.2 There was a significant backlog of jobs, particularly for electrical and carpentry, where there had been some significant sickness absences since December 2021 (Rec 4). Review of occupied positions in iTrent identified that there were a number of electricians and carpenters in post; however, there were shortages of fencers and multi-skilled bathroom fitters, bricklayers/roofers and plasterers. Review of finance salary monitoring identified vacancies for carpenters, electricians, labourers, a bathroom fitter and a bricklayer. Review of complaints identified tenants complaining about delays in repairs and the rebooking of appointments.
- 4.2.3 It was also queried whether there were adequate staffing levels within the Quality and Business Assurance Team with the manager now only part-time and the Service Improvement Officer working a proportion of their time on the new Housing Management system (Rec 4).
- 4.2.4 As detailed earlier in 4.1.5, some reactive repairs were delivered by sub-contractors; for example, there was a contract in place with a named sub-contractor to deliver reactive repairs when required i.e., where there was not the in-house capacity to deliver jobs. In addition, there were named sub-contractors used for the delivery of replacement glazing, roofing, scaffolding and PVCu windows

and rear doors. There had been a significant amount of work carried out by sub-contractors in the current year (see section 4.4 - budget monitoring) due to staffing issues.

- 4.2.5 Review of a sample of 25 open jobs identified in nearly half the cases, these were with subcontractors and had been in excess of the timescales in the SLA. It was unclear whether the jobs had been completed but the invoice had not been received and hence the job was not closed or the job had not been completed (Rec 2). Further discussion with the Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager identified that a weekly progress tracker on jobs was provided by one contractor and monthly review meetings had recently been restarted. This was due to be replicated with the other subcontractors (informed currently a total of 22 contractors were being used to deliver service provision) (Rec 2).
- 4.2.6 A pay and reward scheme had only been partially implemented and did not appear to be well understood. Individual operatives were paid a salary plus part of a pay and productivity scheme that had not been fully implemented to date, with a time-based scheme in place. The national schedule of rates was being used, which provided an amount of time for a job to be completed based on the average amount of time taken to complete the job. If this timeframe was not met, it led to officers having deductions from their pay. It was planned to also have deductions in the future if cash targets were not met. However, it was noted that this would require trades to use their PDAs correctly to accurately record the time taken on jobs (see 4.5.9 for further details on this) (Rec 5).
- 4.2.7 There did not always appear to be clearly defined and understood roles and responsibilities (Rec 6). Discussions with the Housing Projects Team Leader identified that there was overlap between the client contract monitoring role of his team and that of the Quality & Business Assurance Manager (Rec 6). It was noted that the latter team sat both within the client and the contractor sides of the organisation. The overall reactive repairs process sat between the client and the contractor, with neither side having complete control over it. Repairs ordering was carried out by the customer contact centre (client), who identified the repair required, with the scheduling of jobs split between them and the back office (contractor). Work was carried out by the contractor /subcontractor (overseen by the contractor) but budget setting/monitoring and performance information was overseen by the client side.
- 4.2.8 Discussion with the Trade Supervisor in relation to roles and responsibilities identified that there was a soft split between client and contractor. Toolbox talks (team meetings for trades staff which included information sharing, new products, H&S and performance discussions) included coverage of the roles of client and contractor (although no evidence was able to be provided of this) and it was unclear if there were clear, documented policies for each (see Section 4.1 / Rec 1).
- 4.2.9 Declaration of interest forms, which should be required before access to Ohms was provided, were not being retained for housing repairs staff. It was also unclear whether declarations of interest were made in all instances by housing repairs staff prior to being set up on Ohms (Rec 6).

4.2.10 During testing, an instance was identified where two members of the same immediate family were working within the same team, with one provided system access by the other (under their manager's instruction). Completed declaration of interest forms were unable to be located in either instance and further inquiry identified that declaration of interest forms were not being retained for housing repairs staff, with a lack of common understanding between housing rents and housing repairs as to whose remit this fell within (Rec 6).

