



Wolverhampton Homes Open Board Meeting

05 March 2026

Time 9.30 am **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Wolverhampton Homes
Venue The Boardroom, Wednesfield Office, Alfred Squire Road, Wednesfield, WV11 1XU

Membership

Mark Ansell
Councillor Paul Appleby
Darshan Chatha
Councillor Sally Green
Ranjit Kaur
Theresa Phillips
Councillor Zee Russell
Hannah Semple
Councillor Tersaim Singh
Matthew Tschubenko

Information

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

Contact Business Assurance team
Tel/Email 01902 552956; WHSBusinessAssurance@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk
Address

Copies of other agendas and reports are available from:

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

Agenda

Item No. Title

- 1 **Apologies**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of previous Open Board Meeting - 10 December 2025 (Pages 3 - 6)**
- 4 **Matters arising**

EXTERNAL AUDIT ITEMS

- 5 **Summary of the Audit Risk Assessment - Thomas Woodhead, Grant Thornton (Pages 7 - 12)**
- 6 **For Policy Approval**
- 7 **Repairs and Maintenance Policy update - Ian Gardner, Director - Property Services (Pages 13 - 50)**

FOR DECISION

- 8 **Modern Slavery Statement - Emma Rolinson, Head of People (Pages 51 - 62)**
- 9 **Revenue Budget 2026 - 2027 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy update 2026 - 2027 to 2028 - 2029 - Julie Haydon, Director - Corporate Services (Pages 63 - 74)**

FOR INFORMATION

- 10 **Revenue Budget Forecast for 2025 - 2026 as at 31 January 2026 - Julie Haydon, Director - Corporate Services (Pages 75 - 82)**

M I N U T E S



Meeting: Open Board Meeting
Date: 10 December 2025
Venue: The Boardroom, Wednesfield Office, Alfred Squire Road,
 Wednesfield, WV11 1XU
Time: 09:30

Members in attendance: -

Councillor Sally Green - Board member (Councillor)
 Mathew Tschubenko - Board member (Tenant) - Teams
 Ranjit Kaur - Board member (Independent)
 Teresa Phillips - Board member (Tenant)

Wolverhampton Homes staff in attendance (WH): -

Shaun Aldis - Chief Executive
 Angela Barnes - Director –Homes and Communities
 Ian Gardner - Director – Property
 James Howse - Interim Director – Finance
 Julie Haydon - Director – Corporate Services
 Nicky Devey - Head of Business Services - Teams
 Jessica Whitehouse - Business Assurance Manager (Notes)

City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC): -

Jenny Lewington - Deputy Director of City Housing

External Audit – Grant Thornton: -

James McClarnon - Grant Thornton – External Audit item

Observers: -

Amen Amiebenomo - Observer

1.0	Apologies	
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councillor Paul Appleby – Board Member – Councillor - Councillor Tersaim Singh – Board Member – Councillor - Councillor Zareena Russell – Board Member – Councillor - Darshan Chatha – Board Member - Independent - Hannah Semple – Board Member – Independent - Mark Ansell – Board Member – Independent 	

2.0	<p>Declarations of Interest</p>	
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew Tschubenko – Tenant Board Member • Teresa Phillips – Tenant Board Member 	
2.2	Noted: No specific conflict of interest identified.	
3.0	<p>Minutes of previous AGM – 24 September 2025</p>	
3.1	Minutes of the previous AGM meeting agreed as a true record.	
4.0	<p>Minutes of previous Open Board Meeting – 24 September 2025</p>	
4.1	Minutes of the previous Open Board meeting agreed as a true record.	
5.0	<p>Matters arising</p>	
5.1	<p><u>AGM Minutes:</u></p> <p>Page 4 - <u>CWC - shareholder update [verbal]</u> – Action: Statement to be shared for circulation. Complete.</p> <p>Page 6 - <u>Governance Arrangements</u> – Action: Board members to complete the nominations prior to the Open Board meeting. Complete</p> <p>Page 7 - <u>Summary of audit risks - External Audit</u> – Action: Board members to complete the related parties information and submit to Grant Thornton. Complete.</p>	
5.2	<p><u>Open Board Minutes:</u></p> <p>Page 12 - <u>Board roles</u> – Action: Board members to consider role of Chair of Audit and Business Assurance Committee. Ongoing - Any comments from Board members to be discussed</p>	
External Audit Items		
6.0	<p>Summary of Key Audit Matters for Wolverhampton Homes Limited - James McLarnon, Grant Thornton</p>	
6.1	Thanks was given to Grant Thornton for all their hard work and Grant Thornton also returned the thanks.	
6.1.1	Action: Signature to be added to Financial Statements / Accounts.	WH

	Resolved: Board Members approved the summary of key audit items for Wolverhampton Homes Limited.	
For Policy Approval		
7.0	Complaints Policy 2026 - 2027 - Nicky Devey, Head of Business Services	
7.1	Julie Haydon presented this on behalf of Nicky Devey. Resolved: Board members approved the Complaints Policy 2026 - 2027	
For Decision		
8.0	Annual Strategic Financial Arrangements - Julie Haydon, Company Secretary	
8.1	Board members were advised that the draft letter will be dated 10 December 2025. Resolved: Board Members approved the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WH Letter of Going Concern – September 2025 2. Draft Financial Statements 2024 - 2025 and noted the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Letter of Support from the City of Wolverhampton Council – September 2025 	
For Information		
9.0	Revenue Budget Forecast for 2025 - 2026 as at 31 October 2025 - James Howse, Interim Director - Finance	
9.1	Updates provided on the unprecedented financial challenges and the positive steps being undertaken to deliver against a balanced budget. Resolved: Board Members noted the revenue budget forecast for 2025 - 2026 as at 31 October 2025.	
10.0	A.O.B.	
10.1	WH will take the opportunity to publish earlier, to give more time for Board Members to read through the reports / items.	
10.2	Thanks was given to Board members who sent in their questions / comments ahead of the meeting.	
10.3	The Council will be advised of the outcome of the Regulatory Inspection, which will be embargoed until the new year. WH will be	

<p>10.4</p> <p>10.5</p>	<p>included in the update brief with representatives to be decided. The full outcome is expected at the end of January 2026.</p> <p>A reminder that there is opportunity for Board Members to ask questions prior to attendance at meetings. It was noted that access to some Board meeting appendices were included as links on Modern Gov were not accessible – which will be resolved.</p> <p>To ensure timekeeping to the agenda Board members are requested where possible to submit questions / comments in advance of the meeting to allow for time to provide answers / more in-depth information.</p>	
<p>11.0</p> <p>11.1</p>	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thursday 05 March 2026 - Wednesfield Office Boardroom 	

Wolverhampton Homes Limited
 Wednesfield Housing Office
 Alfred Squire Road
 Wednesfield
 Wolverhampton

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 103 Colmore Row
 Birmingham
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26 February 2026

Dear Directors,

Summary of Audit risk assessment and planning for Wolverhampton Homes Limited (“the company”) for the year ending 31 March 2026

International Standard on Auditing ISA (UK) 260 – “Communication with those charged with governance” as well as other ISAs prescribe matters which we are required to communicate with those charged with governance. These have been addressed in this letter and include:

- Confirmation of our independence and objectivity, and compliance with relevant ethical standards
- The respective responsibilities of the auditor and the Directors (see Appendix A)
- Overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit
- Significant audit risks identified

We will share with the Board a letter on the key audit matters arising from our work before the Board’s approval of the financial statements.

Independence

We have considered the factors, which may reasonably be brought to bear on the firm’s independence and the objectivity of the audit engagement lead and all audit staff, and ensured that appropriate safeguards are in place.

We confirm that in our professional opinion, the firm is independent under regulatory and professional rules and the objectivity of the audit engagement lead, Jim McLarnon, and the audit staff assigned to the company’s audit is not impaired. Please see Appendix A for further details.

Planned scope and timing of the audit

We have identified the following items as significant audit risks:

- Risk of Management Override of Controls – under ISA 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk of management override of controls present in all entities.

We will perform the following key audit procedures to address this risk:

- Gain an understanding of the entity’s journal entry process and evaluate the design of the associated controls.
- Review accounting estimates and judgement, with a particular focus on any indications of management bias.
- Substantively test large and unusual journal entries that meet certain risk criteria, considering the nature of the entity, supporting evidence and journal poster.

- Review unusual significant transactions, if any.
- The revenue cycle includes fraudulent transactions - under ISA (UK) 240 there is a rebuttable presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue. We are satisfied that the management fee element of revenue does not present a significant risk and as such, the risk of fraud in the management fee has been rebutted. However, the presumed significant risk remains within the other material revenue streams.

We will perform the following key audit procedures to address this risk:

- Gain an understanding of the entity's system for accounting for income and evaluate the design of the associated controls.
 - Review and testing of revenue recognition policies for appropriateness in line with IFRS.
 - Performance of substantive sample testing on material revenue streams, agreeing occurrence of revenue to evidence that goods or services have been provided
- Valuation of the pension fund net asset/liability - the pension fund net asset/liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the figures involved in the gross assets and liabilities and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.

We will perform the following key audit procedures to address this risk:

- Update our understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the company's pension liability is not materially misstated and evaluate the design of the associated controls.
- Evaluate the instructions issued by management to their management expert (an actuary) for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work.
- Assess the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the company's pension fund valuation.
- Assess the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the company to the actuary to estimate the liability.
- Undertake procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary, as auditor's expert, and performing any additional procedures suggested within the report.
- Test the consistency of the pension fund assets, liabilities and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial report from the actuary.
- For the assets, which are not a significant risk, perform analytical procedures to gain assurance over the asset valuations and the entity's reported share of assets within the scheme.
- Obtain assurances from the auditor of the West Midlands Pension Fund as to the controls surrounding the validity and accuracy of membership data; contributions data and benefits data sent to the actuary by the pension fund and the fund assets valuation in the pension fund financial statements.
- If the pension fund is in a surplus, assess management's judgment on whether, and if so to what extent, to recognise the surplus.

Our risk assessment is an ongoing process, and we will report any changes in audit strategy or significant risks in our letter on the key audit matters arising from our work.

Set out below is the expected timing of our audit procedures

Planning	Fieldwork	Completion of audit procedures	Signing of audit report
February 2026	August 2026	September 2026	December 2026

Fraud and litigation

We have not been made aware of any actual or attempted frauds in the year during our planning procedures performed to date. Should any factors arise in relation to fraud risk or actual or attempted fraud we ask that you inform us of this at the earliest possible opportunity.

If you would like to discuss any aspects of this report please contact Jim McLarnon (james.a.mclarnon@uk.gt.com).

Yours faithfully,

Jim McLarnon
 Director
 Grant Thornton UK LLP

Appendix A

Purpose of letter

This Audit Planning document has been prepared for the benefit of discussion between Grant Thornton and the Board of Directors.

The purpose of this letter is to highlight the key matters expected to affect the results of the company and the preparation of the company financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2026.

This document is also used to report to those charged with governance to meet the mandatory requirements of International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 and the Ethical Standard (2019) issued by the UK Financial Reporting Council.

This letter is strictly confidential and although it has been made available to management to facilitate discussions, it may not be taken as altering our responsibilities to the company arising under our audit engagement letter.

The contents of this letter should not be disclosed to third parties without our prior written consent.

Responsibilities of the directors and auditors

The directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for making available to us all of the information and explanations we consider necessary. Therefore, it is essential that the directors confirm that our understanding of all the matters in this memorandum is appropriate, having regard to their knowledge of the particular circumstances.

The company's management is responsible for the identification, assessment, management and monitoring of risk, for developing, operating and monitoring the system of internal control and for providing assurance to the Board that it has done so.

The company's directors are required to review the company's internal financial controls. In addition, the company's directors are required to review all other internal controls and approve the statements included in the annual report in relation to internal control and the management of risk.

The company's directors should receive reports from management as to the effectiveness of the systems they have established as well as the conclusions of any testing conducted by ourselves.

We will apply our planned audit approach to document, evaluate and assess your internal controls over the financial reporting process in line with the requirements of auditing standards.

The purpose of an audit is to form and express an opinion on the financial statements.

Our audit will include consideration of internal control relevant to the preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control.

We will report to you any matters those deficiencies that we have identified during the course of our audit and that we have concluded are of sufficient importance to merit being reported to you in accordance with ISA 265.

Auditor independence

Consideration of threats and safeguards

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention.

As part of our assessment of our independence at planning we note the following matters:

Matter	Conclusions
Relationships with Grant Thornton	We are not aware of any relationships between Grant Thornton and the company that may reasonably be thought to bear on our integrity, independence and objectivity.
Relationships and Investments held by individuals	We have not identified any potential issues in respect of personal relationships with the company or investments in the company held by individuals.
Employment of Grant Thornton staff	We are not aware of any former Grant Thornton partners or staff being employed, or holding discussions in respect of employment, by the company as a director or in a senior management role covering financial, accounting or control related areas.
Business relationships	We have not identified any business relationships between Grant Thornton and the company.
Contingent fees in relation to non-audit services	No contingent fee arrangements are in place for non-audit services provided.
Gifts and hospitality	We have not identified any gifts or hospitality provided to, or received from, a member of the company's board, senior management or staff that would exceed the threshold set in the Ethical Standard.

We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements. We consider that an objective, reasonable and informed third party (ORITP) would perceive this view to be reasonable.

Audit and non-audit services

The table below sets out the agreed fees for audit for the year.

Audit fees:	£
Wolverhampton Homes Limited	46,500

The above fees are exclusive of VAT and out of pocket expenses.

No non-audit services were provided/are planned to be provided and therefore there are no fees in respect of non-audit services. We will keep this assessment under observation and report any changes to this in our letter of key audit matters.

None of the above services were provided on a contingent fee basis.

