



Wolverhampton Homes

Open Board Meeting

02 December 2020

Time 9.30 am **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Wolverhampton Homes
Venue Virtual Meeting – via Microsoft Team

Membership

Derek Allen
Parveen Brigue
Victor Browne
Angela Davies
Hajrija Dergic
Steve Finegan
Joy McLaren
Councillor Lynne Moran
Mike Porter
Councillor Rita Potter
Councillor Zee Russell
Councillor Paul Singh

Information

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact:

Contact Maya Dhanda
Tel/Email 07881358595; maya.dhanda@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk
Address Virtual Meeting - via Microsoft Teams

Copies of other agendas and reports are available from:

Website <https://wolverhamptonintranet.moderngov.co.uk>

Agenda

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Title</i>
1	Apologies
2	Declarations of interest
3	Minutes of previous meetings (Annual General Meeting and Open) - 18 September 2020 (Pages 3 - 14)
4	Matters arising

FOR DECISION

5	Health and Safety Plan 2021 - 2022 - Tim Munro, Head of Service Health & Safety, City of Wolverhampton Council (Pages 15 - 32)
6	Board Development Plan 2021 - 2022 - Julie Haydon, Assistant Director - Corporate Services (Pages 33 - 66)
7	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, Action Plan and update - Julie Haydon, Assistant Director - Corporate Services (Pages 67 - 100)
8	A.O.B

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY 12 MARCH 2021

M I N U T E S



Meeting: Annual General Meeting

Date: Friday 18 September 2020

Venue: Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

Time: 9:30 AM

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: -

Angela Davies	-	Chair – Tenant Board Member
Steve Finegan	-	Vice Chair – Independent Board Member
Councillor Paul Singh	-	Board Member – Councillor (left meeting at 12.05pm)
Councillor Lynn Moran	-	Board Member – Councillor
Councillor Zareena Russell	-	Board Member – Councillor
Councillor Rita Potter	-	Board Member – Councillor
Hajrija Dergic	-	Board Member – Independent
Joy McLaren	-	Board Member – Tenant
Mike Porter	-	Board Member – Tenant
Parveen Brigue	-	Board Member – Independent (joined 10:05am – left meeting at 11:35am)
Victor Browne	-	Board Member – Tenant

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: -

Shaun Aldis	-	Chief Executive
Angela Barnes	-	Assistant Director – Housing Options
Darren Baggs	-	Assistant Director – Housing
Ian Gardner	-	Assistant Director – Building Services
Julie Haydon	-	Assistant Director – Corporate Services
Kevin Manning	-	Assistant Director – Asset Management
Nicky Devey	-	Head of Business Services
Catherine Stewardson	-	Business Assurance Manager

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE - CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL: -

Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman	-	Councillor Representative
Ross Cook	-	Director for City Environment
Jenny Lewington	-	Service Manager – Housing Strategy and Policy
Lynda Eyton	-	Client Relationship Manager – Housing Management Agents

1.0	Apologies	
1.1	- Derek Allen – Independent Board Member	
2.0	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	<p>Tenant related issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Angela Davies - Joy McLaren - Mike Porter - Victor Browne <p>Noted with interest, allowed to remain and join in the debate.</p>	
3.0	Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting – 27 September 2019	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.	
4.0	Matters arising	
4.1	There were no matters arising.	
5.0	One City - Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman	
5.1	<p>Councillor Sweetman shared thanks to Wolverhampton Homes (WH) for the work undertaken on behalf of the shareholder the City of Wolverhampton Council, and the ambition to continue this valued relationship. Further information was shared as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thanks, were given in memory of Councillor Bilson for the work undertaken during the years he served the community, working in local government and supporting many charitable causes - The duties Councillor Sweetman undertakes as a Graiseley Ward Councillor and how this links to the work delivered by WH - Continued collaboration across WH, working in different ways than before, and the positive solution focused attitude that is entrenched across the company - The work undertaken by WH during the response to Covid-19 and the impact across the services and on customers, with sterling work done by the business in supporting the homeless task force. This approach supported over 160 rough sleepers with half still undergoing intervention to help them address issues and find a home. WH have been an essential part of delivering this support and creating a blueprint model for rough sleeping provision across the country. - Thanks, were given for the positive working relationship with Shaun Aldis – Chief Executive and Julie Haydon – Assistant Director and the joint aspirations for the future, with a 	

	determination to be more creative and innovative – to do things differently.	
6.0	Ross Cook, Director of City Assets and Housing	
6.1	<p>Ross reiterated to Board members the positive relationship between Wolverhampton Homes and the City of Wolverhampton Council, working as one City to provide better homes for all in a range of areas shared in more detail as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Homelessness solutions</u> – that provide a realistic and supportive alternative for those entrenched in rough sleeping, with the aim of taking the learning from Covid-19 to review the future solutions for temporary accommodation using a multi-agency partnership approach - <u>Resilience</u> – is key to be able to support customers through times of challenge, whether that be the continued Covid-19 situation or responding to times of disruption such as severe weather or in response to a major incident - <u>Safer and healthier homes</u> – customer support and the provision of a sound footing for responding to the increasing regulatory demands - Continued Fire Safety improvements and delivery of the Building Safety programme - <u>Estate Redevelopment</u> – Heath Town Regeneration and the benefits this has had on the whole community - <u>More and better homes</u> – the acquisition of 19 properties increasing the housing offer across the city - <u>Domestic Violence</u> – Working towards the Domestic Violence accreditation - <u>Housing Allocations Policy</u> – The implementation of the new Housing Allocations Policy linked to the work undertaken by the Home Improvement Agency - where adaptation grants support City residents to remain independent in their own homes - <u>Impact of Covid-19</u> – the challenges faced by the company during lockdown in continuing to deliver critical services, particularly in relation to repairs and housing management with the aim to continue to keep customers safe and secure - <u>Tenancy Support</u> – particularly working with customers affected by furlough / isolation / safety and security issues. 	
6.2	Ross noted thanks to Wolverhampton Homes, to the Chief Executive and Board members as well as the wider staffing teams in the continued support given to customers and the City of Wolverhampton Council in the delivery of housing and support services.	
6.3	The Chief Executive gave personal thanks to both Councillor Sweetman and Ross Cook for modelling the way forward and for their continued support to Wolverhampton Homes, by building on	

6.4	<p>relationships and working collaboratively throughout lockdown and for the support of the Council over the last 12 months.</p> <p>Board were asked to note the ongoing activity of the partnership approach working with the shareholder, and the strength of the relationship in delivering services to our customers in particular with initiatives such as the Relight the City project, Black Lives Matter and a number of other strands.</p>	
For Decision		
7.0	Annual Strategic Financial Arrangements – Julie Haydon, Company Secretary	
7.1	<p>Board were provided with further details on a number of areas as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The challenges of completing the audit ‘virtually’ for the first time - Assurance gained from the positive outcome of the audit - Key message coming out of external audit this year and as anticipated the opinion on this audit was unmodified - Details of the financial procedural matters still to complete - Risk management in relation to staff working from home 	
7.2	<p>Neil Preece, Grant Thornton UK LLP Auditor shared further details of the audit with Board members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lease payments - Appropriate disclosures - Pension liability - The difference between what Board Members are asked to do, and the Shareholder. - The Audit Findings Report as a standalone document which Board Members are asked to Note. - The Audit Findings Report provides a summary of the main areas of work undertaken by External Audit and the results and findings. 	
7.3	<p>Thanks, were given to CWC Finance colleagues and WH staff in supporting the collation of information required to undertake the audit.</p> <p>Resolved: Board members approved the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial Statements – 2019 - 2020 2. Wolverhampton Homes (WH) Letter of Representation <p>Board Members noted:</p>	

	<p>1. Confirmation of the appointment of Grant Thornton as the ongoing external auditors for the period between April 2020 to March 2023</p> <p>The Shareholder ratified the following decisions and documents:</p> <p>1. Financial Statements – 2019 - 2020 2. Letter of Representation 3. Confirmation of the appointment of Grant Thornton as the ongoing external auditors for the between period April 2020 to March 2023</p>	
8.0	<p>Board and Committee Schedule of Dates October 2020 to December 2021 – Nicky Devey, Head of Business Services</p>	
8.1	<p>Proposed dates were confirmed to Board members, noting the dates post May 2020 are subject to change in line with the council’s municipal calendar and election outcomes.</p> <p>Resolved: Board Members agreed the provisional Board and Committee schedule of dates for December 2020 - December 2021</p> <p>Also noted:</p> <p>1. Dates from May 2021 are subject to change 2. Dates included for October and November 2020</p>	
9.0	<p>Confirmation of Board Membership - Catherine Stewardson, Business Assurance Manager</p>	
9.1	<p>The membership of the Wolverhampton Homes Board was confirmed as follows:</p>	
9.2	<p><u>Tenant Board Members</u> Angela Davies Joy McLaren Mike Porter Victor Browne</p>	
9.3	<p><u>Independent Board Members</u> Derek Allen Hajrija Dergic Parveen Brigue Steve Finegan</p>	
9.4	<p><u>Councillor Board Members</u> Councillor Lynne Moran Councillor Paul Singh Councillor Rita Potter Councillor Zareena Russell</p>	

	Resolved: The shareholder confirmed the membership of the Board as detailed in this report	
10.0	Electing the Chair of Wolverhampton Homes Board – Catherine Stewardson, Business Assurance Manager	
10.1	<p>Angela Davies confirmed the expression of interest in continuing the role of Chair of the Board.</p> <p>This was formally proposed by Joy Maclaren and seconded by Councillor Paul Singh.</p> <p>Resolved: Angela Davies confirmed as Chair of Wolverhampton Homes’ Board for 2020 - 2021</p>	
11.0	Electing the Vice Chair of Wolverhampton Homes Board – Catherine Stewardson, Business Assurance Manager	
11.1	<p>Steve Finegan confirmed the expression of interest in continuing in the role of Vice Chair of the Board.</p> <p>This was formally proposed by Councillor Rita Potter and seconded by Councillor Zee Russell.</p> <p>Resolved: Steve Finegan confirmed as Vice Chair of Wolverhampton Homes’ Board for 2020 - 2021</p>	
12.0	Electing the Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs	
12.1	<p>Electing the Chair of Wolverhampton Homes Audit and Business Assurance Committee – Catherine Stewardson, Business Assurance Manager</p> <p>Steve Finegan confirmed the expression of interest in continuing in the role of Chair of the Audit and Business Assurance Committee.</p> <p>This was formally proposed by Councillor Lynne Moran and seconded by Councillor Zee Russell.</p> <p>Resolved: Steve Finegan confirmed as Chair of the Audit and Business Assurance Committee for 2020 - 2021</p> <p>Electing the Vice Chair of Wolverhampton Homes Audit and Business Assurance Committee</p>	
12.2	<p>Angela Davies confirmed the expression of interest in continuing in the role of Vice Chair of the Board.</p> <p>This was formally proposed by Joy McLaren and seconded by Mike Porter.</p>	

12.3	<p>Resolved: Angela Davies confirmed as Vice Chair of Audit and Business Assurance Committee for 2020 - 2021</p> <p>Electing the Chair of Wolverhampton Homes Communities and Service Delivery Committee</p> <p>Joy McLaren confirmed the expression of interest in continuing in the role of Chair of the Communities and Service Delivery Committee.</p> <p>This was formally proposed by Councillor Rita Potter and seconded by Councillor Lynne Moran.</p> <p>Resolved: Joy Maclaren confirmed as Chair of Wolverhampton Homes' Communities and Service Delivery Committee</p> <p>Electing the Vice Chair of Wolverhampton Homes Communities and Service Delivery Committee</p> <p>It was confirmed to the Board that Derek Allen confirmed the expression of interest in continuing in the role of Vice Chair of the Communities and Service Delivery Committee.</p> <p>This was formally proposed by Councillor Zee Russell and seconded by Mike Porter.</p> <p>Resolved: Derek Allen confirmed as Vice Chair of Wolverhampton Homes' Communities and Service Delivery Committee for 2020 - 2021</p>	
13.0	<p>Any other business</p>	
13.1	<p>A warm welcome was offered to Mike Porter, Tenant Board member in his recent appointment to the Wolverhampton Homes Board.</p>	
13.2	<p>Thanks, were given to Linda Middleton – Tenant Board member for the work contributed to over the term served, in particular for the membership on the Audit and Business Assurance Committee and formerly the Audit and Service Delivery Committee.</p>	
14.0	<p>Date of next meeting</p>	
14.1	<p>The proposed date of next AGM meeting is Friday 03 September 2021.</p>	

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Meeting: Open Board Meeting
Date: Friday 18 September 2020
Venue: Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams
Time: 9:30 AM

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: -

Angela Davies	-	Board Chair – Tenant
Steve Finegan	-	Board Vice-Chair – Independent
Parveen Brigue	-	Board Member – Independent
Hajrija Dergic	-	Board Member – Independent
Joy McLaren	-	Board Member – Tenant
Victor Browne	-	Board Member – Tenant
Mike Porter	-	Board Member – Tenant
Councillor Lynne Moran	-	Board Member – Councillor
Councillor Zareena Russell	-	Board Member – Councillor
Councillor Paul Singh	-	Board Member – Councillor
Councillor Rita Potter	-	Board Member – Councillor