4.3 SYSTEMS AND ACCOUNTING

4.3.1 Housing repairs information was split between Ohms (repairs module) and Total, with the job initially logged in Ohms, including details of the job, what and where it was, the schedule of rates to be used and the job's priority level. This information was then transferred to Total to schedule with the relevant trade, and the time and action taken were recorded. Once the job was completed, the information was then transferred back to Ohms repairs. It was noted that a new Housing Management System (HMS) was in the process of being implemented which would consolidate the two systems into one. As detailed later (see 4.5), a number of delays were encountered by internal audit when trying to obtain various key information from the systems.

4.3.2 As reviewed during the rent accounting audit, the DEGNS Accountant conducted quarterly reconciliations between Ohms (rents module) and Fusion, which included a reconciliation of repairs recharges to residents (although it was noted that this amounted to only a relatively small amount). No formal reconciliation between Ohms (repairs) and Total was carried out. Discussion with the Quality and Business Assurance Manager identified that Ohms (repairs) and Total would not match as there were some jobs that were incorrectly input into Ohms repairs that would not be processed. Where jobs were not transferred from Ohms repairs to Total or vice versa, there was a system-generated report which was received into the Housing Building Maintenance inbox and reviewed by a member of the Quality and Business Assurance Team or tenants would be in contact if a job was not carried out. In addition to the check the Accountancy Assistant - Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services carried out between what was held on Total for repairs charges and what was charged in Fusion, the Quality and Business Assurance Manager reviewed balances on Total and Ohms repairs as part of responsive repairs budget projections, although there was some discrepancy which was not investigated. As noted above, the introduction of a new HMS would consolidate the use of two systems (Ohms and Total) into one.

4.3.3 It was noted that overheads (such as finance, legal etc.) were not recharged to the client. For sub-contractor works, there was an assumption that work had been carried out and when invoices were received, the job was closed on Total. A percentage of jobs were inspected. As noted in 4.2.5, a significant number of the test sample of jobs allocated to sub-contractors were open on Total.

- 4.3.4 Housing repairs were accounted for via a manual journal upload process, with details provided by a weekly autogenerated report manually copied ultimately onto a journal for upload into Oracle Fusion on a monthly basis. This was because there was no automatic link between Total and Oracle Fusion necessitating the use of a manual journal upload process (Rec 7). This was subject to error and omission. A check was conducted to ensure that the total of each type of repair agreed to the report total provided and also to check the amount to be uploaded to Oracle Fusion. Details of the various totals for each type of work, what was being uploaded to Fusion, and what was being posted separately were detailed on a separate spreadsheet, and totals between the report, spreadsheet and what was uploaded to Oracle Fusion reconciled.
- 4.3.5 Review of the weekly transaction reports received for November, December and January 22/23 identified that the total on the report agreed to the total entered on the spreadsheet and the total on the journal upload spreadsheet and repairs seemed to be appropriately coded in Oracle Fusion.
- 4.3.6 Review of a sample of 25 jobs marked as status 72 (invoice export) on Total identified that in 21 out of 25 cases, the cost of the repairs agreed between Ohms, Total and Fusion with repairs charged correctly. In one case, the amount recorded on Ohms/Total did not agree to the sub-contractor invoice (5% added) and it also did not agree to what had been charged to Fusion. The job cost had been recorded on Total using a schedule of rates rather than 5% added to the sub-contractor's invoice. In one case, it was unclear if a resident had been recharged for the cost of repairs and in one instance the cost charged appeared to be incorrect (charged for completion of the job but it appeared the resident had not been at the property and had been carded). Post-work inspections identified that where jobs required follow-up work, in a number of instances this was because the incorrect schedule of rate/work had been charged (Rec 7). No evidence was found during testing that the incorrect tenant had been recharged for repairs.
- 4.3.7 The Housing Income Recovery Team (HIRT) were responsible for recharging housing repairs to tenants, where appropriate. A weekly system auto-generated Total report was received, detailing any repairs that had been marked as rechargeable and was reviewed by the HIRT for completed/rechargeable works. In some instances, there was a standardised price (average of what the job usually costed) for the most common jobs regularly carried out. Otherwise, the cost from Total was used or confirmation of cost was sought from the contractor. A recharge was then made on that basis. It was noted that the standardised costs dated from 2019 and therefore did not reflect the current cost nor take account of inflation, price rises, etc. so the tenant was not necessarily being recharged the true cost of the repair (Rec 8).
- 4.3.8 Review of a sample of 15 recharges from November 2022 identified that it was not always clear why/when the standardised prices were used and when Total/schedule of rates were used when recharging tenants (Rec 8). Discussion with the Senior Housing Income Recovery Officer identified that generally Total costs seemed to be used where they differed significantly from the standardised price list. There was

