



**LANCASTER
CITY COUNCIL**

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER AND OFFICER DELEGATED DECISIONS

WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2022

Please find enclosed Decision Notices in connection with the following:

ICMD6 Implementation of Council Housing Asset Management Strategy (Pages 2 - 28)

Please note that this is subject to call-in.

Queries regarding these documents

Please contact Liz Bateson, Democratic Services - email ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk.

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Dalton Square,
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Published on WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2022



Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

**EXECUTIVE DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER OR DELEGATED OFFICER
NOTICE OF DECISION**

TITLE OF DECISION: Implementation of Council Housing Asset Management Strategy	
NAME OF DECISION TAKER:	CARY MATTHEWS
POSITION AND RESPONSIBILITY HELD:	PORTFOLIO HOLDER - HOUSING
CONTACT OFFICER:	Jo WILKINSON
TELEPHONE:	01524 582762
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<p>Details of Decision:</p> <p>(1) To approve the draft Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and supporting Action Plan covering the period 2022 to 2027.</p> <p>(2) That quarterly reports on progress against the Plan are shared with the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Housing.</p> <p>(3) That the Strategy and Action Plan be reviewed after two years to ensure it stays relevant within the current climate</p>	
<p>Reasons for the decision:</p> <p>Approving the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy will result in the Council being able to understand its Council Housing stock better and direct resources appropriately. Actions contained within the associated Action Plan will also significantly contribute towards supporting residents around the current energy crisis through advice from our dedicated Energy Support Officer and seeking to provide improvements to the energy efficiency and overall warmth of our buildings, whilst having a clear focus on the climate emergency and renewable technology. By keeping the portfolio holder updated on progress, this keeps the work of the team as a strategic priority with governance and oversight of the teams' work.</p>	
<p>IS THE DECISION URGENT No</p>	
<p>I can confirm that this decision is urgent as any delay likely to be caused by the Call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests and therefore is not subject to Call-in. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been consulted. I hereby agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable, in all the circumstances, and to it being treated as a matter of urgency.</p>	
<p>Signed : N/A Chief Executive</p>	
<p>I confirm that I have taken account of the options proposed by officers, the various implications set out in the report and the comments of the Monitoring and Section 151 Officers and am authorising the decision as set out above.</p>	
SIGNATURE OF DECISION TAKER:	Cllr Cary Matthews
DATE:	15.11.22

LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

<i>THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</i>		REF NO.	ICMD6
DATE DECISION TAKEN:	15.11.22	DATE RECEIVED BY DEMOCRATIC SERVICES:	16.11.22
DATE DECISION PUBLISHED:	16.11.22	IMPLEMENTATION DATE (publication day + 5 working days):	24.11.22

Individual Cabinet Member Decision

Implementation of Council Housing Asset Management Strategy

Report of Head of Housing

PURPOSE OF REPORT					
The report seeks authorisation to implement the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and supporting Action Plan.					
Key Decision		Non-Key Decision	X	Referral from Cabinet Member	
Date of notice of forthcoming key decision		N/A			
This report is public					

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) To approve the draft Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and supporting Action Plan covering the period 2022 to 2027.
- (2) That quarterly reports on progress against the Plan are shared with the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Housing.
- (3) That the Strategy and Action Plan be reviewed after two years to ensure it stays relevant within the current climate.

1. Introduction

1.1 Lancaster City Council is proud to remain a stock retaining authority and the opportunities that presents to meetings the Council's Corporate priorities. It is the largest registered provider of affordable rented housing within the district, with responsibility for the management and maintenance of around 3,800 homes, across Lancaster, Morecambe, Heysham, Carnforth, and the coastal and rural villages. The Council's housing stock is a substantial asset, servicing a wide range of housing needs including general needs and family accommodation, older persons independent living schemes, and community centres.

1.2 The council aims to care for and improve the lives of our residents and diverse communities across the district and, in particular to protect those who are the most vulnerable. The Council Housing Team is recognised as contributing to this aim and to our resident's wellbeing by providing homes that are safe, secure, warm and affordable that meet their needs. For this to be a reality it means we need to remain a high

performing Council and continually improve our approach to asset management. This asset management strategy sets out the overarching framework for how the investment and maintenance of our homes will be at the centre of achieving our ambitions, and costs associated with this will be factored into HRA budgets, where not already earmarked.

1.3 In simple terms, asset management of housing stock is wide ranging and can involve repairing, maintaining, refurbishing, converting, acquiring, disposing and developing new homes. It is about making the right decisions utilising financial and modelling tools supplemented by accurate and up to date data. This ensures investment decisions are made which support and sustain individual properties, communities and the wider environment.

1.4 In addition, as residents have seen the cost of their energy bills rising dramatically and this is expected to continue a key focus of this strategy and action plan is the expectation that the Council will take forward measures to ensure homes are more energy efficient and affordable to heat and thus reduce the financial burden this places on residents.

1.5 It should also be noted that the housing sector faces significant challenges linked to new legislation and regimes around building safety following the Grenfell tragedy in not just ensuring compliance with minimum legal standards but of the need to go beyond this. We are committed to doing all that is reasonably practicable to keep our residents safe in their homes and will continue to keep abreast of regulatory and legislative changes, the Asset Management Strategy forms part of that approach.

2. Priorities

2.1 Lancaster City Council Housing Service in conjunction with residents has set the following Strategic Vision for our approach to asset management:

'Lancaster City Council will provide homes and neighbourhoods which are resident centred, modern and fit for the future. We will seek to ensure residents have homes which are energy efficient and easy to use in welcoming neighbourhoods where they can access and enjoy the communities around them.'

2.2 To achieve this ambition the Strategy outlines seven key priorities:

1. Providing safe and secure homes;
2. Understanding our asset base;
3. Reshaping our asset base;
4. Be committed to addressing the climate emergency;
5. Providing new homes and regeneration;
6. Delivering value for money;
7. Delivering high satisfaction.

2.3 To assist in achieving these priorities an Action Plan has been developed which sets a roadmap for the next two years, following which this will be updated. Due to significant changes the Council is already aware of through the Building Safety Act which comes into power from 1st April 2023, as well as other expected changes emerging from the Social Housing White Paper including the update to the Decent Homes Standard it felt appropriate to take stock of achievements and information received through stock condition survey information and EPC data and seek to review and refresh the Strategy with an updated action plan for the current climate at that time.

