

Appendix 1 – Property & Housing Audit Recommendations

Risk	Audit / Area	Recommendation	Target Date	Revised Target Date (FIP)	Appendix 1 – Finance and Commercial Internal Audit Recommendations Update and action plan to discharge recommendation	Link to Housing SIP Project	Evidence to submit ready?
HIGH	Temporary Accommodation	The Council will ensure that an up-to-date Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy is created.	31/10/2023	30/06/2025	<p>This recommendation relates to 2022/23, the previous Housing Strategy ran out in 2021. Campbell Tickell were commissioned and drafted an updated Housing Strategy in January 2024 . Homelessness Strategy runs out 31/12/2024</p>	Workstream 5	N
					<p>Action Plan</p>		
					<p>1. Review and finalise draft Strategy for Housing and draft strategy for Homelessness</p>		
					<p>2. Share with resident’s board for feedback.</p>		
					<p>3. Seek permission to proceed to wider consultation or get permission to implement.</p>		
<p>4. Aim for Cabinet sign off by end Q1 2025/26</p>							

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HIGH	Rent Accounts	The Council will complete the stock reconciliations for 2018/19 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.	31/03/2024	31/12/2024	<p>This recommendation relates to data that is submitted to government on an annual basis. We make the two government submissions that carry stock data, the Local Authority Data Returns (LADR) is associated with our rent calculation against stock the other the Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) which gives a wider overview of Housing data. We can confirm data was submitted for 2019/20, 2021/22 and 2022/23. It was not submitted for 2018/19</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We used the LAHS figures as we could not track down data to evidence the 2018/19 LADR submission and the LAHS figures matched for that year 	Workstream 2	Y

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HIGH	Rent Accounts	The Council will carry out dip sampling of tenancy terminations on a routine basis to ensure that they are processed appropriately.	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	This was last done in 2023 for Housing Management (HM) . No records of a Temporary Accommodation (TA) tenancies being sampled	Workstream 1 & 2	Y(partial)
					Action Plan		
					1.Collate a full list of terminations from 1 Jul-31 Dec 24 for both HM & TA.		
					2. We have assumed routine is quarterly and have added to our SIP to complete 20% by end of Q4, 2024/25		
					3. Agree a checklist to clarify what to audit against the procedure		
4. We will carry out dip sampling of 20% of tenancy terminations every 3 months thereafter for HM & TA							

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HIGH	Rent Accounts	Ensure that the accounts are set up promptly on the Slough Housing system	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	<p>Our current procedure states accounts should be set up within 48 hours and charges applied within 72 hours for HM & TA</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commission report to provide weekly reports for all new tenancies on both HM & TA 2. Compile list of all Historic cases for HM & TA Accounts from April 2024 3. Extract data from various Housing systems Jigsaw, Northgate (NEC) Supplier invoices to produce complete list of accounts that should have been set up 4. Cross reference data to produce list of missing accounts 5. Analyse and agree plan to set up rent accounts, apply charges, write to tenants, apply Housing Benefit by end Q4, 2024/25 	Workstream 1 & 2	N

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HIGH	Rent Accounts	Ensure that the system issues are resolved at the earliest to make the system workable, so that it can support the various functions carried out for housing rents.	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	<p>System issues are linked to the arrears escalation process and require NEC input</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>1. NEC to provide an upgrade/fix to ensure the rents system is workable by end of financial year</p> <p>2. Monitored through NEC project teamwork</p>	Workstream 5	N
HIGH	Rent Accounts	Tenancy Commencement and Sign-Up Policy will be reviewed and updated, including the removal of out-of-date references and processes. This review will also incorporate any significant amendments made to the Fact Sheets.	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	<p>The Policy was reviewed as part of the NEC implementation but was not signed off or implemented. Need to review again and include TA sign up</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>1. End to end process reviewed as part of Empty Homes Task force in Q3, 2024</p> <p>2. Procedures reviewed and amended for HM. Need to duplicate for TA</p> <p>3. Cross reference against the fact sheets by end Q4. Capacity is an issue which needs to be factored in</p> <p>4. Further work through NEC still to be refined / altered. E.g. definitions of void types. By end Q4</p>	Workstream 1 & 2	N