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Board Report

	Agenda Item 6
	<p>05 March 2026 Repairs & Maintenance Policy update</p>
	Open Report
Status:	For Policy Approval
Author and job title:	Ian Gardner – Director Property Services
Contact No:	07971 021420
Recommendations:	Board Members are asked to approve the updated Repairs & Maintenance Policy
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p><u>Key Risks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company has a range of statutory duties under The Health and Safety at Work Act and a wide range of legislation related to the maintenance of the housing assets under its control, as defined within the Management Agreement with the City of Wolverhampton Council. • The company manages a range of assets, that if not adequately maintained, inspected, tested or serviced, may cause injury, death or disease to customers, colleagues or the public. • The company may be vicariously liable for the omissions or failures leading to injury, death or disease of an employee or contractor engaged or managed by Wolverhampton Homes. <p><u>Contentious Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some colleagues may require additional training to meet the requirements of new Building Safety legislation and Awaab’s Law.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some customer expectations may not be met where they request shorter repair timescales that can be achieved with available resources.
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Management Summary

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out Wolverhampton Homes' approach to repairing and maintaining the assets, under its management control, to ensure they remain safe and serviceable for its tenants and communities.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) sets the Safety and Quality Standard, requiring landlords to provide safe, decent homes with timely, effective repairs, clear communication, and tenant involvement, enforced via the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and Awaab's Law for quick action on hazards, for example damp or mould. They require landlords to have robust policies for reporting, prioritising, and completing repairs, ensuring they meet health & safety laws, including electrical and gas safety.

The RSH's key requirements for Landlords include:

- Health & Safety: Ensure homes are safe, meeting legal standards, with clear processes for electrical / gas safety.
 - Repairs & Maintenance: Offer efficient, timely services for all repairs, adapting to tenant needs and using stock data to plan improvements.
 - Communication: Keep tenants informed about repair progress, timescales, and services.
 - Tenant Influence: Involve tenants in decisions and handle complaints effectively.
- 2.2 In response to new legislation and guidance, the company continually reviews its suite of Building Safety related policies. This updated Repairs and Maintenance Policy (RMP) is one of five core policies and links to the Council's Housing Assessment Management plan. This policy has been reviewed earlier than originally planned to incorporate changes in the management of Damp, Mould & Condensation, new requirements under Awaab's Law and learning from complaints, including Housing Ombudsman determinations.
- 2.3 The company's Repairs and Maintenance Policy (RMP) was last reviewed in the summer of 2024.

3.0 Summary of amendments

- 3.1 The RMP has been reviewed in consultation with service managers and customers.

- 3.2 The draft revised RMP was discussed at the WH Customer Involvement Panel (the panel) on 08 January 2026, the Council's City Housing's Oversight Panel (CHOP) on 20 January 2026 and the Equalities Circle Forum on the 05 February 2026.
- 3.3 The panel were supportive of the proposed technical changes made to the policy, that reflects recent changes in Awaab's Law and recommendations from Housing Ombudsman Spotlight reports. Subsequently, they requested further clarity regarding tenant and landlord responsibilities regarding communal areas / common parts. These changes were considered and are included in the latest draft, within the updated version tabled at CHOP on the 20 January 2026. No further suggestions or recommendations were made.
- 3.4 The ECF were satisfied with the Equalities Assessment and noted the intention to undertake a more fundamental review, including wider customer consultation, during late 2026. The ECF did not request any changes be made to the draft policy.
- 3.5 The proposed policy (see Appendix 1) includes a number of updates, summarised below;
- a) Regulatory alignment i.e. added explicit compliance with RSH Safety and Quality Standard and Awaab's Law.
 - b) Hazard management/Awaab's Law: Statutory timeframes introduced, i.e. 24 hour emergency, 10 day investigation, 5 day commencement, 12 week period for 'prevention' works.
 - c) New sections / definitions: Emergency Hazard Repairs, Significant Hazard Repairs, Window Restrictors, Non-Urgent Repairs (changed from Programmed), Adaptations, Pests & Vermin.
 - d) Damp, Mould & Condensation (DMC): Stronger compliance links with Awaab's Law, i.e. written summary within 3 days; proactive prevention measures.
 - e) Repair Categorisation: Changes Programmed Repairs to Non-Urgent Repairs (90-day target), clarifies Programmed Works / DLR protocols and expands examples of service requests for each repair category / definition.
 - f) Voids (Empty Homes) Standard: Adds window restrictor checks and enhanced safety measures.
 - g) Landlord responsibilities regarding communal areas / common parts.
- 3.6 The proposed amendments will not result in any fundamental service offer changes to Wolverhampton Homes' customers as defined in the current RMP approved by Board in September 2024.
- 3.7 The revisions will reinforce and evidence the company's compliance with Awaab's Law and the Regulator's Consumer Standards.
- 3.8 This is an interim policy review, with a further fundamental review planned to commence in late 2026, when further details of Awaab's Law (Phases 2 & 3) and other relevant government guidance is expected.

4.0 Financial and value for money implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the revision of this policy.

- 4.2 The policy does set out a number of mandatory requirements relating to minimum competencies, accreditations, quality assurance arrangements and contract monitoring. These arrangements are expected to be met from existing resources.
- 4.3 A suite of standard operating procedures, e.g. DMC Management Plan, support the RMP that provides more operational detail and sets out the company's monitoring, training, and resource allocation to meet new commitments.
- 4.4 Existing procurement arrangements will ensure value for money is maintained. Evaluation methodologies will consider qualitative & financial appraisals and tenderers proposals regarding Social Value.

5.0 Legal and regulatory implications

- 5.1 This policy contributes to the company fulfilling its legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and a wide range of legislation related to the maintenance of the housing assets under its control.
- 5.2 The policy also supports the company's compliance with a wide range of legislation, related to the maintenance of the housing assets under its control.

6.0 Human resources implications

- 6.1 Some colleagues may require additional training to meet the requirements of the requirements of new Building Safety legislation and Awaab's Law. Any significant changes to job roles, will require job descriptions to be reviewed under existing People Deal arrangements.

7.0 Health and safety implications

- 7.1 The policy underpins Wolverhampton Homes commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of its customers. It is the company's aim to exceed, where possible, the minimum health and safety legislation and adopt best practice.

8.0 Equalities implications

- 8.1 An Equalities Assessment (see Appendix 2) has been completed and was peer reviewed and endorsed by the ECF on 05 February 2026.
- 8.2 No adverse effects towards any Equality Groups were identified and no corrective actions were recommended.

9.0 Impact on the environment and community

- 9.1 No significant environmental or community impacts are anticipated by implementing this policy.

10.0 Long term consequences for the company

10.1 Implementing this policy will balance customers' priorities, within available repairs and maintenance budgets, and ensures compliance with relevant regulatory standards.

11.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers and others

11.1 No significant impact on external stakeholders is anticipated by implementing this revised policy.

11.2 The policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the needs of its customers, with opportunities to enhance service standards being considered where reasonably practicable and within available budgets.

11.3 The company will provide feedback on the customer consultation exercise when the revised policy is implemented.

12.0 Impact on Wolverhampton Homes' Management System

12.1 Once approved, the policy will be available to all colleagues via WHMS.

12.2 If approved by Board members, the updated document(s) will be available on the management system by:

Date: 01 April 2026

Officer responsible: Ian Gardner – Director – Property Services

13.0 List of Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1 - Repairs & Maintenance Policy

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Repairs & Maintenance Policy

2026 - 2029



Monitoring and review

Document owner	Approved by	Authorised by	Effective date	Review date
Head of Housing Maintenance	Director – Property	Wolverhampton Homes Board	March 2026	March 2029

Document History

Version	Summary of changes	Document Status	Date
V1.0	Draft for internal consultation	Withdrawn	October 2025
V2.0	Draft for customer consultation	Withdrawn	December 2025
V3.0	Draft for customer consultation	Live	March 2026

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Background

This policy sets out Wolverhampton Homes' approach to Repairs and Maintenance and how the company will fulfil its responsibilities and duties to ensure the homes and assets, under its management control, remain safe and serviceable for its residents, communities, and colleagues.

This policy forms part of a suite of documents that underpins the company's compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) Consumer Standards, notably their Safety and Quality Standard, as below.



The scope of this policy includes all areas of repairs and maintenance to existing assets and components, which are the responsibility of Wolverhampton Homes to maintain, under its Management Agreement with the City of Wolverhampton Council.

The Housing Asset Management Plan and the City of Wolverhampton Council's capital investment programmes set out investment priorities, where key components have reached the end of the expected lifecycle and/or are beyond uneconomical repair. In addition, separate programmes or policies may exist where homes or estates require major improvements, upgrading or regeneration.

Statement of Intent

Wolverhampton Homes considers providing healthy and safe homes for its customers as being paramount and the company takes its responsibilities very seriously. This policy outlines the company's responsibilities and legal obligations prescribed within the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and other relevant Regulations and statutory guidance, with the aim of eliminating risks where reasonably practicable and managing any residual risks to all affected persons.

This policy demonstrates the company's commitment to ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, and statutory requirements associated with the repairs and maintenance with all homes, communal areas and assets managed by Wolverhampton Homes.

Wolverhampton Homes will make reasonable endeavours to carry out effective repairs at the time agreed with the tenant in a safe and effective manner.

All colleagues and contractors working within the field of repairs and maintenance will be competent to effectively manage and deliver each area of activity within the scope of this policy.

Scope

This policy sets out how property related repairs and maintenance service requests, submitted by tenants, colleagues, or partners, will be managed to meet statutory & regulatory standards. The policy balances the efficient delivery and maintains value for money to meet the needs of the tenant(s) and ensure homes are appropriately maintained, remain safe, secure, and functional.

The main aims of the policy are to:

- Meet minimum housing standards and regulatory requirements, particularly the Safety and Quality Standard of the RSH's Regulatory Framework.
- Ensure compliance with statutory instruments for housing including, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (commonly referred to as Awaab's Law).
- Maintain properties to the Decent Homes Standard.
- Meet contractual requirements set out in the Landlord's Tenancy Agreement or Lease.
- Provide a customer focused service, that balances cost effectiveness and value for money, and eliminates any hazards in the home.
- Undertake major repairs in planned or packaged work to maintain value for money.
- Allocate requests for repairs to a category based on information provided by the tenant but reserve the right to amend these at the discretion of Wolverhampton Homes based on risk assessment.
- Set out how Wolverhampton Homes will ensure compliance with the RSH Safety and Quality Standard.

Responsive Repairs Definition

Responsive Repairs are defined as service requests made by the tenant relating to existing elements / components of the property (their dwelling, or common areas to the block there are residing within). A Responsive Repair is to undertake a repair or replacement of an existing element or component to return to its original designed purpose or function.

A Responsive Repair is not an upgrade, renewal, or improvement to the property, and therefore not part of:

- Planned cyclic maintenance, e.g. lift maintenance, gutter cleaning, electrical testing, gas servicing, or cyclical painting.
- Planned or batched work, e.g. environmental works, paving, guttering or fascia replacements, roofing repairs, or flooring.

- Programmed works, e.g. replastering, door replacements.
- Planned capital improvements, e.g. replacement kitchens, bathrooms, rewiring, heating upgrades, or insulation.
- Void Refurbishments (work to empty homes).
- New Aids or Adaptation works to support occupants continuing to live in their homes following an assessment by Independent Living Services.
- Repairs to assets under the control of others, i.e. neighbours, utility providers, statutory authorities.
- Surface water drainage.
- Garden or grounds maintenance, including landscaping, planting, and ground water drainage.
- Replacement of components for cosmetic purposes only (subject to the component remaining functional for its intended purpose and creates no safety hazard).

Requesting Repairs

Tenants will be offered a range of ways to make requests for repairs including via:

- telephone, calls received outside normal office hours will process emergency service requests only.
- self-serve on mobile applications or on Wolverhampton Homes Website.
- e-mail.
- writing to Wolverhampton Homes head office.

Tenants will be encouraged to use digital channels to make service requests for repairs, however a range of communication methods will be available to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

Landlord and Tenant Responsibilities

The Landlord and the tenant have different responsibilities in relation to repairs.

The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 Section 11 (1) states that the Landlord (City of Wolverhampton Council) is responsible for keeping the following in repair and proper working order:

- The structure and exterior of the dwelling and the building containing the dwelling (including drains, gutters, and external pipes).
- The installations for the supply of water, gas and electricity and sanitary installations (including basins, baths, and toilets).
- The installations for the supply of space heating (i.e. gas fires / central heating) and water heating.
- Communal areas and common parts, including services and safety systems under the Landlord's control.

Section 11 does not require the landlord to:

- Carry out repairs necessary because the tenant failed to use the property in a tenant like manner.
- Rebuild or reinstate the property after destruction or damage by fire, flood, or storms.
- Repair or maintain anything the tenant is entitled to remove from the property.

It will be communicated to the tenant at the time they request a repair whose responsibility it is, based on the information provided. This is subject to change if the information provided is inaccurate. Repairing responsibility will be determined in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement.

Where a repair is the tenant(s) or Leaseholder's responsibility, they may be signposted to the City Council's Trading Standards Approved Traders schemes. Any works undertaken would be at the tenant's own expense. Alternatively, Wolverhampton Homes may undertake the work and recharge the resident in accordance with the Chargeable Works Policy.

Landlord responsibilities include the building structure and elements of the exterior, including common areas, and components that have been installed/under the control of the Landlord.

The law implies a condition into every Tenancy Agreement that the tenant must use their home in a 'tenant-like manner.'

Using a home in a tenant-like manner means:

- doing minor repairs.
- keeping their home reasonably clean.
- not causing any damage to the property and making sure their visitors do not cause any damage.
- using any fixtures and fittings properly, for example, not blocking a toilet by flushing something unsuitable down it.

Under their Tenancy Agreement, tenants are responsible for keeping the interior of their homes in good order and well decorated. Tenant responsibilities include items they have installed themselves and completing minor repairs, for example:

- Reglazing windows and doors where damage has not been caused by a crime.
- Lock changes when keys are lost or misplaced.
- Replacing lost keys and fobs and the cost of getting into their home if they are locked out.
- Clearing blockages in the toilet pan or waste traps.
- Cleaning of chimneys and flues of tenant own solid fuel burning appliances.
- Replacing:
 - lamps, bulbs and light fitting starters.
 - electrical fuses and the resetting of circuit breakers.
 - electric fire elements, fire effect bulbs or gas fire radiant.