3. Resident engagement

3.1 At the end of 2021, several key stakeholder workshops took place with staff from

across the Housing Service, tenants and the Housing Portfolio Holder to help formulate the strategy. The objective was to focus in on the Legislative and Regulatory framework the Council must comply with as a responsible landlord, but also to understand the ambitions of what residents would like to see and what the Council would like to deliver but in the context of limited and stretched resources available. Considering the recent Grenfell tragedy an overriding priority was to seek to mitigate and manage risk where it remains.

3.2 The Asset Management Strategy was presented to members of the District Wide Tenants Forum (DWTF) on 17th March 2022. Membership of this forum consists of customers, elected members and Council Officers. The DWTF supported the implementation of this Strategy, the rationale for having a strategy and the two-year action plan.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

	Option 1: To approve the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and associated Action Plan	Option 2: Do not approve the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and associated Action Plan
Advantages	Council will have an agreed Strategy to work towards – this sets out what requirements the Council needs to meet and will underpin the Council’s actions specifically around property compliance and building management. The Strategy can be utilised to help focus resources where it is needed most and support the budget setting process	None known – whilst the Council Housing service could potentially save resources through not implementing the Strategy and Action Plan it is likely that those resources could then be utilised focussing on the wrong thing e.g. a programme of renewals and investment on a particular area or stock type that wasn’t required.
Disadvantages	The Strategy will require review after two years with an updated action plan to be developed – however it is felt appropriate considering the changes foreseen on the horizon to ensure the strategy is regularly reviewed. Equally many of the actions within the strategy will come with a resource requirement, much of these will be able to be met through current budgets however where additional costs are incurred this will be either built into future years budget setting processes.	None known – it is important that the Council has an Asset Management Strategy for its Council Housing portfolio.
Risks	Approving the Strategy at this point carries a risk that the government will make further announcements in relation to	As detailed above – the Council Housing Service should have an Asset Management Strategy in place helping to shape how we

	<p>requirements for social housing providers in the near future – such as updating the Decent Homes requirements, resulting in the Strategy or parts of the Strategy becoming out of date quickly – however the Strategy allows for regular reviews and therefore the Portfolio Holder and residents through tenant communication channels will be kept updated.</p>	<p>manage the buildings that we own, not approving the strategy risks directing resources inappropriately.</p>
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5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 The Officer preferred option, is Option 1. As already outlined approving the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy results in us being able to understand our stock better and be able to direct resources appropriately. Actions contained within the associated Action Plan will also significantly contribute towards supporting residents around the current energy crisis through advice from our dedicated Energy Support Officer and seeking to provide improvements to the energy efficiency and overall warmth of our buildings, whilst having a clear focus on the climate emergency and renewable technology.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 By approving this Council Housing Asset Management Strategy significant improvements will be realised in understanding our properties through better data and being able to direct resources appropriately. The Strategy supports the Council’s ambitions around acting on the climate emergency through both improved / more energy efficient homes but also in supporting our residents who live in our properties.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

This Strategy seeks to support the ambitions contained within the Homes Strategy 2020-25.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

Implementation of the Council Housing Asset Management Strategy would have no known negative consequences for specific groups, but would undoubtedly have positive impacts such as ensuring disabled residents are able to access appropriate adaptations in their homes and that we support residents across our housing stock by creating warmer and more energy efficient homes.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services have been consulted on this matter and have no further comments to make.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs relating to implementing the draft Council Housing Asset Management Strategy and supporting Action Plan can be managed from within existing budgets.

However, the progression of the action plan will result in various financial issues arising in due course. These will initially be highlighted within the quarterly report and reported to Members for consideration at the appropriate time.

The cost of the project work required to acquire a new asset management system is included in the system replacement project which is funded from the HRA ICT & Systems Improvement Reserve, as approved by Council on 23rd February 2022.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

There are no Human Resource implications arising from this report.

Information Services:

The action plan in the attached strategy proposes that the Council acquire a new asset management system as the current data system is not fit for purpose, to enable data storage, scenario planning and reporting, various scenarios are currently being considered including seeking to utilise the system already used by Property Services within the Council, utilise a system being purchased by the Lancashire Consortia or to implement a system / module as part of the wider Council Housing System replacement roadmap. No decision on the way forward has yet been reached. Where new systems are implemented ICT will be engaged accordingly.

Property:

There are significant positive implications arising from this strategy in relation to Council Housing assets, as outlined in the accompanying documents.

Open Spaces:

There are some implications arising from this strategy in relation to open spaces as part of a neighbourhood approach, but will be linked public / green space owned by the Housing Revenue Account. Any changes to delivery of services by Public Realm will be consulted with and appropriate recharges made where applicable.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

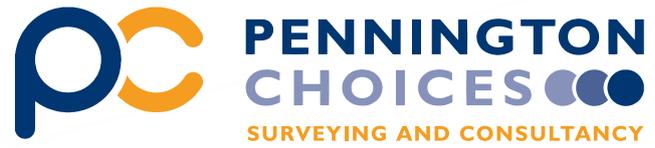
The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to make in addition to those outlined within the financial implications

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Ref: N/A



Council Housing Asset Management Strategy

2022-2027



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Lancaster City Council is the largest registered provider of affordable rented housing within the district, with responsibility for the management and maintenance of 3,816 homes, across Lancaster, Morecambe, Heysham, Carnforth, and the coastal and rural villages. The Council's housing stock is a substantial asset, servicing a wide range of housing needs including general needs and family accommodation and older persons independent living schemes, and community centres.
- 1.2 Lancaster City Council's 'Ambitions' plan (Corporate Plan 2018-22) sets out the Vision and priorities to allow Lancaster district to thrive as a vibrant regional centre in the north of England and by ensuring it is a great place to live, work and visit. The council's objective is to care for and improve the lives of our residents and diverse communities across the district and, in particular to protect those who are the most vulnerable. In doing so we will contribute to our resident's wellbeing by providing lifetime homes that are safe, secure, warm and affordable homes that meet their needs. For this to be a reality it means we need to remain a high performing Council and continually improve our approach to asset management. This asset management strategy sets out the overarching framework for how the investment and maintenance of our homes will be at the centre of achieving our ambitions.
- 1.3 Residents identify the quality and comfort of their home, and therefore repairs and maintenance as one of the most important services they receive. They also place great importance on the level of investment we can make in their home. The repairs service and investment programmes both serve as key drivers when measuring resident satisfaction.
- 1.4 In addition, residents have seen the cost of their energy bills rising dramatically. This brings with it an expectation that we will take measures to ensure homes are more energy efficient and affordable to heat and thus reduce the financial burden this places on residents.