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MEDIUM /LOW	Temporary Accommodation	The TA Team will design interim measures to ensure that tenants are interacted with through periodic calls to identify any issues with their accommodation (or other related matters).	30/11/2023	31/03/2025	<p>In May/June /July 2024, 600 visits were conducted to ensure tenants were interacted with. Focus was on high-risk cases, expensive accommodation etc. No process in place for BAU. Our Welfare officer is in contact with a proportion of TA but there is a resource / capacity issue, and it is not done on a regular or planned basis. Fraud completed visits to all hotels. List sent through with issues and team now working through the list of actions.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design longer term plan to ensure visits are conducted on a regular basis to carry out tenancy checks and ensure homes are safe and compliant as well as identify any tenancy fraud 2.As part of HSIP, review TA structure and redesign service so checks are embedded and not an interim ad hoc intervention 3. Produce quarterly reports to monitor issues arising and ensure appropriate action is taken 4. Seeking TA floating support officers via commissioner in Adult Social Care) bid to submit a Business Plan to recruit three people - grant funding is available for this. 5. On-track to have delivered the interim measures will be in place by 31/03/25. 	Workstream 1	Y (partial)

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MEDIUM /LOW	Temporary Accommodation	The Council will develop a diversification strategy to engaging with private rented accommodation providers.	30/11/2023	30/0/2025	Out of Borough Policy agreed at Cabinet. Top twenty suppliers identified and contacted to renegotiate costs with some reductions in costs made	Workstream 1	Y (partial)
					Action Plan		
					1. Strategy needs to be written and agreed		
					2. Produce Temporary Accommodation Acquisition Policy and take to CLT for approval		
					3. Conduct Equality Impact Assessment to allow us to implement Out of Borough Policy		
4. Explore private sector solutions using private sector suppliers , Simply Phi ,MB, Chalk Hill, Cromwood and others re. 12-month agreements with all providers. Will continue use B&B for short term i.e. where assessment is required. Although, no actual strategy paper has been produced the team is actively diversifying the TA stock.							
5. Use Bed & Breakfast for short term i.e. where assessment is required. Until strategy paper has been produced the team is actively diversifying the TA stock.							

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MEDIUM /LOW	Housing Management – Health and Safety (Gas, Electrical and Legionella)	The September 2022 iterations of the Compliance Strategy and safety policies will be uploaded to the Council website. Subsequent iterations will be uploaded to replace these once annual reviews are completed.	31/01/2024	30/01/2025	Policy etc. was on the website but much of it disappeared when website was updated in 2023. We are in process of re-instating . Gas policy has been re-drafted.	Workstream 1	Y
					Action Plan		
					1. Working on Electric & Legionella policies		
					2. Produce Temporary Accommodation Acquisition Policy		
MEDIUM /LOW	Housing Management – Health and Safety (Gas, Electrical and Legionella)	Following the resolution of NEC system issues, the Compliance Coordinator will resume with reconciling RAMIS and NEC property records.	31/01/2024	31/12/2024	Compliance co-ordinator can provide evidence on blocks. Further work needed on individual properties and waiting for ICT to confirm issues resolved. Internal computer systems RAMIS and NEC reconciled on a weekly basis in place since Dec 24	Workstream 3	Y
					Action Plan		
					1. Pennington's commissioned to conduct health check on compliance function to cover the BIG '6' for General Needs & TA in Q2, 2024- accepted recommendations and timescales and overall good compliance		
2. Recommendations on the BIG '6'@ incorporated in Housing SIP							

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MEDIUM /LOW	Housing Management – Health and Safety (Gas, Electrical and Legionella)	The Council will introduce additional forward planning for properties with previous access issues for Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICRs)	30/09/2023	30/04/2025	<p>We are 95% compliant. Additional planning linked to 1) tie in with gas servicing and 2) do the checks in year 4 2025)to give 1 year contingency. Weekly update from Cardo on EICRs. Property certs now issued 1 year in advance. Now a breakdown of priority properties e.g. CAT 1 = 68 homes, two new steps – 1) if logging a repair and no EICR then book EICR at same time and 2) combine outstanding EICR with gas servicing visits.</p>	Workstream 3	Y
					Action Plan		
					1.Develop an additional forward plan activity to embed current working practices		
					2. To adopt the same approach for EICR as Gas assessments		
					3.Produce list of difficult to reach tenants, carry outdoor knocking		
4. Engage Cardo to co-ordinate Resident Liaison Officer visits							