one instance where a recharge had been reversed but there was a lack of audit trail as to why this was, one instance where a tenant had been recharged but there was a dispute as to whether they had carried out the work or RBC and two instances where no recharge had been made to the tenant due to oversights. There were also two cases where it was unclear how the charge amount had been arrived at (Rec 8). It was also noted that currently no charge was made for abortive/carded/unable to gain access jobs and that often a deposit was not taken on jobs and if one was taken, £5 was charged; however, it should be 15% of the predicted job cost with non-essential works not booked in/carried out without a deposit (Rec 8). Review of November 2022 recharges also identified some discrepancies between Total recharge reports, what had been recharged to tenants and what had been recorded as recharges on Fusion (Rec 8).

- 4.3.9 Review of a sample of 25 reactive repairs carried out since April 2022 identified that, excluding three cases where either costs were not held or were void works, expected to actual costs varied by up to circa £260. It was also noted that there was one repair sampled where the trade attended to identify that the works were not RBC's responsibility to undertake but those of a private tenant. From the sample, it was also noted that time taken by trades undertaking jobs were not always accurately recorded with on-the-way, arrived and/or completed job times being recorded as the same time in some instances (i.e misuse of their PDAs). Post-work inspections and spot checks had also identified issues in some instances with costs charged for jobs, instances where jobs were not charged, charged more than once and sub-contractor errors with quantities and trades (Rec 9).

4.4 BUDGETING

- 4.4.1 For the 2022/23 and 2023/24 DLO budget, the Finance Business Partner identified that the budget build had not changed significantly and had effectively been rolled forward (Rec 10), the salaries moved to a central code (resulting in it being difficult to see salary costs for individual teams without further analysis (Rec 10), new roles and apprentices also included. Discussion with the Finance Business Partner identified that the budget should be based on breaking even; however, a recharge was carried out at the end of the year to the HRA on any excess. The income target did not have a clear rationale behind it i.e., whether/what was achievable/stretch target and was based on breaking even (Rec 10).
- 4.4.2 Budget setting for the contractor side started with a salary build, together with any business cases for the service. There were no business cases for housing repairs for the 2022/23 budget. The payroll build was based on current staffing, whether an increment was likely to be awarded and assumed a 2% pay award for 2022/23; this was subsequently adjusted to reflect the agreed flat rate pay award. Also, some additional posts had been built into the current year. For 2022/23, salaries had been transferred to a central code to avoid individual salaries being split between a number of codes where trades were working across a number of areas. An analysis

of salaries for each code would be carried out based on the percentage of budget that was moved to the central code from each separate cost centre.