1.5 The sector faces challenges in not just ensuring compliance with minimum legal standards but of the need to go beyond this, particularly in light of the recent Grenfell tragedy and the learning from this and associated reviews on building and fire safety. We are committed to doing all that is reasonably practicable to keep our residents safe in their homes.

1.6 In January 2020, the Council re-affirmed its priorities:

A Sustainable District achieving net zero carbon by 2030 by implementing a series of measures which include waste management, increasing sustainable energy and decreasing energy consumption, working collaboratively towards an accessible and inclusive low transport system, supporting communities to be resilient to flooding and the wider effects of climate change and increasing biodiversity.

An Inclusive and Prosperous Local Economy supporting development of new skills and access to employment to reduce inequality within a more environmentally sustainable local economy, increasing more sustainable supply chains and using our land property finance and procurement to benefit local communities.

Happy and Healthy Communities supporting wellbeing and ensuring local communities are engaged involved and connected, addressing health and income inequalities, improving mental wellbeing and loneliness, seeking early intervention approaches, developing housing to ensure residents of all incomes are comfortable, warm and can maintain their independence, improving access to cultural and leisure activities as well as access to good quality neighbourhoods, parks, beaches and open space.

A Co-operative Kind and Responsible Council listening to communities and treating our residents with respect, working in partnership with local residents communities and partners, delivering excellence through customer focussed services, working to improve service delivery and operations of the Council, providing value for money and ensuring the Council is financially resilient and sustainable.

1.7 This Council Housing Asset Management Strategy provides one of the main tools for delivering our business plan and is built around our 'Ambitions' plan and Homes Strategy 2020-25.

Note: It should be noted that this Asset Management Strategy is for the Council's Housing portfolio, and the Council's commercial portfolio is out of scope.

1.8 Overall Strategic Aim:

'Lancaster City Council will provide homes and neighbourhoods which are resident centred, modern and fit for the future. We will seek to ensure residents have homes which are energy efficient and easy to use in welcoming neighbourhoods where they can access and enjoy the communities around them.'

This is supported by our 'Homes Vision' in our Homes Strategy 2020-25, the key commitments are as follows:

- Effectively meeting affordable and social housing need, promoting independence and creating happy, healthy and sustainable communities to make Lancaster district a great place to live.
- Our vision is that all residents in Lancaster district will be living in:
 - Good quality affordable homes
 - Homes with appropriate levels of support
 - Safe and secure communities and neighbourhoods
- Affordable Housing Growth - Maximising the amount of affordable homes available to rent and buy
- Improving Housing Quality - Improving the quality and energy efficiency of homes, particularly in the private sector and reducing the number of empty homes
- Promoting Independent Living - Minimising homelessness through greater focus on prevention and supporting vulnerable residents to live independently
- Creating Sustainable Communities - Creating confident and sustainable communities through effective management of neighbourhoods and tackling anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and crime
- Improving Health through Housing - Promoting healthy lifestyles, reducing health inequalities, tackling poverty and supporting people to meet health needs through housing options
- Meeting the Needs of Older People - Ensuring that the right housing options are available which allow older people to remain active and independent in their homes and communities

1.9 Asset management is a systematic process of operating, maintaining, upgrading, acquiring, developing and disposing of homes and other properties. Effectively it is about making strategic choices and balancing risk, particularly in light of the current operating environment and the portfolio of homes we have. In simple terms, it is about achieving our social purpose and balancing this with improving the financial return from our entire portfolio of homes.

1.10 We have identified our need to have more specific and up-to-date stock condition data on our stock. We currently hold data for 25% of our homes, however, the majority of this data was collected back in 2014. This new data needs to be user friendly and held in a dynamic system which will enable scenario planning and reporting.

1.11 We have identified our need to have a targeted approach to our asset management work, including the need to commission and carry out a full appraisal of our property portfolio, through a property grading and valuation exercise, known as 'Active Asset Management'. This will mean us being more ambitious in driving forward a new brand of 'intelligent' and 'intelligence-led' asset management which embeds an approach across the whole of the Council in order to tackle the challenges we face.

1.12 Like many registered social landlords, we have a diverse and ageing profile of homes, some of which have significant investment needs. More than 1,000 of our homes were built before 1945 and therefore in addition to the component replacements required (kitchens, bathrooms etc.), there is a need for significant internal improvements to these homes, including plastering and joinery works.

1.13 We have small pockets of rural homes with poor infrastructure access, as well as a diverse range of properties requiring more specific investment decisions.

Key facts on stock profile

Types	Number
Domestic properties	3816
Communal blocks	284
Other properties	488
Total	4588

1.14 **Our other key challenges** can be summarised as follows:

- We need to ensure we can demonstrate with absolute assurance that we are complying with our legal obligations and doing all that is reasonably practicable in relation to resident safety. Also, this will include the council taking a proactive approach to changes in legislation, and guidance. For example, the Building Safety Bill and the government's Social Housing White Paper which includes a review of the Decent Homes Standard
- We need to collect and maintain robust data and intelligence so that it can be used more effectively to help demonstrate compliance and safety, and to inform investment decisions and subsequent works
- We must protect and enhance the value of our homes and future rental income streams through appropriate investment and divestment decisions
- We must implement and use our property grading and valuation methods and strengthen our approach to collecting and maintaining stock condition survey information about our homes to aid decision making
- We must address our poorly performing homes and those that are difficult to manage due to their specialist or complex nature
- We must analyse and deal with competition faced from other landlords, and focus on areas of low demand and make interventions accordingly
- We must strengthen and optimise our contract management, procurement and delivery approaches to help our resources go further
- We must continue to develop our people and their skills, ensuring we have the right people, processes and systems in place to deliver this strategy
- We must continue to engage with our residents, leaseholders and communities, ensuring the future requirements of our services are considered.

