

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

**DATE:** Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Kamal Lallian, Neighbourhood Contracts & Business Services Manager  
Contracts: 01753 875695

**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I**

## **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

### **REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE & INVESTMENT (RMI) UPDATE**

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel with an update on RMI contract management, with a detailed update on the specific areas of housing repairs, maintenance and customer experience.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Panel is requested to consider and comment on the report.

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The robust management of the RMI contract underpins the delivery of the Strategy's priorities, namely:

- Protecting vulnerable children
- Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Housing

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The RMI contract directly contributes to all outcomes contained in the Council's Five Year Plan (2019-2024), namely:

- Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful
- Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs
- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
- Our residents will live in good quality homes
- Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents.

#### 4. Other Implications

##### (a) Financial

Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, the budget management for the RMI contract has been split under two service areas:

1. Housing Development & Contracts – responsible for:

- Contract Establishment Costs
- Statutory Compliance
- Capital Investment

2. Housing (People) Services – responsible for:

- Customer Contact Service
- Repairs
- Voids
- Caretaking & Cleaning
- Aids and Adaptations (pending review)

After the first quarter of 2019/20, it should be noted that the repairs and voids budgets are currently approximately 20% overspent and Housing (People) Services (HPS) are in consultation with Osborne to mitigate the risk of an overspend at the end of the financial year.

##### (b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Score	Future Controls
Economic/ Financial	Overspend of HPS budget following transition of services to HPS from 01.04.19	Budget monitoring through monthly applications	18  Critical impact. Very High probability	HPS to establish robust processes for expenditure and monitoring
Political	Reputational risk to council due to negative perception of Osborne	Work is underway to put in place targeted communications – namely Members, staff workshops, and resident engagement	15  Critical impact. High probability	Establish clear communications strategy to include regular Member briefings/surgeries/resident engagement (neighbourhood forums to be re-established by HPS as part of RMI governance) activities targeted by neighbourhoods and regular targeted communications through SBC corporate communications team. Plan established.

Health & Safety	Vulnerability/ warning flags Information not updated in Capita – exposing SBC and Osborne employees to risk.	Interface between Capita and Accuserv provides weekly updates but reliant upon manual input to Capita.	18 Catastrophic impact. Significant probability	HPS to prioritise and commit resources to upload historical vulnerability/ warning flags information onto Capita and set clear deadline for completion.  Raised with SBC H&S Team and monitored by RMI Operational management Board, monthly.
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(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications or other legal implications connected to this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The compilation of this report has not required an Equalities Impact Assessment.

5. **Supporting Information**

5.1 Contract Management

A contract management audit was undertaken by RSM Tenon in February 2019, which reported there were adequate controls in place to address the key risks associated with the management of the Osborne RMI contract, although it did identify 6 recommendations where improvements were required – 5 were identified as low priority and 1 as medium priority. These were as follows:

<b>Audit Control</b>	<b>Management Action</b>	<b>Status</b>
Responsibility for managing the contract <b>(Medium Priority)</b>	To ensure that the responsibilities, authorities and limitations are communicated in writing to the named representatives and monthly updates are presented to the service partner with details of any changes to the named representatives in place to manage the contract, namely where individuals have left or have been replaced.	<b>Completed</b> – Schedule 2 of the contract - Governance Arrangements updated to reflect the roles and responsibilities of key personnel for both SBC and the Service Partner.  Changes will be communicated to the Service Partner as they arise.  Additionally, Schedule 2 and the terms of reference for Strategic Management Board (SMB) and Operational Management Board (OMB) contained within it, are reviewed annually.