- 4.4.3 It was noted that spend should be covered by income; however, discussions identified that currently there was an overall credit budget of circa. £600k relating to a virement carried out in a previous year which was currently being investigated by finance. For 2023/24 payroll build, a business case had been included for a workforce review with an increased budget of £241k. The budget was currently phased³ equally across the year, although managers should be able to phase their budget themselves once the new e5 finance system was introduced (Rec 10).
- 4.4.4 Further discussion with the Finance Business Partner identified that he met with the Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager roughly every couple of months to review the managers' view report produced from Oracle Fusion, salaries and expenditure and discuss any issues. More detailed meetings were held with the Quality and Business Assurance Manager, ideally on a monthly basis, although this was subject to capacity issues (Recs 4, 6); the focus at these meetings was on subcontractors. None of these meetings were formally documented. Where issues were identified i.e., significant balances, more regular meetings were held to address the issues. It was understood that separate budget monitoring for the HRA (client side) was held, to which the Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager was invited.
- 4.4.5 It was noted that as at February 2023, it was anticipated that salary costs would be c£600k under budget at the year-end-, due to vacancies, as detailed in 4.2.1. Sub-contractor labour was 50% overspent on budget, which was identified as partly resulting from them carrying out more work due to RBC sickness/vacancies (Rec 4). Discussion with the Finance Business Partner identified that also there was a big backlog in jobs when the interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager came into post (also see 4.2.2), plus there had been some exceptional weather (storm and cold spell pre-Christmas). As a result, sub-contractors had been used to carry out more work.
- 4.4.6 As at February 2023, there was a balance of c£1.6m (as discussed earlier in 4.1.1 this should break even); the Finance Business Partner identified that it had likely to be related to delays in invoicing both to Wokingham and internally to the client side. As noted previously, there were also a number of open jobs which, if completed and invoiced, would generate more income. In addition, the Quality and Business Assurance Manager also undertook responsive repairs projections on an ad hoc basis, projecting the outturn of the service at year-end (last carried out in January 2023 with Dec 2022 information). However, it was noted that there were circa 8,000 outstanding jobs, so if the majority of these were not completed and/or the costs of them changed, then the associated projections would be inaccurate.
- 4.4.7 It was also noted during testing that in some instances there were some quite significant delays between status 55 (full completion) and status 65 (authorised for

³ Allocation/splitting of the budget across the financial year to match the anticipated pattern of expenditure

invoicing RBC) for jobs (Rec 11). This then led to a delay in invoicing/recharging the cost of repairs to the client side and hence an understatement of income /expenditure. It was noted that status 55 reports should be reviewed weekly.

4.5 JOBS DATABASE

- 4.5.1 Repairs were initially recorded in Ohms Housing Management System when reported before being transferred to Total, where details of allocation, commencement and completion/cancelling of job, etc. were recorded. Once agreed, the details were then transferred back to Ohms.
- 4.5.2 It was noted that it was very difficult for internal audit to obtain reports with key information from Ohms or Total to allow for testing of all data rather than a small random sample (Rec 11). It was also noted that jobs carried out by sub-contractors/out-of-hours were not recorded in detail on Total (Rec 11).
- 4.5.3 A report of jobs raised since the beginning of April 2022 until the end of October 2022 from Total was provided, which detailed the priority of each job ranging from P0 (planned work) to P6 (emergency work) and an associated timeframe. In roughly a third of the cases sampled, the required timeframe for the job did not appear to have been met (Rec 11).
- 4.5.4 It was also noted that for sub-contractors, the process for recording the job status was manual rather than workflowed (Rec 11). The jobs were detailed on Ohms and Total when received and shown as allocated to a sub-contractor. Once invoices for jobs were received from the sub-contractors, the job was closed on Total with the date of completion entered. This was reliant both on invoices being sent for jobs completed (and in a timely manner) and then the system being manually updated on receipt of invoices to reflect that the job had been completed (Rec 11). It also meant that there was not a live system for sub-contractor works to determine the current position with jobs for example whether they were underway.
- 4.5.5 Similar to the process for sub-contractors, the out-of-hours process was manual rather than workflowed and retrospectively reflected on Total (and Ohms) (Rec 11). If a call was received out of hours, operatives on call-out were contacted either via email or telephone call (i.e., outside of the PDA system). The trade then completed a call-out sheet as to what work they carried out and how long it took (all of which was manual) (Rec 11). The following morning, any major issues identified the previous night were carried out as a priority and the job input onto Total. Review of a sample of 25 out-of-hours jobs identified that the job description detailed often did not capture sufficient information (for example to identify what the problem was, whether it was urgent, how long it had been occurring) to identify if an emergency call was required (Rec 12). No recharges of costs were seen in the sample selected despite several jobs not appearing to be urgent from the description provided and one detailing that there was tenant damage (Rec 8). In addition, call-out sheets to evidence the jobs carried out were only retained in the back-office Outlook mailbox and for approximately a quarter of jobs sampled, the relevant call-out sheet was unable to be located (Rec 12). There were also three instances where a new job was required but did not appear to have been raised and one instance where the job appeared to have been raised more than once (Rec 12).