- plugs and chains to waste pipes in sinks or baths.
- shower hose and shower head.
- shower curtain and rail.
- toilet seats.
- clothes lines.
- Maintaining:
 - the gardens including trees shrubs and clearing rubbish.
 - internal decoration, including central heating radiators.
 - Electric Vehicle Chargers installed by the tenant or their agent.
 - appliances provided by the tenant, e.g. washing machines, showers, pumps, etc.
 - outbuildings provided by the tenant, e.g. sheds, greenhouses, car ports, etc.
- Any repair to installations or improvements tenants have made.
- The Council or its agents may repair some gas and electrical appliances for safety reasons but may charge any excess costs over the Landlords normal requirements.

Where Wolverhampton Homes is required to undertake works that are 'tenant's responsibility', these will be subject to a charge under the Chargeable Works Policy.

The Landlord, via Wolverhampton Homes, will maintain paving from the highway to each main access door (front, side and rear, where applicable) to the property.

Neither Wolverhampton Homes or the Landlord is responsible to provide, ensure or maintain;

- assets under the control of others, i.e. neighbours, utility providers or telecoms providers, statutory authorities.
- TV aerials or signal receiving equipment (unless part of an existing communal system under the control of Wolverhampton Homes).
- surface water drainage.
- garden or grounds maintenance, including landscaping, planting and ground water drainage.
- electricity, including cost recovery / income, or heat generation provided by solar or ground source technologies provided by the Landlord or others.

Tenants are responsible for maintaining the gardens, including trees, (except in circumstances outlined in the Tenancy Agreement), shrubs, garden paths (not providing access to the home), patios and clearing rubbish.

The Landlord is not responsible to provide or maintain fencing between properties. Tenants are responsible, under their Tenancy Agreement to;

82) You agree not to allow, permit or cause any animal to create a nuisance, annoy or frighten other people. You agree to ensure that any animal is kept under control at all times. You are responsible for providing and maintaining any fencing specifically required for control of the animal at your own expense. Further you agree to pay us or our contractors the cost of any remedial work necessary to fencing as a result of the animal's behaviour.

The Landlord will maintain fencing that is:

- adjacent to open land.
- next to a main 'A' road.
- bordering a public alleyway, canal or railway embankment.
- adjacent to a garage site or car park.
- bordering communal areas to all flats in a building.
- subject to an existing and up to date Fencing Service Charge.

Arrangements where the Landlord may provide discretionary fencing between properties can be found in Appendix A.

Requests for general property improvements, e.g. installing additional electric sockets and repairing damage to a property caused by the occupants will normally be considered as tenant responsibility.

Tenants who wish to make alterations or improvements to their home will normally be required to seek permission from Wolverhampton Homes in advance. Any specialist surveys or inspections that may be required to facilitate a tenant own improvement, may be chargeable. The Landlord is not responsible for maintaining or replacing current or former tenants' own improvements or alterations, examples include kitchens, bathrooms, outbuildings, porches, canopies, lead to glazing, fireplaces, built in wardrobes, cupboards, solar panels, electric vehicle chargers, etc.

Permissions may be granted subject to conditions or declined. Unauthorised alterations or improvements may be removed or rectified by Wolverhampton Homes and any costs incurred will be recoverable from the tenant(s).

Where a fault is not an emergency and has occurred as a result of tenant damage, neglect or abuse the tenant(s) will be required to pay the cost of repair before any work is undertaken.

Tenants are responsible for reporting any repairs, defects, damp, excessive mould or property damage to Wolverhampton Homes as soon as reasonably practicable.

Tenants are responsible for undertaking regular testing of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors within their home and must report any faults to Wolverhampton Homes. The Landlord will provide guidance and instruction how to test alarms within their home.

The Landlord is responsible to undertake maintenance, servicing and inspection of equipment it has installed in its homes and common areas, these include, but are not limited to gas appliances, smoke or fire detection, fire sprinklers, lifts and hoists, electrical installations and appliances, emergency lighting, water temperature control, etc. Tenants are responsible to cooperate with the Landlord, or its agents, and provide access, with reasonable notice, to facilitate any inspection and testing required.

Leaseholders have a range of duties and responsibilities under their Lease, including maintaining and servicing appliances at their own cost. They also have a duty to cooperate and provide access to undertake fire safety inspections.

Wolverhampton Homes will respect the tenant's Right to Quiet Enjoyment. Section 9A (8) of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 addresses when a landlord or contractor can enter a tenant's home. Unless in the case of an emergency, such as a flood or fire, entry is only permitted at a reasonable time and with at least 24 hours' written notice provided to the tenant. Tenants can request a more convenient appointment but must allow the landlord or contractor access once the appointment is agreed upon. The Right to Quiet Enjoyment is not a right to complete silence or living in a perfectly peaceful neighbourhood.

Prioritising Repairs and Inspections

Timescales and service standards only apply to repairs under the Landlord's control, i.e. excluding issues relating to private properties that may affect tenant's homes, neighbours, utility or telecoms providers, statutory authorities, etc.

Wolverhampton Homes will comply with the requirements of the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, commonly referred to as Awaab's Law, and will:

- investigate any potential emergency hazards and, if the investigation confirms an 'emergency hazard', undertake relevant safety work as soon as reasonably practicable. The investigation and the work will take place within 24 hours of Wolverhampton Homes becoming aware of the hazard.
- investigate any potential significant hazards within 10 working days of Wolverhampton Homes becoming aware of them.
- produce a written summary of investigation findings and provide this to the tenant within 3 working days of the conclusion of the investigation.
- undertake relevant safety work within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a 'significant hazard'.
- begin, or take steps to begin, any supplementary preventative work to prevent a significant or emergency hazard recurring within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant or emergency hazard. If steps cannot be taken to begin work in 5 working days this will be done as soon as possible, and work must be physically started within 12 weeks.
- satisfactorily complete supplementary preventative works within a reasonable time period.
- consider any vulnerabilities the occupants may have and how these are impacted on by any hazards present and apply any reasonable adjustments to response times or sequence or scopes of work required.
- secure the provision of suitable alternative accommodation for the household, at the social landlord's expense, if relevant safety work cannot be completed within specified timeframes.
- keep the tenant updated throughout the process and provide information on how to keep safe.

For a hazard to be in scope of the Awaab's Law repair requirements, it must:

- be a part of buildings or land for which the social landlord is responsible.
- result from defects, disrepair or lack of maintenance.
- be in the landlord's control to resolve.
- not be damage that is a result of breach of contract by the tenant.
- be a significant or emergency hazard, based on 'risk to health', not just that it is present.

Requests for repairs that are the Landlord's responsibility will be prioritised as follows:

Emergency Hazard Repairs

An Emergency Hazard Repair is a repair, based on the information provided, that creates an immediate health and safety risk and/or creates a serious inconvenience to the occupants, neighbours or the public or if serious damage occurring to the property is likely.

Emergency repairs or investigations are attended to within 24 hours, but most service requests will receive a same day response and will be prioritised based on risk, i.e. the impact of the repair on the occupant's vulnerability.

Emergency repairs include, but are not limited to:

- extensive visible mould in rooms used for sleeping and / or where occupants have an underlying related vulnerability
- blocked flues to an open fire or boiler
- blocked or leaking foul drains or soil pipes
- broken glass panes breaching security (excluding cracked where safe)
- burst pipes or water / roof leaks that cannot be reasonably contained or controlled
- Carbon Monoxide alarm activations
- exposed live mains (230V>) electrical wires, connections, fixtures or fittings
- faulty smoke alarms, detectors, or safety devices
- gas leaks
- insecure (non-latchable) windows, doors or locks
- toilets not flushing, where no other working toilet is available
- total loss of electricity – excluding network or metering issues not in under Wolverhampton Homes control
- total loss of heating or hot water (31 October and 01 May, as defined under Right to Repair Regulations)

Wolverhampton Homes may not be able to fully complete an Emergency Repair at the first visit. The property will be made safe and additional visits may be required. Wolverhampton Homes will advise the tenant of the relevant timescales for any additional visits that may be required, based on the scope of work or materials required.

If the fault is very serious and makes the home uninhabitable (typically affecting two or more habitable rooms) or it creates an emergency hazard, the tenant will be offered temporary accommodation until the property can be made safe.

Significant Hazard Repairs

A Significant Hazard Repair is a repair, based on the information provided, that creates a potential significant health and safety risk to the occupants.

Wolverhampton Homes will conduct a 'standard investigation' within 10 working days of becoming aware of a potential hazard. This will confirm whether or not there is a significant or emergency hazard and must also, if possible, identify the required work to make a property safe and prevent the hazard from recurring.

Following the conclusion of an investigation (whether that be standard, emergency, renewed or further investigation) a written summary of our findings will be issued to the tenant within 3 working days, unless all required works (both to make the home safe and prevent the problem recurring) have been completed to address any 'significant' or 'emergency' hazards before the end of the 3 working day period.

If the investigation concludes there is a significant hazard or an emergency hazard, we will begin relevant works within 5 working days of the investigation concluding. There may however be circumstances where it is not reasonably practicable to begin the relevant work within 5 working days, for example where Wolverhampton Homes are unable to:

- secure specialist workers to attend the property within 5 working days;
- obtain the required materials for relevant supplementary preventative work within 5 working days;
- secure required approvals, for example from local authority building control or Building Safety Regulator, within 5 working days;
- contract necessary detailed surveys or assessments such as a fire risk assessment of external walls or a structural survey within 5 working days.

In these circumstances, best endeavours will be made to commence the relevant supplementary preventative work as soon as reasonably practicable and within 12 weeks.

Right to Repair (Urgent Repairs)

Wolverhampton Homes will meet its legal requirements under the Right to Repair.

The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994 gives the right to tenants to have 'urgent' repairs carried out with prescribed timescales. Wolverhampton Homes will make reasonable endeavours to complete works within the relevant statutory timescales, as set out in Appendix B.

Reports of Damp, condensation and/or Mould (DMC)

Homes can experience dampness and/or condensation for a range of reasons, including building defects (e.g. leaking pipes or roofs), poor construction design, (e.g. concrete construction or low levels of insulation), inadequate heating and/or ventilation or high internal humidity levels. These scenarios can create environments that exacerbate condensation forming and mould spores to grow.

Wolverhampton Homes adopts a '*fabric first approach*' and initially assumes reports of dampness, water penetration and/or mould growth relate to a property related defect.

Where tenants report dampness, water penetration and/or mould growth, and where this is considered to be a potential 'significant hazard', an investigation by a competent person will be undertaken within 10 working days.

A DMC risk assessment will be undertaken at the initial point of contact by a competent person. Timescales for rectifying traumatic damp and mould will be evaluated and prioritised according to the evidence of DMC and consideration of any customer vulnerabilities. Wolverhampton Homes will make all reasonable endeavours to abate the hazard and undertake any remedial works in accordance with Awaab's Law.

A competent person may also provide the tenant with advice to minimise the effects of condensation, where appropriate.

Works identified as DMC 'root-cause' related, will be raised against the appropriate Routine or Programme activity timescales. These estimated timescales and a summary of the works to be undertaken will be conveyed to the customer within 3 working days of the completion of the DMC investigation.

Condensation within double glazing units will be processed as a Routine Repair as this does not constitute an emergency or significant hazard.

Wolverhampton Homes will be proactive and take reasonable steps to prevent internal atmospheres occurring that propagate mould growth through its use of materials & specifications and by analysing property data and patterns of service requests.

Colleagues and contractors will also be encouraged to look for signs of dampness, water penetration and / or mould growth when undertaking home visits, for any reason, and report these to Wolverhampton Homes for action.

Wolverhampton Homes will use data from contacts, in-home monitoring sensors, service requests, repairs activity, complaints and stock condition information to inform future planned investment programmes.

Where homes are identified for planned investment programme(s) or disposal, Wolverhampton Homes will closely liaise with the tenant(s) to ensure their home remains safe and habitable. Wolverhampton Homes will continue to undertake

essential repairs and maintenance, based on the individual needs of the occupants. Temporary repairs may be undertaken prior to the major improvements or rehousing of the tenant(s) occurring, where appropriate.

Wolverhampton Homes will use appropriately trained and competent persons to record and investigate reports of dampness, water penetration and / or mould growth, schedule remedial works or provide appropriate advice to tenant(s). Wolverhampton Homes may utilise external independent specialists to investigate or arbitrate, where appropriate.

Wolverhampton Homes will regularly communicate with tenants to raise awareness of the effects and causes of dampness, water penetration and / or mould growth and provide advice & guidance reduce occurrences. Wolverhampton Homes will support tenant(s) by providing specialist advice or connecting them to appropriate support networks.

Window Opening Restrictors

Wolverhampton Homes will respond to reports of faulty existing window opening restrictors, to windows above ground floor, as an urgent repair under the Right to Repair Regulations, i.e. actioned within one working day.

Requests from tenants or leaseholders to install new/additional window opening restrictors will be processed as a Routine Repair.

Wolverhampton Homes will regularly communicate with residents to raise awareness of the hazards of persons falling from unrestricted / unlatched windows.

Routine Repairs

Routine Repairs are day to day repairs that do not present an emergency or significant hazard for the occupants and is a repair or replacement to an existing element or component, to return to its original designed purpose or function.

Routine Repairs are normally completed within 20 working days, however parts availability or specialist surveys (e.g. intrusive, drainage, asbestos, etc.) being required may extend these timescales for operational reasons. Tenants will be kept updated with progress and where timescales may vary for technical reasons.

Routine repairs do not include any emergency or significant hazards, but may include the following;

- Cracked glass or misted / condensed double glazed units
- Faulty:
 - doors and windows
 - electrical fittings and appliances
 - garage doors
 - internal joinery and stairs
 - kitchen unit doors or drawers
- Minor leaks to sanitary ware, water or waste systems

- Minor repairs to uneven paving / slabs
- Pest Infestation (where landlord's responsibility only)
- Plaster patches (typically less than 1 square metre)
- Repairs to fencing and gates, to open land or subject to an existing and up to date service charge
- Replacing:
 - parts after gas appliance servicing, where not the primary heat source
 - toilet pans or cisterns
 - wash hand basins

Wolverhampton Homes aim to complete all routine repairs within 20 working days by a pre-agreed appointment. These repairs will normally be started and completed the same working day. However, on occasions additional visits may be required. Wolverhampton Homes will advise the tenant of the relevant timescales for any additional visits that may be required, based on the scope of work or materials required.