		MoU produced by RMI client team to support dual contract management by two service areas underpinned by a detailed operations manual and accompanying process maps.
Whether KPIs have been agreed as part of the contract and the frequency of how these are monitored <b>(Low Priority)</b>	The Contract Manager will review the forward plan to ensure that sufficient time has been allocated at the Performance Sub-group, RMI Operational Management Group and RMI Strategic Management Group for review of the performance of KPIs. This will include a standard agenda item being implemented at each respective forum for this activity.	<b>Completed.</b> A full suite of KPI's were agreed as part of the contract, and are reviewed annually to ensure they continue to meet business need and incentivise contract performance. A standard agenda item is included on SMB, OMB and Performance Sub Group to support robust monitoring and reporting of KPIs.
Monitoring / Validation of Performance Data <b>(Low Priority)</b>	A check on the complete KDI performance data as per Accuserv will be undertaken in the month following the KDI reporting to identify the actual level of performance, and to ensure any potential failing performance is picked up once the complete data set is analysed.	<b>Ongoing.</b> Verification approach being considered by Performance sub-group for process across each KDI.
Payment Mechanisms in place, including approval of works and payment of invoices <b>(Low Priority)</b>	The Contract Manager will ensure that all payment documentation is accurately completed, ensuring that invoices are reviewed upon receipt, confirming that the invoice date accurately reflects the date that it was sent.  The Council will liaise with Osborne to create an agreement, clearly detailing the required timescales for the payment process, in order to support the Slough/ Osborne RMI contract.	<b>Complete.</b> Process in place and being implemented and monitored monthly
The establishment of a group / board for reporting and review of performance of the contract <b>(Low Priority)</b>	We will ensure that the terms of reference for the performance monitoring forums include version control as well as dates of creation and dates of next review, with the fora required to self-assess their effectiveness as part of reviews to inform any	<b>Complete.</b> Terms of reference created for each sub group and review dates added. Action also assigned to sub group chairs with governance guidelines. Monitored by Contract Governance Officer.

	amendments to the terms of reference.	
Relevant reports and performance information is stored on a shared drive so all relevant parties can access it. Access is limited to only those relevant individuals to protect sensitive information. <b>(Low Priority)</b>	We will ensure that user access to the shared drive is monitored on a periodic basis to ensure that user access is appropriate.	<b>Complete.</b> Ongoing 6 monthly reviews of user access programmed by Contract Governance Officer.

Robust governance arrangements are in place and this includes monitoring of 9 sub groups which formally report into OMB on a monthly basis. Reports are prepared by each sub group highlighting emerging risks or issues and also identifying any potential changes required to existing contractual arrangements which would require formal consideration by OMB/SMB.

## 5.2 Perception of the RMI Contract

At SMB on 16th May, the Chief Executive raised concerns about the perception of the RMI contract and Osborne amongst members and residents reflected in the correspondence received directly and indirectly by her office. The RMI Contract Manager, Osborne Account Director and HPS RMI Client Representative held a white board session to develop a plan for communication and engagement to address perception concerns which were not reflective of current service delivery.

The areas identified that are contributing to the negative perception of the contract are;

- Complaints and Enquiries
- Void Turnaround
- Cleaning and Caretaking
- Repairs – what Interserve where contracted to do ‘v’ Osborne
- Recharges.

A plan was developed to address perception at every level – staff, members and residents, working alongside the SBC Communications Team who will centrally bring together communications, internal and external, to residents, staff, press and social media in relation to the RMI partnership and seek out opportunities to publicise and engage on the RMI. The following actions were agreed:

- **Communication with Housing (People) Services – Internal Staff**  
To ensure understanding of the contract, expectations of service delivery and engagement with Osborne to deliver the service and customer experience that is set out in the contract and continuous service review.

These workshops will ensure clarity of the RMI contract, the responsibilities of residents and the service that Osborne deliver/are contracted to deliver.

**Action:** HPS RMI Client Representative and Osborne Account Director to co-produce and co-deliver workshops to meet the specific needs of HPS staff. A joint communication from service leads requiring mandatory attendance will be issued to staff.

**Progress:** HPS to progress with Osborne.

- **Engagement with Residents**

The contract governance set out in Schedule 2 of the contract, attached at Appendix A, requires quarterly engagement with residents via Neighbourhood Forums in each locality, North, South, East. These had not been programmed by the HPS neighbourhood teams since September 2018. Whilst HPS worked toward an alternative proposal for the forums, Osborne initiated a plan to determine a range of opportunities to engage directly with residents, to include:

- Estate days
- Pop-up events
- Neighbourhood Guardian Walkabouts
- An Estate Team
- Resident Surgeries (to book repairs and undertake small handyman jobs whilst on site)
- Performance Portal – made available to all residents and further developed to include information that residents requested to see.

In addition, HPS will update the Tenants Handbook (which still refers to Interserve and is out of date) and join up Housing Highlights (quarterly newsletter sent to all tenants) with RMI news and opportunities to participate and engage, including information sharing to support managing the perception of the RMI.

