

Report to: Environmental Services,
Regeneration, Housing and Skills
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 1st December 2011

Report of: Keith Davies - Director of
Development and Regeneration

Report No:

Contact Officer: Michelle Horrocks - Housing Strategy
and Performance Manager

Tele No: Ext 3963

Report Title: **Quarter 1 2011/12 Monitoring Report: Delivery of the Council's Offer to Tenants**

Non Confidential: **(Non-Confidential)** This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose: To inform the Executive Member for Regeneration, Housing and Skills of the progress being made by Bolton at Home on the delivery of the Offer Document promises made by the Council.

Recommendations: The Executive Member for Regeneration, Housing and Skills is recommended to:

- Comment on the style and content of the report
- Note the contents of the report.

Decision:

Background Doc(s): Formal Consultation: Bolton Council's proposal to transfer its homes to Bolton at Home.

(for use on Exec Rep)

Signed:

Leader / Executive Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

1. Introduction

1.1 At the end of March 2011, the Council transferred its housing stock to Bolton at Home. The transfer will see around £124m being invested in homes and estates over the next five years. This includes:

- External refurbishment to help protect homes e.g. work to roofs, brickwork, rainwater goods and external doors.
- Installation of modern energy efficient heating and insulation systems which could help tenants benefit from lower fuel bills.
- Electrical rewires (including extra sockets), where needed.
- Further door replacement schemes to offer added security.
- Where needed and appropriate, security measures such as CCTV, door entry systems and security lighting will be provided as well as essential equipment for the antisocial behaviour team.
- Improvements to estates and areas, including new fencing, and improved pathways to properties.
- Service improvements e.g. right first time repairs service.

1.2 The improvements listed above, along with many others, were set out in the formal consultation document or Offer Document, last year. The Offer Document outlined all of the promises made by the Council to tenants which Bolton at Home are now required to deliver as part of the Transfer Agreement.

1.3 It was agreed at the Executive Member meeting on the 28th June 2011 that the Council would formally monitor Bolton at Home on the delivery of the offer document promises on a six monthly basis.

1.4 This report is the first formal monitoring report since the stock transfer took place and will provide the Executive Member with details of the delivery of the Offer Document for the next five years and the progress that has been made during the first quarter.

2. Delivery of the Offer Document

2.1 The Offer Document contained many improvements for tenants to properties, the environment and services. These were developed following significant consultation with tenants about what they would like to see achieved as a result of the transfer. Bolton at Home has developed an Investment Plan which includes the capital programme and action plans for the delivery of the service improvements for the first five years.

2.2 The Investment Plan includes details of which areas and estates are going to receive improvements in the first five years. Tenants can access this information through Bolton at Home's website and their local housing office.

2.3 Below is a table summarising the Investment Plan for the first five years which includes annual targets. It is this programme that will be monitored on a six monthly basis alongside details of the levels of investment.

Number of Properties to Receive Transfer Promises

	2011/12	2011/13	2011/14	2011/15	2011/16	Total
Electric Rewires	460	264	461	400	415	2000
External Improvements	873	868	1651	2231	1027	6650
Window Replacement	171	291	145	79	1114	1800
Heating Programme	720	720	720	720	720	3600
Kitchen & Bathroom Programme	1504	1527	1501	1495	2273	8300
Environmental Improvements						
fencing	459	663	653	701	676	3152
wider environmental work	860	860	860	860	860	4300
Total	1,319	1523	1513	1561	1536	7452
Spend £	1,548	2187	2107	2327	2220	10,389
Homes which are non-decent	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	

3. Capital Programme Monitoring

- 3.1 The total available budget for 2011/12 is £23,894k. The value of work carried out at the end of quarter 1 is £4,156k against an anticipated spend of £4,980k.
- 3.2 At 1/4/11 there were 873 homes non-decent. At the end of quarter 1 there were 1439 homes non decent and it is anticipated that by the end of the financial year all of these will have been made decent within the resources available.
- 3.3 The table below shows the number of units that have been improved during quarter 1 and the level of expenditure.

Quarter 1 2011/12			
	Target for units completed 2011/12	Actual Units Completed Q1	Total Value of Work
Electric Rewires	460	119	259,242
External Improvements	873	210	758,000
Window Replacement	171	60	65,000
Heating Programme	720	172	541,242
Kitchen and Bathroom Programme	1504	249	2,004,916
Environmental Improvements:			
Fencing	459	0	
Wider environmental works	860	991	
Total	1,319	1801	3,628,400

