



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 20 January 2025

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran
Cabinet Member for Housing

Repairs Service Update

Report Author

Mark Rogers, Head of Service (Technical Services)

✉ mark.rogers@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To update the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress made following the internal repairs service audit report received in April 2024.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Note the progress made to improve the Council repairs service following the audit report received in April 2024.**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	N
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Housing
Which wards are impacted?	(All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report, which is for noting.

Completed by: Paul Sutton Interim Head of Finance (Deputy s151)

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

Completed by: Graham Watts Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. On the 2 April 2024 the Council received its internal audit report for the Responsive Repairs service. The report stated that it could take partial assurance that the controls to manage this area are suitably designed, consistently applied or effective. The report identified that actions were required to strengthen the control framework to manage this important area of service.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The internal audit identified that whilst several controls and processes are well designed, a large amount of work was required by the Council to address the backlog of jobs and then implement new controls which detect and action jobs which are open for long periods of time to reduce the risk of backlogs accumulating again.
- 3.2. The audit identified that performance for emergency and urgent jobs is relatively strong with most jobs being completed within target times, however oversight and management for repairs needs to be fully established to monitor the reduction of the current backlogs and scrutinise any jobs which are breaching agreed performance targets.

- 3.3. The report identifies 2 high, 7 medium, 4 low priority management actions and 2 advisory actions. Appendix 1 provides details of the progress against the audit actions which was also presented to the Governance and Audit Committee on 27 November 2024 as part of the Internal Audit follow-up report.

4. Oversight and Management of Repairs

- 4.1. In response to the audit recommendations to improve the oversight and management of repairs the new Head of Technical Services has introduced a new interim staffing structure. This has included replacing the single Repairs and Voids Manager role with two managers, one for repairs and one for voids. This will allow both managers to develop more expertise in each area and provide greater resilience to the staffing structure. Introducing separate managers for each work stream has created capacity for the new Damp and Mould team, which has recently been added to the structure, to be included in the Repairs team.
- 4.2. A review of the permanent Technical Services team structure is currently underway with a view to bring greater stability to the team, together with proposals to further strengthen management resource in the repairs team.

5. Performance Reporting

- 5.1. Performance reporting has been significantly strengthened since the repairs audit and this is an important tool to measure performance and track progress. Following extensive work in the summer to establish new Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and creating reports in the new QL repairs system, weekly and monthly performance reporting has been launched.

5.2. *Monthly Reporting*

Reporting against a new suite of KPI's was launched in September 2024 with updates presented at the Technical Services team meeting each month. An extract of the KPI's is shown below:

Call Handling

Call Handling	Target	Sept	Oct	Nov
Total calls offered	NA	2009	2286	1867
Number of calls Handled and Interflowed	NA	1949	2205	1731

% of calls Handled and Interflowed	>80%	96%	91%	92%
% of abandoned calls	<10%	4%	9%	8%

Progress:

- Positive - the percentage of calls handled and interflowed has consistently been above our corporate targets.

In-house Repairs

In-House Repairs	Target	Sept	Oct	Nov
No of repairs in progress	NA	3316	3314	2595
Repairs not allocated	0	1161	1254	737
No of overdue repairs	NA	2076	2581	1792
24H repairs completed on time	100%	96%	96%	88%
5WD repairs completed on time	75%	NA	44%	42%
20WD repairs completed on time	75%	63%	47%	74%
12M repairs completed in time	75%	83%	85%	58%

Progress:

- Repairs work in progress down from 3316 to 2595 (reduction of 22%)
- Repairs jobs not allocated (appointed with residents) down from 1161 to 737 (reduction of 37%)
- Repairs overdue down from 2076 to 1792 (reduction of 14%)
- Completion on time performance is below target and fluctuates each month as the team continue to cleanse the data and complete older overdue jobs, this has a significant impact on completion on time performance. The team expect these figures to recover more gradually over time as they complete the backlog of overdue jobs.
- Performance figures for external contractors will be published from Q4 2024/25.

Damp and Mould Jobs

- Weekly reporting for damp and mould inspections and repairs was introduced in November 2024 together with more detailed monthly reporting. These KPIs are still being developed in line with the new Damp and Mould policy.

6. Repairs Service Improvement Plans

6.1. In November 2024 repairs service improvement plans were developed which cover reactive repairs and damp and mould jobs. It is recognised that a more focussed management approach is required to ensure that this important service for residents continues to improve.

6.2. Our recovery plans are well underway, and positive progress is being made. The following actions have been completed so far:

- Confirm numbers and status of jobs in progress with in-house team and contractors.
- Introduce weekly reporting of jobs in progress.
- Reconcile jobs in the QL system with the DRS job management system.
- Contact all jobs over 12 months old and update the status in QL.
- Procure a new ventilation contractor.
- Update the DRS job management system to prevent on the day diary changes for operatives and improve productivity.
- Mobilise new dedicated damp and mould team (including Surveyor, Builder and 2 Labourers) to carry out surveys and deliver works

6.3. The following actions are planned for Q4 2024/25

- Procure new repairs contractor to clear backlog of jobs in progress and provide additional resource for the service to deliver repairs within policy timeframes.
- Batch up older jobs and issue to existing contractors used across Technical Services.
- Allocate resources to improve contract management of jobs including daily and weekly routines of chasing overdue jobs.
- Mobilise contractor portal in the QL system and train contractors to update job status.
- Procure new materials contract by October 2025.

7. Weekly Reporting

- 7.1. A weekly report of repairs in progress was introduced in November 2024 to monitor the progress of our improvement plans.
- 7.2. A snapshot of the jobs is shown below, this shows positive reductions in the number of repairs in progress and overdue jobs. These figures include both in-house and contractor jobs.

Week Commencing	Responsive Repairs (Total)	Repairs - not allocated	Repairs Overdue
04/11/2024	4985	1187	2965
11/11/2024	4783	1165	2684
18/11/2024	4592	903	2443
25/11/2024	4677	773	2498
02/12/2024	4696	737	2542
09/12/2024	4253	553	2374
16/12/2024	4204	502	2410
23/12/2024	4240	285	2346
30/12/2024	4316	294	2532

Progress since November 2024:

- Repair jobs in progress - down from 4985 to 4316 (reduction of 13%)
- Repairs jobs not allocated (appointed with residents) - down from 1187 to 294 (reduction of 75%)
- Repairs overdue - down from 2965 to 2532 (reduction of 15%)

8. New Policies and Procedures

- 8.1. As part of the plans to improve the Councils Repairs service, new Repairs and Maintenance and Damp and Mould policies have been drafted. The draft Repairs and Maintenance Policy was presented to this committee on 14 November 2024 and the draft Damp and Mould Policy is included as an item on the agenda being presented to Members as part of this committee meeting. The draft policies will be presented to Cabinet for approval on 4 March 2025 and will be effective from April 2025.
- 8.2. New procedure documents will be written to support the teams to deliver against our updated policies.

9. Summary

- 9.1 This report provides an update to the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work that has been completed by the team following the Internal Responsive Repairs Audit report received in April 2024.
- 9.2 The Committee should note the improved performance monitoring and KPIs used to track performance and the plans in place to maintain sustained improvement to this important service.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 This report is provided for information to ensure that the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee is kept updated regarding the progress of the Repairs Service improvements that are currently being implemented.

11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Progress against internal audit actions