- 4.5.6 Discussion with the Quality and Business Assurance Manager also identified that a Total report of out-of-hours jobs still open was provided to the back office on a daily basis (Rec 12). These should not be occurring as out-of-hours jobs were raised retrospectively on the system and then should be immediately closed down after opening.
- 4.5.7 Further discussion identified that an open and outstanding jobs report was run approximately weekly/fortnightly and provided to the contractor side, detailing all open jobs, those in progress and those outstanding past their due date, although it did not identify whether there were internal or sub-contractor jobs. As at 15th February 2023:
- there were 8,053 open jobs, of which over half (5,357) were with the back office.
 - nearly a third of these were on status 15 (job allocated) and another third on status 20 (job notified).
 - approximately 400 jobs were with trades and just over 2,000 i.e., roughly a quarter, with supervisors - nearly all on status 55 - awaiting approval.
 - over a quarter of open jobs (2,230) were for electrical, with about an eighth in each case being carpentry, plumbing and gas servicing (roughly half of these were status 55 awaiting approval for carpentry and gas servicing).
 - the number of outstanding (i.e., overdue jobs) as at 15/2/23 was 5,332, nearly a third of which related to electrical jobs, with again plumbing and carpentry also having high numbers.
 - the majority of outstanding jobs were with the back office, although a significant number are also with supervisors.
 - a month previously, there were 8,174 open jobs and 5,449 outstanding (overdue jobs) i.e., the figures had slightly reduced between January and February but not significantly, with electrical and carpentry outstanding jobs slightly decreasing but plumbing slightly increasing.
 - about 40% of outstanding jobs were overdue by 100 days or more. It was unclear if all these jobs were new ones or if some of these were duplicates (Rec 11).
- 4.5.8 For jobs allocated to sub-contractors, the back office held details of all these jobs. Meetings should be held with the sub-contractors to verify what jobs they had been allocated, progress with them and to ensure that invoices were sent once the job was completed so that the job could be closed down on Total, although this was not regularly happening at present (see 4.2.5).
- 4.5.9 Review of a sample of 25 reactive repairs jobs raised since 1st April 2022 identified that in all cases (other than two which were not examined as they were void cases) details of when the job was allocated to a trade, when they had accepted, detailed they were on their way, arrived and completed/cancelled a job and associated costs were recorded on Total. However, it was noted that there were a number of instances where the time recording system had not been used correctly with the same times entered for when the trade was on their way, had arrived and/or completed the job, resulting in recorded travel/job time being detailed as zero. Discussion with the Trades Supervisor identified that Trades were not using their PDAs correctly to record their time (Rec 5). Whilst the pay and productivity scheme was currently on hold (see section 4.2.6), it did mean that the time recording was not a true reflection of how trades were using their time, making performance management difficult (although there were trackers on the vehicles that could assist) (Rec 5). Also, when trades entered on their PDA that they were on the way

to a job, a text was automatically sent to the resident to inform them. If they did not enter this on their PDA until they either arrived at the job or once they had completed it, the resident had no advanced notification that they were on their way to them (Rec 5).