- 3.4 Environmental improvements have been split into fencing and wider environmental improvements. No fencing has been completed in quarter 1 due to the fencing programme being developed in this quarter including sourcing of materials etc. The programme is about to commence this year and is expected to meet the target. Wider environmental improvements haven't been programmed but a number of improvement schemes are identified for completion this year and will exceed the target. These are attached as appendix 1.
- 3.5 The majority of the improvements identified within the offer document are exceeding targets at this stage in the year and therefore there is a good degree of certainty that these will meet the end of year target. The one area of concern is kitchens and bathrooms where the numbers being completed is below target, while at the same time this is an area which is showing a potential overspend. The main reason for this is the unit cost coming in higher than the budgeted figure. This is due to extra work identified when visiting the property that needs to be carried out before the kitchens and bathrooms can be completed. This can be due to structural issues relating to the floor or the need to remove pantries or in other cases the need to lay a new water supply. None of this additional work has been budgeted for and therefore a review of the investment plan will be carried out in the coming months and its findings reported back.

4. Service Improvements

4.1 There is a 5 year programme to deliver the offer document promises. Bolton at Home has set targets which aim to deliver the various offers as quickly as possible. There are a total of 68 offers, of which 63 are 'on target' and 5 are 'close to target'. Of the 68 offers 19 had already been completed by the end of quarter 1. Examples of the completed offers include:

- Providing a new tenants' handbook
- The new Tenancy Agreement has been returned and signed by over 70% of customers
- The text messaging service providing repairs appointment reminders has been operational since March 2011.

4.2 There are only 5 service improvement promises where the actions to fulfil them are other than 'On Target' and all of these are 'Close to Target'.

- Continue to work with the council to improve refuse collection and recycling facilities

Action: Bolton at Home and the Council are working together to develop appropriate solutions to improve refuse collection and recycling during environmental works.

- Support the council in any plans to improve local roads and footways, public spaces and play areas

Action: Bolton at Home and the Council are working together to investigate all alternative external funding options for wider environmental works.

- Provide customers with a repairs reporting line on Saturdays (9 a.m.to 4p.m.)

Action: This initiative has been delayed until Sept 2011 whilst recruitment to the Planning Team is undertaken. The Planning Team referred to is the Optitime Planning Team which is the team that plans and allocates jobs and manages mobile working. New planners are in recruitment

- Reduce the average response time for non - urgent repairs to 7 days

Action: Rollout of mobile working to Building Cat 7 & Cat 4 workforce subject to delay, whilst replacement planners are recruited and trained. A Cat 7 repair is a large job that is not urgent i.e. within 21 days (e.g. replacing a front door which is damaged but still serviceable). A Cat 4 repair is a large job that is urgent i.e. within 7 days (e.g. a front door needs replacing which is not serviceable). The planners referred to are part of the Optitime Planning Team which is the team that plans and allocates jobs and manages mobile working. New planners are in recruitment.

- Strengthen repairs quality management procedures through utilisation of Optitime and additional post inspection resource

Action: The switching of resources to the voids process has had a detrimental impact on progress with this Offer. This involved moving resources from pre-inspection (the staff who assess what work is needed) to voids work for operational reasons. An additional inspector has now been recruited.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Bolton at Home have made a good start on delivering the offer document promises and have comprehensive plans in place to ensure that over the five years everything will be achieved. In addition, there are robust monitoring processes in place to enable the Council and the Board to track progress on a quarterly and annual basis.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 As this is the first monitoring report after the stock transfer, the Executive Member is asked to comment on the style and content of the report.
- 6.2 The Executive Member is also asked to note the contents of the report.

Appendix 1.

Wider environmental work completed quarter 1 2011/12

Type of work	Locations to benefit	Neighbourhood
Landscaping - soft	Ellesmere Walk front of 17-25 Pixmore Ave/Pimlott Rd Langshaw Rd/near Hibernia St Garage colony behind Gloucester Ave, Horwich	Farnworth Tonge Moor Deane Chorley Old Rd
Landscaping - hard	19 to 39 Westwood Close, Farnworth Front and side of 27 Belmont Road Brunswick Ave Horwich Bamber Croft, 25 Greenway Tonge	Farnworth Brownlow Way Chorley Old Rd Tonge Moor
Landscaping - both	Valley view, Bromley Cross St Georges Court	Brownlow Way Brownlow Way
Community garden	Springfield Gardens, Kearsley	Farnworth
Planting shrubs/flowers	Monks Lane play area	Brightmet
Gating	Land opposite 84 Hillfield Walk Area of land behind 61 Parkfield Ave	Tonge Moor Farnworth
Installing raised flower beds	Dukes and Queens, Little Lever	Farnworth
Tidying and clearing communal area	New Rock, Westhoughton Highfield House, Farnworth Merton extra care housing unit Flats at 208 Winchester Way Rothwell Street	Deane Farnworth Deane Brightmet Deane

Landscaping – soft – includes removal of shrubs, grass seeding areas

Landscaping – hard – includes improving hard surfacing – tarmacing, paving