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: -

Shaun Aldis	-	Chief Executive
Angela Barnes	-	Assistant Director – Housing Options
Darren Baggs	-	Assistant Director – Housing
Ian Gardner	-	Assistant Director – Building Services
Julie Haydon	-	Assistant Director – Corporate Services
Kevin Manning	-	Assistant Director – Asset Management
Nicky Devey	-	Head of Business Services
Catherine Stewardson	-	Business Assurance Manager

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: -

Joy McCoy	-	Head of Financial Management
Lynda Eyton	-	Client Relationship Manager
Tim Munro	-	Health & Safety Lead

1.0	Apologies	
1.1	- Derek Allen – Independent Board Member	
2.0	Declaration of Interest	
2.1	- Angela Davies – Board Member – Tenant - Joy McLaren – Board Member – Tenant - Mike Porter – Board Member – Tenant - Victor Browne – Board Member – Tenant Noted with interest and allowed to remain and join in with the debate.	
3.0	Minutes of the previous meeting – 10 July 2020	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.	
4.0	Matters arising	
4.1	There were no matters arising.	
For Decision		
5.0	Governance Arrangements - Annual Review – Julie Haydon, Assistant Director - Corporate Services	
5.1	The updated Board and Committee Terms of Reference were presented to Board members, in line with the governance structure to ensure clarity, with Board asked to note the ongoing governance arrangements.	
5.2	Terms of Reference – Page 16 – amendment noted in relation to reference to “Business Assurance Committee” to reflect “Audit and Business Assurance Committee”. Resolved: Board members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed to the Terms of Reference in line with the Governance Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board - Audit and Business Assurance Committee - Communities and Service Delivery Committee • Noted the ongoing Governance Arrangements and content of the report 	

For Information		
6.0	Health and Safety - 12-month update 2019 - 2020 – Tim Munro, Health and Safety Lead, City of Wolverhampton Council	
6.1	<p>Board members were provided with an overview of the Health and Safety 12-month update 2019 - 2020, which demonstrates assurance that Health and Safety is managed effectively throughout Wolverhampton Homes.</p> <p>The following key points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultation in relation to engagement around Health and Safety for employees and trade unions takes place through both the Health and Safety Wellbeing Committee and the Health and Safety Champions Group with the updated Terms of Reference agreed for both meetings. - The draft Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan is currently being developed and will be presented to Board in December 2020. This will incorporate training, development and interactive learning opportunities for staff and Board Members. - Fire safety remains high profile both nationally and locally, with compliance arrangements for Wolverhampton Homes remaining satisfactory - no major issues highlighted. - Health and Safety training continues to be delivered virtually. - Health and Safety operational support will be bolstered with the addition of two new posts to be appointed to within Wolverhampton Homes. This will provide operational Health and Safety support, with CWC continuing to provide strategic support and guidance. 	
6.2	<p>Board members stated the importance of a Board representative at the Health and Safety Wellbeing Committee and the Health and Safety Champions Group</p>	
6.3	<p>The Chair offered thanks to WH and CWC for the continued support and promotion of Health and Safety.</p> <p>Resolved: Board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the contents of the report 	
7.0	A.O.B	
7.1	<p>Board members were advised that Modern.Gov system will be the preferred method for issuing Board and Committee papers. Specific requests based on specific individual needs can be provided.</p>	

7.2	Board were also asked to note that the additional PDF copy of the Board and Committee papers is provided via email in the event the system is inaccessible on the day of the meeting.	
8.0	Date of next meeting	
8.1	Date: 02 December 2020 Time: 9:30 am	

Board Report

	Agenda Item 5
	02 December 2020 Health and Safety Plan 2021 - 2022
	Open Report
Status:	For Decision
Author and job title:	Tim Munro, Head of Service Health & Safety, City of Wolverhampton Council
Contact No:	07976 751442
Recommendations:	<p>Board Members are asked to approve the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed Health and Safety Annual Action Plan 2021 – 2022 <p>Board Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the contents of the report
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p>Protecting the Health and Safety of employees and members of the public who may be affected by our activities is an essential part of risk management and must be led by the Board.</p> <p>Health and Safety law places duties on organisations, employers and Directors who can be personally responsible when these duties are breached.</p>

Management Summary

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To update Board members with progress of the corporate health and safety action plan for Wolverhampton Homes (WH).
- 1.2 To gain approval for implementation of the proposed corporate health and safety action plan.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At the December 2019 Board meeting, discussion took place regarding the development and implementation of a health and safety action plan to identify key health and safety milestones and monitor the progress with the health and safety agenda. An action plan is attached to this report on which members views are requested, with a view to formal adoption and agreement. The proposed action plan has been developed in line with the Plan, Do Check Act cycle identified in HSE Document 'Successful Health and Safety Management'.
- 2.2 Adoption of a corporate health and safety action plan will assist the Board in taking an active involvement in integrating health and safety into management responsibilities. In particular, the Board should set the direction for effective health and safety management.
- 2.3 The organisation's health and safety policy is much more than a document, it is an integral part of the organisation's culture, values and performance standards.
- 2.4 Adoption and implementation of the proposed plan will enable Wolverhampton Homes Board to show:
 - There is visible and active commitment from the Board
 - There is strong and active leadership in relation to health and safety
 - That there are effective 'downward' communication systems and management structures to enable implementation of Wolverhampton Homes Corporate Health and Safety Policy
 - The integration of good health and safety management in business decisions
- 2.5 Review and monitoring of the Action Plan, will enable the Board to demonstrate that health and safety appears regularly on the agenda for management and Board meetings, and that the Chief Executive can give the clearest visibility of leadership together with the involvement of the Board Health and Safety Champion.

The presence on the Board of a Director specifically responsible for health and safety is also a strong signal that health and safety is of strategic importance.

- 2.6 Setting targets through the action plan will define what the Board is seeking to achieve.
- 2.7 Matters contained in the plan have been developed through the Assistant Director - Corporate Services and the CWC Health and Safety Lead. Employees and senior

management have been involved with the development of the plan through the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (HSWC) and the Health and Safety Champions meeting, both of which have Trade Union representation.

3.0 Financial and value for money implications

3.1 Breaches of Health and Safety Regulation can result in financial penalties.

4.0 Legal implications

4.1 Health and Safety law places duties on organisations. Employers and Directors can be personally responsible if these duties are breached.

4.2 The punitive measures include not only enforcement powers of inspectors but can include both personal and corporate liability proceedings.

5.0 Human resources implications

5.1 Failure to have robust Health and Safety arrangements can negatively impact the work force.

5.2 The Health and Safety of our employees is of paramount importance to the company and our Board.

5.3 All staff should be aware of their responsibilities in regard to health and safety.

6.0 Health and safety implications

6.1 There are potentially serious risks for Wolverhampton Homes and its operations from inadequate consideration of health and safety issues.

6.2 As a significant presence in the West Midlands, Wolverhampton Homes is a high profile case, particularly if things go wrong or as an employer, they are unable to demonstrate effective health and safety management.

7.0 Equalities implications

7.1 Has an equality impact assessment been carried out? **No.**

8.0 Impact on the environment and community

8.1 It is a legal requirement for the company to meet its health and safety responsibilities, which by doing so, has a positive impact on the environment and community.

9.0 Long term consequences for the company

9.1 A robust health and safety policy and plan and its effective implementation will safeguard against litigation, improve reputation, increase productivity, and reduce insurance premiums.

10.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

- 10.1 A safe, healthy organisation is important in the provision of effective and efficient services to our customers and is essential for the planning of quality services.
- 10.2 Demonstrating effective health and safety management will help to show the importance the organisation places on health and safety.

11.0 Impact of Covid-19

- 11.1 Health and Safety risk assessments and considerations continue to be a priority focus throughout this crisis and in line with business as usual.

12.0 Impact on Wolverhampton Homes' Management System

- 12.1 Will any new policy or policy updates have an impact on the management system? **Yes.**
- 12.2 If yes and approved by board members, update to go on the management system by:

Date: **31/12/2020**

Officer responsible: **Cathy Stewardson**

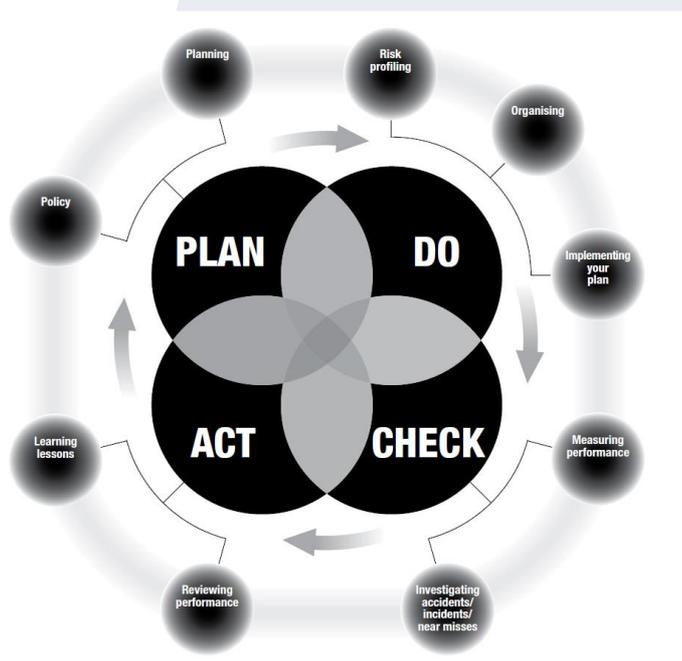
13.0 List of Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix 1: Draft Health and Safety Annual Action Plan 2021 - 2022

Appendix 1 Wolverhampton Homes Health and Safety Action Plan 2021 – 2022

Wolverhampton Homes supports and follows the plan, do, check act methodology for implementing its health and safety policy.

Planning is essential for the implementation of health and safety management systems. Adequate control of risk can only be achieved through a co-ordinated approach throughout the organisation.



This health and safety plan is Wolverhampton Homes approach to:

- Controlling risks
- Reacting to changing demands
- Sustaining a positive health and safety attitudes and behaviours
- Applying the principles of sensible risk management

In deciding and agreeing the items for inclusion in the plan, consideration has been given to key strategic business priorities in order that achievement of health and safety objectives contributes to, and is a valuable part of the business, ensuring compliance with legal, moral and economic obligations.

With regard to health and safety the key areas for action are:

- 1) Leadership and Management
- 2) Planning (Plan)
- 3) Manage Significant Risks (Do)
- 4) Audits (Check)
- 5) Employee engagement (Act)
- 6) Wellbeing in the workplace (Act)
- 7) Working in partnership with the trade unions (Act)
- 8) Training of employees to ensure competence (Act)

The outcome of the plan is to contribute to the business objectives by:

- Promoting a positive health and safety culture within the organisation, at all levels of responsibility
- Promote health and well-being in the workplace for employees – Good health is good business
- Reducing accidents, near misses and incidents
- Reducing work related absences from work, both from physical injuries and health related factors
- Supporting Wolverhampton Homes to comply with health and safety legislation and best practice
- Reducing direct consequential costs of investigations into untoward occurrences
- Improving workforce health, safety and welfare
- Providing safe facilities for use by tenants, leaseholders, members of the public and service users
- Provision of safe and fit housing, by the maintenance of existing stock and provision of new
- Working in collaboration with partner organisations, contractors and consultants to ensure health, safety and welfare is effectively managed

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟨…⟩
Plan						
Leadership and Management Continuous Improvement Health and safety Culture Visible Leadership driven top down						
<u>Strategic Leadership</u> Through the Board and Chief Executive who appoint a dedicated member of SMT with delegated responsibility for health and safety. In addition, a Board member to be appointed as a champion for	The Assistant Director - Corporate Services will be formally appointed by the Board and the Chief Executive including delegated responsibility for health and safety.	Chief Executive appoints Assistant Director – Corporate Services in writing.	February 2021	Shaun Aldis	Tim Munro	⟨…⟩
	The Board Champion appointed by the Board to take a lead for health and safety.	Board appoints nominated Board Champion.	December 2020	Shaun Aldis	Tim Munro	⟨…⟩
	Monthly assurance review meetings between the Assistant Director - Corporate Services and the Health and Safety Lead.	Monthly plan of meetings scheduled.	February 2021 ongoing	Julie Haydon	Tim Munro	⟨…⟩
	Quarterly assurance review meetings between Assistant Director - Corporate Services, Health and Safety Lead and the Board Champion on the Health and Safety Committee.	Quarterly plan of meetings scheduled.	February 2021 ongoing	Julie Haydon	Tim Munro	⟨…⟩

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟷
health and safety issues.	Review arrangements and effectiveness of meetings including the annual review of the associated Terms of Reference.	Formal review of meetings planned into agenda for September quarterly assurance meeting.	September 2021	Julie Haydon	Tim Munro	⟷
	Prepare and present a Health and Safety Board report twice yearly.	Board reports presented to July and December Board meetings.	June 2021 & December 2021	Julie Haydon	Tim Munro	⟷

Develop a framework to HSG65
 Prepare procedures to include planning, audit, communication, competence, organisation, consultation and review.
 Ensure that there are measures in place to implement this strategic plan on an operational basis.