Non-Urgent Repairs

Non-Urgent Repairs are day to day repairs that do not present an emergency or significant hazard or creates a significant inconvenience for the occupants and is a repair or isolated replacement to an existing element or component, to return to its original designed purpose or function. Non-Urgent Repairs include, but are not limited to:

- Any minor works that that require asbestos removal
- Minor repairs to:
 - guttering and rainwater goods
 - repairs to outbuildings / stores
- Plastering to a single wall or ceiling
- Renewing floor tiles
- Renewing stair treads and / or balustrades
- Replacing:
 - a bath or wash hand basin
 - a kitchen single base or wall unit or sink
 - existing thermoplastic floor tiles or vinyl flooring
 - isolated kitchen units or worktops
- Roofing, including chimneys

Wolverhampton Homes aim to complete Non-Urgent Repairs within 90 calendar days from the property inspection.

Components will not be replaced for cosmetic purposes only, subject to the component remaining functional for its intended purpose and there being no safety hazard, they will remain. Individual replacements of kitchen doors / drawer fronts or tiling may differ in colour from the remaining / adjoining items due to obsolescence. A functional alternative may be installed pending complete renewal under future planned investment works / programmes.

Programmed Works and Demand Lead Replacement (DLR) Programmes

Some repair requests may identify components that have reached the end of their economic life and require complete renewal. Examples include, kitchens, bathrooms, plastering to complete rooms, joinery, heating systems, paving or hard standings etc.

Programmed Works or Demand Lead Replacement (DLR) Programmes are larger activities that normally require the complete renewal of existing major components, that do not create an emergency or significant hazard. These will be delivered on a batched and programmed manner to improve communication, efficiency, value for money and workforce planning.

Wolverhampton Homes will complete Programmed Works or DLR Programmes on a rolling programme across the city with indicative estate-based programmes being made available to customers. Timescales will vary based on work type and approved budgets.

Programmed Works include, but are not limited to:

- Any works required to be undertaken by a Licensed Asbestos Contractor
- Enhancements to dwelling ventilation (to reduce effects of condensation)
- Internal Wall Insulation (to reduce effects of condensation)
- Renewing / upgrading:
 - internal joinery and doors
 - solid or timber suspended floors
 - upgrading bathrooms suites
 - upgrading electrical appliances
 - kitchens (complete or substantially)
 - roof coverings, including chimneys, verges and ridges
 - to communal areas or common parts
 - to rainwater goods (guttering / downpipes etc)
- Replastering to walls and / or ceilings
- Specialist access equipment or work at height planning is required
- Specialist or structural works are required
- Where Building Control, Building Safety Regulator or Planning consent is required.

Where tenants have submitted a Right to Buy Application, Programmed Works and / or DLR Programmes will be suspended where the works could potentially impact on the property's valuation. Response repairs to address any Emergency or Significant hazards will continue.

Statutory repairs subject to The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994 and Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 will continue to be actioned.

Property Inspections and Investigations

Wolverhampton Homes aim is to allocate all service requests for response repairs based on the information provided by the tenant at the first point of contact. Most repairs will receive an initial visit from a competent trades person and / or contractor.

Due to the nature of the service request, an inspection by a competent person, may be necessary to obtain more information or to undertake a more detailed investigation, identify any hazards, determine the scope of the work and safely plan delivery of the works.

When an inspection is required and where a significant hazard may be present, an investigation appointment will normally be offered within 10 working days.

Routine inspections, i.e. where there is no suspected emergency or significant hazard being present, an investigation appointment will normally be offered within 20 working days. Where a specialist or external / independent surveyor is required, additional timescales may apply, but the tenant will be kept informed of progress.

Non-emergency repair works orders or instructions for work will not be raised until the inspection or investigation has taken place. Any necessary works will be raised for the appropriate Response Repair timescales or included in future a Programmed Works or Demand Lead Replacement (DLR) Programme.

Adaptations

When responding to response repair requests, visits by trades persons and/or officers may identify a need for the occupants to require potential adaptations to the property for mobility, sensory or safety reasons. Wolverhampton Homes will provide the appropriate contact information to the tenant in order for them to submit a referral directly to the Council's Independent Living Services Team for specialist assessment.

Any non-emergency, Programmed and DLR works may be suspended, pending receipt of assessment and any recommendations by the Council's Independent Living Services Team to ensure repairs/improvements meet the needs of the occupant(s).

Appointments

Individually agreed appointment timeslots will be offered to tenants for all urgent and routine repairs and inspections / investigations, where access inside or to the rear of the property is required. For communal area responsive repairs and external works, where no tenant-controlled access is required, appointments will not normally be made.

Wolverhampton Homes will endeavour to keep all appointments made or give the tenant prior notice if this is not possible and a new appointment will be agreed. Appointments will normally be offered for Monday to Friday (excluding Bank

Holidays) for a morning (a.m.) or afternoon (p.m.), all day or all-day avoiding 'school run' slots.

Where appointments need to change due to unforeseen circumstances, tenants will be provided with as much notice as reasonably practicable. Similarly, if tenants need to change an appointment Wolverhampton Homes request that as much notice as possible is given to enable us to make new appointments for other customers. If a pre-arranged appointment is missed due to tenant unavailability or refusal to allow us access, the repair call order will be cancelled, and the tenant will need to contact Wolverhampton Homes for the repair to be rebooked. Rebooked repairs will be treated as a new repair for calculating repairs timescales.

Where the service request may relate to a Category 1 hazard (as defined under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System) or an emergency or significant hazard under Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, Wolverhampton Homes will make further access attempts and consider Legal action under its Access to Homes Policy.

Completion at First Visit and Right First Time Commitments

Wolverhampton Homes is committed to providing value for money services and maximising tenant satisfaction. Wolverhampton Homes are committed to providing a repairs service that completes as many repairs as possible during the first visit to the tenants home, wherever possible, and completed works are 'right first time' i.e. the repair undertaken is of satisfactory quality and free from defects.

Some repairs cannot be completed in one visit for technical reasons, where repairs are adjacent to private properties, requiring scaffold or where specialist equipment or materials may be required, or may be subject to additional timescales or included in future Programmed Works or planned investment programmes.

Wolverhampton Homes will advise the tenant of the relevant or estimated timescales for any additional visits that may be required, based on the scope of work required.

To manage the quality of repairs, quality inspections, audits or surveys may be undertaken. Tenants can also report concerns or defects to Wolverhampton Homes for further investigation.

The Repairs and Maintenance Policy sets out target timescales for most day-to-day repairs to tenants' homes. Faults with neighbouring homes, that are not under the management of Wolverhampton Homes, can affect our properties and tenants. In these circumstances the Landlord's service standards do not apply, as it is normally the responsibility of the neighbour or their Landlord to resolve any defects. These are commonly leaks affecting the home or garden, but other faults can impact on Wolverhampton Homes' tenants.

Wolverhampton Homes' will inform the neighbouring household of the fault and request they complete the repair in a reasonable timeframe, considering the severity and inconvenience the defect may be causing. Wolverhampton Homes' will monitor

the rectification of the defect and keep any Wolverhampton Homes' affected tenants informed of progress and when the repair is likely to be completed by others.

In circumstances where neighbouring households do not respond satisfactorily to Wolverhampton Homes' requests for action, all reasonable endeavours will be made to resolve the issue affecting the tenants, which may include legal action being taken against the neighbouring owner occupier or Landlord.

Wolverhampton Homes has no right of access to homes not under its management control. If the fault is very serious and makes the home uninhabitable (typically affecting two or more habitable rooms) or it creates an emergency hazard, the affected tenant(s) will be offered temporary accommodation until the property can be made safe.

Decoration

Internal decoration is normally the tenant's responsibility. Care will be taken to minimise damage to any decoration resulting from repair work undertaken by Wolverhampton Homes or its contractors. Where decorations have been substantially affected, Wolverhampton Homes will offer:

- Decoration vouchers for the tenant to purchase materials for their application, or;
- Decoration works to be undertaken by Wolverhampton Homes or their appointed contactor.

Pests and Vermin

As detailed within the Tenancy Agreement, it is the tenant's responsibility to keep the property in a clean condition including, but not limited to, taking steps to eradicate any pest or vermin infestation within the property (dwelling). The treatment of pests or vermin is therefore not normally considered to be a landlord responsibility under this Policy, unless the property structure is defective. Examples may include a broken drain or gully, crack or hole in walls, missing roof tiles or vent grilles. In these circumstances, Wolverhampton Homes will make good as necessary repairs and arrange pest treatment, if the defect was the probable cause of the infestation.

The original construction methods or design of architectural features may create entry roots for vermin, e.g. open roof eaves, joist pockets or perforated sleeper walls. These do not constitute a 'defect' and any associated pest control works will be the responsibility the tenant.

Service Standards

Wolverhampton Homes will:

- Comply with the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards
- Attend Emergency Hazard repairs within 24 Hours
- Investigate Significant Hazard Repairs within 10 working days

- Commence hazard mitigation works within 5 working days of investigation, and commence prevention works (where required) within 12 weeks
- Complete Routine/non-urgent day-to-day minor repairs or inspect (where applicable) and schedule works within 20 working days of report
- Where these timescales cannot be met, the customer will be informed with reasons for the delay and any revised estimated timescales
- Provide estimated timescales (where known) for any future Programmed Works, Demand Lead Replacement or investment programmes determined by Wolverhampton Homes or the City of Wolverhampton Council.

Voids (Empty Homes)

All homes made available for Letting (excluding Mutual Exchanges) will meet the following minimum standards upon possession or within agreed timescales with the incoming tenant(s).

All homes will be inspected by a competent person to investigate their condition and to schedule/arrange any necessary works. All homes will meet the standards set out In Appendix C, to ensure they are:

- Clean
- Safe (no Category 1 hazards present and relevant safety certificates are available)
- Secure (lockable external doors and latchable windows)
- In a reasonable state of repair
- Have rubbish cleared away, including that in gardens, outbuildings and communal areas
- Have any sheds or outbuildings that are unsafe or in very poor condition removed

Interdependences and related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following company documents and statutory instruments (see Appendix D).

- Access to Homes Policy
- Asbestos Management Plan
- Asbestos Policy
- Asset Compliance Policy
- Chargeable Works Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Control of Contractors Policy
- Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) Management Plan
- Fire Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Housing Asset Management Plan

Monitoring

Exception reporting will be presented to Wolverhampton Homes Board, Senior Management Team, Audit and Business Assurance Committee, and City of Wolverhampton Council, as required.

Performance against the service standards defined within this policy will be reported to tenants via Wolverhampton Homes Annual Report and within the relevant Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

This policy will be regularly reviewed, at intervals no greater than 3 years and adapted accordingly to respond to future legislative or regulatory changes.

Equality Analysis

This policy sets out how the company will comply with existing housing repairs related legislation, regulatory standards and best practice.

The policy applies equally to all tenants' homes and communal areas, regardless of the resident's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Property related risks will consider the vulnerability of the occupants in accordance Housing Health & Safety Rating System.

Due consideration will be given to tenants who require different forms of communication, and individual needs and preferences will be taken into account to ensure all tenants have access to services provided by Wolverhampton Homes.

An Equality Analysis was reviewed by the Equalities Forum in February 2026, and the policy was endorsed.

Appendix A - Fencing Protocols

1. The Landlord is not responsible to provide or maintain fencing between properties. Tenants are responsible, under their Tenancy Agreement to;

Clause 82) You agree not to allow, permit, or cause any animal to create a nuisance, annoy or frighten other people. You agree to ensure that any animal is kept under control at all times. You are responsible for providing and maintaining any fencing specifically required for control of the animal at your own expense. Further you agree to pay us or our contractors the cost of any remedial work necessary to fencing as a result of the animal's behaviour.

2. The Landlord will maintain fencing that is:
 - adjacent to open land
 - next to a main 'A' road
 - bordering a public alleyway, canal, or railway embankment
 - adjacent to a garage site or car park
 - bordering communal areas to all flats in a building
 - subject to an existing and up to date Fencing Service Charge (FSC)
3. Arrangements where the Landlord or Wolverhampton Homes may provide discretionary fencing between properties are subject to these protocols.
4. For new fencing installations or replacement between properties (regardless of ownership) Wolverhampton Homes operates a discretionary budget to undertake a limited number of fencing installations, subject to any benefitting tenants contributing via a weekly 'fencing service charge (FSC)' and any owner occupiers or third-party Landlords providing a lump sum contribution. The discretionary budget is reviewed annually and will determine the number of new fencing installations or replacements to be available.
5. The FSC is a set charge and is reviewed annually for inflation. The FSC is a fixed amount and does not vary based on the length or height of fence or scope of works undertaken. The FSC continues indefinitely. Wolverhampton Homes will maintain or renew the fence, as required, where the FSC continues to be paid and is not subject to arrears.
6. The FSC applies to all new fencing installations or replacements, excluding fencing that is:
 - adjacent to open land
 - next to a main 'A' road
 - bordering a public alleyway, canal, or railway embankment
 - adjacent to a garage site or car park
 - bordering communal areas to all flats in a building
 - subject to an existing and up to date Fencing Service Charge

7. The FSC is applied to all properties that benefit from the erected fence.
8. Exceptional circumstances may apply where Wolverhampton Homes are liable to provide a fence or barrier due to specific health & safety issues, e.g. falls from height. These cases will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the implementation of the FSC charge will be at the Director of Property Services discretion.
9. The implementation of the charge is activated if the total fencing/boundary works sum is £500 or more.

Repairs to existing fencing subject to the FSC

10. Wolverhampton Homes will undertake Repairs to/or replacement of existing fencing, where the FSC continues to be paid and is not subject to arrears.
11. Fencing will be repaired, where possible, and only replaced if substantially defective. Individual panels may be replaced, where required, therefore resulting in different style or aged panels/boards in the same fencing line being present.
12. Where fencing has been damaged due to deliberate or negligent acts, repairs may be subject to an additional recharge to the tenant(s) or owner occupiers, subject to the Chargeable Works Policy.