**Progress:**

- Osborne have developed a programme to engage with residents, attached at Appendix B. These will be regular and ongoing activities throughout the year, and already form part of Osborne's service delivery plans.
- "Estate days" seek face-to-face interaction with Slough residents, providing information on the service Osborne deliver, community developments and activities in each neighbourhood and local investment. Once established, it is hoped that these would be established as opportunities where all services in the council share what is happening in each neighbourhood.
- In addition, Osborne are engaging with residents through walkabouts, estate days, community events, onsite handyperson for 'on the spot' repairs for minor jobs and consultation for new repairs to be logged and

appointments made whilst onsite with residents. These events will also provide an opportunity to find out about Osborne processes, e.g. what happens when things go wrong.

- Some estate days will be run in collaboration with other events. The first took place on Wednesday 7th August at Slough Play Day (Salt Hill Park). Osborne hosted a fun stall with activities for children, such as archery, hook the hoop on the peg, and other activities and offered prizes. This attracted people to the stall and gave residents the opportunity to engage with Osborne.



- **Engagement with Members**

Communication on the RMI needs to engage with Members and management. Platforms to engage include:

- Member Walkabouts – Linked into Estate Days (see above)
- Member Workshops and Surgeries – set up per ward/individual
- Members Performance Portal – made accessible to everyone
- Members Casework Process
- Members Understanding of the RMI Operation and who does what

**Action:** The RMI Client Team are taking the lead on engagement with Members and SBC management through workshops and surgeries and website development with the communications team to provide information on the RMI.

**Progress:**

- A series of dates were issued to members via the Members Bulletin to provide opportunities to meet individually or at ward level, but take up has been very limited so we will be canvassing individual ward members to come and meet with us at Hawker House to understand the RMI operation and raise any specific queries they may have.
- The website pages (internal and external) are with the SBC developer and will be launched in September, providing links to information about the RMI service and the performance portal where information is broken down to ward level and updated monthly. We will also publish the MoU produced by the RMI Client Team to support dual contract management by two service areas. The MoU sets out the respective responsibilities of each service.

Work also continues to publicise tenant responsibilities in order to dispel some of the myth's which have emerged since the change in service provider from Interserve to Osborne. Whilst there are some service issues which require ongoing management, some of the negativity has arisen due to a lack of understanding of tenant responsibilities and Osborne's contractual obligations.

- The management of Members case work has been reviewed and confirmed to align with SBC processes so Osborne work to SBC timescales for responses to casework raised by Members.
- A template has been agreed for monthly reports to the Lead Member for Housing & Community Safety which will also be published on SBC InSite and will include information on housing developments as well as the RMI contract.

### 5.3 Capital Investment Programme

An update on the capital investment programme was presented to the Panel as part of the Asset Management Strategy progress report on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and will be updated in future reports.

### 5.4 Landlord Statutory Compliance

On 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019, a report was presented to CMT (Appendix C) to provide assurance in regards to HRA tenanted stock managed by the RMI Client Team in response to the letter received by the council on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019 (Appendix D) from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) reminding the council of our responsibilities under its consumer standards, specifically part 1.2 (b) of the Home Standard, which requires that registered providers shall meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of occupants in their homes, and specifically of the need to ensure that Member awareness and scrutiny of performance in this area is adequate.

Compliance is the highest priority for the RMI Client Team and a considerable amount of work and resources have been committed to addressing shortcomings in the position inherited at the start of the RMI contract in December 2017. To assess the progress made and provide an assurance position statement required by CMT and Members, the report (attached at Appendix B) sets out how the RMI Client Team is undertaking a review of the current position for assessment, works undertaken, recording and reporting against the consumer standards.

The report also presented the HRA Tenanted Stock Landlord Compliance Strategy (Appendix D) which was accepted by CMT and sets out a clear internal 'route map' and governance approach as to the audiences to receive updates and performance information in order to ensure that effective oversight and scrutiny takes place within SBC (including at Member level) of performance and service delivery relative to the council's statutory, legislative and regulatory obligations.