<u>Leadership and Management</u>	All Directorate Management Teams confirm acceptance of the strategic Health and Safety Plan.	Meeting minutes to be provided to Assistant Director - Corporate Services as evidence.	March 2021 ongoing	Julie Haydon - Assistant Director	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷
Ensure all service Directorate Management Teams are aware of the strategic health and safety plan and that health and safety forms part of	Directorate Health and Safety Champions meetings review membership and provide updates on the progress of their areas, under the action plan. Report progress to each meeting of the Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.	Annual plan of Directorate Champions meetings scheduled. All Directorates provide update reports to Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.	June 2021	Julie Haydon - Assistant Directors	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟷
standard items for discussion at meetings.	Matters requiring escalation from Directorate Health and Safety Champions meetings are reported to Strategic Health and Safety Committee for support and resolution.	All Directorates provide update reports to Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee. Minutes of meetings.	ongoing	Julie Haydon - Assistant Directors	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷
Implementation (Do)						
Potentially Violent Persons Register 23	Maintain an up to date list of persons known to present health and safety risks to employees including those persons known to be violent, aggressive, abusive or threatening.	PVPR process operational and accessible to employees	February 2021	Julie Haydon / Darren Baggs	Jennie Hickson	⟷
	Update and share information between different software systems and investigate long term IT solution.	PVPR system communicates and updates the different software systems used				
	Ensure information is shared in a secure manner between all service areas and partners. - Data Sharing agreement	PVPR process allows for sharing of information between Wolverhampton Homes and partner organisations.	February 2021	Julie Haydon / Darren Baggs	Jennie Hickson	⟷

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟨…⟩
	Carry out a review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment panels - Review of entries - Standard assessment criteria 	PVPR process includes a means for review of existing and new entries. Dates for 2020 review panels planned and agreed.	March 2021	Darren Baggs	Jennie Hickson	⟨…⟩
<u>Health and Safety Accreditations</u>	Ensure that Wolverhampton Homes Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS) Annual Submission is maintained for construction related activities.	Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS) accreditation for 2021 submitted.	July 2021	Ian Gardner	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟨…⟩
<u>Occupational Health and Health Surveillance</u> Ensuring that employees are fit for work and that work does not adversely affect the health and wellbeing of employees is a	Work with HR to ensure that there are robust processes in place to confirm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees are fit for work at the time of recruitment. • Employees have access to appropriate occupational health advice to support them through their employment with Wolverhampton Homes. • Ensure that ongoing health surveillance and health screening is undertaken for employee groups 	Review of occupational health and health surveillance Policy carried out and approved by HSWC.	May 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟨…⟩

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟷
statutory requirement.	where this is required by statute or Wolverhampton Homes policies.					
Page 25 <u>Hazardous Substances</u>	Review suitability of Chemdoc on-line system and others for the management of hazardous substances.	Incorporate Wolverhampton Homes service areas into Chemdoc system	April 2021	Ian Gardner	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷
	Maintain up to date COSHH register including data sheets and COSHH assessments via My Compliance system. Coordinate flow of information to managers and staff.	Hazardous substances added to substance	April 2021	Ian Gardner	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷
	Audit COSHH management arrangements.	Audit of Chemdoc system carried out. Report submitted to HSWC.	January 2021	Ian Gardner	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷
Check						
<u>General Contractor Monitoring</u>	Agree a plan of pre-determined number of inspections and performance meetings for contracted works.	Annual plan for inspections developed.	March 2021	Kevin Manning / Ian Gardner	Tim Munro	⟷
	Report inspections to be presented to and reviewed by the Directorate at the health and safety meetings and reported to the	Reports presented to Directorate Champions meetings.	July 2021 ongoing	Kevin Manning / Ian Gardner	Tim Munro	⟷

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟷
	Health and Safety Committee for information.					
<u>Health and Safety Audits – Building Services</u>	Undertake a third-party assurance across the Building Services directorate.	Reports presented to Directorate Champions meetings.	April 2021	Ian Gardner	Tim Munro	
<u>Health and Safety Audits</u> Necessary to provide assurance of compliance and fitness for purpose. Key areas to include Landlord Duties: Gas, Electricity, Asbestos, Fire safety, Lifts, Legionella. Others:	Produce an audit schedule in accordance with Wolverhampton Homes and RoSPA principals / methodology adopted to undertake all health and safety audits.	Audit Plan produced. Reports presented to HSWC.	January 2021	Julie Haydon	Tim Munro / Jennie Hickson	⟷
	Annual plan for each area. Audit plan for each area is produced and monitored. Rolling Audits to be presented and monitored at Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.	Reports presented to HSWC.	Jan 2021 ongoing programme	All Assistant Directors	Tim Munro / Jennie Hickson	⟷

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟨⋯⟩
Management of road risk First aid Fire Marshall & evacuation Site duty holders Contractors Trades working practice						
Review Wolverhampton Homes policies, procedures and guidance. Ensure all health and safety resources are available for all staff.	Produce a review timetable for all existing health and safety policies and procedures.	Timetable produced and reported to HSWC.	January 2021	Julie Haydon	Tim Munro	⟨⋯⟩
	Review documents ensuring they are fit for purpose in line with the document review timetable.	Review timetable monitored at HSWC. Formal agenda item at each meeting.	December 2021 ongoing	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson	⟨⋯⟩
	Ensure all documents once revised are hosted on Wolverhampton Homes intranet, and where there are changes that appropriate communication is circulated to Wolverhampton Homes employees.	Existing and reviewed health and safety policies hosted on intranet.	ongoing - in line with timetable	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson	⟨⋯⟩

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟷
<u>Accident reporting, recording and investigation</u> Wolverhampton Homes are legally required that all workplace incidents are reported, recorded and investigated.	Ensure that there is a comprehensive database of workplace related accidents and incidents.	All work related accidents collated in a single database.	February 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson	⟷
	Ensure there are robust accident reporting procedures in place that are followed by employees of Wolverhampton Homes.	Produce and deliver toolbox talk and internal communication on accident reporting procedures.	February 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson	⟷
	Ensure that incidents reported are received by the Health and Safety team and receive appropriate investigation and follow up action.	Ensure that investigation process is included in accident reporting procedures.	February 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson	⟷
	Ensure incidents are recorded and analysis reports are presented to Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.	Reports submitted to HSWC.	March 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson	⟷
	Ensure incidents are reported in line with Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) where required and reported to SMT.	Reports to HSWC identify those that are reportable under RIDDOR.	January 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson	⟷
<u>Contractor Management</u> Construction Design and Management	Ensure that there are processes in place to confirm that all construction projects have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-construction plans • Health and Safety support • Site monitoring 	Procedure for compliance with CDM produced and approved by Directorate Champions meeting.	July 2021	Kevin Manning / Ian Gardner	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟷
Regulations 2015 (CDM).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk elimination • Health and safety files – development and completion • Relevant statutory notifications 	Minutes of meeting.				
Review (Act) Employee Engagement (Act) Continuous Improvement Health and Safety Culture Visible Leadership driven top down						
<u>Staff engagement</u>	Develop and agree a Communication Strategy with regards to health and safety including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovations • Campaigns • Media / Communication • Health and safety newsletters • Health and Safety Champions in all service teams and Directorates 	Annual plan of health and safety communications presented to and agreed by HSWC.	March 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷
<u>Engagement and Control of Contractors</u>	Investigate current engagement with contractors and their employees. Carry out an assessment of the possibility of delivering a health and safety event to	Engagement plan discussed and agreed at directorate Champions meeting.	July 2021	Kevin Manning / Ian Gardner	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟷

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟨...⟩
	support engagement on health and safety and to share expectations.	Engagement event delivered.				
Training						
<u>Training for WH Board Members</u>	<u>Board Training</u> Specific training for Board members to ensure they are regularly updated on their health and safety responsibilities.	Annual Board health and safety update delivered.	December 2021 Annual	Julie Haydon	Tim Munro	⟨...⟩
<u>Training</u> Provision of information, instruction, training and supervision is a statutory requirement.	Work closely with the Learning and Development Team (L&D) to identify health and safety training requirements and evaluate mode of delivery i.e. in-house, external, e-learning. Ensure health and safety training is included in annual training plan.	Health and safety included in corporate annual training plan.	April 2021	Julie Haydon	Tim Munro	⟨...⟩
	Produce a suite of Toolbox Talks For Trade employees. Ensure that an ongoing basis they are updated and delivered by supervisors. Ensure this is monitored through the appropriate Directorate Health and Safety Champions Meeting.	Toolbox talks produced and made available. Delivery of toolbox talks evidenced with signature sheets.	March 2021	Ian Gardner	Jennie Hickson	⟨...⟩

Priority	Targets / Measures / Actions	Completion Measure	Timescale (review and completion date)	Responsibility		Target Tracking
				Service Assistant Directors	Safety Team	✓ X ⟨…⟩
		Reports presented to Directorate Champions meeting.				
Wellbeing in the workplace (Act)						
<u>Wellbeing in the workplace</u> Ensure that employees' mental wellbeing is appropriately addressed within the organisation, to an equal extent as physical safety measures.	Review existing mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures, ensuring they are fit for purpose and appropriately implemented.	Health and Wellbeing Policy reviewed and presented to HSWC.	March 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟨…⟩
	Ensure that there is appropriate recording of health and wellbeing information and statistics and that this information is reported to Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.	Health and wellbeing updates presented to each meeting of HSWC.	March 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟨…⟩
	In conjunction with HR and Occupational Health provide regular, planned initiatives on health and wellbeing for all employees.	Annual plan of initiatives planned and agreed. Plan is reported and monitored by HSWC.	March 2021	Julie Haydon	Jennie Hickson / Tim Munro	⟨…⟩

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Board Report

	Agenda Item 6
	02 December 2020 Board Development Plan 2021 - 2022
	Open Report
Status:	For Decision
Author and job title:	Julie Haydon, Assistant Director – Corporate Services
Contact No:	07970 948305
Recommendations:	Board Members are asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the Learning Needs Analysis (LNA). 2. Note the draft Board training and development plan. 3. Note the Letter of appointment for Wolverhampton Homes directors.
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p>It is imperative that the work undertaken by Wolverhampton Homes Board is delivered with effective governance arrangements. The company's Articles of Association specifically underpin the arrangements for the Board Membership.</p> <p>The efficacy of the company relies upon the ability to recruit and retain a diverse effective, appropriately skilled, competent and energised Board.</p> <p>Wolverhampton Homes must be able to provide adequate assurance to its shareholder and wider stakeholder groups that it is effective in its operation and management.</p>

Management Summary

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Board member approval of the Board Training and Development Plan (Draft) to agree the next steps and arrangements for supporting Board Members in their skills and development. This is based on the outcomes detailed in the Board Learning Analysis Report.
- 1.2 To request comment on the content of the Letter of appointment for Wolverhampton Homes directors.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Board will recall the outline of proposals for the Board Competency framework, the Board Skills Self-Assessment and the Board Training and Development plan template which were presented to the January 2020 Board meeting.
- 2.2 The completion of the Board Skills Self-Assessment was undertaken during late summer 2020.
- 2.3 Effective governance allows the Company to determine strategic direction and control, and supports the creation of robust accountability, oversight and assurance for performance.
- 2.4 The Self-Assessment form is detailed at Appendix 1.

3.0 Competency Framework

- 3.1 The Board Competency Framework sets out the competencies required by the Board for delivery of effective governance.

4.0 Self-Assessment

- 4.1 The Skills Self-Assessment will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis for each Board member.
- 4.2 Individual Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) packs have been produced, the content of which have been shared with individual Board members. Results in these individual LNA packs will form the basis of the identification of the individual skills and development needs, to be discussed at upcoming one-to-one meetings in February 2021.
- 4.3 All self-assessment results have been collated to produce the Board LNA report, which provides a wider understanding of the current areas of development needs of the Board as a whole.
- 4.4 The Board members' LNA Report – can be found at Appendix 2.

5.0 One-to-one meetings

5.1 One-to-one meetings have been undertaken by Angela Davies – Chair of the Board and the Assistant Director – Corporate Services and will support Board members to further consider their own confidence and competence across 6 key areas as detailed in the Board Competency Framework:

- Analysis
- Corporate services and compliance
- Finance
- Governance and risk
- People
- Strategic leadership

Evaluation of the learning outcomes is completed to inform the Learning Needs Analysis.

5.2 Board Members will have the opportunity to discuss their contribution, interests and strengths, and also to identify any specific development needs.

5.3 The Board Training and Development Plan – Draft – can be found at Appendix 3.

6.0 Legal implications

6.1 WH require an effective governance framework in place with effective and appropriately skilled Board Members, as detailed in the UK Code of Governance.

6.2 The letter of appointment for Wolverhampton Homes is detailed at Appendix 4.

7.0 Human resources implications

7.1 An effective and appropriately skilled Board will demonstrate the commitment of the company to the strategic development of the organisation.

8.0 Financial and Value for Money implications

8.1 It is important that Board members have an understanding of financial and value for money implications identified within reports presented to Board and Committee.

9.0 Equalities implications

9.1 The recruitment process for Board members is administered in line with WH's current and wider commitment to equalities.

10.0 Impact on the environment and community

10.1 An effectively and appropriately skilled Board will be equipped to be able to make strategic decisions in the best interests of the company, its shareholder and customers.

11.0 Long term consequences for the company

11.1 To ensure that the role of the Board continues to meet the requirements of the Articles of Association.

11.2 It is also important to ensure Board Members are provided with skills and development opportunities to ensure the Board is effective in its delivery. This will ensure that Board members are suitably skilled and competent to undertake their roles effectively.