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MEDIUM /LOW	Housing Management – Health and Safety (Gas, Electrical and Legionella)	<p>The escalation procedure for EICRs will be reviewed and updated, notably to outline the action to be taken following the sending of reminder letters (replacing legal action).</p> <p>The actions in this procedure will then be followed (including the timeliness of actions) where no access is granted to complete EICRs.</p>	30/09/2023	30/04/2025	<p>Procedure is reviewed annually</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>1. Drafting the escalation procedure - Legal advice sought</p> <p>2. Check escalation is compliant</p> <p>3. Cardo to provide regular updates on numbers</p>	Workstream 3	Y(partial)
MEDIUM /LOW	Rent Accounts	<p>The Council will review the processes in place for the approval of key documents, in light of the level of remote working currently undertaken. An approach will be agreed and shared across the organisation, introducing e-signatures</p>	31/03/2024	30/06/2025	<p>Review of processes took place in Q1, 2024 DocuSign was proposed as solution but was then abandoned</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>1. Review previous solution and agree innovative approach</p>	Workstream 2	N

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		or the use of email trails for approvals.					
MEDIUM /LOW	Rent Accounts	<p>We will maintain the starters forms for all users.</p> <p>We will ensure that the system will show the date when it was updated and the leaving date for the leaver.</p>	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	Starter forms for new users should be uploaded to the system and updated on exit	Workstream 5	N
					Action Plan		
					1. Review current procedure and process to ensure starter forms are updated at start and end		
MEDIUM /LOW	Rent Accounts	<p>Fact Sheets relating to rent accounts (including mutual exchanges) will be updated to reflect current processes and regulations, and these will be subject to appropriate approval. Target dates and responsible owners for the update of these fact sheets will be documented, and the updated guides will be disseminated to all relevant staff, including the Rent Accounts team.</p>	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	Fact sheets reviewed in 2023 , some updated but work abandoned	Workstream 2	N
					Action Plan		
					1. Collate full inventory of current fact sheets, agree ownership		
					2. Neighbourhood leads to update and provide proof		

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MEDIUM /LOW	Temporary Accommodation	Following completion of the corporate restructure, a new performance mechanism will be developed to reflect the new service. This will include periodic consideration of Temporary Accommodation related performance indicators	31/03/2024	31/03/2025	Corporate Restructure completed in 2023/24, monthly KPI data produced, Jigsaw provides some reports for Government Homeless Case Level Information Collection (HCLIC) purposes . New Dashboard required	Workstream 1	Y (partial)
					Action Plan		
					1. New Dashboard commissioned in Q3 , 2024 from NEC project team		
					2.Review of structure to be conducted in Q4 and Dashboard will be updated as necessary		
MEDIUM /LOW	RMI Contract Management - Osborne	The Council will implement a checking mechanism to confirm repair target dates set by Osborne align to the timeframes defined within the RMI contract.	02/06/2022	30/01/2025	Monthly stats are sent in by Cardo (took over Osborne). These are checked and challenged. Ian Stone to provide evidence of challenge.	Workstream 3	Y (partial)
					Action Plan		
					1.Director to review and sign off		
MEDIUM /LOW	RMI Contract Management - Osborne	The internal governance arrangements for the reporting of RMI contract performance will be agreed and	02/06/2022	30/01/2025	Oct 2021 KPI's were revised. Osborne contract Novated to Cardo 2023. Ian Stone to provide evidence of challenge.	Workstream 3	Y (partial)
					Action Plan		

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		include an appropriate level of scrutiny.			<p>1. Review of Dashboard and KPI under review</p> <p>1. Director to review and sign off and included on HSIP</p>		
MEDIUM /LOW	Follow Up of Previous Management Actions	The Planning Manager will request for an electronic document management system/method to be put in place to securely retain PPA related documentation	05/09/2022	30/01/2025	<p>There was no cost-effective way of doing this. With SharePoint now having been rolled out, the folder is being moved over to SharePoint with only Planning Officers being invited to the Cloud documents. This provides secure management with limited access to only appropriate officers.</p> <p>Action Plan</p> <p>1. Director to review and sign off</p>	Workstream 5	Y