Requests for new fencing under the FSC

13. Fencing requests, where a Wolverhampton Homes property adjoins an owner occupier property and a Wolverhampton Homes that is not subject to an existing FSC, will be processed as the Sale/Property Deeds specify and any defined responsibility split contribution from the owner occupier will be collected before the works commence.
14. These protocols provide fencing to owner occupier boundaries also apply to leaseholder - tenant boundaries. Where the boundary adjoins two leaseholder properties and Wolverhampton Homes has no obligation to provide a fence, then the required work should be sourced by the respective leaseholders, with no interest from Wolverhampton Homes.
15. Where there is an obligation for Wolverhampton Homes to provide a fence to a Leaseholder boundary that does not adjoin a Council property, then the cost of the fence shall be recovered from the Leaseholder as per outlined in the Sale Deeds, subject to Section 20 Consultation.
16. Where tenants who have erected their own fence, such fencing should be left in-situ where it is safe and of a satisfactory standard and where it reflects the boundary line.
17. Where tenants request to have their own fencing replaced by Wolverhampton Homes, they will become subject to the FSC (subject to budget availability).

18. No compensation for any remaining life of the previous tenant's fence will be paid by Wolverhampton Homes.
19. All tenants who have new fencing or repairs to existing fencing costing £500 or more, will be subject to the FSC.
20. The FSC will not apply to medium or high-rise flats where the fencing forms the perimeter of the block, or low-rise blocks with no designated gardens and these properties.
21. The removal of obstacles, rubbish, or shrubbery from the existing garden and any 'no man's land' to facilitate the installation or repair of a fence under the FSC is the responsibility of the tenant and/or owner occupier.
22. Should the tenant and/or owner occupier or third parties not undertake the required preparation/clearance works, Wolverhampton Homes may undertake the ground preparation works under exceptional circumstances, which may be subject to an additional recharge to the tenant(s) or owner occupiers, subject to the Chargeable Works Policy.
23. If it is deemed that a fence requires replacing, but both tenants do not wish to participate in the FSC or wait for any future budget availability and agree to carry out/arrange themselves, then they have the option to do so.
24. Both tenants are required to agree to the FSC, for fencing works to be undertaken. Should one or more tenants not agree to the FSC, then no works will be undertaken, and the boundary should be maintained by the tenants in accordance with their Tenancy Agreement.
25. Any works to boundary fencing should seek to reinstate the fence on the original line as defined on the GIS, where financially viable. If the original boundary line cannot be attained, then consultation with House Sales should be sought on where the new boundary can be located. Following the installation, Wolverhampton Homes will not carry out any alterations works should there be any dispute on the attained boundary line.
26. Wolverhampton Homes will not recommend the replacement of fencing or removal of existing boundaries if they are:
 - a. Safe
 - b. Secure
 - c. Have at least an estimated 18 months' life remaining.

Owner Occupiers

27. In order to facilitate works to fences that adjoin owner occupiers, Wolverhampton Homes will seek to recover 50% of the costs from the owner occupier by issuing a '*Precedent Letter – Party Walls Fences and Hedges*'.
28. Wolverhampton Homes assume all boundaries to be party. It is for the owner occupier to provide evidence of the covenant to prove the contrary. NB - even

where recommended by Wolverhampton Homes, there is no right to remove a fence or hedge if it belongs to the owner occupier and is not presenting a health and safety risk to the tenant.

29. Where remaining life is estimated to be more than 18 months, the boundary should remain for owner occupier and tenant to maintain.
30. The responsibility for removing foliage, rubbish from their existing garden and any 'no man's land' territory is the responsibility of the owner occupier. Should the owner occupier or third parties not undertake the required preparation /clearance works, Wolverhampton Homes may undertake the ground preparation works under exceptional circumstances, which will be subject to an additional recharge to the owner occupier, subject to the Chargeable Works Policy, being paid in advance.
31. Consultation with owner occupiers should take place prior to works starting to inform them of proposed works and ensure the new fence is erected on the correct boundary line. The Fencing Approval Form (see template below) must be signed by the owner occupier prior to works commencing. Small scale works of less than £500 will not require the completion of the form.
32. This Protocol only applies to the installation of Wolverhampton Homes standard specification fencing, any deviation at the owner occupiers request must have consent from the Repairs Manager and will be solely funded by the owner occupier.
33. Owner occupiers have the right to opt out of the scheme and install their own fences. Wolverhampton Homes cannot enforce a specification of fencing for joint boundaries, e.g. in terms of height and fencing material / specification. However, what is being proposed must constitute a reasonable boundary in legal terms, be installed to a reasonable standard and be safe.
34. Where acceptance has not been made and/or the standard of fencing is deemed inadequate or of poor quality/workmanship, legal advice shall be sought regarding a remedy.
35. Any new fence shall be deemed a gift to the owner occupier and Wolverhampton Homes accept no future responsibility for repairs, maintenance of replacement of the fence.
36. Wolverhampton Homes deems that the Party Wall Act 1996 does not apply to fencing works as stated in the Party Wall Act Guidance Notes on wooden fences. Consent to the works will be attained from the owner occupier via the Fencing Approval Form.

Financial Contributions from Wolverhampton Homes to Owner Occupiers

37. Owner occupiers may decide to accept the standard of any fencing offered as specified by Wolverhampton Homes, but they may wish to either install fencing themselves or use their own contractor to do so. For Wolverhampton Homes to

agree to contribute (up to 50% of the replacement fencing cost) the owner occupier must obtain and provide three independent contractor quotations.

38. Wolverhampton Homes may contribute up to 50% of the replacement fencing cost based on the lowest priced quote, subject to the specification not exceeding Wolverhampton Homes standard fencing specification.

Part Fencing

39. These protocols apply part fencing, i.e. where it is only essential that only part of a fencing run to be replaced.

Recovery of cost from Third Parties

40. These protocols apply to cost recovery from third parties, including utility companies, highways agencies etc.

Fencing Approval Form

Name (the owner):	
Address:	

I, the owner, as detailed above, consent to the fencing works outlined in this letter and agree to the attached stated conditions, including boundaries and costs.

Signed:	
Print name:	
Date:	

The completed form will be collected in person by the Wolverhampton Homes designated officer.

Wolverhampton Homes contact officer details:

Name:	
Contact details:	

Appendix B - Right to Repair (statutory timescales)

Qualifying repairs and timescales are set out in the table below.

Repairs type	Prescribed period (in working days)
Banister or Handrail: Loose or detached banister or handrail	3
Door Entryphone not working	7
Electric: Total loss of electric power	1
Electric: Partial loss of electric power	3
Electric: Unsafe power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting	1
Flooring or Stair tread: Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3
Flue: Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Foul drain / Soil stack / Toilet: Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack, or (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling-house) toilet pan	1
Gas: Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Heating: Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 31 October and 01 May	1
Heating: Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 30 April and 01 November	3
Leaking from water or heating pipe, tank, or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working	7
Sink, Bath or Basin: Blocked sink, bath, or basin	3
Tap which cannot be turned	3
Toilet: Toilet not flushing (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling-house)	1
Water: Total loss of water supply	1
Water: Partial loss of water supply	3
Windows, Door or Lock: Insecure external window, door, or lock	1

Extract from; <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1994/133/made>

Appendix C - Empty Homes (Void) Standard

All new homes (excluding Mutual Exchanges) will meet the following minimum standards upon possession or within agreed timescales with the incoming tenant(s).

The property will be reasonably clean.

Wolverhampton Homes will:

- clear away any rubbish, including that in gardens, outbuildings, and communal areas (during periods of inclement weather this may be undertaken after the tenant has taken moved in)
- remove any sheds or outbuildings that are unsafe or in very poor condition
- sweep all floors
- wipe sinks, toilets, baths, and wash basins.

The property will be safe.

Wolverhampton Homes will:

- assess for the presence of asbestos and take action to remove it or manage its condition in accordance with current regulations
- complete gas (where applicable) and electrical safety inspections and provide a copy of the safety certificates to the incoming tenant
- ensure:
 - existing patios, driveways or paths to gardens are free from trip significant hazards or are removed (NB paved areas not within the Landlord's repair responsibilities may be gifted to the tenant or removed)
 - internal doors latch shut
 - there are no visible signs of infestation and undertake treatment where appropriate
 - there is satisfactory paving from the public highway to external doors
- inspect all window opening restrictors, including repairing any defective window restrictor(s) and/or install new window restrictors on or above the first floor, where they are not present
- remedy any identified leaks
- remove:
 - alterations or fixtures and fittings that may pose a significant health and safety risk
 - or drain garden ponds, unless there is an environmental need to keep them or the incoming tenant specifically requests they remain
 - polystyrene ceiling tiles
- renew internal lead water distribution pipes
- repair or replace missing or:
 - damaged handrails
 - unsafe flooring and floor treads on stairs
- replace missing or damaged glazing (some cracked glass or misted double glazed units may be undertaken after the tenant has taken moved in)
- treat any areas of mould growth to the structure/fabric of the building under the landlord's control

- treat/seal any areas of internal flaking paintwork to wood or metal if likely applied before 1992 (i.e. risk of containing lead)
- undertake plaster patching where necessary

The property will be secure.

Wolverhampton Homes will:

- ensure:
 - any existing rear/side gates are safe and securable with a bolt
 - a carbon monoxide alarm is located in any room, used as living accommodation that contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers)
 - at least one smoke alarm is located on each storey of the home, where there is a room used as living accommodation
 - that repairs to fencing that forms a boundary between the property and open land, such as railway lines or canals. Unsafe boundary fencing or gates between homes may be removed and not replaced (please refer to Wolverhampton Homes Fencing Protocols)
- change main entrance door locks (where possible) and provide at least two keys for all locks, including any lockable windows

The property will be in a reasonable state of repair.

Wolverhampton Homes will:

- ensure:
 - all plumbing is working correctly
 - any gardens are provided in a reasonably tidy condition; i.e. overgrown gardens are cut back to within 100mm and cleared to enable maintenance with common domestic garden tools/equipment (during periods of inclement weather this may be undertaken after the tenant has taken occupation)
 - doors and windows open and close correctly
 - gullies and drain grids are clean and free from obstruction
 - kitchen and bathroom fittings are serviceable and fit for purpose
 - that the property is wind and weather tight
 - that there is a gas and/or electrical cooker supply
 - visible plaster work is in a serviceable condition and can accept decoration, (i.e. wallpaper)
- explain how to operate the heating system (upon occupation)
- maintain washable floor coverings in kitchens and bathrooms, if already provided
- supply washer connections and locations for washing machines, where reasonably practicable

NB components will not be replaced for cosmetic purposes only, subject to the component remaining functional for its intended purpose and creates no safety hazard, they will remain. Individual replacement kitchen doors/drawer fronts or tiling may differ in colour from the remaining due to obsolescence, pending future renewal under planned investment works.

Appendix D - Statutory Instruments relating to this policy

(Include, but are not limited to):

- Building Act 1984
- Building Regulations 2010
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Electricity at Work Act 1989
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health & Safety Rating System
- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment regulations 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Occupiers Liability Act 1984
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Safety and Quality Standard
- Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

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Board Report

	Agenda Item 7
	05 March 2026 Modern Slavery Statement
	Open Report
Status:	For Decision
Author and job title:	Emma Rolinson, Head of People
Contact No:	07964 121484
Recommendations:	Board Members are asked to approve the Modern Slavery Statement as at 01 April 2026 for Wolverhampton Homes.
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p>Risks can arise through the commissioning of services through the supply chain. These risks should be mitigated by the presence of a robust procurement process.</p> <p>Large businesses are required to carry out due diligence to combat modern slavery and human trafficking.</p> <p>Without the appropriate statement in place, as detailed under the Act, Wolverhampton Homes may suffer reputational damage and put individuals at risk of exploitation.</p>

Management Summary

1.0 Purpose

1.1 Board members are asked to approve the Modern Slavery Statement in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, as it applies to Wolverhampton Homes (WH).

2.0 Background

2.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 is designed to address slavery, service trade, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires specified organisations to prepare a slavery and human trafficking statement for each financial year to include information on its:

- structure, business, and supply chains where there is a risk of slavery and human trafficking taking place.
- policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking.
- due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking in its business and supply chains.
- steps taken to assess and manage that risk.
- training about slavery and human trafficking available to its employees.

2.2 The slavery and human trafficking statement must be approved at the highest level of an organisation, and WH must publish the slavery and human trafficking statement on its website.

2.3 Wolverhampton Homes Modern Slavery Policy Statement for 2026 - 2027 is located at Appendix 1. This document outlines all the above as well as the company's commitment to ensure that there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in the supply chains, partner organisations or in any part of the business.

2.4 Following approval, the statement will be published on WH website and on the Government's Modern Slavery Register. The register provides a platform for organisations to voluntarily share the positive steps they have taken to tackle and prevent modern slavery. The register asks for confirmation of the date the statement was approved by Board. Modern Slavery Statements are based on the steps taken to deal with risks during the preceding financial year. Board members are asked to approve the statement as at 01 April 2026 for the purposes of updating the register.

2.5 The statement outlines the current review and monitoring processes in place to ensure all suppliers and their subcontractors comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 – see section 4.0 of Appendix 1. As part of the organisation's approach to compliance, a management request has been noted to request internal audit to review the current monitoring processes in place and ensure they remain effective and proportionate. These arrangements are likely to include, but not limited to:

- The frequency of contract management reviews to assess evidence of supply-chain due diligence and safeguarding controls.
- High-risk suppliers (e.g. repairs and maintenance) to be subject to enhanced monitoring, including regular progress meetings.

- WH to request suppliers to provide their annual Modern Slavery statements, if applicable, and notify WH immediately of any identified risks or incidents.
- Any significant risks identified to be escalated for investigation and suppliers' contracts may be suspended (subject to their conditions of contract) pending review.
- WH to maintain records of all supplier monitoring outcomes on the contract management system and highlight findings within the Corporate Risk Register, where appropriate.
- Training for staff involved in procurement and contract management to include refreshers on modern slavery indicators and reporting procedures.