12.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

12.1 It is imperative that the key stakeholders and tenants have confidence in the efficacy of the Board.

13.0 List of Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1 – Board Skills Self-Assessment Form

13.2 Appendix 2 – Board members' Learning Needs Analysis Report – Please refer to Board Teams Channel

13.3 Appendix 3 – Board Training and Development Plan – Draft

13.4 Appendix 4 – Letter of appointment for Wolverhampton Homes directors

Appendix 1: Board skills self-assessment form

Board member name:	
Date of self-assessment:	

Our core values

Working together – We work collaboratively with our customers and colleagues. We value each other's ideas and different skill-sets. Many hands make light work, so we're more efficient when we work together.

Open to new ideas – We embrace change, look in different places, ask questions and try new things. We're curious and we are always looking for a better way. We won't always find one, but that's OK, because we know that 'good enough' isn't the best we can be. Being open to and trying new ideas is an achievement in itself.

Respecting differences – We treat others as we would like to be treated and we value open and honest conversations with customers and colleagues. We are encouraging of others views and considerate in our responses. We know that our greatest strength comes from our differences, so together we have created a supportive environment where we can all be ourselves.

Delivering our promises – We take personal responsibility for getting things done and we do what we say we will. We are committed to providing a great service to our customers and always act with integrity.

What is self-reflection?

Self-reflection is like looking into a mirror and describing what you see. It is a way of assessing yourself, your ways of working and how you learn. To put it simply 'reflection' means to think about something. Reflecting and completing an exercise of self-assessment is becoming an increasingly important element to any form of personal development or learning.

Why is self-reflection important?

Reflecting helps you to develop your skills and review your effectiveness, rather than just carry on doing things as you have always done them. It is about questioning, in a positive way, what you do and why you do it and then deciding whether there is a better, or more efficient, way of doing it in the future.

In any role, whether at home or at work, reflection is an important part of learning. You wouldn't use a recipe a second time around if the dish didn't work the first time, would you? You would either adjust the recipe or find a new and, hopefully, better one. When we learn we can become stuck in a routine that may not be working effectively. Thinking about your own skills can help you identify changes you might need to make.

Board skills self-assessment form

How to use this self-assessment form

Use this self-assessment form to help you consider your own confidence about the six key competencies in the Board Competency Framework. You can also use this document to help you to identify any potential areas for training and development:

- Strategic leadership
- Finance
- People
- Analysis
- Governance and risk

Each of the knowledge and skills areas should be scored using a scale between 1 and 4; with 4 being highest and 1 being lowest. The table below will help you determine your score for each area.

Score ratings explained

Score 4:

High level /confident ability with regard to all the requirements of the skill, gained through significant experience or professional work. This would involve a detailed knowledge of the whole of the skill area. This would be demonstrated by:

- The ability to use this skill immediately in the context of a Board of a commercial organisation
- To lead in the development of work in the skill area
- The ability to liaise at executive and Board level of stakeholder organisations or regulatory authorities in the area of the skill.

Score 3:

High level/confident ability with regard to at least half of the requirements of the skill, gained through some experience or professional work. This would be demonstrated by:

- The ability to use the knowledge with some limited support in the context of a Board of a commercial organisation
- To contribute effectively as part of a group in furthering issues by using the skill.

Score 2:

An overview knowledge or ability in most of the requirements of the skill. This would be demonstrated by:

- The ability to understand the context of decisions (although not necessarily the detail) that a Board of a commercial organisation needs to make
- To question appropriately in the skill area and to contribute to issues by using the skill.

Score 1:

Either some limited experience in some of the requirements of the skill or having undertaken the organisation's training programme in a particular area. This would:

- Involve sufficient understanding in the skill area to know how to ask relevant questions in a large commercial organisation, with a limited support, in order to further increase understanding.

Board skills self-assessment form

Strategic leadership

Do you understand:	1-4
National and local housing policy and news	
What the key features of good governance should be	
The difference between strategic and operational decisions	
How to carry out strategic planning, and what tools you need to do this	
Are you able to:	1-4
Think strategically about the organisation's development	
Explain strategic priorities and goals, and how these will be monitored	
Champion the reasons for change, and explain how these changes benefit the community	

Do you understand:	1-4
Your organisation's vision and values	
Your strategic Business Plan	
Your organisation's governing policies and how these reflect the company's vision and values	
Are you able to:	1-4
Act in a way that reflects the culture and values, and ensure that policies are in line with these	
Agree the distinctive characteristics and culture of the organisation	

Do you understand:	1-4
Identify the decisions that are likely to support the organisation to achieve its goals	
Put aside your own interests to make decisions in the best interests of the company	
Act with honesty, objectivity, and integrity	
Ensure that your decisions are well informed and impartial	
Are you able to:	1-4
Recognise when your Board will require external advice	
Stand by the decisions of the Board, and respect collective decision making	
Accept challenge, and encourage open discussions	

Board skills self-assessment form

Finance

Do you understand:	1-4
The company's financial policies, funding arrangements and methods of assuring financial accountability	
The internal control processes, and how value for money is secured	
The organisation's financial health and efficiency, and how it compares with other housing organisations	
Are you able to:	1-4
Be confident in the financial information you receive	
Interpret budget monitoring information, and communicate this to others	
Take part in financial self-evaluation activities	
Rigorously question how the company is approaching financial efficiency	

Do you understand:	1-4
How the company receives funding, and how this funding is spent	
The importance of a robust financial strategy and plans to ensure sustainability	
How the company allocates resources, and how these translate into outcomes for tenants	
How the budget is set and monitored	
Are you able to:	1-4
Make decisions about funding, based on the company's priorities	
Interpret data relating to finances	
Ask informed questions about income and expenditure	

Board skills self-assessment form

People

Are you able to:	1-4
Show your commitment to your role through active participation	
Find the information you need to support you in your role	
Accept constructive challenge and feedback	
Demonstrate a level of listening and engagement during Board meetings	
Raise doubts and differences of opinions in an appropriate way, and encourage others to do the same	
Acknowledge your mistakes, and the lessons learnt from these	
Influence others, and build consensus through persuasion	
Demonstrate professional ethics and values, and sound judgement	

Do you understand:	1-4
Who your main stakeholders are	
How aware are you of what the Board expects of you in your role	
How to work with stakeholders, and members of the community	
Are you able to:	1-4
Proactively consult with a range of views, and welcome feedback and challenge	
Work with other organisations where necessary	
Be clear, honest and open when communicating with tenants and stakeholders	

Do you understand:	1-4
What the company spends on staffing, and how to benchmark this against other housing organisations	
How staff are recruited and the processes that apply	
How staff performance management and the pay model works	
Are you able to:	1-4
Ensure that staffing structures are fit for purpose	
Take responsibility for maintaining a robust pay policy	
Be confident in how you apply procedures to the performance management of senior staff members	
Identify how pay decisions will affect the budget	
Have due regard to the work-life balance of staff members	

Board skills self-assessment form

Analysis

Do you understand:	1-4
How to analyse performance data	
The context on a local and national basis	
Where the data you receive comes from and is quality assured	
Tenant population	
Are you able to:	1-4
Analyse and interpret data to evaluate how the company is performing	
Use data to inform decisions	
Challenge the Senior Management Team (SMT) to ensure that the data you receive is valuable and efficiently collected	

Board skills self-assessment form

Governance and risk

Governance structures

Do you understand:	1-4
The role of the Board, and its core functions	
How the strategic role of governance is different to operational leadership	
Do you regularly attend Board and committee meetings, and the importance of meetings being quorate	
Do you spend adequate time in reading Board minutes, and other materials before Board meetings	
The governance structure and how decisions are delegated	
Are you able to:	1-4
Help your board members design a committee structure that is appropriate, and make changes where appropriate	

Risk management

Do you understand:	1-4
What risk management is	
How risks are managed and how concerns are escalated	
How conflicts of interest, and breaches in confidentiality, lead to risks	
Are you able to:	1-4
Identify the main risks, and the contingency measures that are in place	
Ensure that risk management systems are robust, and regularly reviewed	
Advise on how to achieve the right balance of risk, and how to mitigate the impact of risks	
Actively avoid and manage conflicts of interest	

External accountability

Do you understand:	1-4
The purpose of formal scrutiny and accountability	
How national performance measures are monitored and reported	
Are you able to:	1-4
Ensure appropriate structures are in place to support external scrutiny	
Ensure that the Board is open and accessible to members of the community	
Use your understanding of data to inform responses to external scrutiny	

Board skills self-assessment form

Corporate services and compliance

Do you understand:	1-4
The legal, regulatory and financial duties	
The importance of having regard to statutory guidance, such as the National Federation of Housing	
The organisation's legal obligations in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment legislation • equality, diversity and inclusion • health and safety • data protection and freedom of information 	
The Board's duties with relation to Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty	
The role of governance in scrutinising the organisation's performance on equality	
Your instrument of governance: Articles of Association	
Your whistleblowing policy, and how these relate to the Board's responsibilities	
The importance of observing company policy for example regarding complaints	
Are you able to:	1-4
Explain why equality, diversity and inclusion in housing matters	
Describe who is protected from discrimination and the different ways in which discrimination can be experienced	
Identify and understand the common barriers faced by people with protected characteristic and assess tools and good practice that can be used to overcome these barriers	
Speak out when you are concerned about non-compliance	
Explain the Board's statutory duties in relation to Equality legislation; H&S legislation and Data Protection legislation	
Ensure that the membership of the Board reflects the diversity of the communities they serve	
Understand monitoring information on equality target groups	
Champion equality, diversity and inclusion	
Help to mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion into the day to day working of the organisation	
Recognise when the Board may need specialist advice	

Board skills self-assessment form

Evaluation

Do you understand:	1-4
Your own strengths and areas for development	
Are you able to:	1-4
Be 'outward facing', and learn from others	
Maintain your own personal development plan	
Be ready to accept opportunities for training and development	
Accept a wide range of feedback, and use this to inform your development	
Carry out self-reviews, and reflect on your own performance	
Evaluate how the Board's decisions affect the organisation	
Use feedback from inspections to inform decisions about Board development	
Contribute to the Board's self-evaluation	

Board skills self-assessment form

Chair

Are you able to:	1-4
Guide and direct the governance process, focussing the work of the Board on the organisation's values, vision and strategic direction	
Facilitate and effectively manage varying perspectives and points of view, and intervene when necessary in instances involving conflict of interest, confidentiality and other Board policies	
Preside over Board meetings in a manner that encourages participation and information sharing, while moving the Board toward timely closure and prudent decision-making	
Maintain a positive, collaborative relationship with the SMT, including acting as a sounding board on emerging issues and alternative courses of action	
Stay up-to-date about the organisation and determine when an issue needs to be brought to the attention of the full Board or a committee	
Lead the processes of SMT goal-setting, performance evaluation and remuneration review, consistent with Board policy	
Set a high standard for Board conduct by modelling, articulating and upholding rules of conduct, creating an environment of openness and acceptance	
Delegate responsibilities such as committee work and participation in committees	
Lead the development of the Board's knowledge and capabilities by playing a central role in orientation of new board members and providing continuing education for the entire Board	
Play a key role in the recruitment of new board members	

Board skills self-assessment form

Vice Chair

Are you able to:	1-4
Preside over meetings in a manner that encourages participation and information sharing, while moving the Board toward timely closure and prudent decision-making	
Develop and maintain a positive, collaborative relationship with SMT, Heads of Service and other operational managers	
Stay up-to-date about the organisation and determine when an issue needs to be brought to the attention of the Board	
Set a high standard for Board conduct by modelling, articulating and upholding good conduct	
intervene when necessary in instances involving conflict of interest, confidentiality and other Board policies	
Lead the development of the Board's knowledge and capabilities by playing a central role in orientation of new board members, and providing continuing education for the Board	
Play a key role in the recruitment of new board members as required	
Consider the effectiveness of the committee and makes recommendations for improvement	
Seek feedback on your performance as chairperson.	

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Appendix 3:

Board Training and Development Plan

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version history

This table records the status and version history of this document or agreement.