- 4.5.10 For sub-contractors, whilst Total identified that a job had been allocated to a sub-contractor, details of time taken to carry out the job (subcontractor on their way, arrived and completed job) was not recorded, unlike internal work. Review of a sample of 25 sub-contractor reactive jobs identified that Total detailed that the job was being undertaken by a sub-contractor and the name of the sub-contractor carrying it out. Details of when the job was allocated and notified were held, together with details of the completion date and cost once an invoice had been received.
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4.6 JOB ALLOCATION

- 4.6.1 Repair orders were raised for works carried out to allow the trade to carry out the job. Where jobs were routine, there was no need for them to be approved. A review of a sample of 25 repairs raised in the year identified that an order had been raised in all cases.
- 4.6.2 For out-of-hours jobs, external call handlers received the call and determined whether it was an emergency and required a call-out which was actioned by a telephone call. Non-urgent cases should be asked to call back within working hours to book an appointment although from out-of-hours testing this did not necessarily seem to be occurring (see 4.5.5). For sub-contractor jobs, a job and works order was raised as for those conducted in house.
- 4.6.3 Post work inspections identified a number of issues regarding the incorrect charging for work carried out and incomplete jobs. The Service Improvement Officer produced performance information, looked at appointments that were open on the system and whether repairs were carried out on a first-time right principle. Contractor reports identified that for June 2022, a significant number of jobs were not completed the first time and were still open (Rec 9).
- 4.6.4 It was also noted that the call centre was not always making appropriate inquiries/detailing that they had made appropriate inquiries. During testing, there was an instance where a trade attending to mend a fence identified that the fence was a private tenant's responsibility. It is queried whether this should have been identified up front without necessitating a trade visit; this resulted in a loss of productive time for the trade, with time taken away from legitimate jobs (Rec 9).
- 4.6.5 Where trades were unable to gain access to a property, they left a card. It was detailed in the SLA that trades should attempt to gain access twice before the job was closed. However, a discussion with the Trades Supervisor identified that trades only attended a site once before the job was closed unless there was a Health and Safety issue/emergency etc. (Rec 9).
- 4.6.6 It was noted during internal audit testing that there had been some significant delays to some jobs and that open/carded/stop-the-clock jobs were not being effectively monitored to help reduce delays/identify problems and follow them up to ensure jobs were completed in a timely manner. Evidence of supervisor challenge was not observed (Rec 9).

- 4.6.7 Stop-the-clock should be used when a trade attended a job and did not have the required materials to complete it. They stopped the clock, went and acquired the necessary items then returned and completed the job. Where items were out of stock or were unable to be acquired the same day, the job should be closed, and an additional works order raised. There should be a code/note on the system as to why this has been used. However, this did not appear to be occurring nor were those jobs on this designation being (regularly) reviewed/issues actioned as there were a number of long outstanding stop-the-clock jobs. This included issues relating to ordering materials which are then not being followed up to ensure new appointments were booked, materials not arriving were not being followed up, jobs being superseded, and a new job raised but the old job not being closed down and jobs put on stop-the-clock multiple times (Rec 11). Review of a sample of 25 cancelled jobs identified that in the majority of cases there was a valid reason for cancelling the job.
- 4.6.8 Customer satisfaction surveys were provided to tenants for completion. Once the customer satisfaction form was returned in hard copy, the responses were manually keyed into a section in Ohms. A report writer was then used to export the data to Microsoft Excel for analysis (this was the sole way to analyse/review survey responses once they were input into Ohms). It is noted there had been issues with the report writer following a systems upgrade meaning that analysis had not been carried out for several months and was not readily available to internal audit for review (Rec 11, 13). Once keyed in, the hard copies were sent in bulk via the post to be scanned into NEC document management. Internal audit review did not locate the scanned surveys in the majority of cases sampled (Rec 13).
- 4.6.9 Post-work inspections were carried out; however, the central record of them was not readily available to internal audit. Discussion with the Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager identified that there should be a check of work undertaken being carried out both by trade supervisors and the client side on a percentage of repairs completed. However, it was noted that due to an increase in the number of complaints received, supervisors were spending time resolving these and therefore were unable to carry out post-work inspections (Rec 14). A random sample of works completed to be post-work inspected was selected by the Housing Stock Information Analyst and details sent to the supervisors to carry out. Supervisors contacted the tenants to arrange a visit with inspections recorded on a spreadsheet, with any works failing the post-works inspection followed up.
- 4.6.10 The client-side inspections were carried out by the Clerk of Works and the Quality Assurance Officer. The Quality Assurance Officer completed post-work inspection forms on a PDA, which were then sent to the Service Improvement Officer to capture the information. The Clerk of Works received a form detailing key information relating to the job, with a post-inspection form completed on her mobile telephone which was sent to the Quality and Business Performance Team for the Quality Assurance Officer to review. Where issues were identified during the post-work inspection, the clerk of works contacted the repairs team directly and kept a spreadsheet of these jobs with issues.