3.0 Financial and value for money implications

- 3.1 Failure to ensure the company's compliance with the Modern Slavery Act could impact on costs associated within the supply chain.

4.0 Legal and regulatory implications

- 4.1 Statement to be published on WH website to meet the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and is available via the link below:
<https://www.wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk/about-us/about-wolverhampton-homes/key-policies/modern-slavery-statement/>

5.0 Human resources implications

- 5.1 To ensure all employees are aware of modern slavery and human trafficking, provision is made through various routes to provide information and awareness raising including:
- publication of the policy and details on WH Intranet and SharePoint sites.
 - My Learning Hub (MLH) – the online staff development portal.
 - Managers are notified of the statement that is published on the WH website and asked to discuss with staff in 121 meetings or in team meetings, to ensure awareness and understanding.
- 5.2 The internal See it Report it (SIRI) process also provides an escalation route for concerns to be raised.

6.0 Health and safety implications

- 6.1 Indirect implications relate to ongoing responsibility as an employer.

7.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activity and impact on customer

- 7.1 Members of the LGBTQ+, females, minority ethnic groups, elderly and employees with a disability may be perceived to be more vulnerable to modern slavery and human trafficking, therefore having a policy statement that protects against such acts may have a positive impact for these groups.

8.0 Impact on the environment and community

- 8.1 Without effective controls and monitoring of the supply chain, there is an increased risk of exploitation of vulnerable individuals which could undermine community safety and

wellbeing. Non-compliance may expose individuals to harm and result in reputational damage.

9.0 Long term consequences for the company

9.1 To continue to publish a statement on modern slavery on an annual basis reflecting a sustained organisational commitment to compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, ensuring that any risks associated with modern slavery within the business and its supply chains are reviewed, addressed and transparently reported at least annually as part of the usual governance and assurance arrangements..

10.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers, and others

10.1 To ensure through the procurement process that any partners and supply chain adhere to the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

11.0 Impact on Wolverhampton Homes' Management System

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

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

Date: March 2026, Officer responsible: Emma Rolinson.

12.0 List of Appendices

12.1 Appendix 1: Modern Slavery Policy Statement 2026 - 2027

Appendix 1

Modern Slavery Policy Statement 2026 - 2027

March 2026

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wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk



Monitoring and review

Document owner	Approved by	Authorised by	Effective date	Review date
Head of People	Director of Corporate Services	Board Members	01 April 2026	Annually
Emma Rolinson	Julie Haydon	WH Board		

Document History

Version	Summary of changes	Document Status	Date
V1.0	Reviewed to ensure fit for purpose and compliant with regulatory and statutory obligations.	Withdrawn	June 2024
V2.0	Updated Section 3.0 in relation to National Referral Mechanism following introduction of exploitation toolkits by Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together.	Live	March 2025
V3.0	Updated Section 4.0 to outline WH's monitoring processes for ensuring suppliers and subcontractors comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.	Draft	March 2026

Contents Page

- 1.0** Introduction
- 2.0** Structure and supply chain
- 3.0** Due diligence processes
- 4.0** Supplier and Subcontractor monitoring processes
- 5.0** Modern slavery policies

1.0 Introduction

Wolverhampton Homes (WH) must ensure that all potential modern slavery risks related to its business are understood and that steps are in place that aim to ensure there is no slavery or human trafficking in its own business and, its partners and supply chains. WH is further committed to making sure that properties are not used to accommodate the work of human traffickers or to detain others against their will.

This statement is made under section 54 (1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA) and refers to the financial year ending 31 March 2025 and received approval from the Board as at 01 April 2026.

WH acknowledges its duty to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of slavery or human trafficking as introduced by section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

WH considers that modern slavery encompasses sexual and criminal exploitation, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

2.0 Structure and supply chain

WH is an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO), responsible for managing over twenty thousand social housing properties on behalf of the City of Wolverhampton Council.

It is the company's aim to help make Wolverhampton an even better place to live by aiming to provide great homes in clean, safe neighbourhoods where our customers can access training, skills, and job opportunities.

Partners and supply chain consist mainly of services rather than goods, with the highest risk areas being associated with our repairs and maintenance activities. WH does not have any direct supply chain outside of the United Kingdom. All suppliers of our services are obtained through a procurement process (managed via a service level agreement with the City of Wolverhampton Council) that requires all contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

There is an approved list of contractors and suppliers that WH work with and our purchase order payment system requires the use of pre-approved suppliers.

The labour supplied and recruited to WH in pursuance of its operation is carried out in the United Kingdom.

3.0 Due diligence processes

Board / Chief Executive

Responsibility for compliance rests at the highest level with the WH Board, with responsibility delegated to the Chief Executive.

Senior Team

The senior team are responsible for assessing risks associated with modern slavery and human trafficking within their areas of responsibility.

National Referral Mechanism and First Responder

Wolverhampton Homes (WH) has a statutory duty to report any circumstances where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child, young person, or adult (with or without care and support needs) is being exploited through modern slavery or human trafficking. WH fulfils this duty by making timely and appropriate referrals to a recognised First Responder Organisation.

For the purposes of WH, the designated First Responder Organisation is the City of Wolverhampton Council's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which acts as the single point of contact for the triage and assessment of all safeguarding concerns and requests for support relating to children, young people, and adults.

WH is represented on both Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Board and associated forums, enabling oversight of safeguarding activity and referrals involving WH customers, tenants or their household members.

Adults

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect an adult (with or without care and support needs) is being exploited or is at risk of exploitation, an e-marf will be completed - <https://marf.wolverhampton.gov.uk/>. The e-marf will be accompanied by an Exploitation Screening Tool for Adults:

<https://www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk/images/2021/Adults%20Exploitation%20Screening%20Tool%20FINAL%202021%20JUNE%202021.docx>

For adults age 18-25, along with the submission of an e-marf, it may be more appropriate to complete the exploitation screening tool for children/young people:

<https://www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/i-work-with-children-young-people-families/exploitation>

Child/Young Person

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is being exploited or is at risk of exploitation, an e-marf will be completed - <https://marf.wolverhampton.gov.uk/>. The e-marf will be accompanied by an Exploitation Screening Tool for Children:

https://www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk/images/2022/Wolverhampton_Exploitation_Screening_tool_0_to_25_years_Final_Version_with_restrictions.docx

If the adult, child or young person is at risk of significant harm and there is concern about immediate risk, the police should be contacted on 999.

Tenancy Management

WH collects and processes personal data from customers and applicants primarily for the purpose of managing tenancies and delivering safe, effective housing services. As part of assessing housing applications, WH processes information in accordance with the City of Wolverhampton Council's Allocations Policy to determine eligibility and priority for housing.

To support our duty to prevent exploitation, abuse, and modern slavery, WH may share relevant personal data with the City of Wolverhampton Council's and other

authorised agencies where necessary and lawful. This includes sharing information for safeguarding adults and children, preventing and detecting fraud, identifying risk indicators of modern slavery or trafficking, and assisting in the investigation of criminal activity.

All applicants are required to provide specified identification documents, including photographic identification, to verify their identity and support their application. These checks help ensure that individuals are not placed at risk of exploitation and that fraudulent or coercive applications are identified.

WH is committed to transparency regarding how personal data is used. Our full Privacy Policy, which outlines the legal basis for processing and the rights of individuals, is available on the WH website:

<https://www.wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk/about-us/about-wolverhampton-homes/key-policies/privacy-policy/>

People Services

The company's recruitment process ensures that all potential employees are checked to ensure they are eligible to work in the UK – in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 and Immigration Act 2016.

References are requested on all employees, and Disclosure and Barring Checks for applicants working with vulnerable people or children.

Salaries are in line with the Living Wage.

WH safeguarding and modern slavery awareness training is provided to ensure that all staff have an awareness and understanding of their role.

Employees and Line Managers

All employees are encouraged to report any concerns about a person or property to their line manager. See First Responder section for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub contact details.

Wolverhampton Homes See It, Report It (SIRI) process supports the identification of, and response to concerns about a property or a person. All staff in the company are made aware of SIRI, supported by regular awareness campaigns, and encouraged to report any concerns.

Business Services

WH maintain a risk management register ensuring the effective identification, monitoring and management of risk across Wolverhampton Homes with Modern Slavery as one of the identified risks. The risk register is reported through the governance framework to Board.

4.0 Supplier and Subcontractor monitoring processes

It is an expectation of WH when working with partners and suppliers that they observe our values on modern slavery and also carry out their own due diligence on their own supply chains, to limit the risk of modern slavery taking place.

The primary method of monitoring effectiveness within the supply chain is the pre-qualification criteria for suppliers during the tendering of new contracts and ongoing contract management, which includes a requirement that suppliers take appropriate steps to ensure that there is no slavery or human trafficking in its supply chains.

The City of Wolverhampton Council oversee the procurement of goods and services on behalf of WH, who are also a signatory to the Charter Against Modern Slavery. This goes further than existing law and guidance, committing councils to proactively vetting their own supply chain to ensure no instances of modern slavery are taking place.

5.0 Modern slavery policies

The company's policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they are fit for purpose, and compliant with regulatory and statutory obligations. Where required, new policies are agreed through the relevant governance structure and in consultation with Trade Unions and the Customer Involvement Panel.

There are a number of policies and procedures in place that contribute to the prevention of modern slavery occurring which include:

- Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy.
- Dignity at Work Policy.
- Domestic Abuse Policy (for employees and customers).
- Employee Code of Conduct - a requirement for all staff to adhere to which includes requirements in relation to workplace behaviour and equality and diversity.
- Financial Regulations / Standing Orders.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Recruitment and Selection Policy - which includes the requirement to undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), where applicable, and checks for eligibility to work in the UK.
- Safeguarding procedures.
- Statement on Equality and Diversity.
- Tenancy Management policies - which set out the action to be taken where our properties are used for unlawful purposes.
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure - which protects staff should they raise concerns about issues such as modern slavery.

Further information on Modern Slavery and associated guidance documents can be found on the following Safer Wolverhampton link:

<http://www.saferwolverhampton.org.uk/>

This statement will be reviewed annually in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and published on the company website. It will also be included on the new government modern slavery statement registry.

Board Report

	Agenda Item 8
	<p>05 March 2026 Revenue Budget 2026 - 2027 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy update 2026 - 2027 to 2028 - 2029</p>
	Open Report
Status:	For Decision
Author and job title:	Julie Haydon - Director of Corporate Services
Contact No:	01902 552956
Recommendations:	<p>Board Members are asked to approve the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline Revenue Budget for 2026 - 2027 • Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the financial year 2026 - 2027 to 2028 - 2029 <p>Board members are asked to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Budget includes Cost Improvement Programme (CIP) saving approved by Board of £1,980,000
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p>Effective financial management is a critical part of our business assurance framework.</p> <p>For 2026 - 2027 in setting the draft budget, Board are asked to approve a balanced budget position.</p> <p>Agreement has been made through the Resources and Financial Assurance Group to report the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for period beyond the end date of the Management Agreement, but this approach was agreed with the Council.</p> <p>The Board will receive regular updates on the position of this revenue budget during the next financial year, and whether the savings reflected in the budget are being achieved.</p>

Management Summary

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 An annual budget is presented for approval to the Wolverhampton Homes Board before 31 March each year in accordance with financial regulations.
- 1.2 The budget is prepared in the context of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, which is reviewed and updated at least annually.
- 1.3 This strategy and revenue budget is also set within the context of the Council's 30-year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Wolverhampton Homes (WH) continue to deliver housing services against the priorities of the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) as part of the requirements of the Management Agreement.
- 2.2 After a challenging few years, cost and demand pressures continued to place considerable burdens on WH. The cost burdens from increased demand, legislation and inflation have been largely funded from increases to the Management Fee (MF) and well documented in prior reports to Board. However, in turn, this has increased pressures on the HRA along with the scale of the capital programme which has increased borrowing. As a result of the HRA and therefore WH needing to reduce costs to maintain a sustainable position, WH have developed the Cost Improvement Programme (CIP).
- 2.3 As part of budget setting for 2025 - 2026 WH identified savings of around £1.36 million. These have been achieved, which can be demonstrated by the Quarter 3 forecast where WH is now projecting an underspend position of £0.5 million for 2025 - 2026.
- 2.4 2025 - 2026 has brought further pressures, but through the CIP, WH has identified further savings of £1.98 million that have been reflected in the 2026 - 2027 budget. Total savings of £2.6 million were identified with £620,000 being deferred. In late December 2025, WH was notified of the results of the three-year valuation of the West Midlands Pension Fund which determines employer contribution rates for the next 3 years. The rate that WH will pay has reduced from 13.4% to 9.6%, which will reduce contributions by around £0.8 million per year. This saving has been taken account by the council in calculating the MF. The council have also reflected in the MF the CIP items that have been deferred for 2026 - 2027.
- 2.5 After making a provision of 3% for a pay award in 2026 - 2027 and building in both existing and new pressures to the budget, the approved CIP savings and the pension contribution saving, the MF was set at a level to balance the budget and provide a £100,000 contingency. The MF approved at Cabinet and Council in January 2026 is £53.0 million which is affordable to the HRA in 2026 - 2027 and enables WH to set a balanced budget.
- 2.6 The new pressures included in the budget include both recurrent and one-off items and are detailed in section 4. Spending against these items will be tracked, alongside progress against the CIP savings. It will again be crucial that WH contains spend to

within its budget for 2026 - 2027 which will demonstrate the company's continuing commitment to managing its costs. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) does not have the capacity for a further management fee increase in 2026 - 2027 without utilising the HRA reserve which would only be one off - above inflationary increases to revenue budgets, due to the scale of the capital programme and the costs of financing it, are not sustainable.