1.15 The following strategic aims have been arrived at by taking the asset challenges we've identified and then producing a range of specific actions that will address them – see appendix 3 'action plan'. Our strategy delivers a shift away from viewing our homes as a series of individual components to seeing our homes as a whole housing offer, meeting resident expectations with appropriate and balanced levels of investment.

1.16 **Safe and Secure Homes** (First Priority) - We will always prioritise investment into the health and safety of residents ahead of any other investment decisions we take. In doing so we will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure our residents are safe in their homes. This includes as a minimum complying with all regulation, legislation and approved codes of practice.

1.17 **Understanding Our Asset Base** (Second Priority) – We will expand our knowledge of our stock by implementing a new stock condition survey to achieve 100% new data on our stock. This will also include the renewing of out of date energy performance certificates (EPCs), so we have 100% stock condition data and 100% energy data on our stock. In addition, the Council will acquire a new asset management system, to enable data storage, scenario planning and reporting. This system will act as a dynamic and user friendly system/tool. The Asset Management team will be appropriately resourced, with dedicated roles recruited to.

1.18 **Reshaping our Portfolio** (Third Priority) – We will develop our new approach to 'active asset management' and combine this with our stock condition survey data to help us deliver a stronger and more sustainable portfolio of homes to aid future investment and divestment decisions.

We will target investment into our homes to ensure all of our different types of homes are suitable and appealing to our diverse range of residents, both now and in the years ahead.

1.19 **Our commitments to Climate Change** - We will invest in 'energy efficiency' measures and initiatives that will ensure we make our homes more affordable in use to minimise fuel poverty in line with our ambition, including:

- Making the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030
- Consider systematically the climate change impact of each areas of the Council activities
- Increase local resilience to and knowledge of climate impacts already in the system
- Maximise local benefits of these actions in other sectors such as health, agriculture, transport and the economy; and
- Support and work with other relevant agencies toward making Lancaster District zero carbon within the same timescale.'

This will include addressing properties we know which do not meet a band C energy efficiency rating. We have 962 properties within Band D to G, see item 9.4 for details.

We will be closely monitoring our progress towards our ambitions goals, to see the activities of the council carbon neutral by 2030. This will include a number of projects below:

- Changes to recycling and waste collection
- Co-Wheels car club scheme
- Fleet Electrification Programme/ Electric vehicle charging points
- Million trees project
- Solar Farms across the district
- Flood risk works

1.20 **Providing New Homes and Regeneration** – (Fifth Priority) - We will ensure, via the Housing LATCo and through our own ambitions, that the Council maximises the borrowing opportunities and deliver a number of key housing and regeneration priorities, to meet the needs of our local neighbourhoods and communities.

1.21 **Value for Money** – We will ensure that value for money remains at the heart of every asset management decision we take through an improved approach to ‘active asset management’ ‘contract management’ and ‘procurement’ of contracts, services and materials. This will include adopting the council’s Procurement Policy principles, with particular emphasis on social value.

1.22 **High Satisfaction** – we will deliver year on year resident satisfaction and provide evidence of this through the new tenant satisfaction measures due to come into effect from 1st April 2023.

We will provide a ‘repairs and maintenance service’ and a ‘planned investment service’ that is comparable if not better than our peers.

We will contribute to the achievement and maintenance of great neighbourhoods and sustainable communities through the delivery of an agreed number of ‘environmental and communal’ interventions.

2. Regulatory Framework

- 2.1 **Regulatory Framework** - the application of this strategy will ensure we can comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s regulatory framework and consumer standards for social housing in England.
- 2.2 **Legislation** – the application of this strategy will also ensure compliance with all relevant legislation as outlined in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 **Sanctions** – we accept our responsibilities in accordance with the regulatory standards, legislation and codes of practice.



3. Resident Involvement

- 3.1 Being resident focused is a key responsibility throughout the Council. We know through feedback from our residents that maintaining and improving the condition of their homes is their number one priority.
- 3.2 The details of our approach to resident engagement is covered in more detail in our 'Ambitions' plan and Homes Strategy 2020-25, and this should be read in conjunction with this Asset Management Strategy.
- 3.3 Our Resident's Voice approach will be at the heart of key decisions involving property compliance and resident safety.
- 3.4 We will consult with our residents and review and update our own 'Lancaster Standard' throughout the life of this strategy.
- 3.5 We will continue to capture resident satisfaction data following the completion of repairs, investment works and communal and environmental projects, along with satisfaction with newly let or newly built homes, to measure the impact of our approach.

4. Safe and Secure Homes

- 4.1 It is our responsibility to provide safe and secure homes and communicate this to our residents, staff and other stakeholders. We acknowledge, and take very seriously, our responsibilities and obligations for property compliance and ensuring resident safety, and see this as our primary key strategic priority.
- 4.2 We also recognise and understand our obligations for property compliance and resident safety when set in the context of regulation, legislation and approved codes of practice.
- 4.3 Whilst we are committed to complying with our legal obligations, we will go beyond this in the life of this strategy to ensure we are doing all that is reasonably practicable to keep our residents safe in their homes. We will review and update our own 'Lancaster Standard' throughout the life of this strategy, in consultation with our residents, and then ensure this is embedded in our policies, processes and procedures for delivery thereafter.
- 4.4 As part of this we will ensure our residents are involved at all stages of property compliance, and ensure their voice is at the heart of key decisions involving resident safety.
- 4.5 We must ensure that our staff and residents have greater awareness of building safety issues and an audit trail clearly showing how their concerns about safety have been addressed. We must also reflect on learning emerging from the Grenfell enquiry and associated reviews on building safety and adopt relevant recommendations as best practice.
- 4.6 We will adopt the 'three lines of defence approach' to resident safety. Responsibility for managing risk will be shared between our first-line, consisting of front line staff applying policies, our second-line, internal audit/quality assurance and a third-line, comprised of external assurance.

4.7 We will implement a roadmap to full compliance within an agreed timeframe, which will aim to ensure we can evidence and demonstrate full compliance with our legal obligations, and within the new policies for the big 6 areas of property compliance, dated 2022 (i.e. the policy principles we will implement which go beyond delivering to the minimum legal requirements to ensure for resident safety).