Version	Date	Author	Version History
1.0	02.12.2020	Sarah Butcher	Document creation from LNA

This document should be read in conjunction with:

1. Board LNA Report – December 2020.

DRAFT

FOR INTERNAL PURPOSES ONLY

Plan title:	Board Training and Development Plan
Overall aim(s) of intervention(s):	<p>To improve the knowledge and skills of Board members in competencies detailed in the WH Board competency framework that scored an Average Skill result of less than 3.5 in the Board Skills Self-Assessment in 2020 in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis• Corporate services and compliance• Finance• Governance and risk• People• Strategic Leadership <p>Evaluation: Learning outcomes to inform the Learning and Needs Analysis</p>
Plan outcomes:	<p>By the end of this plan, Board members will have the knowledge and skills to score at least 3.0 or above in all competencies in the Wolverhampton Homes Board Competency Framework, and to demonstrate the knowledge and skills in their performance of the role of Board member.</p>

FOR INTERNAL PURPOSES ONLY

Analysis			
Competency	Description	Learning outcome	Method
Rigorous analysis of data	Board members are required to develop specific knowledge to allow the monitoring of performance and improvement. It will also assist them in holding leaders to account.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of how to analyse performance data • Knowledge of the context on a local and national basis • Knowledge of where the data you receive comes from and is quality assured • Knowledge of the tenant population • Ability to analyse and interpret data to evaluate how your company is performing • Ability to use data to inform decisions • Ability to challenge the SMT to ensure that the data you receive is valuable and efficiently collected 	TBC

DRAFT

Corporate services and compliance			
Competency	Description	Learning outcome	Method
	We want to ensure all those involved in governance understand the legal frameworks and context in which the organisation operates, and all the requirements with which it must comply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knowledge of the legal, regulatory and financial duties• Knowledge of your instrument of governance: Articles of Association• Able to explain the Board's statutory duties in relation to Equality, Health and Safety, and Data Protection legislation	TBC

DRAFT

FOR INTERNAL PURPOSES ONLY

Finance			
Competency	Description	Learning outcome	Method
Financial frameworks and accountability	These are the skills, knowledge and behaviours, which enable the Board to ensure that the organisation is in a strong and sustainable financial position to achieve its strategic goals. It is about ensuring the sustained financial health and efficiency of the whole organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the company's financial policies, funding arrangements and methods of assuring financial accountability • Knowledge of the internal control processes and how value for money is secured • Knowledge of the financial health and efficiency of the organisation and how it compares with other housing organisations • Ability to be confident in the financial information you receive • Ability to interpret budget monitoring information and communicate this to others • Ability to take part in financial self-evaluation activities • Ability to rigorously question how the company is approaching financial efficiency 	TBC
Financial management and monitoring	The competencies required will ensure that the Board is able to make sufficiently informed and effective decisions on the use of resources and allocation of funds to improve outcomes for tenants. It will also ensure that public money is utilised efficiently and in the best interests of the organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of how the company receives funding and how this funding is spent • Knowledge of the importance of a robust financial strategy and plans to ensure sustainability • Knowledge of how the company allocates resources and how these translate into outcomes for tenants • Knowledge of how the budget is set and monitored • Ability to make decisions about funding based on the company's priorities • Ability to interpret data relating to finances • Ability to ask informed questions about income and expenditure 	TBC

FOR INTERNAL PURPOSES ONLY

Governance and risk			
Competency	Description	Learning outcome	Method
Governance structures	Understanding and designing the structures through which governance takes place is vital to avoid unclear and overlapping responsibilities that can lead to dysfunctional or ineffective governance arrangements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of how the strategic role of governance is different to operational leadership 	TBC
Risk management	Effective boards play a key role in setting and managing risk appetite and tolerance. They are able to ensure that risks are aligned with strategic priorities and improvement plans, and intervention strategies provide a robust framework for risk management. These competencies enable those on the board to identify, evaluate and prioritise organisational risks and ensure appropriate action is taken to mitigate against them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to advise on how to achieve the right balance of risk and how to mitigate the impacts of risks 	e-Learning Face to Face session
External accountability	This section is about managing the organisation's relationship with those who have a formal or informal role in holding it to account. It enables the Board to use their skills and knowledge confidently and effectively to be accountable for the delivery of the organisation's strategic plan, their own decision-making and their oversight of executive leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of how national performance measures are monitored and reported Ability to use your understanding of data to inform responses to external scrutiny 	TBC

FOR INTERNAL PURPOSES ONLY

People

People that govern need to form positive working relationships with their colleagues to function well as part of a team. They need to be able to relate to staff, tenants, and the local community, and connect to stakeholders to enable effective delivery of the organisation’s strategic priorities.

Competency	Description	Learning outcome	Method
Staffing and performance management	The knowledge and behaviours required by the Board to oversee executive leaders in their responsibility to ensure that the organisation has the right staff who are managed and incentivised to perform to the best of their abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of what the organisation spends on staffing and how to benchmark this against other housing organisations • Knowledge of how staff are recruited and the processes that apply • Knowledge of staff performance management and how the pay model works • Ability to ensure that staffing structures are fit for purpose • Ability to take responsibility for maintaining a robust pay policy • Ability to be confident in how you apply procedures to the performance management of senior staff members • Ability to identify how pay decisions will affect the budget 	TBC

FOR INTERNAL PURPOSES ONLY

Strategic leadership

Effective boards provide confident, strategic leadership to their organisations; they lead by example and ‘set the tone from the top’. These competencies relate to the core function of boards to set vision, ethos and strategic direction.

Competency	Description	Learning outcome	Method
Setting direction	The knowledge and skills required for effectiveness in setting the strategic direction of the organisation, planning and prioritising, monitoring progress and managing change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the national and local housing policy and news • Knowledge of what the key features of good governance should be • Knowledge of the difference between strategic and operational decisions • Knowledge of how to carry out strategic planning and what tools you need to do this • Able to think strategically about the organisation’s development • Ability to explain strategic priorities and goals and how these will be monitored 	TBC
Culture, Vision and Values	The knowledge and skills required to set the culture, vision and values of the organisation successfully; demonstrate these in the conduct and operation of the Board; embed them through the whole organisation; and monitor the impact on outcomes for customers, and on the reputation of the organisation in the wider community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of your strategic action plans • Knowledge of your organisation’s governing policies and how these reflect the company vision and values • Know the values of the organisation 	TBC

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Letter of appointment for Wolverhampton Homes Directors

**A welcome letter setting out what is
expected of new Board members**

29 Market Street
Wolverhampton
WV1 3AG
01902 552956

WHSBusinessAssurance@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk

Letter of Appointment for Wolverhampton Homes Directors

Wolverhampton Homes recognises the value of providing new directors of the Board with a letter of appointment which sets out what will be expected of them.

The following letter is designed to be a guide to accommodate our requirements.

Dear new Board member,

I write to confirm your appointment as a Director of Wolverhampton Homes.

This letter is intended to inform you of a number of important formal matters connected with your appointment and accompanies an induction pack which provides more detail to assist you in your new role. It is agreed that on acceptance of this offer, this letter will constitute an appointment to the office of director and not a contract of employment.

Appointment

Your appointment is subject to the governing document of Wolverhampton Homes, namely the Articles of Association. Your term of office will be for an initial tenure of four years commencing on the confirmed start date, (unless otherwise terminated earlier), as per the termination clause herein until the conclusion of the annual general meeting occurring in the final year of your tenure.

Your appointment and position of director is contingent on satisfactory performance and any relevant statutory provisions relating to the removal of a director.

The Board has determined you to be an Independent, Tenant or Councillor member and will disclose this at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). You must inform the Company Secretary, or the Board Chair, immediately if you believe that your ability or conduct renders you no longer able to continue in this role.

Termination

Your appointment may be terminated with immediate effect if you:

- breach the Code of Conduct for Directors or
- breach your duties to Wolverhampton Homes or
- become disqualified from acting as a director or
- You fail to meet the criteria to be a director as set out in the Articles of Association.



Induction

In addition to the enclosed induction pack you will be provided with a comprehensive and tailored induction. We will request that you make yourself available during your first year of appointment for not less than an additional four days. A member of the Learning and Development shall be in touch shortly with further details.

Role

The Board as a whole is collectively responsible for the success of Wolverhampton Homes. The Board has a direct responsibility to ensure that Wolverhampton Homes operates under the terms of the Management Agreement and in line with the Articles of Association. It is also responsible for ensuring the Senior Management Team operate within the responsibilities laid out in their job descriptions.

The role of a director is a varied one, and there are a range of responsibilities. Please refer to the enclosed Roles & Responsibilities of a Director Guidance Note for more details. You will be expected to perform your duties and responsibilities to Wolverhampton Homes faithfully, efficiently and diligently to a standard commensurate with both the function of your role as director and your knowledge, skills and experience.

As a director you must:

- Understand and exercise your powers under, and abide by, Wolverhampton Homes Articles of Association.
- Take decisions objectively in the interests of the Company.
- Understand and abide by Wolverhampton Homes Code of Conduct for directors.
- Know and abide by the principles of being a Director as set out in the UK Code of Governance.

In your role as director you will be required to be involved in a wide range of activity, including but not limited to:

- Constructive challenge and development of proposals on strategy.
- Scrutinise the performance of the Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team and monitor the reporting of performance against KPIs and objectives.

- Satisfy yourself on the integrity of financial information and that appropriate controls and systems of risk management are in place, robust and defensible.
- Uphold high standards and integrity and instil the appropriate culture, values and behaviours in board meetings and beyond.
- Determine appropriate levels of remuneration and have a role in appointing and where necessary, removing the Chief Executive, and in succession planning.

If there are matters which arise which cause you concern about your role you should discuss them with the Company Secretary [or the Chair].

Time commitment

Overall Wolverhampton Homes anticipates a time commitment of up to one day a month after the induction phase. This will include attendance at least four board meetings per year, the AGM, four board strategy sessions, at least two training days and at least one site visit(s) per year. Unless urgent and unavoidable circumstances prevent you from doing so, it is expected that you will attend the meetings outlined here.

Additional involvement may include representing Wolverhampton Homes at other events. Board members will also be requested to take on other roles, including serving on one or more of the associated committees and undertaking the role of a Board Champion. You will also be expected to devote appropriate preparation time ahead of each meeting.

By accepting this appointment, you have confirmed that you are able to allocate sufficient time to meet the expectations of your role. You will be provided with the relevant terms of reference upon appointment to a committee. The agreement of the board should be sought before accepting additional commitments that might impact upon the time you are able to devote to your role as a director.

Code of Conduct

All directors are required to sign, and abide by, the enclosed Code of Conduct for Directors. Please read the attached and if you feel you are able to abide by it you should sign the enclosed agreement and return it to the Company Secretary. If for whatever reason you feel unable to abide by the Code of Conduct for Directors, you must inform the Company Secretary or the Chair as soon as possible.

Declaration of interests

It is accepted and acknowledged that you may have business interests other than those of Wolverhampton Homes and must declare any conflicts that are apparent at present on the enclosed Declaration of Interests form. In the event that you become aware of any potential conflicts of interest, these should be disclosed to the Company Secretary immediately as they become apparent. The Declaration of Interest form must be updated every 6 months.

Confidentiality

All information acquired during your term of office is confidential to Wolverhampton Homes and should not be released, communicated, nor disclosed either during your appointment or following termination (by whatever means), to third parties without prior clearance from the Company Secretary. This restriction shall cease to apply to any confidential information which may (other than by reason of your breach) become available to the public generally. You are required to hold and retain information (in whatever format you receive it) under appropriately secure conditions.

Personal Details

You should advise the Company Secretary of any change in address or other personal contact details.

Return of Property

Upon termination of your appointment with Wolverhampton Homes, you should deliver to Wolverhampton Homes all documents, records, papers and other property which may be in your possession or under your control and which relate(s) in any way to the business affairs of the company. Making copies of such is not permitted.

Data Protection

By signing the enclosed declaration, you consent to Wolverhampton Homes holding and processing information about you for legal, personnel, administrative and management purposes and in particular to the processing of any sensitive personal data (as defined in the Data Protection Act 2018) including, as and when appropriate:

- (a) Information about your physical or mental health or condition in order to monitor and take decisions as to your fitness to perform your duties;
- (b) Information about you that may be relevant to ensuring equality of opportunity and treatment in line with Wolverhampton Homes equal opportunities and diversity policy and in compliance with equal opportunities legislation; and
- (c) Information relating to any criminal proceedings in which you have been involved, for insurance purposes and in order to comply with legal requirements and obligations to third parties. You will comply with the Wolverhampton Homes data protection policy.

If you are willing to accept these terms of appointment, please confirm your acceptance by signing and returning the enclosed signed declaration. In conclusion, may I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment to the board and to contact me if you require any additional support and/or information.

A copy of Wolverhampton Homes Code of Conduct is attached with this letter.



Board Report

	Agenda Item 7
	02 December 2020 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, Action Plan and update
	Open Report
Status:	For Decision
Author and job title:	Julie Haydon, Assistant Director – Corporate Services
Contact No:	07870 363036
	<p>Board Members are asked to approve the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Wolverhampton Homes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021 - 2023 • Draft Wolverhampton Homes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Action Plan – 2021 - 2022 <p>Board Members are also asked to note the progress made in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Inclusive Futures Campaign – Update • Black Lives Matter Agenda – Update • Meeting the needs of key equality groups during the Covid-19 crisis – Update • Annual Action Plan Update - 2020 • Key achievements – Update - 2020
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p>Failure to meet legislative requirements is not tolerable.</p> <p>WH must adequately identify and meet the needs of all sections of the community it serves in order to demonstrate compliance and meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirements as laid down by the Equality Act 2010.</p>

Management Summary

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) continues to be a key consideration throughout the activities and culture within Wolverhampton Homes (WH). Equalities is firmly embedded within the 4 year Wolverhampton Homes Business Plan 2019 - 2023.
- 1.2 As an organisation, WH remains committed to providing equality of access and opportunity to services, and in embracing the diversity of our staff, customers and communities.
- 1.3 Furthermore, there has been a heightened focus on equalities since the tragic death of George Floyd in the United States of America earlier this year, highlighting the Black Lives Matter movement, and with the impact of Covid-19 this year, particularly on BAME groups.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 This report provides Board members with the following:
 - Draft Wolverhampton Homes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021 - 2023
 - Draft Wolverhampton Homes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Action Plan – 2021 - 2022
 - The Inclusive Futures Campaign - Update
 - Black Lives Matter Agenda – Update
 - Meeting the needs of key equality groups during the Covid-19 crisis – Update
 - Annual Action Plan Update – 2020
 - Key achievements – Update – 2020

3.0 The EDI Strategy – our plan for the next three years

- 3.1 The strategy provides details of our approach and plans for progressing EDI over the next three years. It also details our overall commitment and objectives that will enable us to deliver annual supporting action plans.
- 3.2 This approach ensures that the organisational equality objectives and priorities remain relevant, and the associated action plans that meet those priorities are appropriate moving forward.
- 3.3 Wolverhampton Homes will continue to work towards meeting the ‘five broad equality objectives’, aligned with best practice against national standards, (e.g. the Local Government Associations recommended ‘equality outcome’ areas of the Social Housing Equality Framework, Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH), Equalities & Diversities Standards and the Housing Diversity Networks standards), which are:

- To know our customers better and understand their needs
- To provide visible leadership and commitment to this agenda and maintain strong relationships with community led organisations
- To continue to encourage and facilitate the involvement of customers in shaping the design and delivery of high-quality and relevant services
- To provide accessible responsive services and customer care
- To take steps to diversify the workforce, so that WH reflects the community it serves

3.4 Work has taken place with the Senior Management Team and the service area leads, to better understand and establish both the corporate equality priorities and the service specific equality priorities, and outcomes to be achieved.