3.0 Income Forecast for 2026 - 2027

- 3.1 The annual management fee from the Council will provide around 90 percent of Wolverhampton Homes' income for 2026 - 2027.
- 3.2 The council have agreed a Management Fee for 2026 - 2027 of £53 million, an increase of £1.3 million from 2025 - 2026. The level of inflationary increase for 2025 - 2026 takes into account the CIP savings and the reduced employers pension contributions. With this level of Management fee the company anticipates that it will not exceed the budget in 2026 - 2027.
- 3.3 Further income is generated from delivering capital schemes on behalf of the Council's Capital Programme. The cost of staff working on Capital Projects is recharged to the Capital Programme. The budgeted income in this report reflects planned work programmes for 2026 - 2027 and estimated demand for services in the next 12 months.
- 3.4 Income is also received from the council from the general fund to support the delivery of Anti-Social Behaviour services and for out of hours and Telecare calls. Further additional miscellaneous income streams include fees and charges, grant income and rental income from the 19 owned properties.
- 3.5 A £425,000 reduction to the forecast for Asbestos traded services income budget has contributed to the overall budget pressures in 2025 - 2026 due to the ending of this workstream. This is reflected in the budget for 2026 - 2027,
- 3.6 Table 1 below sets out the forecast income for 2026 - 2027.

Table 1 – Income Forecast 2026 - 2027

Funding Source	2026-2027 £000
Base Management Fee from Wolverhampton City Council	53,000
Capital Salaries Recharges	2,265
Capital programme trading income	1,883
Other income from CWC	403
External trading Income	60
Income from Owned Properties & Help To Own	268
Other income	1,142
Total income for the year	59,021

4.0 Expenditure Forecast 2026 - 2027

4.1 Employee costs

- 4.1.1 Employee costs make up just under half of Wolverhampton Homes' expenditure. As well as direct pay costs, employers National Insurance (NI) and Pension contributions the budget includes occupational health, recruitment, and training expenses.
- 4.1.2 The salaries budget for 2026 - 2027 reflects approved CIP savings. The budget includes the impact of spinal pay point increments, and provision for a 3% pay award. The pay award provision is being held corporately. The budget reflects the employers pension contribution rate reduction from 13.4% to 9.6%, saving around £0.8 million.
- 4.1.3 There was a saving from the provision for the pay award in 2025 - 2026 of £0.6 million. This was due to the number of vacant posts, the majority of which have been deleted as CIP savings. This meant that the full pay award did not need to be transferred to underspending budgets. The in-year underspend has helped to offset non pay pressures.
- 4.1.4 Table 2 below provides a breakdown of salary budget adjustments, demonstrating that WH has saved £2.4 million in total.

Table 2 – Changes to 2025 - 2026 Employee Budget

Employee Budget Breakdown	£000
Employee Budget 2026 - 2027	30,559
Provision for 3% pay award	796
Pay spinal point increments	148
Employers pension contribution rate reduction	(790)
Budget requirement before savings	30,713
Unused 2025-2026 pay award provision	(585)
CIP savings	(1,792)
Reductions to training and Medical fees budget	(53)
Other adjustments	(5)
Total of savings reflected	(2,435)
Employee Budget 2025-2026	28,278

4.2 Non-Pay budgets

- 4.2.1 Non pay budgets now make up over 50% of the budget with a budget requirement for 2026 - 2027 of £30.7 million of which £24 million relates to Property Services. These budgets have been increased to reflect £2.1 million of recurrent pressures identified during 2025 - 2026 relating to responsive and planned works pressures as a result of legislation and demand. The budget reflects £188,000 of CIP savings.
- 4.2.2 New pressures and priorities identified during 2026 - 2027 include both recurrent pressures (£450,000) and time limited workstreams (£480,000) and are set out in Table

3 below. These are built into the budget for 2026 - 2027 and when non recurrent are shown as reductions in the MTFS.

Table 3 – Priorities and Pressures for 2026 - 2027

Pressure	£000	
CO2 detector replacement programme	180	£180,000 per year for 2 years
Structural surveys	250	£200,000 for 2026 - 2027 and £50,000 per year recurrent
Data analytics/information management	250	£100,000 one off and £150,000 recurrent
Tenants influence	100	Recurrent
Heating regulation requirements	150	Recurrent
Total	930	

5.0 Budget Summary and Medium-Term Financial Strategy

5.1 Table 4 below sets out the forecast budget position for 2026 - 2027

Table 4 – Summary Budget Position

Budget for 2025 - 2026	
Expenditure	£000s
Pay	28,278
Non-pay	30,743
Total expenditure	59,021
Total income	(59,021)
Contribution from reserves	-

A breakdown of the budget growth at service level is provided at Appendix 1.

Budgets by service are included in the Budget Book at Appendix 2.

5.2 The updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy is illustrated in Table 4 below. The 2025 - 2026 forecast position is as reported in the Q3 revenue report.

Table 5 – Medium-Term Financial Strategy Summary:

	Q3 2025- 2026 £000	Budget 2026- 2027 £000	Forecast 2027- 2028 £000	Forecast 2028 - 2029 £000
Base expenditure	57,883	57,883	59,021	59,985
Inflationary growth	-	3,399	1,364	1,397
Employers pension rate saving	-	(790)		
Reverse one off allocations	-	(150)	(400)	(180)

Priorities/Pressures & contingency	-	1,058	-	-
CIP savings	-	(1,980)	-	-
Other efficiencies		(369)		
Revised expenditure	-	59,021	59,985	61,202
Income	(57,883)	(59,021)	(59,945)	(61,202)
Contribution (to)/ from reserves	-	-	40	-
Reserves				
Opening	805	805	805	805
Contribution to/ (from) revenue	-	-	(40)	-
Closing	805	805	765	765

- 5.3 Table 5 illustrates the Medium-term forecast as it stands, after applying inflationary increases to the 2026 - 2027 budget. Income includes current management fee projections assumed in the HRA Business plan model managed by the council.
- 5.4 Current projections assume no further efficiencies that could be required to fund future pressures contribute to reserves, or to prepare for further management fee reductions if required by the council in order to balance the HRA budget.
- 5.5 Lower reserve balances create risks in term of operational cashflow – ideally Wolverhampton Homes would aim to hold reserves of a balance that are sufficient to provide contingency and working capital.

6.0 Financial and value for money implications

- 6.1 Wolverhampton Homes has achieved significant efficiencies through a deliberate move towards cross-working and matrix management, underpinned by a highly integrated operating model. Rather than pursuing savings through structural fragmentation, the organisation has focused on better aligning skills, capacity and demand across services. This has enabled teams to flex in response to priorities while maintaining service resilience, particularly during periods of financial constraint and organisational change. As reflected in Board and RAFAG discussions, these efficiencies have been achieved in a way that protects core services and supports delivery of the Business Plan and Cost Improvement Plan.
- 6.2 A key element of this approach has been the active movement and realignment of staff across service areas, including within Repairs and customer-facing functions, allowing capacity to be redirected where pressures were greatest. This has been supported by a review of vacant posts, the avoidance of agency usage (except for the recent Interim Finance Director role) and tighter control of overtime and call-outs. Rather than creating gaps, these measures have been mitigated through cross-skilling, shared leadership and flexible deployment, giving staff opportunities to develop new skills while sustaining operational performance. This approach has been consistently framed in Board reporting as redesigning services and resources, rather than reducing them in isolation.
- 6.3 Matrix management has enabled Wolverhampton Homes to operate with fewer silos and greater collaboration between departments, with corporate functions working more closely alongside operational teams. This has strengthened support around service delivery, risk management and transformation activity, ensuring that efficiencies are

embedded rather than transactional. The benefits of this model have been highlighted in RAFAG discussions, recognising that without the flexibility and willingness of staff to work across traditional boundaries, the scale of efficiencies achieved would not have been possible. The organisation has explicitly acknowledged and thanked staff for this flexibility, reinforcing a culture of shared ownership and collective responsibility.

- 6.4 In addition to staffing efficiencies, Wolverhampton Homes has delivered non-staffing savings by fundamentally rethinking how services are delivered. This includes streamlining processes, redesignating resources where appropriate and reviewing how work is organised across teams. These changes are overseen through established governance arrangements, with efficiency proposals and associated risks routinely considered by Board and RAFAG to ensure financial sustainability, regulatory compliance and customer impact are balanced appropriately. Together, these approaches demonstrate how cross-working and matrix management have become core enablers of efficiency, resilience and transformation across the organisation.
- 6.5 Ongoing service reviews are being carried out to assess the balance between costs and efficiencies across various business areas, such as the contact centre, Human Resources, and Learning and Development. Wolverhampton Homes recognises that these functions are not confined to a single department; instead, they are interconnected across directorates. The organisation's matrix management approach is central to this process, ensuring that skills and resources from specific areas of the business are utilised flexibly and collaboratively, supporting efficiency and strengthening operational effectiveness throughout the company.
- 6.6 Wolverhampton Homes is committed to continuing to drive efficiencies by implementing new ways of working with a focus on delivering fit for purpose core services to meet customer needs while demonstrating a value for money approach.
- 6.7 While the required savings have been successfully delivered to ensure a balanced budget, this has created ongoing operational pressures across all directorates. In Property and Housing Management, some planned and preventative activity has therefore been deferred rather than removed.
- 6.8 The most significant impact continues to be on staffing capacity. This position is compounded by the current level of reserves, which stand at approximately £0.8m and therefore provide limited flexibility. In this context, reserves do not represent capacity for investment, acceleration of deferred work, or increases in staffing levels, but instead provide only a minimal buffer against in-year financial and delivery risk. This reinforces the need for continued careful management of pressures and prioritisation decisions.
- 6.9 Board are aware that Value for Money considerations are central to the approach within the Cost Improvement Plan.

7.0 Legal and regulatory implications

- 7.1 Wolverhampton Homes is required to deliver against its legal and regulatory responsibilities.

8.0 Human resources implications

- 8.1 As part of the redesign of services and new ways of working, it is imperative that Wolverhampton Homes continues to learn from experience, looking for opportunities to reimagine service delivery ensuring that there are fit for purpose structures and services that are managed in line with its budget that will deliver first time resolution for customers.
- 8.2 Reimagining the services the company delivers, could have an impact on the structure of the organisation and establishment head count.

9.0 Health and safety implications

- 9.1 As part of the company's service delivery, Health and Safety requirements are included in the budget forecasting. There are no proposals within this report with health and safety implications.

10.0 Equalities implications

- 10.1 Has an equality impact assessment been carried out? **Not applicable.**

Explanation: This is financial budget setting which is required annually.

11.0 Impact on the environment and community

- 11.1 Wolverhampton Homes will continue to work with the City of Wolverhampton Council to provide adequate access to high quality green space for the local community.
- 11.2 Wolverhampton Homes will embed corporate social responsibility as part of its procurement considerations.

12.0 Long term consequences for the company

- 12.1 Tight control and regular monitoring of budgets and getting the best use of our cash reserves is essential to ensure the company is sustainable and has sufficient resources for the long term.

13.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers, and others

- 13.1 Careful financial planning is required to ensure the company can continue to provide more efficient service delivery to its customers, and to support local suppliers.

14.0 Impact on Wolverhampton Homes' Management System

- 14.1 Will any new policy or policy updates have an impact on the management system? **No**

15.0 Appendices

- 15.1 Appendix 1: Budget breakdown by Directorate and service
- 15.2 Appendix 2 : Budget book 2026 - 2027

Appendix 1: Budget breakdown by Directorate and service

Directorate	Budget				Budget		Comment on pressures
	2025-2026 £	CIP savings £	Other changes* £	Pressures £	2026-2027 £	Net change £	
Corporate Services							
Business Support	7,917	(272)	(984)	1,611	8,272	355	3% pay award provision £0.8 m, Data analytics and tenants influence £0.35 m, contingency
Human Resources	549	(61)	(7)	0	481	(68)	
Learning and Development	1,951	(700)	(45)	30	1,236	(715)	
Neighbourhoods and Resilience	4,053	(65)	(7)	120	4,101	48	contract cleaning
Total Corporate services	14,470	(1,098)	(1,043)	1,761	14,090	(380)	
Operations							
Capital Works	329	0	(14)	0	315	(14)	
Commercial	200	0	67	0	267	67	
Compliance	7,471	(130)	(19)	329	7,651	180	surveys
Housing Maintenance	21,055	(96)	(310)	2,542	23,191	2,136	Planned and response repairs
Housing Management	2,141	(348)	(207)	5	1,591	(550)	
Housing Solutions	881	(116)	(26)	0	739	(142)	
Income	1,828	(192)	(64)	7	1,579	(249)	
Operations Directorate	285	0	115	0	400	115	
Stock Investment	3,040	0	(113)	250	3,177	137	structural surveys
Total Operations	37,230	(882)	(571)	3,133	38,910	1,680	
Total Budget	51,700	(1,980)	(1,614)	4,894	53,000	1,300	
Management fee	(51,700)	0	0	(1,300)	(53,000)	(1,300)	
Balance (reserves funding)	0				0	0	

*includes employers pension contribution rate savings, prior year pay award saving, increments, budget review minor savings and virements

Wolverhampton Homes

Budget Summary

	2025-2026 Revised Budget £000	2026-2027 Draft Budget £000
Expenditure		
Salary and wage costs	30,186	27,960
Other Employee Costs	373	318
Total Employee Costs	30,559	28,278
Other expenditure		
Premises	20,167	21,536
Transport	1,140	1,207
Supplies and Services	4,251	5,513
Support Services	2,411	2,487
Total Other Expenditure	27,969	30,743
Total Expenditure	58,528	59,021
Income		
Fees and Charges	(1,873)	(1,424)
Grants (direct)	(46)	- 46.00
Grants (via CWC)	0	0
Capital recharges (CWC)	(4,513)	(4,148)
CWC income for services	(396)	(403)
Management Fee	(51,700)	(53,000)
Total Income	(58,528)	(59,021)
Transfer To/(from) Reserves	-	-
Net Expenditure/Income	-	-