4.8 This roadmap will focus on the following areas:

- Carrying out a comprehensive validation of property assets, inspection records and evidence of follow up work completions – followed by the initiation of a project to get all property compliance data into one core system
- Reviewing policy principles to be applied for all areas of property compliance and resident safety culminating in a new suite of policies, process maps and procedures
- Reviewing and enhancing our reporting arrangements at management, leadership and cabinet levels to ensure for robust scrutiny and oversight
- Assessing our existing competencies, qualifications and accreditations in respect of our own internal staff and our external supply chain partners responsible for delivering the risk assessment, testing and inspection programmes and the associated follow up works

4.9 We will deliver a robust approach to the delivery and close out of follow-up works identified as part of the risk assessments and programmes of testing and inspection in order to ensure compliance and resident safety.

4.10 We will ensure that the key areas of property compliance (gas, electric, asbestos, fire, lifts and water) are subject to a programme of internal audits as part of our risk plan and/or external scrutiny from appropriately qualified external experts.

4.11 We will enhance our current reporting on property compliance in year one of this strategy to include the following for each of the 6 major areas of compliance (gas, electric, fire, asbestos, lifts and water). This data will be supported by narrative outlining the current position, any non-compliance and corrective action to be taken and the expected outcome from the corrective action with firm timescales set out.

4.12 We will continue to produce an annual assurance report in respect of property compliance and resident safety to be approved by our Executive Team and Cabinet.



5. Reshaping Our Portfolio of Homes

5.1 Strategic Aim

We want to ensure we make the right investment into the right homes at the right time, enabling us to optimise the performance of those homes we retain and to divest of those homes which are evaluated as poor performing assets.

We recognise we need to develop a new approach to asset management (Active Asset Management) which will see us evaluate our homes combining financial and non-financial data to give us a greater insight into our portfolio so we can make better decisions. Through this process we will aim to:

- Deliver the maximum return we can on each home
- Provide a balanced portfolio of homes that reflects what our residents want
- Enable us to simplify our portfolio of homes where appropriate to do so
- Help us decide whether to demolish, repair, improve, change or sell homes
- Build a property regeneration/refurbishment programme based on intelligent data
- Be responsive to and pro-actively seek out acquisition opportunities

5.2 What is Active Asset Management?

In simple terms 'active asset management' is a process which enables an organisation to understand which homes work best in the longer term (over 30 years) and which homes don't, so future investment decisions can be made appropriately.

As part of demonstrating and delivering value for money, we should understand the return we get on our homes and have a strategy in place for optimising the future returns these homes can generate. This process should include a rigorous appraisal of all potential options for improving VFM and determine whether we should retain or dispose of homes.

We will therefore adopt an agreed Asset Performance Evaluation (APE) tool in order to evaluate our homes so that long-term decisions can be made in a more informed way.

The tool will look at the financial performance of our homes – i.e. the income they will generate and what the associated investment, maintenance and management costs are with that home. The use of Net Present Value (NPV) analysis can then be applied which takes into account 30-year replacement costs of maintaining each of our homes to a standard compared with the income it will generate over that period.

We will agree a way of classifying our homes from the outputs of this exercise, so we are clear going forward as to what our approach will be to each and every home we own and/or manage. It will also identify those homes that we wish to put forward for a more detailed option appraisal.

Active asset management combines this financial performance of our homes with other factors including sustainability, desirability and resident satisfaction, along with our stock condition survey data. This combined analysis will form the basis of decision making for our homes against an agreed classification and/or criteria. Following a more detailed option appraisal this could inform one of the following strategic choices and/or decisions for a home or scheme – to demolish, to repair, to improve, to change or to sell.

5.3 Active Asset Management - Principles agreed for this strategy

For the financial year 2022-2023 we will continue to use existing methods (i.e. the results of the 25% stock condition survey data) to derive the planned investment programme, as well as continuing with our current options appraisal process for poor performing homes.

The financial plan for the Council identifies the anticipated resources to meet the expenditure on our homes over the next 30 years. This includes for expenditure on responsive and void repairs, compliance and cyclical programmes and planned investment programmes.

We will commission and complete a new stock condition survey to achieve 100% of the Council's property portfolio. This will be completed in three phases. Phase 1 (2022-23) – 25%, Phase 2 (2023-24) – 25%, Phase 3 (2024-25) – 25%. Therefore, achieving the target of 100% new data by March 2025.

In 2022-23 the Council will acquire a new asset management system, to enable data storage, scenario planning and reporting.

In 2022-23 a full review of the Asset Management function will be undertaken to ensure Asset Management is appropriately resourced, with dedicated roles agreed and recruited to.

We will commission and complete the Asset Performance Evaluation of all our homes by March 2024. The outputs of this will lead to our processes for formulating our 30 year expenditure plans, planned investment programmes and our approach to option appraisal being reviewed and revised accordingly.

We will use this approach to decide whether to demolish, repair, improve and invest, change or sell homes accordingly.

If disposing, we will endeavour to safeguard the future of neighbourhoods where we choose to dispose of homes, by offering these to like-minded organisations, reviewing affordable home ownership options or placing covenants on these sales where we can to safeguard the ongoing sustainability of these neighbourhoods.

6. Providing New Homes and Regeneration Ambitions

6.1 The details of our new homes and regeneration programme are covered in more detail in our Homes Strategy 2020-25, the key commitments are as follows:

- New homes and schemes are developed using the National Design Guide to create well designed places and communities that are beautiful successful and sustainable and contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents
- The Council will aim to build ultra-low carbon homes as part of its identified housing and regeneration priorities
- All new homes will meet Nationally Described Space Standards
- The Council will seek to exceed the requirement of 20% of new homes meeting Building Regulations M4 (2) accessibility standards wherever possible
- The Council will have regard to Secured by Design Standards
- New build homes acquired by the Council should meet a minimum of EPC Band B with scope to increase to EPC Band A through future investment programmes
- Properties acquired by the Council should either meet EPC Band C or be capable of achieving EPC Band C through a fundable retrofitting programme and contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents

- Retrofitting of Council housing stock will seek to bring all properties up to a minimum of EPC Band C by 2030
- Planned refurbishments will seek to achieve Secured by Design Standards

6.2 In 2021 The Housing LATCo – More Homes for the Bay was formed. This is seen as a catalyst for the Council to develop its own land assets, to explore and acquire new sites that could be acquired exclusively or contain an element of residential accommodation in appropriate locations within the Lancaster district, and to acquire existing housing where this directly links to existing or future housing priorities which will expand the Council’s existing housing portfolio.