Regular updates to the panel will be provided as set out in the strategy (point 7.2). It should be noted that whilst the RMI Client Team are able to offer assurance on the 6,000+ properties managed within its HRA stock, the Council owns and manages a number of other properties e.g. through its housing companies, temporary accommodation etc. which are not covered by the compliance measures outlined within this report. As such, further assurance should be sought from all other managing agents in this regard.

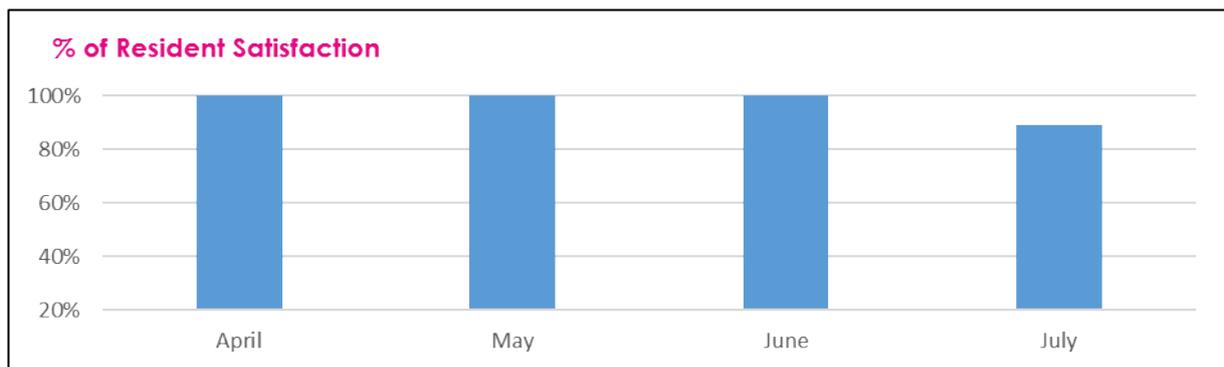
### **Compliance Performance 2019/20**

- Following on from the fire risk assessments (FRAs) undertaken in 2018/19 a major investment of FRA works are now underway to all blocks of flats with an initial budget of £3m. Works include new signage, fire stopping, repair and replacement of fire doors.
- A major programme of electrical tests (EICR) to 3800 properties is underway with any repairs identified being done at the same time.
- A review of all statutory compliance areas is about to be completed, policies and management plans will be updated and reporting of performance indicators for corporate governance.

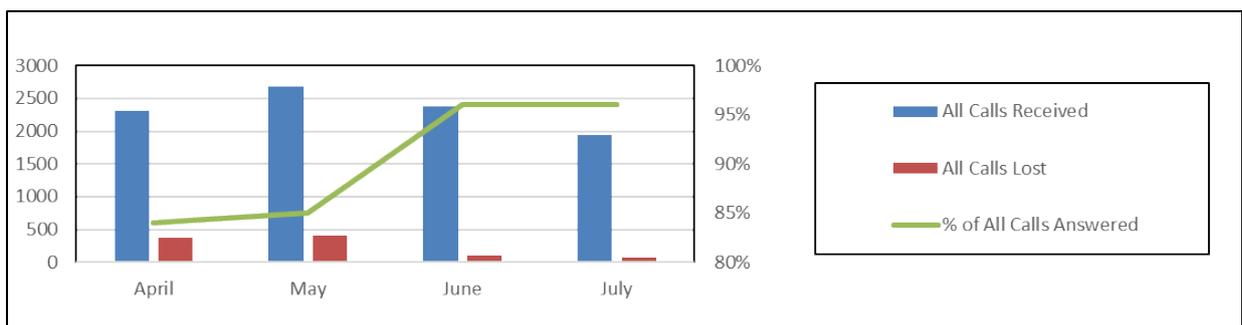
Since 01.04.19 the following areas have been managed by HPS RMI Client Representative; Tony Turnbull

