

Date of Meeting: 20 January 2022

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release: N/A

Update to the SWAP Audit of the Integrated Asset Management Contract

Report summary:

This report is to update members on work undertaken following the findings and recommendations contained within the SWAP Audit report of July 2020 and offer assurance that the amber concerns raised have been dealt with in a timely manner

The Integrated Asset Management Contract is the delivery mechanism for all the HRA repairs, maintenance and void processes and is managed by our procured contractor Ian Williams. The contract is currently in its 3rd year of operation and the partnership is maturing well. The working relationship between Ian Williams and EDDC is strong and able to withstand considerable challenge when required to ensure delivery targets are met

It is a sizable and highly transactional service contract completing some 900 -1400 jobs per month on behalf of our tenants and the HRA

There are very strong governance procedures written within the contract and these are followed scrupulously to ensure a clear audit trail, risk mitigation, value for money and financial probity. The governance meeting structure is set out below;

- Tool Box Talks and Training – to ensure all front line operatives have the skills and expertise they require to complete their job role and are clear about EDDCs expectations and delivery standards
- Reactive Repairs Meetings – held weekly for resource planning to ensure all targets are met
- Voids Meetings again held weekly, Housing Allocations Officers also attend this meeting to ensure a smooth transition back into rental
- Operational Group Meeting – Operational Managers meet weekly to discuss and address any delivery issues. If there are issues they are unable to address these are escalated to senior managers. Operational Group reports to Core Group
- Core Group – Strategic management and oversight of the contract and its delivery; review of KPIs, finance, risk, BCP, complaints etc

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

Members are requested to note this report as an update of the SWAP Audit carried out on the Integrated Asset Management Contract in July 2021

Reason for recommendation:

The above mentioned audit gave an amber pass to some areas of delivery. This report seeks to provide reassurance to members that these issues have been addressed and that this contract is robustly and competently managed to the benefit of the council and its tenants

Officer: Joanne Garfoot – Housing Service Lead – Acting JGarfoot@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

This contract was put in place to ensure EDDC could fully comply with its landlord and social housing provider obligations and value for money for the council.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

Report in full

This report is intended to offer members reassurance and updated information on the amber rated key findings within the SWAP Audit Report. For ease the numbers below correspond with the findings within the audit

1. Risk Register – At the time of the audit the risk register had been presented and discussed at the last core group meeting held in March 2021 but was not a standard agenda item at Core Group Meetings. This has been addressed, so it is reviewed, updated and agreed at every quarterly meeting
2. Business Continuity Plan (BCP) – The BCP will be formally agreed at the next Core Group Meeting in January. However all risks that could have an impact on safe and consistent service delivery are captured within the Risk Register, which is reviewed and updated regularly

3. Monthly Reporting of Expenditure – Ian Williams provides a financial report at each Core Group Meeting. SWAP felt this was not really sufficient. However at the time of the audit we were already working with Ian Williams on producing a monthly finance report to be reviewed at the Operational Meetings and then a summary presented to Core Group
4. Annual Review Actions – a suggestion was made by SWAP that rather than having actions discussed and monitored via the Core Group Meeting minutes, that these be captured in a standalone Issues Log following each Annual Review. This has now been done, it is actioned by the Operational Group and reviewed at Core Group
5. Compliance Records – The housing service has an exemplary record of delivering full compliance with our statutory obligations. Ian Williams do not manage any of our major compliance works, they cover solid fuel, rain water harvesting etc however this does not negate the need for us to maintain accurate records and we do. The inference in the audit was that we don't receive inspection certificates from Ian Williams but this is not true. We do get them but sometimes there can be a lag, which we are working hard to shorten. Once received they are held within a spreadsheet overseen by our Compliance Manager. When we upgrade to the new One Housing information management system all compliance records will be stored within a new compliance module.....Open Housing does not have such a function
6. Contract Variations – This was raised due to the length of time it took us to manage a small contract amendment. This lead to significant delays in implementing changes that had been agreed at Core group. SWAP suggested a clear delegated authority process be confirmed through appropriate internal channels to reduce future impact. This has still to be finalised
7. Core Group Membership – within the contract there is a stipulation as to who should attend Core Group on behalf of both parties. Our Core Group does not contain 4 of these officers, but this was agreed and formalised within the Core Group Terms of Reference. Those 4 officers form the bulk of the Operational Group
8. Terms of Reference – although in place this document had not been formally ratified by Core Group – this has now been done
9. Core Group Actions – akin to point 4 this relates to actions being captured in the body of the Core Group minutes rather than on a separate Issues Log. This has been addressed and an Issues Log is in place

I hope this offers members the comfort of knowing that this contract is robustly managed. That very strong governance processes are in place and being followed rigorously. That we effectively monitor and mitigate presenting risk and that we have plans in place to cover all eventualities. This has been borne out by the contracts ability to continue to deliver across the district throughout the entire pandemic and in spite of significant staff shortages (currently 11 vacancies) within the Housing Property and Asset Team, who largely oversee and manage this contract

Financial implications:

No direct financial implications to be highlighted.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications set out within the report on which to comment at this time.