The rationale of creating the new Housing LATCo is to maximise the borrowing opportunities available to the Council and deliver a number of key housing and regeneration priorities:

- Target is to provide more than the 50 homes identified within this plan over the next 5 years.
- Regeneration of Mainway
- Regeneration of the Canal Quarter area.
- Bailrigg Garden Village - broad location for growth in South Lancaster (distinct community offering a variety of mixed tenure residential housing).

Note: The LATCo Network (of which Lancaster City Council is a member) is the official representative body for Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCo’s) across the UK.

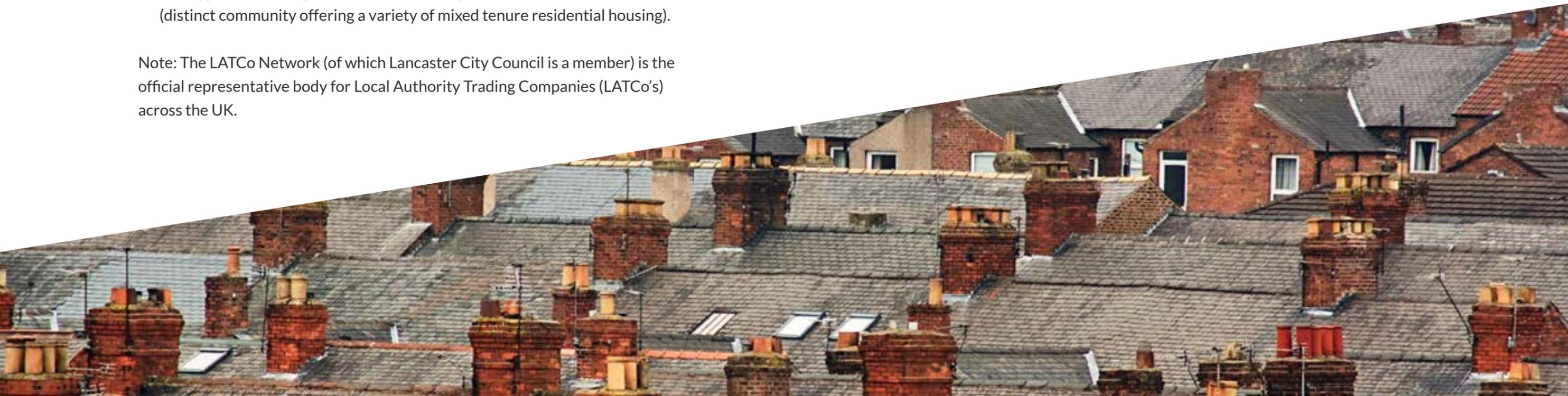
6.3 In addition, Lancaster City Council’s MyMainway project has been formed to bring the Mainway estate homes up to modern, liveable, energy efficient standards, and to revitalise the open space and the riverside location.

Approval has been given for the project team to develop a Mainway masterplan for submission for eventual planning permission later in 2022. In addition, in February 2022, Cabinet approved the progression of an accelerated phase 1 of the project, to reconfigure and refurbish two of the existing blocks on the estate – Lune House and Derby House.

The project includes the council’s three high rise blocks, and therefore decisions will need to be made on their future ahead of the new Building Safety Bill which is due April 2023. This will require landlords to register their high rise blocks, and undertake a number of ‘building safety’ requirements, including, premise information box, fire door audits, tenants voice etc.

6.4 In 2021 the Council undertook a review of its garage site, and has identified a total of 43 sites for further appraisal for the potential redevelopment for affordable housing. Develop feasibility and option appraisal, and implementation strategy by April 2023.

6.5 Homes England confirmed (October 2021) that Lancaster City Council has qualified to participate in the Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26 and associated affordable homes programmes.



6.6 In 2020 Lancaster City Council was allocated £707,630 of the £60 million funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Community Housing Fund. The funding has been awarded to build capacity within local groups, raise awareness of community-led housing and identify local communities that would benefit from community-led housing initiatives.

Community-led housing aims to solve local housing problems, create affordable homes and establish and encourage strong communities. These solutions can be the development of new build properties, the re-use of existing buildings and bringing empty homes back into use.

There are several models of community-led housing which often overlap, including Co-housing, Community land trusts (CLT), Cooperative housing, Self and custom build; and Self-help housing.

In each model the onus is on the community to take the lead in the design and development of the scheme. In terms of the community's stake in the long-term role in the ownership, stewardship or management of homes, this would be dependent on the housing model they adopt.

7. Decent Homes Standards and Planned Investment

- 7.1 The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) requires that social homes meet the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) which requires social homes to be free of hazards that pose a risk to residents, to be in a reasonable state of repair, to have reasonably modern facilities and services such as kitchens and bathrooms and efficient heating and effective insulation.
- 7.2 We are committed to ensuring all homes which are occupied by residents continue to remain fully compliant with the DHS, and any future changes to the DHS.
- 7.3 Compliance with the DHS will continue to be assessed as part of our approach to gathering stock condition survey data information and any remedial works will be carried out where failures or 'acceptable failures' are identified.
- 7.4 We will continue to survey every home (excluding those identified for option appraisal) at least once every 5 years in order that we can maintain them and bring them up to standard, wherever practicable, and so to meet the core principles of the DHS.
- 7.5 We will explore the possibility to enhance our current approach to our stock condition survey work to incorporate compliance validation checks (i.e. additional data gathering to cleanse and update records) and other property related checks.