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MEDIUM /LOW	Follow Up of Previous Management Actions	The Planning Team will add detail to the performance excel spreadsheet on why the EoT had been used for planning applications.	05/09/2022	30/01/2025	<p>There was no cost-effective way of doing this. With SharePoint now having been rolled out, the folder is being moved over to SharePoint with only Planning Officers being invited to the Cloud documents. This provides secure management with limited access to only appropriate officers.</p>	Workstream 5	Y
					<p>Action Plan</p>		
					<p>1. Director to review and sign off</p>		
MEDIUM /LOW	Follow Up of Previous Management Actions -	The Council will update the Recharges Policy and Procedure document to reflect current practice. The document will then be formally approved by an agreed authority. Once approved, the document will be reviewed on an annual basis.	30/09/2021	31/03/2025	<p>Policy was partially drafted but never completed and agreed</p>	Workstream 2	N
					<p>Action Plan</p>		
					<p>1. Update the Policy and Procedure for Recharges</p>		
					<p>2. Set up working group to meet monthly</p>		
<p>3. Get ICT sign off to upload</p>							

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MEDIUM /LOW	Service Charges	The procedures relating to calculating estimated and actual leasehold charges will be updated to reflect the current corporate structure and current practice, as well as including information on version control.	31/03/2024	31/01/2025	Procedures on estimates and calculations are in place and reviewed with finance on an annual basis	Workstream 4	Y(partial)
					Action Plan		
					1. Further work needed to check it reflects the current corporate structure and current practice and all costs are recharged to ensure no loss to HRA		
					2. New procedures are in NEC which holds previous versions		
					3. Director to review and sign off		
MEDIUM /LOW	Service Charges	The Council will establish an accurate and reliable means of identifying costs associated with grounds maintenance and management fees	31/12/2022	31/03/2025	Review of costs began in 2023 but abandoned	Workstream 4	N
					Action Plan		
					1. Review of all areas that receive grounds maintenance		
					2. Finance to apportion costs and Leasehold team to benchmark		

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MEDIUM /LOW	Service Charges	As part of the annual billing process an exercise will be performed to ensure that all costs incurred relating to leaseholders are billed through service charge	31/12/2022	30/04/2025	Link to above action- joint working with finance , due to go to Committee on 21/1/25 for sign off	Workstream 4	N
					Action Plan		
					1. Joint working with finance underway in Q3/4 2024/25 to include the new rent service charges . Evidence will be a spreadsheet of before and after charges		
MEDIUM /LOW	Follow up of Previous Management Actions	The Council’s Tenancy Management Workbook will be reviewed and updated to include updated fact sheets and next review date. Once approved, this will then be communicated to staff and implemented	30/11/2022	30/04/2025	Work commenced in 2002 and abandoned	Workstream 2	N
					Action Plan		
					1. Review the current workbook and include in HSIP		
MEDIUM /LOW	Service Charges	The Council will update the leasehold charges webpage to include comprehensive information around major works and how the Council recharges these costs	30/09/2022	31/03/2025	Review and basic updates to website started in Q3, 2024/25	Workstream 4	Y(partial)
					Action Plan		
					1.Further in-depth review underway to update website pages		

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MEDIUM /LOW	Service Charges	The Council will establish a mechanism to ensure that the section 20 consultation process, including issuance of section 20 notices, is undertaken prior to Capital Works being started	30/09/2022	30/01/2025	Work began in Q2 2024/25, can provide evidence of consultation and re-charge. Work underway on Procedure. There is a shared folder of consultation. Process map being developed.	Workstream 4	Y(partial)
					Action Plan		
					1. Complete process map and procedure		
2. Director to review and sign off							
MEDIUM /LOW	RMI Contract Management - Osborne	The Council will implement a process for obtaining feedback from complainants to determine the clarity of responses received and satisfaction with these.	30/09/2022	31/03/2025	Complaints centralised as part of 2023 restructure and not started	Workstream 5	N
					Action Plan		
					1. Complaints Task Force launched Jan 2025		
2. Included as part of HSIP							