

Report title	Estate Cleaning Services
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Department	Housing
Exempt?	No

Purpose of report:

For information

Synopsis of report:

The estate services of cleaning and management of waste and recycling for communal areas within the Council’s Housing stock is currently provided through a small in-house team. There is an aspiration to increase the level of service provided in order to improve the presentation of communal areas across the HRA estate which is not currently possible within a small team due to lack of capacity and resilience.

This report informs members of the plan to outsource the cleaning of internal communal areas through a procurement route.

1. Context and background of report

- 1.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has historically employed staff to provide cleaning services for the communal areas of the Garfield Road estate with reactive cleaning being provided to other blocks on an ad-hoc basis. A service charge is levied at Garfield Road where communal cleaning is completed by a small team of dedicated staff. There is no other formal arrangement for communal cleaning within the HRA stock, or service charge in place to residents.
- 1.2 There has been a rise in issues within communal areas, dumping of bulk rubbish, storage of inappropriate items and a general increase in dirt and mess being left by tenants and visitors. The interior of all communal areas should be regularly cleaned, and this is not possible within the current operational arrangements.
- 1.3 The Council has a responsibility to ensure that shared areas are clear of hazards and kept clean. It is essential that we put a regime in place that enables people to enjoy their home and be confident that the communal areas will be well presented. In last year’s customer survey, the upkeep of communal areas was an area highlighted, and we know that the appearance of these areas plays a key part in the desirability of an area to live and increase the reputation of Council Housing provision in the Borough.
- 1.4 In the 2019/20 Service Area Plan a new mobile caretaking post was created with the intention to provide cleaning services for our shared houses and introduce cleaning in all the

internal communal areas across the HRA stock. The officer recruited suffered ill-health and resigned from their post earlier this year. Since then, it has not been possible to recruit to this position even with agency staff, and with the increase in workload at Garfield Road there is insufficient resilience within a small team to provide a consistent cleaning service beyond that area.

2. Report

- 2.1 The cost of communal cleaning can be recovered through service charges to tenants and leaseholders. When the mobile caretaking service was planned, it was intended that a charge would be introduced once the service was established, and monitoring was in place so that when the Council consulted on the new charges residents would be aware of what they were being asked to pay for.
- 2.2 Through part of our best practice work with other social housing providers, we have met with teams who have recently moved away from an in-house service provision to outsourcing their communal cleaning services across multiple sites, to learn from their experience and utilise their expertise in this area.
- 2.3 Based on this advice, work is underway to produce a detailed specification for each communal site which can then be incorporated into an open market procurement exercise.
- 2.4 Initial contact with Human Resources indicates that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) will apply to those staff currently employed by the Council in this work within this HRA.
- 2.5 Once the full specification is established with cost estimates and proposed timescales a further report will be brought to this Committee to seek approval for procurement of a contract. Arrangements for monitoring this contract and the potential cost to residents will be included in this report.

3. Policy framework implications

- 3.1 This work is aligned with the Council's Corporate Business Plan vision to provide high quality services and to enhance our environment, and the aims within the HRA Business Plan around having well-managed neighbourhoods, ensuring high standards of cleanliness and safe environments.

4 Resource implications/Value for Money

- 4.1 As this report is for information only there are no resource implications at this stage. .

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 As highlighted in the body of the report the condition of communal areas is important from a health and safety perspective. Risks can arise from trip hazards, vermin infestation and fire hazards. The provision of a service designed to address such issues will reduce the risks and possible claims against the Council.
- 5.2 The body of the report mentions that if an outsourcing of the service were to take place, then what is termed as TUPE might apply to staff currently involved in delivering the service. A transfer of undertakings (TUPE) occurs when either a business transfer or a service provision change takes place. In such instances staff may transfer from one employer to another. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006

(TUPE) currently protects the entitlement of UK employees to the same terms and conditions, with continuity of employment, as they had before the transfer.

- 5.3 The report indicates that the Council is considering whether to undertake a procurement exercise to secure an external provider of such services. Any such exercise will have to comply with national legislation and the Council's Contract Standing Orders. There are a variety of methods for undertaking such a procurement exercise and the most appropriate will be selected.

6. Equality implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of this project.

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

- 7.1 This will be a feature of the tender process.

8. Timetable for Implementation

- 8.1 TBC

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 Members are asked to note that a cleaning service for all HRA communal areas is being specified in preparation for procurement of a contract. Once the service is in place the cost of this will be recovered through service charges.

10. Background papers

[Agenda-8-January-2020-Housing-Committee \(runnymede.gov.uk\)](https://runnymede.gov.uk/agenda-8-january-2020-housing-committee)

11. Appendices

- Appendix – Caretaking Service Task Specification (Draft)