4.6.11 Review of the post-inspection summary received identified that a total of 322 reactive repairs inspections had been carried out to date in 2022/23, with 41 inspections failed overall on quality (just under 13%) on a total of 14,445 responsive repairs i.e., an overall inspection rate of just over 2%. Further analysis found that just under 13% of internal jobs failed inspection and just over 17% of subcontractor jobs failed (although it should be noted that circa 90% of the inspections were internal and only circa 5% sub-contractors). However, just over 30% (i.e., nearly a third) of those inspected required follow-up action. The majority of the follow-up action related to the incorrect schedule of rates being used/charges for jobs or incomplete work (Rec 11).

4.7 REPORTING AND MONITORING

4.7.1 It was noted in a discussion with the Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager that there had not been a service review for more than four years and not since the client/contractor split had been put in place.

4.7.2 There was a performance dashboard in place that focused on various areas such as number of cancelled, completed, emergency jobs and jobs completed within the required timeframe. There were also analyses of customer satisfaction, complaints and post-inspections (as discussed earlier), job costs and sickness.

4.7.3 Performance meetings were held between the client and contractor sides with Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager and members of the Quality and Business Assurance Team in attendance, usually on a monthly basis, with a summary of the meeting produced. In addition, contract review meetings should be held with the Property Client Team, the latter of whom were responsible for setting these up. No minutes from these meetings were available at the initial time of audit testing and further discussion identified that these meetings had not been occurring due to resource issues within both teams (Rec 6).

4.7.4 It was noted that there was an overlap in the contract review meetings due to be held between the contractor/delivery side and the Quality and Business Assurance and Housing Projects Teams. There did not appear to be clarity between all parties as to roles and responsibilities to ensure that contract monitoring was adequately overseen whilst ensuring a lack of duplication of tasks between the different teams (Rec 6).

4.7.5 Complaints were dealt with through the corporate complaints procedure. Issues identified included delays to carry out repairs, not fixing the problem first time (including not having the necessary part to resolve the problem, or fixing it at all, incomplete job), failure to attend the agreed appointment, behaviour of the trade/call handler, lack of communication with tenants about changed or cancelled appointments, damage to the property as a result of the repair, poor clean up after the repair, tenant carded but at property and miscommunication with out of hours service. Discussion with the Interim Housing Repairs and Maintenance Manager

identified that post-inspections were carried out where complaints were received by the supervisor or manager. The Quality Assurance Officer reviewed complaints as part of her remit and had recently commenced carrying this out.

- 4.7.6 As detailed in 4.6.8, surveys were used to gauge customer satisfaction. It was noted that 681 responses for reactive repairs had been received in 2022/23 out of a total of 14,445 repairs completed to date in the year i.e., roughly a five percent response rate. In the vast majority of cases (circa 90%), the response was positive with approximately 7.5% being negative overall. Action taken where there were negative comments was not detailed in the majority of cases.
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