5.5 Customer Experience Performance 01.04.19 – 31.07.19

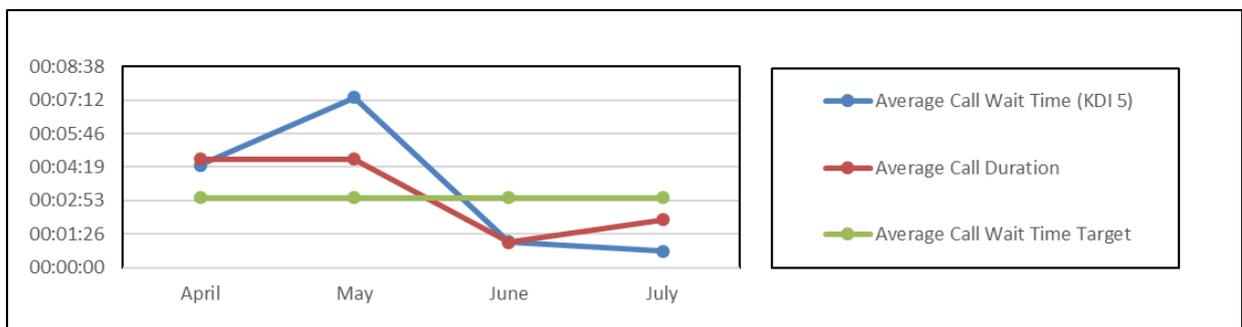
KPI	Target	April	May	June	July	YTD
% of Resident Satisfaction		100%	100%	100%	89%	97%
All Calls Received		2313	2691	2375	1943	9322
All Calls Lost		367	416	101	69	953
% of Calls Lost (KDI 4)	4%	15%	15%	4%	4%	10%
Average Call Wait Time (KDI 5)	00:03:00	00:04:24	00:07:18	00:01:06	00:00:42	00:03:23
Average Call Duration		00:04:39	00:04:39	00:01:05	00:02:03	00:03:07
Complaints (S1,S2,S3)		10	21	2	25	58
Compensation Payments Made		1	0	1	0	2



**Calls made to the contact centre**



**Average time to answer calls**



## 5.6 Response Repairs & Maintenance Performance

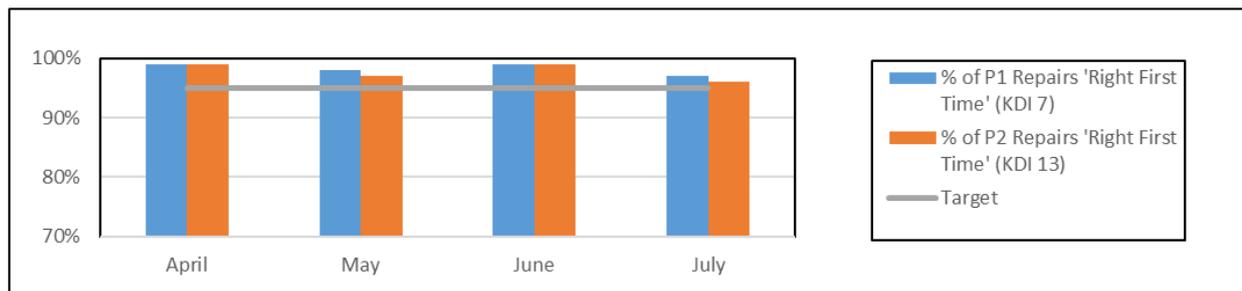
	Target	April	May	June	July	YTD
Jobs Completed		1417	1356	1336	1564	5673
Jobs Completed in Target		1291	1285	1270	1443	5289
% of Jobs Completed		91%	95%	95%	92%	93%
% of Appointments Kept (Emergency & Urgent) (KDI 6)	97%	97%	97%	97%	98%	97%
% of P1 Repairs 'Right First Time' (KDI 7)	95%	99%	98%	99%	97%	98%
% of P2 Repairs 'Right First Time' (KDI 13)	95%	99%	97%	99%	96%	98%
Average Repair Time		10	8	7	8	33