3.5 WH has consulted with the Equality Staff Forum, with customers and key partner agencies via the Equality and Diversity Steering Group.

The focus of the communication and consultation has been to introduce the document and invite comments and feedback on whether they believe WH are taking the right action, at the right time, for the right people. The final draft strategy has taken account of all feedback received to date.

3.6 The strategy and action plans will allow WH to continue to demonstrate and monitor its commitment to continuing to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and its Public Sector Duty.

More importantly WH will aim to meet social and ethical responsibilities by making sure that there are 'meaningful equality outcomes' against core business activities and continue to sustain excellent standards in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

3.7 WH have reviewed the structure of the Equality Champions looking closely at the projects we wish to fulfil. The new structure, which sees the overarching Equality Champions Group being supported by four specific strands of equality work, and a member of SMT will support the business in the delivery of the EDI strategy.

Working within the group are four equality strands:

- Race, Religion and Belief
- Disability and Mental Health
- Gender Equality
- LGBTQ+

3.8 The group will:

- Continue to play an important and visible role
- Continue to respond to the Black Lives Matter movement with specific actions relating to Black and Minority Ethnic colleagues
- Has a SMT representative as a dedicated officer for each staff network group
- Hold regular briefings held with the Chief Executive and staff network members
- Regularly attend SMT to help inform decision making

- Budget set for staff network group activity has been allocated
- The outcomes of the project underpin the EDI Action Plan and the Organisational Development (OD) Strategy

3.9 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is detailed at Appendix 1.

3.10 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Action Plan Update 2021 - 2022 can be found at Appendix 2.

4.0 Update on the Inclusive Futures Campaign

4.1 Inside Housing launched its 'Inclusive Futures Campaign', which called upon the housing sector to sign up to / make a pledge to improve its diversity, particularly in senior and executive level roles, to promote positive role models from under-represented groups and to provide information to support change.

4.2 WH embarked on a project to look at: "*How Wolverhampton Homes can improve the diversity of its workforce at the top*" as current workforce profiles at senior level are not fully representative of the communities it serves.

4.3 Further information can be found at Appendix 3.

5.0 An update on the Black Lives Matter Agenda

5.1 Board will recall the public outcry over the death of George Floyd at which time a number of residents and staff asked to find out what the company was doing to support this global movement.

5.2 Wolverhampton Homes continues to actively improve the partnerships with staff, communities and partners. A 'Let's Talk Race' meeting was held in July 2020, followed with subsequent conversations with the group and attended by over 130 employees who were able to view concerns / challenges facilitated by the Chief Executive and Assistant Director – Corporate Services, subsequently an action plan related specially to Black Lives Matter (BLM) has been developed, which focuses on 4 key areas of improvement:

- Leadership and Organisational Culture
- Employment Matters
- Training and Development
- Service priorities to tackle existing inequalities

5.3 The Black Lives Matter Action plan has been incorporated in the overall EDI Action plan.

6.0 Meeting the needs of key equality groups during the Covid-19 crisis update

6.1 In collaboration with CWC, Wolverhampton Homes reviewed the support provided to our customers during the impact of Covid-19.

- 6.2 The public enquiry launched by Public Health England (PHE) during the crisis noted that the impact of Covid-19 had a disproportionate impact on individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. By considering compounding factors, such as age, additional underlying health conditions or socio-economic factors, it was noted there was an increased risk to BAME groups, with additional consideration of other social factors such as deprivation.
- 6.3 During this period, Wolverhampton Homes focused on protecting the most vulnerable from Covid-19. This included older residents and many from different ethnic backgrounds, and those with disabilities.
- 6.4 Significant work has already been done to consider where certain groups may require a more tailored offer, but as WH moves into the service redesign, it is vital that this work is built upon, continuity to develop a systematic approach to supporting our customers.
- 6.5 Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, WH has recognised that vulnerable groups have not only been elderly people, those with ill health and comorbidities, or people living in crowded conditions, but also people from a gradient of socio-economic groups that have struggled to cope financially, mentally or physically with the crisis.
- 6.6 A number of positive actions have been taken to date to continue to support the needs of key equality groups during the crisis; older adults, BAME groups, financially vulnerable, and those with wellbeing needs.
- 6.7 Time will tell if our response to the outbreak has been enough to meet people's diverse needs. However, looking ahead, the service redesign presents a great opportunity for Wolverhampton Homes to rethink how services are delivered and to take into account the challenges and issues faced by our vulnerable communities during Covid-19 and to build on the huge strides we have taken to mitigate against the pandemic.
- 6.8 The outcomes of the Customer STAR survey conducted in August 2020 will support the priority areas of work (Customers, Property, People, Finance), and will help to identify further areas for improvement.
- 6.9 WH is aware that the country is still subject to further national and local restrictions and as such, will continue to support its customers. Insight from the Customer STAR survey will provide an opportunity to identify any other groups who require specific needs.
- 6.10 More detailed information can be found at Appendix 4.

7.0 Key achievements update – 2020

- 7.1 A number of key achievements have been made in relation to equality and diversity over the previous year.
- 7.2 More detailed information can be found at Appendix 5.

8.0 Financial and value for money implications

8.1 It is agreed that WH will apportion a budget to the work of the Staff Network Groups and in particular, Black and Minority Ethnic activities.

9.0 Legal implications

9.1 Mainstreaming equalities and building cohesive communities is at the heart of national policy.

9.2 Social landlords are required to comply with and meet specific duties outlined within the Equalities Act 2010.

10.0 Human resources implications

10.1 It is imperative that initiatives are delivered to support staff particularly those from BAME backgrounds as part of this strategy.

11.0 Health and safety implications

11.1 There are no health and safety implications identified within this report.

12.0 Equalities implications

12.1 Has an equality impact assessment been carried out. **No.**

13.0 Impact on the environment and community

13.1 Supporting customers to sustain their tenancies will have a positive impact on the wider community and should increase the general wellbeing of customers and their ability to manage their homes better.

14.0 Long term consequences for the company

14.1 Regular equalities monitoring of services is essential – this is to reflect and take account of the changing demands and priorities placed on Wolverhampton Homes as a company.

15.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

15.1 Wolverhampton Homes has a duty to ensure that their partners and contractors meet the duties outlined within the Equalities Act 2010.

15.2 Learning from equalities monitoring data will help to improve services, resulting in more positive relationships with our customers.

16.0 Impact of Covid-19

16.1 The impact of Covid-19 has been detailed within this report where appropriate.

17.0 Impact on the Wolverhampton Homes' Management System

17.1 Will any new policy or policy updates have an impact on the management system? **Yes.**

17.2 If yes and approved by board members, update to go on the management system by:

Date: 31/12/2020

Officer responsible: Cathy Stewardson, Business Assurance Manager

18.0 List of Appendices

18.1 Appendix 1: The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2021 - 2023

18.2 Appendix 2: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Action Plan Update 2021 - 2022

18.3 Appendix 3: Inclusive Futures Campaign - Update

18.4 Appendix 4: Meeting the needs of key equality customer groups during the Covid-19 crisis - Update

18.5 Appendix 5: Annual Action Plan Update – 2020

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Appendix 1: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021 - 2023

Monitoring and review

Document owner	Approved by	Authorised by	Effective date	Review date
Title:	Title:	Title:		
Name:	Name:	Name:		

Document History

Version	Summary of Changes	Document Status	Date
1.0			

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- 5.0** National Context
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- 7.0** Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategic objectives
- 8.0** The objectives
- 9.0** Achieving our objectives
- 10.0** Responsibilities for delivering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
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- 12.0** Monitoring and Review
- 13.0** Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Action Plan

1.0 Introduction

The Wolverhampton Homes EDI Strategy underpins the three key business priorities in the company's Business Plan 2019 – 2023 to:

- Enhance our community and customer focus
- Provide safe and secure homes
- Support people to sustain their tenancies and homes

The strategy also provides direction to our service delivery activities and employment functions in supporting us to deliver against the City of Wolverhampton Council's six strategic outcomes:

- Children and young people get the best possible start in life
- Well skilled people working in an inclusive economy
- More good jobs and investment in our city
- Better homes for all
- Strong, resilient and healthy communities
- A vibrant, green city we can all be proud of

Our vision is that equality, diversity and inclusion are fundamental in everything we do, raising awareness of the importance of inclusivity in housing. We believe that having a comfortable home is a basic human right that impacts both physical and emotional wellbeing. Redesigning the delivery of our services is therefore key to ensuring we continue to meet our priorities.

Alongside other key strategies, we will set our priorities to advance equality, diversity and inclusion across the business. This will support us to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and our responsibilities under the Regulatory framework going beyond legislation, to meet our moral and social responsibilities.

2.0 Aims

We know the value that diversity brings to the workplace and we are working to ensure that our Board and colleagues are reflective of a wide range of views and backgrounds.

Achieving equality and valuing diversity is about making sure that all people are treated fairly and given equal opportunity, either in the standard of service they receive, or as our employees. It is not about treating everyone the same but recognising that everyone's needs must be met in different ways.

We are proud that we can serve our customers, we are fully committed to promoting equality of opportunity, developing inclusive services, celebrating diversity and putting our customers at the heart of everything we do.

Equality also recognises that historically and currently, certain groups of people with protected characteristics have experienced discrimination.

It is our aim to:

- Provide an environment where our people feel included and can make choices
- Provide services and homes that are accessible and respond to the needs of individuals
- Address and challenge discrimination experienced either by individuals or by groups of individuals
- Have a positive impact and influence on all of our people by setting a good example for others to follow
- Create an environment where everyone's contribution is respected and valued, and where our staff can develop and grow
- Promote the benefits of working with diverse communities
- Consider the outcomes of Equality Impact Assessments in the development, or investment of all we do.

3.0 Background

The society we live in is changing. At one level it appears there is greater awareness of inequalities and injustice than ever before; on another, examples of discrimination and disadvantage are never far from the headlines. With equality, diversity and inclusion there is always more that can be done, and we are committed to doing just that.

Our customer base is diverse and some of the most vulnerable residents of the City live in the homes that we manage. We know we cannot make a positive impact for customers or succeed as a business without recognising, respecting and valuing people's differences and making sure that our customers and staff feel comfortable to be themselves.

Equality for Wolverhampton Homes (WH) is about ensuring that all individuals have an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives. We believe that no-one should have poorer life chances because of where or to whom they were born, what their beliefs are, or whether they have a disability.

4.0 Scope

This strategy applies to our customers, staff, Board members, stakeholders, contractors and partners; we expect that everyone will abide by the principles as set out herein.

It sets out our commitment to promote equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion, supporting our vision to:

“Unlock people's potential through housing, skills and technology “

The strategy further supports the demonstration of our values:

- Working together
- Open to new ideas
- Respecting differences
- Delivering on our promises

As a large employer within the City of Wolverhampton, we will work towards employing a workforce which is representative of the communities we serve. Having a diverse workforce means that we can offer a wide range of ideas, skills, resources and energies to our business to give us a competitive edge. There is a much wider pool of talent available to organisations which embrace diversity, and we will reap the benefits of a broader market, improved productivity and a raised profile within the community.

Wolverhampton Homes is governed by a Board of Directors responsible for setting out the company's vision and strategic direction. Our Board has representatives from the communities we serve; having a diverse Board with a range of experiences, backgrounds and understanding, contributes to more effective and impactful decision making.

5.0 National Context

The Equality Act 2010

This Act simplified, has streamlined and strengthened equalities law. It gives individuals greater protection from unfair discrimination and makes it easier for employers and organisations to understand their responsibilities. It also sets a new standard for those who provide public services to treat everyone with dignity and respect. This forms the prime legislative basis under which Wolverhampton Homes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy operates.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

Created under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty means that Wolverhampton Homes as a public body, must fulfil the duty to ensure we consider the needs of different individuals in our day to day work – whether delivering services, involving customers to help shape our policies or in relation to our employees.

When carrying out our work we must have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different communities.