8. Repairs and Maintenance

- 8.1 We recognise the importance of the repairs and maintenance service to residents and we will always carry out our contractual repair obligations as a responsible social landlord.
- 8.2 However, we recognise it is about more than this. It is about us providing homes to our residents that are well maintained and that over time, remain relevant and appealing to our residents, helping to support healthy and successful lives.
- 8.3 It is also about providing a service that is responsive, efficient and provides for as little inconvenience as possible. To this end we will keep our approach to the delivery of responsive repairs as simple as we can.
- 8.4 We are committed to retaining our community based repairs and maintenance service (RMS) who have responsibility for our repairs and void maintenance service to residents. However, this will always be subject to ongoing compliance, performance and demonstration of value for money.
- 8.5 We recognise that our community based RMS team has a significant impact on the local economy and in the neighbourhoods we serve, with more than 50 local people employed within this team.
- 8.6 The aims of our repairs approach can be summarised as follows:
- To ensure we and our residents meet all their statutory and contractual obligations
 - To provide a prompt, efficient and economical 24 hour, 365 day per year responsive repairs service
 - To determine the key interventions required to improve resident satisfaction with the repairs service

- To increase our first time fix rates
 - To achieve high standards of resident care and consistently high levels of resident satisfaction
 - To offer more flexible appointments times and self-service options
 - To improve follow-on arrangements and communication with the service
 - To ensure vulnerable residents receive a service which is appropriately tailored to their needs
 - To ensure that all properties are maintained to the Decent Homes Standard
 - To ensure as a minimum and that residents live in safety, comfort and warmth
 - To provide transparency in the repairs procedure and provide a link between us and our residents, through resident feedback and involvement
 - To meet our commitments to our residents as detailed within the tenancy/ lease agreement
 - To provide value for money in respect of repairs and service chargeable services
- 8.7 We are committed to adopt a proactive approach to damp and mould interventions, as recommended by the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight report on damp and mould (October 2021). This approach will also be aligned to our energy efficiency measures – see section 9 ‘Homes Affordable in Use’. This proactive approach will include early diagnosis and intervention, effective communication and aftercare.
- 8.8 In addition to the above we will continue to examine ways of utilising the ‘internet of things’ and investing in technology that will drive efficiency and effectiveness in respect of service delivery and will provide residents with greater capacity to ‘self-serve’ through the ordering of repairs and maintenance (and other) requests.

9. Homes Affordable in Use

- 9.1 We will continue to invest in 'energy efficiency' measures and initiatives that will reduce the incidence of fuel poverty for residents through our annual investment programmes.
- 9.2 In addition, Lancaster City Council is helping its residents tackle rising energy costs and climate change by improving the energy efficiency of their homes with a whole house improvement programme. This has included the council appointing a dedicated role, namely an Energy Support Officer, to advise and support residents on energy usage/savings. The refurbishment and retrofitting of 150 council homes in the most urgent need of improvement is scheduled to take four years to complete. The council is working with Lancaster University in order to measure and report on the results of these energy improvements.

The programme aims to help tenants save money in energy costs, as well as reduce the carbon emissions generated by 30% per household each year. The improvement works include full decoration, the installation of new bathrooms and kitchens, 'A' rated windows, boilers, a new central heating system and removal of inefficient gas and electric fires. Homes also benefit from insulation works, composite front and back doors, and LED lightbulbs throughout.

To ensure residents make full use of the efficiency measures in place, residents are offered top tips on how to use their heating systems effectively and other action they can take to reduce their energy bills and carbon emissions.

- 9.3 The ongoing requirement to provide an Energy Performance Certificate with every new tenancy serves as an important opportunity to collect energy data on the stock, so that measures and initiatives can be fully considered on a property by property basis or modelled on a programmed basis. The data we have is summarised below:

Energy Rating Band	Number of Homes
A	22
B	194
C	2462
D	870
E	62
F	24
G	6
Total	3,640

- 9.4 We will assess and if necessary carry out an option appraisal of all properties within bands D to G, within the first year of this strategy. This equates to 962 homes. We appreciate there may be others not yet assessed. This piece of work will be undertaken in conjunction with the planning stages for redevelopment projects to ensure properties are taken 'out of scope' where appropriate.
- 9.5 We are committed to ensuring that as many fuel poor households as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency standard of band C by 2030.
- 9.6 We will also continue to review and seek out opportunities to attract external funding for hard to treat properties and other energy efficiency improvements, where such initiatives are promoted and available.
- 9.7 We will undertake a review of our gas heating replacement programme, and develop a feasibility study for alternative renewable heating options, to ensure we achieve our net zero carbon by 2030 target.

10. Neighbourhood Interventions

- 10.1 We will target investment to enhance schemes to provide a significant improvement in their physical environment as part of our 'Ambitions' plan. This will be combined with activities to address anti-social behaviour and other social factors which have a negative impact. These interventions will seek to reduce the frequency of tenancy changes, helping to create more balanced and sustainable communities and increase rental income.
- 10.2 The Council will continue to work closely with partners and residents, to make sure homes are fit for purpose, and where necessary suitable adaptations will be undertaken in order to improve the quality of life for residents with disabilities. This will be undertaken in conjunction with our occupational therapists. This is covered in more detail in our Homes Strategy 2020-25.

- 10.3 Significantly improving some of our poorer quality homes, communal areas, environmental conditions and neighbourhoods is essential, as homes which are no longer attractive to our residents can have a negative impact on the wider community.
- 10.4 During the life of this strategy we will work with our staff and residents to identify and target a number of priority communities which will seek to eradicate this negative impact, again through our 'Ambitions' plan.
- 10.5 Investment will focus on lifetime homes for our residents, with improved levels of property and scheme security; adaptations, upgrading the quality of the environment in communal areas; and creating long term sustainability of our homes by working collaboratively with all stakeholders and agencies to deliver measurable outcomes for our residents.



11. Key Roles and Responsibilities

- 11.1 The overall governance arrangements for this Asset Management Strategy will be encompassed with our existing framework.
- 11.2 Lancaster City Council Cabinet and Exec Team team will have overall governance responsibility for ensuring this strategy is fully implemented to ensure the strategic aims are delivered and achieved and to ensure full compliance with the regulatory standards, legislation and codes of practice. As such the Cabinet and Senior Management team will formally approve this strategy and review it every two years (or sooner if there is a change in regulation, legislation or codes of practice).
- 11.3 The Exec team will receive regular updates on the implementation of the strategy, its strategic aims and associated performance along with notification of any non-compliance issue which is identified. A summary of this will be escalated to the Cabinet by the Exec team. This is so they have assurance that the strategy is operating effectively in practice.
- 11.4 The Head of Housing has strategic responsibility for the Asset Management Strategy and ensuring the aims are achieved. The Asset Manager will oversee the implementation of the strategy.

