

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel  
**DATE:** 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020  
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### **PART I**

#### **FOR INFORMATION**

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

1. **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report to provide an 'Information Update' on the key points on the performance of Osborne in delivery of the RMI contract to 2019/20 financial year end in March 2020 and during the Covid -19 period in April and May 2020.

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

The Panel is recommended to note:

- a) the content of the report;
- b) the requirement for Osborne to present the 2020/21 Annual Report to the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel; and
- c) the requirement for Osborne to offer the Panel the outline of the program of service improvements and service innovations and intended outputs  
Osborne agree to commit to for delivery during the financial year 2020/21.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

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

The provision and maintenance of good quality and affordable housing can reduce housing need for local households and contributes to the identified priorities of the JSNA. The RMI is contracted to provide investment into existing council properties through the Osborne & Council partnership approach to sustain good quality homes that will improve the safety, health and well-being of the borough's tenants.

### 3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes

The RMI contract is housing revenue funded from a 30-year business plan that has enabled the investment required to sustain an HRA Housing Asset Strategy to meet objective 4 'Our residents will live in good quality homes'. The RMI is intended to focus on making the best use of the borough's existing housing stock and provide better match to needs and challenges through delivery of services, adopting excellent customer care and safeguarding and working to find solutions in partnership .

### 4. Other Implications

#### (a) Financial

The RMI is a 7-year contract with an option to extend for three years. The contract is funded from the Housing Revenue Account and the business plan that has set aside £100m for the Contract Administer R John Griffiths to fund the RMI, the annual expenditure of day-to-day repairs and maintenance, Voids properties refurbished for reletting and fund major works program e.g. kitchens, bathrooms, windows can be £14m per year.

The RMI has a robust performance framework of service delivery requirements and where Osborne fails to deliver there are contractual consequences and financial repercussions. The Panel is advised that since the last report, performance deductions have been applied and a remedy notice served for critical service failure within 2019/20.

#### (b) Risk Management

The Panel is requested to note that the contractual governance outlined in Appendix 1 offers a formal basis for management of risk through contract management, a framework for discussion intended to seek not just solutions but foster innovation through partnership initiatives. The structure of governance allows a place for raising issues, and monitoring performance as well as commercial initiatives across the breadth of the contract. The levels of escalation and accountability are set out alongside the basis for contractual scrutiny by members and for residents.

**The Table below outlines the context of risk management in relation to the recommendations outlined in Section 2**

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
a) to note the content of the report	RMI has the governance in place to offer committee the information required	RMI	4 Low	RMI contract governance

b) require Osborne to present their annual report for the Panel's scrutiny and refer to residents board for review	The RMI contract provides the opportunity for Osborne to provide and present reports to the Panel.	RMI contract requirements	4 Low	RMI Contract requirements
c) require Osborne to offer the Panel the outline of program of service improvements and service innovations and intended outputs Osborne agree to commit to for delivery during the financial year 2020/21.	Osborne have demonstrated a willingness in engaging with residents forums and have historically attended scrutiny to present performance reports to the Panel.	RMI Contract Governance	6 Low	RMI Contract Governance encourages Partnership working with Osborne to enable solutions

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 (the 'Act') adds hazards listed in the government's housing health and safety-rating system (HHSRS) set out in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. Tenants can therefore legally compel their landlord to address any of the 29 HHSRS hazards, which range from fire safety issues to damp & mould or poor natural lighting and ventilation. The Act came into effect for new tenancies on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019, but now applies to all existing tenancies.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The contractor routinely carries out equality Impact Assessments as part of operational service delivery.

(e) Workforce

The workforces delivering the RMI are Osborne direct employees or sub-contracted services. The RMI has a contractual payment framework that offers a monthly establishment fee and there after payment is based on the work delivered.

5. **Supporting Information**

The management of The RMI has returned in full to the Housing Development & Contracts Service. The repairs and maintenance function managed by Housing (People) Services (HPS) in 2019/20 has returned to Housing Development &

Contracts Service. The engagement of HPS service within the contract continues as you would expect of a one council approach through governance at sub-group level, resident complaints panel and dialogue on service issues; the reality of the change is the onus of 'Contract Management' rests with the HDC Service.

During the Covid-19 crisis, Osborne furloughed the majority of staff, retained a core group in the contact centre, and focused on delivery of HHSRS priority repairs and statutory compliance work such as gas servicing. Throughout this period Osborne have retained regulatory compliance for gas servicing and responded to contact from residents for emergency repairs.

The remaining RMI services were withdrawn at the outset of the crisis at the start of April and commencement of commitment to their return has taken place since the 18<sup>th</sup> May. There is a backlog of 1300 repairs, the major work at Broom & Poplar remains outstanding, the garage program has been reactivated alongside key works commissioned by Osborne for the delivery of key compliance requirements, and the Osborne interim Account Director has offered plans for the improvement of services.

The performance of service delivery by Osborne has been subject to comment, including compliments, complaints and concerns. The financial year 2019/20 drew to a close at the end of March, performance deductions were applied to the March invoice, and a remedy notice was served on basis of service failure of the Osborne contact centre between December 2019 and April 2020. The Panel is advised that the RMI client team have an ongoing relationship of offering advice and assistance in discussing service delivery issues and solutions with Osborne. The partnership approach of working with Osborne is supported within the contract governance so that issues of concern, innovation-presenting opportunity have a channel for discussion, so agreement and delivery is able to take place quickly. Appendices A & B offer the Panel the detailed governance and summary diagram by which the council partner with Osborne to discuss service issues and seek solutions

The Panel is offered the following key data for service delivery for 2019/20 that outlines the performance by Osborne as :

- Maintained 100% of Regulatory Compliance Works eg Gas Servicing
- 17'496 repairs took an average of 15.7 calendar days to complete and of these 89% were completed in time.
- Kept 98% of the appointments they made. Against a target of 97%
- Completed 353 voids took an average of 26.2 calendar days to complete voids and 99% were recorded as being in time. Against a target of 98%
- received 322 compliments and had 233 complaints about the service
- took an average of 3min 12 sec to answer calls against a target of 3min
- answered 91.9% of the calls they received in the call centre, against a target of 95%
- reported a 99% satisfaction rate for the service from the surveys Osborne carried out

The 'Annual Report 2018/19' background paper alongside the draft Annual Report circulated to the Residents Board for comment are provided for the Panel for reference and comparison.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

None

7. **Conclusion**

The Panel is requested to invite Osborne to deliver their 'Annual Plan' that outlines the performance of services in 2019/20 and to deliver to the 'Residents Board' the Annual Plan and program for service improvement and service innovation for 2020/21. Then to attend the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel to present these plans for the benefit of the Panel, and having the benefit of the resident representatives offering their feed back on the Osborne service delivery and plans for improvement and delivery.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A' - RMI Contractual Governance Schedule

'B' - Diagram RMI Contractual Governance Schedule

9. **Background Papers**

'1' Osborne RMI 2018/19 Annual Report

'2' Osborne RMI Draft 2019/20 Annual Report