Regulatory Standards

The debate following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower, the subsequent publication of the Green Paper and the publication of the White Paper has encompassed issues much wider than fire safety including; the way that customers and residents perceive they are viewed, and a strong sense that people living in social housing were stigmatised more generally. There were important equalities dimensions to this debate, which have been highlighted by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

6.0 Local Context

Whilst having a focus on the legal aspects of equality, this strategy also considers the wider and broader definition of equality, to include vulnerability – which can be as a result of an individual's socio-economic circumstances or simply through their status as someone in need of support and assistance.

The City of Wolverhampton has a rich diverse set of communities, each with different histories, capacities and needs. Some communities live together with a shared sense of belonging within neighbourhoods, while other communities are geographically dispersed and living parallel lives.

The City has an increasingly ageing population and a growing black and ethnic minority community. Demand for social housing is high, the environment we work in remains challenging and the regeneration of our City and community cohesion also remains a critical issue.

7.0 Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategic objectives

We are committed to tackling discrimination and harassment, putting measures in place that are aimed at preventing and responding to such issues. We will go beyond getting the basics right that will help us continue working towards building communities and a work environment where our customers and staff feel acknowledged as uniquely different but equally valued.

We have used the Local Governments Association – Social Housing Equality Framework to advance on the importance of meeting diverse needs in the way we plan and improve our services. As such, the strategy and objectives have been aligned with the five equality outcome areas of the framework:

- Knowing customers
- Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Involving your customers
- Responsible services, access and customer care
- A skilled and committed workforce

These five overarching strategic objectives will drive the corporate EDI action plans, which will be reviewed regularly to reflect any changes in local or national circumstances, and customer needs and priorities.

8.0 The objectives

Objective 1 - Continue to know our customers better – understand their needs and expectations.

Objective 2 - Continue to provide visible leadership and commitment to this agenda – and maintain strong relationships with our strategic partners and community led organisations.

Objective 3 - Continue to encourage and facilitate the involvement of customers in shaping the design and delivery of high-quality and relevant services. Protected groups are involved and listened to, which ensures the provision of excellent services.

Objective 4 - Continue to provide accessible and responsive high-quality services and customer experience.

Objective 5 - Continue to take steps to diversify the workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

The objectives identified above will run concurrently with Wolverhampton Homes Business Plan 2019 - 2023. Each objective is reflected in the associated action plan which will be reviewed and updated annually.

9.0 Achieving our objectives

To achieve our objectives, we will:

Support customers to ensure equality outcomes particularly in times of change – understanding their needs and adapting our services to meet those needs; providing training and support for our customers in relation to the digital agenda; tackling matters that are important to our customers, such as social isolation.

Promote diversity in leadership – create an environment that is transparent and strives to deliver against best practice.

Be innovative and aspirational – understanding where our strengths lie and helping others by sharing knowledge and expertise and identifying areas for improvement.

Measure equality outcomes and publish what we do – evidencing the impact that we have by reporting and publishing our results.

Develop our workforce to deliver our values and embed these in all that we do – creating a culture of inclusivity where our staff and customers can thrive; delivering a programme of training and events that will help us to raise awareness and knowledge around inclusion.

10.0 Responsibilities for delivering Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Board of Wolverhampton Homes and the Chief Executive will provide leadership on equality issues and ensure that the actions derived from the objectives in the strategy are delivered.

Senior Management and Leadership Team will ensure that all staff are aware of, and understand our approach as set out in the strategy, and that they receive the relevant training and development; that monitoring of progress against the action plans takes place and is reported to the Board and to the Equality Diversity Steering Group.

Staff are responsible for working to our standards of conduct, for living our company values and for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. They are required to ensure that they, and others, work in a non-discriminatory way and should do whatever they reasonably can to respond to and take account of the needs of our customers.

Customers will be expected to act in a non-discriminatory way.

Partners including contractors working on our behalf, will be expected to adhere to the commitments in this strategy, to act in a non-discriminatory way and deliver services in accordance with the standards and values of Wolverhampton Homes.

The Regulator will ask for evidence that we comply with our legal and regulatory duty in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, that services to our customers are fair, equitable and accessible, and that we have listened and learned from customer feedback that we ask for, or that is given to us.

11.0 Statutory responsibility

The Equality Act 2010 includes a Specific Equality Duty which requires Wolverhampton Homes to:

- Publish equality information on its workforce and services in an accessible way.
- Publish equality objectives which must be based on equality evidence and analysis, be specific and measurable, and be reviewed and revised at least every four years.

12.0 Monitoring and Review

Our overall approach to equality, diversity and inclusion is overseen by the Board and led by the Senior Management Team to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is fully embedded across the organisation.

Action Plans will be reviewed on a quarterly basis via reporting to the Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG) from service areas, staff forums and the CWC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team. The action plans will be

monitored as indicated above and will be reviewed on an annual basis with both Wolverhampton Homes Board and Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG).

13.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Action Plan

- 13.1 An annual action plan will be produced to monitor progress against the priorities within the strategy.

Appendix 2: Draft EDI Annual Action Plan 2021 – 2022

EDI Action Plan – Strategic Objective Overview		
Strategic Objective	Service Area Priorities	Required Outcome
Knowing our Customers	To increase customer data in those categories where we hold the least information about our customers, using it in line with the principles of the Equality Act 2010. Refine the data to make the most difference to the way that we deliver services, taking action to address known inequalities of outcomes in the delivery of our services.	Improved data held on customers and their protected characteristics - by gender, by disability, by ethnicity, by sexual orientation, by marital status, by age and by religion. This data is used to inform the development and delivery of key policies, services and functions, with evidence and examples required.
	Use all customer satisfaction data collected to identify and undertake targeted work with under-represented groups.	Engagement with stakeholder audiences.
	Have a deeper understanding of current and future customer needs.	Analysing customer satisfaction from across different groups improving service performance measures, these will vary by service area.
	Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment	Supporting the mainstreaming of EDI through Wolverhampton Homes Business Plan and other key strategies.
	Promote progress and key measures of success – annual reporting to Board and other relevant parties.	Achievements and successes are highlighted and reported on along with progress updates to the relevant Board or Committee / Group.
	Equality impact considerations are part of all key decision making at Wolverhampton Homes.	Equality Impact Assessments routinely undertaken / completed across all areas of Wolverhampton Homes business – where relevant; and results published each quarter.

Involving our Customers	Undertaking targeted engagement with community groups who can act as a sounding board, critical friend and consultation / promotion mechanism, demonstrating our understanding of issues raised and taking actions to address these.	Customer engagement and satisfaction across different groups.
	Developing and improving how we support within diverse communities to ensure accessible services.	Inclusive range of involvement opportunities offered to meet diverse needs.
	Consulting with community groups on the design, delivery and evaluation of EDI events and programmes, encouraging and building relationships to better understand the needs of communities we work with and serve.	Service Level Agreements in place / effectively monitored with key agencies who deliver bespoke / culturally sensitive services to specific sections of the community we serve.
Responsible Services, Access and Customer Care	Recognise that some customers will need solutions that are tailored to meet their specific needs and requirements.	Evidence / data used to tailor service delivery through clear and consistent examples in reports to Boards, Committees and staff.
	Our services remain accessible, inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of people living in Wolverhampton across all protected characteristics.	All services utilise customer information to deliver responsive services.
	Strong understanding of our local areas in order to target resources to where they will be most effective, for example in meeting the needs of vulnerable people or communities and delivering good equality outcomes.	Service delivery responds to the diverse needs of our customers and their needs.
Skilled and Committed Workforce	Delivering appropriate training to staff at all levels of the organisation so that everyone is able to understand and respond to differing needs.	Evidence of training and employee relations outcomes for different staff groups. Evidence of diversity on recruitment panels. Evidence of development opportunities.
	Fostering a culture of inclusion and to support staff engagement by promoting good practice, setting clear	Staff engagement for different groups to promote a happy and healthy workforce and confidence in

	<p>expectations and visibly tackling behaviours that are unacceptable and discriminatory.</p>	<p>reporting bullying and harassment / behaviours not in keeping with our corporate values.</p>
	<p>Steps taken to increase greater representation of underrepresented groups.</p>	<p>Internal promotions and profile of staff at different levels of the organisation.</p> <p>Monitoring available workforce data against the protected characteristics for applicants for employment, promotion; unsatisfactory performance; discipline and grievances, flexible working and leavers to the organisation.</p>

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Appendix 3: Inclusive Futures Campaign – Update

The Inclusive Futures Campaign was a project that was undertaken late in 2019 to consider how Wolverhampton Homes could improve the diversity of its workforce at senior levels in the organisation. Current workforce profiles at senior level are not representative of the communities we serve.

The scope of the project involved the review of:

- Employment equality profiles of the workforce at Wolverhampton Homes
- Employment / workforce equality targets against baseline data and identify with any actions to date to achieve targets
- Recruitment and selection methods / practices
- Training and development opportunities
- Employment data and any good practice adopted by other neighbouring housing providers

Two postgraduates from the University of Wolverhampton were assigned to lead on the project, the findings of which have been reviewed and a summary of actions are as follows:

Actions	Status
Recruitment	
Use inclusive advertising when recruiting – paying attention to the language used.	Complete
Recruiting and interviewing panels to be diverse, in terms of race, gender and disability and have received unconscious bias training.	Complete
Review / modernise recruitment practices – think creatively for different job roles.	Complete
Develop a recruitment video that showcases BAME staff.	Q1, 2022 delivery
Development	
Develop an Organisational Development Strategy supporting workforce development.	Complete
Introduce a formal mentoring and coaching scheme. Consider an external provider for mentoring, to support internal opportunities – providing a pool of diverse mentors.	Q4, 2021 delivery

<p>Monitor all BAME employees who have applied for promotion and ensure they get full wrap around support and guidance regarding training and development opportunities, if they have been unsuccessful.</p> <p>Offer a formal mentoring / shadowing process for all staff.</p> <p>Introduce a leadership programme that senior managers must participate in and ensure that all managers undertake 'how to effectively manage people' development.</p> <p>Invest in recognised qualifications and assist / support staff in accessing job specific qualifications</p> <p>Develop cultural awareness training and develop a better cultural understanding of their workforce.</p>	<p>Planning Stage</p> <p>Q1, 2022 delivery</p> <p>Q4, 2021 delivery</p> <p>Planning Stage</p> <p>Planning Stage</p>
<p>Culture</p> <p>Review the mission, vision and values and ensure that they are lived.</p> <p>Conduct a staff satisfaction survey on an annual basis.</p> <p>Introduce an advocacy scheme so that employees have access to HR and other advocates within the business.</p> <p>Hold inspirational speaker events targeted at BAME staff twice a year.</p> <p>Ensure senior managers take into account the differing needs of their customers when planning and shaping services – hold master class on how to conduct Equality Impact Assessment's (EIA's).</p>	<p>Q4, 2021 delivery</p> <p>Q4, 2021 delivery</p> <p>Q4, 2021 delivery</p> <p>Part - complete</p> <p>Q3, 2020 programme delivery – start of delivery</p>
<p>Monitoring</p> <p>Agree employment equality targets regarding workforce representation at senior level.</p>	<p>Planning Stage</p>

Appendix 4:

Meeting the needs of key equality customer groups during the Covid-19 crisis – Update

Below are a number of areas where positive action has been taken to meet the needs of key equality customer groups during the crisis:

Supporting older adults: Support offered to almost 4000 Wolverhampton Homes (WH) residents; those older than 70 and volunteers have provided personal shopping services.

Supporting BAME groups: Wolverhampton Homes provide support to customers who are moving home during the lockdown period – supporting contents removal and allowing time for rent payments.

Supporting the financially vulnerable: Wolverhampton Homes (WH) and the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC), Crowdfund Wolves and One City Fund both aim to ensure support is more widely available to those who are not in the 'clinically vulnerable' groups. Recent additional projects have included a financial hardship workstream working with Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council (WVSC) groups to identify those at risk from digital exclusion and providing them with technology for the period of lockdown, supporting university students in hardship, providing a reduction on council tax bills to lower income households, transport for young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to ensure they continue to have access to education and additional financial support offered to care leavers.

Supporting residents with hearing impairment and / or wellbeing needs (WH & CWC): British Sign Language (BSL) video links used as a means of communicating key messages on the CWC website. Partnership arrangement brought forward with Zebra Access to ensure the new online counselling services and befriending services is promoted, targeted and made available through social media platforms to deaf residents who may feel socially isolated / lonely during this crisis. Sustained high level of service for Telecare users 24/7.