### Key:

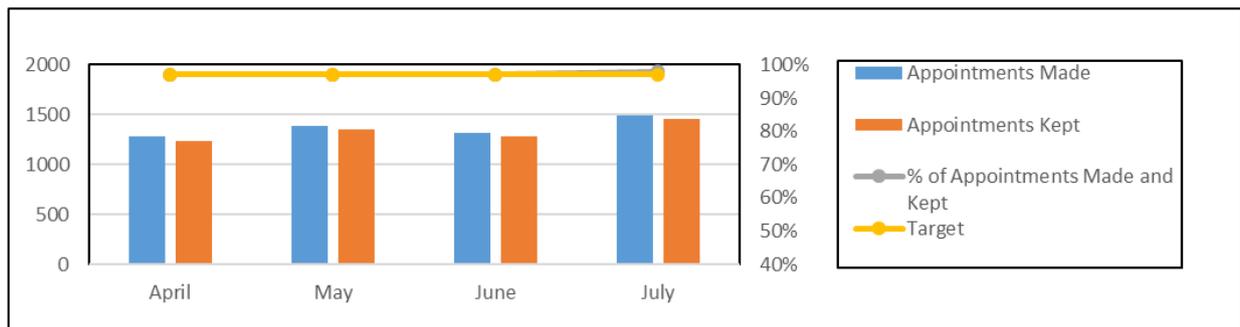
**P1** – Emergency – 2 hours attendance, complete within 24 hours

**P2** – Urgent – 3 days

### Repairs right first time



### Appointments made and kept



## 5.7 Voids Performance

KPI	Target	April	May	June	July	YTD
% of Voids Completed in Target (V1,V2,V3) (KDI 12)	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	82%
% of Voids Completed in Target (All Priorities)		100%	100%	100%	100%	82%
Voids Received (All Priorities)		31	25	24	27	107
Voids Completed (All Priorities)		31	25	24	27	107
Voids Completed in Target (All Priorities)		31	25	24	27	85
Zero Day' Voids delivered						
One Day' Voids delivered						

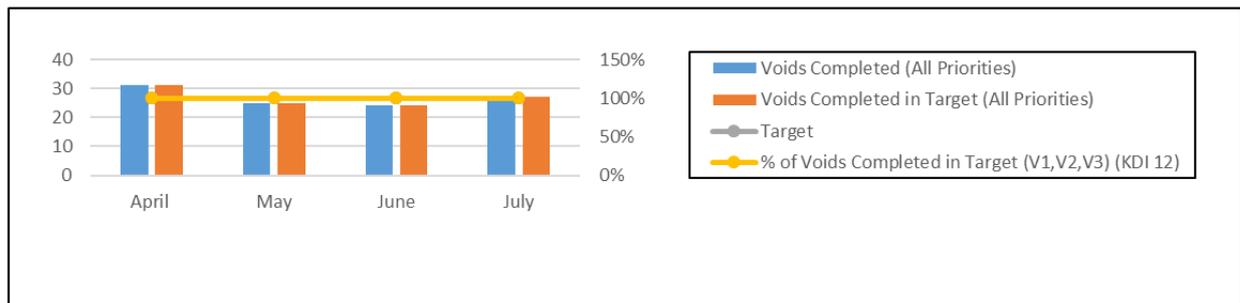
**Key:**

**V1** – 5 Days

**V2** – 10 Days

**V3** – 20 Days

### Void completions v target



## 5.8 Caretaking & Cleaning

Cleaning and Caretaking Performance				
	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19
Visits Completed	2263	1778	1904	2380
Visits Missed due to Bank Holiday	117	126	0	0
Visits Missed due to Training	0	0	0	0
Total No. of Attempted Visits	2380	1904	1904	2380
<b>% of Completed Visits</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6. Comments of Other Committees

No other committees have seen this report.

## 7. **Conclusion**

The RMI contract continues to deliver its services and meets its performance targets with the exception of noted failures in the contact centre in April and May; KDI 4 (average number of calls lost) and KDI 5 (average call wait time), these were primarily due to a lack of resources in the contact centre; measures were put in place by Osborne which have mitigated the risk and performance is now back on target and will continue to be closely monitored.

The HRA Tenanted Stock Landlord Compliance Strategy sets out how the Panel will scrutinise compliance performance as set out by the Regulator of Social Housing consumer standards and a reporting programme will be developed for the Panel and Cabinet.

## 8. **Appendices Attached**

Appendix 'A' - RMI Contract Governance (flow chart)

Appendix 'B' - Osborne Engagement Programme

Appendix 'C' - CMT Report on HRA Landlord Statutory Compliance

Appendix 'D' - Letter to Local Authorities - RSH consumer standards - May 2019

Appendix 'E' - HRA Tenanted Stock Landlord Compliance Strategy

Appendix 'F' - HRA Tenanted Stock HS Incident Escalation Reporting - August 2019