Net Budget by Service

	2025-2026 Revised Budget £000	2026-2027 Draft Budget £000
Directorate		
Corporate Services		
Business Support	7,917	8,272
Human Resources	549	481
Learning and Development	1,951	1,236
Neighbourhoods and Resilience	4,053	4,100
Total Corporate services	14,470	14,089
Operations		
Capital Works	329	315
Commercial	200	267
Compliance	7,471	7,651
Housing Maintenance	21,055	23,192
Housing Management	2,141	1,591
Housing Solutions	881	739
Income	1,828	1,579
Operations Directorate	285	400
Stock Investment	3,040	3,177
Total Property	37,230	38,911
Total Budget	51,700	53,000
Management fee	(51,700)	(53,000)
Balance (reserves funding)	-	-

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Board Report

	Agenda Item 9
	05 March 2026 Revenue Budget Forecast for 2025 - 2026 as at 31 January 2026
	Open Report
Status:	For Information
Author and job title:	Julie Haydon, Director of Corporate Services
Contact No:	01902 552956
Recommendations:	Board Members are asked to note the revenue budget forecast for 2025 - 2026 as at 31 January 2026.
Key risks and contentious issues:	<p>The revenue forecast for the year, as at 31 January 2026, is for an underspend against the budget of £0.5 million. Reserves balances are currently at £0.8 million.</p> <p>This is an improvement of £0.8 million on the £0.3 million forecast overspend as at 31 October previously reported to the Board and a £1.4 million improvement from the 31 July position.</p> <p>This reflects the additional work undertaken in recent months to revisit, check and challenge all budget assumptions underpinning spend estimates and to tightly control spend.</p> <p>Work will continue to ensure an outturn position within budget in 2025 - 2026 is delivered in line with this forecast.</p>

Management Summary

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the revenue budget forecast for the 2025 - 2026 financial year, based on the position as at 31 January 2026.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 As reported to the Board previously, the Company (and the housing sector more generally) has in recent months faced unprecedented pressures on its budgets driven by aging stock, inflation (pay and non-pay) and increases in demand, customer expectations and regulation.
- 2.2 The Company set a balanced budget for 2025 - 2026 in January 2025. This included management fee income from the Council of £51.7 million. The management fee reflected inflationary increases from 2024 - 2025 levels, as identified at the time of budget setting. It also reflected the £3 million increase in the management fee made during 2024 - 2025 as a result of demand led budget pressures identified during the year. The budget included reductions of £0.9 million in relation to identified efficiencies made by Wolverhampton Homes.
- 2.3 It should be noted that this management fee was appropriately adjusted to reflect the previous transfer of Homelessness services to the Council, which reduced the management fee budget (and corresponding expenditure budget) by around £1 million.
- 2.4 In recognition of the unprecedented pressures on budgets, and the limited financial envelope available to the Company through the management fee, the efficiency approach has continued with the implementation of a Cost Improvement Programme – a programme of work put in place with the support of Board.
- 2.5 The Cost Improvement Programme (CIP), identifies opportunities for cost reduction and efficiencies, through doing things differently and through (re) prioritisation of resources. All services have been subject to review. The progress made with regard to the CIP was reported to Board in December 2025.
- 2.6 In recognition of the ongoing CIP and the pressures on budgets, and in order to maintain robust financial controls, a number of budgeted for vacant posts have been held during the year where appropriate, with recruitment subject to tight control via the Senior Management Team.

3.0 Revenue Forecast 2025 - 2026 (subjective analysis)

- 3.1 The revenue budget forecast for 2025 - 2026 (by subjective area) is set out below.

Table 1 – 2025 - 2026 Revenue Budget Forecast at 31 Jan 2026 (by subjective area)

Income and Expenditure	2025-2026 Budget £000	2025-2026 Forecast £000	2025-2026 Variance £000
Expenditure			
Employee Costs	30,559	28,885	(1,674)
Non-Pay Costs	27,969	28,443	474
Total Expenditure	58,527	57,328	(1,200)
Trading Income	(5,634)	(4,655)	979
Other Income	(1,194)	(1,505)	(311)
Net Expenditure	51,700	51,168	(532)
Management Fee	(51,700)	(51,700)	-
Net Budget underspend	-	(532)	(532)

- 3.2 Table 1 shows that the revenue budget is, based on the position at 31 January 2026, is forecast to underspend by £0.532 million in 2025-2026. However, there are variances within this position, and the main variances (by cost / income category) are set out below:

Employee Costs (underspend of £1.674 million)

- 3.3 This underspend forecast (representing 5.5% of the pay budget), demonstrates a £0.2 million reduction from the December forecast, and reflects latest staff numbers and reductions in forecast for overtime and training costs. It reflects both the prudent approach to pay related budgets at budget setting and the controls put in place around recruitment (as set out above). Whilst there may be some posts that are vacated, there is an approach to hold a number of posts until such time CIP business cases are actioned in the respective budget service areas. The CIP savings are reflected in the 2026 - 2027 budget. Over and above this, the vacancy position also reflects the practical difficulties being experienced in the recruitment of appropriately skilled staff in some specific areas given the current job market, particularly in the area of repairs and maintenance.
- 3.4 The forecast reflects the 'quick wins' identified through the CIP in year, in particular in relation to Occupational health, training and Lettings (overtime) budgets, where efficiencies have been identified and actioned.

Non-Pay Costs (Overspend of £0.474 million)

- 3.5 In a continuation to the trend seen since 2022 - 2023 (non-pay) repairs spend continues to increase, due to inflation, demand, the impact of damp and mould and increased regulation, and is the main reason for this forecast overspend on non-pay budgets.
- 3.6 The forecast overspend relates to both planned / programmed repairs work and responsive repairs and voids work and it has reduced by £0.83 million since the December reported position. However, there is an offsetting reduction of £0.38 million to

the trading income forecast which reflects that an element of planned works not now included in the forecast would have been recharged to the HRA capital programme.

- 3.7 Indicators of increased demand include the number of works order raised.
- Based on activity levels at the end of the third quarter of the year, we have noted a volatility in demand, with the high demand (+8.75%) observed during quarter 1 stabilising with a modest reduction in quarter 3. Overall, the total number of works orders (excluding cancelled and capitalised) in 2025 - 2026 is now estimated to be broadly comparable to around 87,075 orders for the previous year.
- 3.8 It is also important to note that the average price of this activity is also increasing.
- For instance, and in terms of the increased demand in responsive repairs noted above, the average cost of a responsive repairs work order is still in the region of £149, some 8.5% higher than the previous year's average of £137.
- 3.9 In addition, the forecast overspend includes £150,000 in relation to asbestos survey work. The additional requirement for this work being identified after the 2025 - 2026 budget was set.
- 3.10 The appointment of the Interim Finance Director was also an additional pressure on the budget of £134,000.
- 3.11 As previously reported, and in order to respond to these pressures as part of the CIP work is underway to identify and implement further efficiencies across the repairs and maintenance service area. This includes revisiting service levels and processes, reviewing supervision and management, considering the value of increased inspections and undertaking a value for money assessment between internal and external (contractor) provision across various trade groups.

Traded Income (Overspend of £0.979 million)

- 3.12 The forecast overspend has increased by £0.38 m as referenced in 3.6 above, due to a reduction in planned works to be recharged to capital which has also reduced expenditure on planned works. As previously reported, the balance of the overspend relates to the Asbestos service. When setting the budget some £550,000 of income was anticipated, primarily in relation to Asbestos removal services provided to the Council's strategic construction partners, engaged on the Council's capital investment programmes. Due to refocussing of the capital work streams, this income stream is now forecast to be only £40,000. Colleagues within this service area continue to support internal revenue activity, i.e. asbestos works for response repairs and to voids, and some have been reassigned to mould treatment works to maintain efficiency / productivity and reduce our contractor spend.
- 3.13 It should be noted that this reduction in income is partially matched by a saving on corresponding expenditure budgets and that in addition staff resources used to undertake this work previously have been reallocated to other priorities.

4.0 2025 - 2026 Revenue Budget Forecast at 31 Jan 2026 (by directorate)

4.1 The revenue budget forecast for 2025 - 2026 (by directorate) is set out below.

Table 2 – 2025 - 2026 Revenue Budget Forecast at 31 Jan 2026 (by Directorate)

Directorate	Budget £000's	Forecast £000's	Variance £000's
Corporate Services	13,633	12,409	(1,224)
Property Services	32,380	33,258	878
Homes and Communities	5,687	5,501	(186)
Total	51,700	51,168	(532)

4.2 Table 2 shows an alternative presentation of the 2025 - 2026 revenue budget forecast position, by Directorate. The budget figures reflect some services moving directorates during Q3. This summary being set out in greater detail within Appendix 2, with the main variances and key pressures being set out below:

Corporate Services (overall underspend of £1.224 million)

- 4.3 Budget provision for the pay award budget of £0.86 million was held corporately. This was only passed out where required - to salary budgets overspending due to the pay award in line with the prudent approach referred to Sections 3.3 and 3.5. This has created a budget underspend of £0.655 million.
- 4.4 The Business Support budget is forecast to underspend by £0.23 million. This is because of additional income being generated in relation to the delivery of homelessness customer services being provided to the Council in the first part of the year.
- 4.5 The Human Resources and Skills Development budget is forecast to underspend by £0.342 million due to cost reductions opportunities identified in relation to occupational health and training budgets.

Property Services (Overall overspend of £0.878 million)

- 4.6 The Housing Maintenance budget is forecast to overspend in overall terms by £1.3 million and is therefore the main factor behind this overall directorate overspend position. This is in line with the issues set out in section 3 (3.7 to 3.14), given the major element of this relates to increased (non-pay) contractor spend and reduced asbestos service-related income. This position has reduced from that previously reported (although there is further comment in Section 5.4).
- 4.7 There are offsetting areas of underspend – Grounds Maintenance contract £0.1 million, communal fuel £0.23 million and some additional insurance income of £0.1 million. The voids budget forecast has reduced from an overspend of £0.13 million as at 31 October

to an underspend of £0.16 million. There is a forecast underspend on the budget for Facilities of £0.155 million for reduction in rent and other services.

Homes and Communities (Overall underspend of £0.186 million)

4.8 The overall underspend is made up of a broad range of savings related to pay consistently achieved across this directorate including Tenancy, Housing Options, Lettings and Income. These forecast underspends are consistent with the steps highlighted above to closely control recruitment, and to delay filling vacancies where feasible and where CIP options in those areas are being considered. None of these savings individually by service area being above £0.1 million.

5.0 Summary of Financial Position at 31 January 2026

5.1 As detailed above, there are a number of reasons for variances across Company budgets.

5.2 In overall terms, the revenue forecast for the year, as at 31 January 2026, is projected to be an underspend of £0.532 million.

5.3 At the September Board meeting the overall forecast position (as at July 31) was an overspend against budget of approximately £0.9 million. The updated forecast as at the end of October was for an overspend of £0.3 million. The latest forecast therefore represents a further improved forecast position of £0.8 million compared to that previously reported to Board in December.

5.4 This improved position being largely driven by a reduction in the forecast for employee costs and a reduced overspend position within Property Services relating to the voids and planned repairs budgets. This reflects the continuing additional work undertaken in recent months to revisit, check and challenge all budget assumptions underpinning spend estimates.

5.5 Reserves balances are currently at £0.8 million.

5.6 Work will continue to ensure delivery of an outturn position within budget in 2025 - 2026.

6.0 Financial and value for money implications

6.1 While the required savings have been successfully delivered to ensure a balanced budget, this has created ongoing operational pressures across all directorates. In Property and Housing Management, some planned and preventative activity has therefore been deferred rather than removed.

6.2 The most significant impact continues to be on staffing capacity. This position is compounded by the current level of reserves, which stand at approximately £0.8m and therefore provide limited flexibility. In this context, reserves do not represent capacity for investment, acceleration of deferred work, or increases in staffing levels, but instead

provide only a minimal buffer against in-year financial and delivery risk. This reinforces the need for continued careful management of pressures and prioritisation decisions.

6.3 Board are aware that Value for Money considerations are central to the approach within the Cost Improvement Plan.

7.0 Legal and regulatory implications

7.1 No direct implications arising from this report.

8.0 Human resources implications

8.1 There are no Human Resource implications to this report.

9.0 Health and safety implications

9.1 There are no Health and Safety implications to this report.

10.0 Equalities implications

10.1 Has an equality impact assessment been carried out? No

10.2 Explanation: Not applicable in respect of this report.

11.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activity and impact on customer

11.1 Not applicable.

12.0 Impact on the environment and community

12.1 Not applicable.

13.0 Long term consequences for the company

13.1 No consequences arise directly from this report. However, sound financial management and operating with budget is an important element of long-term planning.

14.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers, and others

14.1 None arising directly from this report.

15.0 Impact on Wolverhampton Homes' Management System

15.1 None arising directly from this report.

16.0 List of Appendices

16.1 Appendix 1 - Forecast Revenue Budget by Service

Appendix 1 – Forecast Revenue Budget by Service

Division	Service	Budget £000	Forecast £000	Variance £000	Reasons for Variance (where significant)
Corporate	Business Support	8,062	7,954	(108)	Income from Homelessness calls
	Pay contingency budget	789	0	(789)	Budget for pay award
	Estate Services	2,282	2,296	14	
	Human Resources	549	506	(43)	Professional fees and medical fees per CIP
	Learning and Development	1,951	1,653	(298)	Training expenses (£110,000) CIP and salaries
	Subtotal	13,633	12,409	(1,224)	
Property	Housing Maintenance	21,055	22,370	1,315	Asbestos income reduction, programmed works, response repairs
	Capital works	329	286	(43)	Waste management
	Commercial services	200	225	25	
	Compliance	7,471	7,381	(90)	Includes £150,000 additional asbestos surveys, Facilities underspend
	Property Directorate	285	207	(78)	Salaries (1 post)
	Stock Investment	3,040	2,789	(251)	Communal fuel – rate reduction
	Subtotal	32,380	33,258	878	
Homes and Communities	Anti-Social behaviour	837	857	20	
	Homes and Communities directorate	396	355	(41)	Salaries – vacancies per CIP
	Housing Management	1,745	1,647	(98)	Salaries – Vacancies per CIP
	Housing Solutions	881	840	(41)	Salaries - reduction of overtime
	Income	1,828	1,802	(26)	
	Subtotal	5,687	5,501	(186)	
Total		51,700	51,168	(532)	