Supporting people living in poverty: Wolverhampton Homes manages around 2,300 leaseholders on behalf of CWC and some of the leaseholders are in the groups protected by the Equality Act. WH are working with those leaseholders financially affected by Covid-19 by agreeing payment plans for their service charges, in addition to signposting them to agencies who would be able to assist them financially:

- Redwings – provided 3 meals a day to all rough sleepers / homeless and needs led support
- Redwings – referred customers to P3 to obtain a mobile phone
- Additional support offered to tenants who are moving home during the lockdown period i.e. contents removal, supporting initial rent payments, allowing longer periods of time before rent is changed at the new property

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Appendix 5: Annual Action Plan Update – 2020

Progress to date

Leadership & Organisational Culture

- Improving our communications on equalities – Black History Month / Black Lives Matter / Pride events
- Members of the Equality Forums to attend SMT
- Visible SMT attendance across all equality network groups
- Involve equality forum members in leadership meetings where relevant
- Equality a key consideration for decisions as it has been in Covid-19 – including agile working opportunities
- Assessment of performance of managers to be measured against work on equalities amongst other key performance indicators

Employment Matters

- Transparency on data
 - Recruitment / grievance / disciplinary data
 - Gender / Race Gap data
 - Annual workforce monitoring reporting
- Measured by:
- All recruitment panels will be gender / race diverse from 01/01/2021
 - Developing employees so they are able to perform well at interview - training for BAME staff to go on or participate on interview panels
 - New approach to grievance / disciplinaries – diverse panels
 - Wrap around support for staff who have been unsuccessful in securing a career progression
 - Safe Space – introduction of a safe space scheme in addition to existing Union and HR support – confidential employment support

Training and development for staff

- Creating development opportunities for our diverse employees
- Improve coaching and support opportunities for our diverse employees - introduction of a Mentoring scheme in Quarter 4, 2021
- Mandatory EDI training for all staff – ensuring equalities are embedded – “No Offence” training being rolled out in Quarter 4, 2021
- Reverse Mentoring opportunities for Tier 3 and Tier 4 managers

Service priorities to tackle race inequality

- Embedding the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – 2021 – 2023 and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Action Plan Update 2021 – 2022

Culture and Visible Leadership

Stonewall:

- WH have continued to collect data to progress and self-assess against the Stonewall Index for submission in 2021 and will look at re-submitting for accreditation against the Housing Diversity Networks in 2021

Training:

- All front-line staff have received comprehensive training on Safeguarding, Respect, Modern-Day Slavery, Disability Awareness and PREVENT during 2019 - 2020
- Completed the start of the Unconscious Bias training to all staff

Growth:

Small Sites New Build Programme:

- The small sites new build programme continues to progress with Phase Four completed in March 2020 delivered which saw the delivery of 35 units across seven sites. Since Lockdown restrictions were lifted, construction has restarted.
- The former Patchbox public house site was acquired by the City Council due to continued breaches of public protection orders and issues with Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). The project started in June 2020 and will complete this financial year delivering a further four, two bedroom houses. This site will be the 22nd small site and in the process will complete our 100th new build property as part of the small sites programme.
- Phase five of the programme was tendered during lockdown and the award of contract was being presented to City Environment Leadership Team (CELT) on the 10 November 2020, and then to the Cabinet Member Briefing on 16 November 2020. Once approved it is intended to commence work on site from December 2020, with the programme of 11 sites delivering 34 properties completing by March 2022.
- We have one particular site within Phase five, which will be used for temporary accommodation. The site is within an area where we have very little in the way of temporary accommodation, so this will enable households to remain in an area where there they may already have family support, educational availability and health centres in place for them. The site provides a mix of house types, which will enable us to accommodate both small and large family units.

Our Customers and Delivering Responsive Services:

Building Services Directorate

Building Solutions

- Buildings Solutions Team have joined forces with other teams to ensure the continued provision of key frontline services and go above and beyond to help and support our city's most vulnerable
- Earlier this year Building Solutions were shortlisted and were runners up in the Housing Quality Network (HQN) frontline services awards
- Since the beginning of the pandemic, the turnaround of 107 empty homes, has been a priority so that they can be offered to homeless residents
- The Aids and Adaptations Team have been working seven days a week to carry out 64 installations to enable residents to return home from hospital, thereby freeing up hospital beds and easing pressure on the NHS
- Aids and Adaptations have also carried out 141 emergency repairs and 38 Telecare installations. Those that have been unable to carry out their normal duties at work or from home, have volunteered their time to prepare and deliver food parcels to vulnerable residents as part of a city-wide relief effort
- In a brand-new build bungalow, radiators have been relocated – due to customer unable to access kitchen draws and wash hand basin, restricting him in gaining access in his wheelchair
- We have recently accommodated an Installation of a shower into a private property, at very short notice to aid a hospital discharge
- The Asbestos Team have assisted the Aids and Adaptations and the Heating Team on various properties, in terms of asbestos sampling, shadow-vacuum techniques and removals to enable works to progress quickly for vulnerable tenants, so that the period that they are without essential services are kept to a minimum
- Compliment received for the Asbestos Team who assisted in the removal of Asbestos from an elderly gentleman garden, which was deemed, dangerous and expensive. WH commissioned the works by offering advice to the family on types of asbestos and removal techniques, in line with legislation
- Several compliments have been received by the Aids and Adaptation Team promoting independent living

Housing Directorate

Customers in Need

- 3000+ vulnerable tenant contacts during Covid-19 Lockdown in the summer and 300 referrals to the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) stay safe be kind
- 100+ elderly tenants currently benefiting from the Befriending Service
- Supported, CWC in the summer with volunteer staff delivering food shops to the vulnerable. We also supported the transition of some of these customers onto on-line shopping services
- Continued promotion of our company-wide "See it - Report it" approach to ensuring vulnerable customers in need of help are identified and referred to

Tenancy Officers for support - every tenant visited at least once every 12 months for either a repair, gas service or tenancy officer visit

- Estate custodian way of working, with Tenancy Officers building their relationships and knowledge of local tenants and helping to keep customers informed about their enquiries or concerns

ASB Unit

- The Anti-Social Behaviour Team received reports about children in a household making a lot of noise, including loud music, arguing, video games etc, that was disturbing the neighbour the Anti-Social Behaviour officer established that mum was deaf - The officer used the services of a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter and arrange for a decibel meter to be installed in the property, it helped mum to monitor noise levels

Building Services Directorate

Repairs

- WH have collected and delivered 200 meals twice a week from Darlaston to All Saints area to help a diverse community at times of need, during the initial lockdown from March to June 2020 - This was a local initiative bought about by local Councillors
- Where necessary, we continue to tailor services - We will adjust appointment times to fit in with religious attendance to places of worship and prayer times.
- Changed a heating provision from gas to electric to accommodate a mental health concern
- Installed a pirobag (arson prevention device) to a letterbox to eliminate an issue of hate crime

Asset Management Directorate

The Capital Work Programme Team continues to tailor its services:

- To continue to have one to one meetings with customers prior to the work starting and inform them of all works required. Ensure they provide the opportunity to understand individual needs and make adjustments as required

Examples of this are:

- Decanting residents for the day or offering an alternative respite area while the works are being undertaken
- Being conscious of religious holidays and traditions by tailoring work programmes to suit an individual's needs
- Provide a collection / delivery service for residents who require meals on wheels / medication when access is restricted
- Ensuring carers can access residents by providing access to properties or changing programmes; providing a countdown to works start.

- Decanting residents to allow asbestos removal on communal landings - Arranged for residents to have the option of use of a local hotel, for the day (and evening if necessary) with the arrangement of travel to and from the hotel.
- Liaised with Mr XX in order to respect his prayer days ensuring work is planned around prayer days
- Wates operative, has helped on several occasions with translations for Russian and Lithuanian speaking residents

Housing Options Directorate

Homeless Unit

- Developed a 'Everybody in Campaign' to ensure all homeless people were off the street and into accommodation. This meant anyone who was not normally in priority needs and those without recourse to public funds were assisted into accommodation - The night shelter where a lot of Eastern European adult males without access to public funds reside, was ordered to close down so these were the first customers we entered into the project
- All of Housing Options were involved in these cases, from homelessness, support and lettings for us to get more permanent solutions for those we could, which was a partnership approach with CWC and lots of other organisations in the City
- The current service is by phone, this hasn't caused any significant issues for customers as of yet, however, longer term we will need to review the service delivery for homeless customers, there are situations where face to face meetings would be better off course and we may introduce more home visits as well moving forward

Tenancy Sustainment and Support

- Young Persons Team ensures that clients with disabilities claim travel passes to support them accessing the community and reducing isolation
- Ensuring financial support is in place for people with disabilities
- Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) is designed to improve the lives of those with a disability based on their individual needs
- Small Works Assistant Grant (SWAG) – the repayable element is not subject to interest or admin charge, which would exclude people out of applying depending on their religion – in some religions it is not permitted to take out loans
- Worked with interpreters including BSL to ensure we have gathered all the facts about individuals we support

Lettings

- During the first lockdown period following the 'Everyone in' project it was agreed with CWC, that we would hold back a number of properties from advertising and look to directly allocate these properties to applicants who

were homeless and had been placed in temporary accommodation in order to permanently resolve their housing needs.

- WH also linked in with the Housing First project to ensure that applicants with the most challenging behaviours were able to find accommodation and receive the support that they so desperately need through Wolverhampton Homes Sustainment and Support Team.
- The Lettings Team continues to tailor its services to the needs of the customers that interact with our services; examples of this include:
 - Organising for interpreters for customers whose first language is not English – this is undertaken at any point in the lettings process to ensure the customer fully understands the aspect of the process they are involved with
 - Partnership working with the Refugee and Migrant Centre (RMC) to ensure that applicants receive a pre-tenancy service that clearly explains the context of housing in Wolverhampton, Housing Advice on finding a new home and financial guidance on being able to sustain that new home
 - Undertaking thorough assessments of properties to ensure they can be adapted to meet the needs of a disabled applicant. Advice to customers around this is carefully balanced with housing need, the choice of the customer and the adaptability of the property for a customer's needs in the medium or long term
 - Providing documentation in a form that a customer can more easily understand whether this is via translation or change to text size or readability we will always look to accommodate the needs of customers accessing our services

Homeless stories

A range of customer experiences are detailed below:

Anwar Ali:

“I was just a teenager when I moved to England a few years ago. I had been living happily with a foster family, but when COVID-19 came and the government later imposed restrictions, my family asked me to leave. You see, I was working part-time in a pizza shop and they were worried about the risks to the wider family. I got in touch with my support worker from the council who put me in touch with Housing Options at Wolverhampton Homes.

“They offered me a room in a hotel, and I took it. I stayed there for about five or six weeks. It wasn't ideal; I was working part-time alongside studying, and I was also fasting, which is always hard but even harder when you're in unfamiliar surroundings. On top of that, it was very noisy and busy, but I was grateful of the support they offered me and understood it was a necessary step to finding something better.

“My Visiting Officer Gill eventually found me a flat near the City Centre and I took it straight away. I'm so grateful to her. I'll never forget her for as long as

live. She's helped me a lot. She is very kind; I could tell she cared and wanted to help me. I feel a lot more settled now and I'm in a much better place."

Chantelle:

"I was living with a parent, having been encouraged to due to my health conditions. At the time, I thought it was the best thing for the two of us. However, after a short time the abuse began. At first it was verbal, but it quickly escalated to being physical, too. I spoke with Wolverhampton Homes' Housing Options Team a few times over the weeks that followed to discuss my housing situation. I built a good relationship with James – Visiting Officer; he gave me his work mobile number so I could contact him in case things at home got any worse.

"As luck would have it, James reached out to me in March 2020. It was just as the situation around Covid-19 got bad and shortly following yet another incident of abuse at home. James listened to me and said it wasn't safe for me to stay at home and I agreed. A lovely lady called Laura arranged for a taxi to pick me up and take me to a hotel within the City.

"I stayed at the hotel for several weeks and during that time I was blown away by the support the other residents and I were offered. I had volunteered in soup kitchens and for other support services, so I knew something of what went on behind the scenes but being on the other side of it felt strange. It was so surreal. Wolverhampton Homes were fantastic; they supported me from the get-go, from fleeing the situation I was in, to becoming settled at the hotel and obtaining food and other goods, to finding myself a new home. It was a real team effort. More so than anything though, I think what I valued most was the emotional support, not just from Wolverhampton Homes, but from their partners too, not least The Haven who have been absolutely fantastic.

"Laura and another lady called Gill from the Housing Options Team found me a new home in a lovely area of the City and they made sure it was right for me before I committed to anything. I'm pleased to say it was and at the end of May, I moved into my new home. They signposted me to services to help me get everything I needed to turn it into a home – there's still lots to do, but I'm getting there, one piece of furniture at a time. The Haven are in touch with me every day and Wolverhampton Homes are always on hand to offer advice and guidance.

"Honestly, the whole experience has changed my life. Together, they took me out a dark situation and helped me move forward to something safe and secure. I'm in a better place now and the future is brighter than ever. I have no words to express my gratitude but thank you. I encourage anyone worried about leaving an abusive relationship because of their housing situation, to speak to Wolverhampton Homes, The Haven or the Police. Help is available for those that need it."

Fred:

“I was living in a private property in Wolverhampton. I was happy there, but then last year the landlord got in touch and said he wanted the property back, as he had plans to gift it to one of his relatives. I was obviously disheartened, but I accepted his decision.

“Sadly, I had trouble getting my landlord to issue me the required notice, so I had nothing to give the Council to show them that I was going to be made homeless. Also, the landlord began coming into the property and making changes. It made me very uncomfortable. I contacted Wolverhampton Homes and explained the situation. They interviewed me and within a couple of days, they got in touch to say that they had accepted my case and agreed to help me find a new home.

“I left the property in October 2019 and moved in with a friend while I tried to find a new home. It wasn't easy; I'm a Healthcare and Social Worker for the NHS, and I've been working all throughout lockdown. Working full-time while not having my own space was tough, but my friend was very understanding and did everything he could to accommodate me.

“Fortunately, Wolverhampton Homes found me a property in Oldbury and on 11 May, Accord Housing offered it to me and invited me to come and view it that same day. I did and I was really pleased. I took it straight away. I'm really happy in my new home. I feel settled and I know I'll be here a long time. I'm very thankful to Wolverhampton Homes for supporting me.”