11.5 The Exec Team will oversee:

- Monitoring of performance in relation to providing safe and secure homes, in particular in relation to compliance performance and resident safety
- Monitoring the performance of homes following the initial asset performance evaluation (APE) and subsequent evaluations thereafter
- Reviewing the business cases for options relating to schemes and homes
- Approving of disposal of homes and monitoring the performance of sales and disposals
- Assessing opportunities relating to the acquisition of stock
- Monitoring performance in relations to the new homes development programme
- Monitoring of residents satisfaction with repairs, investment and neighbourhood intervention projects



12. Performance Reporting

- 12.1 Robust key performance indicator (KPI) measures will be established and maintained to ensure we are able to report on performance in relation this strategy - see appendix 2.
- 12.2 KPI measures will be produced and provided on a monthly basis at Housing Manager meetings and via quarterly reports to Exec Team and on an annual basis at Cabinet level.
- 12.3 These KPIs should align to the requirements of the RSH' new tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) which are expected to come into effect on 1st April 2023.

13. Non-Compliance

- 13.1 Any non-compliance issue identified at an operational level will be formally reported to the Head of Housing in the first instance.
- 13.2 The Head of Housing will agree an appropriate course of corrective action with the Exec team in order to address the non-compliance issue and report details of the same through update reports.
- 13.3 The Exec Team will ensure that Cabinet are made aware of any non-compliance issue so they can consider the implications and take action as appropriate.
- 13.4 In cases of a serious non-compliance issue the Exe Team, and Cabinet will consider whether it is necessary to disclose the issue to the Regulator in the spirit of co-regulation as part of the Regulatory Framework.



14. Approval

Strategic Lead:

Sign/date:

Cabinet Member:

Sign/date:

15. Appendix 1 – Relevant Legislation

- 15.1.1 Construction, Design and Management (CDM) Regulations 2015
- 15.1.2 Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- 15.1.3 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- 15.1.4 Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- 15.1.5 Housing Act 2004
- 15.1.6 Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- 15.1.7 The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- 15.1.8 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO)
- 15.1.9 Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR) as amended
- 15.1.10 Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- 15.1.11 Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- 15.1.12 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (as amended) (COSHH)
- 15.1.13 Lifting Operation and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER)
- 15.1.14 Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008
- 15.1.15 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- 15.1.16 Approved Code of Practice - L8 – Legionnaires Disease: The control of legionella bacteria in water systems

16. Appendix 2 – Performance Reporting

16.1 Property Compliance

We will report robust key performance indicator (KPI) measures for the big 6 areas (gas/electric/asbestos/fire/water/lifts). These will be provided to the Exec Team via the Director for Communities and Environment on a quarterly basis and to the Cabinet via the Housing Portfolio Holder on a quarterly basis.

As a minimum, we will report:

Data – the total number of:

- Properties – split by category (domestic, communal and others);
- Properties on the programme;
- Properties not on the programme;
- Properties with a valid and in date risk assessment/certificate;
- Properties without a valid and in date risk assessment/certificate;
- Properties due within the next 30 days; and
- Completed, in-time and overdue follow-up works/actions arising from the programme.

Narrative - an explanation of the:

- Current position;
- Corrective action required;
- Anticipated impact of corrective actions; and
- Progress with completion of follow-up works.

In addition:

- The number of RIDDOR notifications to the HSE.

16.2 Decent Homes Standards and Planned Investment

- Decent Homes position %
- HHSRS position
- Planned maintenance programme – programme plan v actual completion %
- Planned maintenance programme – budget v actual spend %

16.3 Repairs and maintenance

- % of emergency repairs completed within target time(24hours)
- % of urgent repairs completed within target time(7 days)
- % of P2 completed within target time(3 w days)
- % of Standard completed within target time(20 w days)
- % of repairs completed on the first visit (right first time)
- Appointments kept as a % of appointments made
- Voids – standard relet time (days)
- Void rent loss

16.4 Energy efficiency

- Overall % properties with an EPC and overall position
- Breakdown of EPC results Band A to G
- Energy Officer – number of cases being supported
- Number of homes improved with energy efficient measures

17. Appendix 3 – Action Plan

Ref	Asset Management Strategy - Action Plan 2022- 24	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
4.7	Implement a roadmap to full property compliance for big 6 areas								
5.3	Undertake a review and validation exercise of the existing stock condition survey data (25%)								
5.3	Develop planned investment programme 2022/23, based on existing stock condition data								
1.17 & 5.3	Acquire a new asset management system, to enable data storage, scenario planning and reporting								
1.10 & 5.3	Commission new stock condition surveys (25%) Phase 1 (2022-23)								
5.3	Undertake a full review of the Asset Management function will be undertaken to ensure Asset Management is appropriately resourced, with dedicated roles agreed and recruited to.								
1.10 & 5.3	Commission new stock condition surveys (25%) Phase 2 (2023-24) to achieve 75%								
1.10 & 5.3	Commission new stock condition surveys (25%) Phase 3 (2024-25) to achieve 100%								
1.10	Renewal of 25% of EPC's (which are inaccurate or out of date) Phase 1 (2022-23)								
1.10	Renewal of 25% of EPC's (which are inaccurate or out of date) Phase 2 (2023-24)								
1.19	Feasibility study for energy efficiency improvements on Band D and below properties								
6.3	Mainway project – develop an implementation plan for the three high rise blocks, in terms of their future ahead of the new Building Safety Act which is due April 2023.								
3.3	Establish Resident's Voice strategy								
4.3	Update our own 'Lancaster Standard'								
4.6 & 4.11	Embed '3 lines of defence' approach to resident safety, and monthly performance reporting								
1.18	Develop 2-year planned investment programme 2023-25, based on 50% stock condition data								
1.18	Develop 5-year high level planned investment programme 2023-27, based on 50% stock condition data								
6.3	Develop feasibility and option appraisal of its garage sites (43), and develop implementation strategy by April 2023								
1.11 & 5.3	Commission and complete the Asset Performance Evaluation of all our homes by March 2024.								
1.6, 1.7 & 9.5	Develop a specific council housing climate strategy, in order to achieve the council's net zero carbon target by 2030.								
9.8	Undertake a review of our gas heating replacement programme, and develop a feasibility study for alternative renewable heating options, to ensure we achieve our net zero carbon by 2030 target.								

Note:

Q1 – April - June 2022

Q2 – July - September 2022

Q3 – October - December 2022

Q4 – January - March 2023

Q5 – April - June 2023

Q6 – July - September 2023

Q7 – October - December 2023

Q8 – January - March 2024