

Summary of the Preferred RP selection process assessment

Stage 1 – Formal Application

Stockholding RPs in the Borough were invited to apply. Those interested submitted a formal application form, with weighting applied to the different areas. A summary of the questions asked included:

Introductory Questions:

- Equalities and how these are met.
- Number of properties including tenure breakdown for Wokingham and nationally.
- Meeting the council's priorities for housing, e.g. meeting housing need, providing specialist housing for vulnerable groups, working in partnership with other RPs or specialist providers.
- Information regarding their Tenancy Policy

Development:

- Units completed in the last five years in this Homes England region.
- Ability to deliver against the Councils planning policy in relation to affordable housing.
- Range of site sizes (in units) that they would consider providing as affordable housing.
- New development opportunities, will this meet housing need and contribute positively to the local community?
- Number of sites land-banked in the past 5 years

Management:

- Locations where current Wokingham sites would be or are currently managed from.
- Policy relating to how schemes should be managed in the future
- How they address anti-social behaviour
- Information on customer satisfaction surveys, number of tenant representatives, how are these representatives involved in decision making with Wokingham Borough Council.
- How they engage hard to reach groups such as BAME and older people.
- Initiatives relating to communities and neighbourhoods including partnership working with other organisations including local authorities/voluntary sector.
- Cost of living/fuel poverty – how to minimise the impact to customers.
- Statistics covering the past 5 years for:
 - Financial spend on Housing Management Services and Rent Arrears.
 - Number of evictions
 - Number of ABCs, ASBOs and Injunctions
 - Void turnaround
 - Financial spend on tenant participation.

Maintenance

- Health and Safety policies, Fire Risk Assessments, Energy Efficiency policies.
- Are there appointment systems in place for repairs.
- Statistics covering the past 5 years for:
 - Number of repairs, number of responsive repairs, repairs completed on time.
 - Percentage of boiler servicing completed.
 - Percentage of homes that meet the decent homes standard.
 - What % of homes are post inspected.

Sustainable Communities

- How are you working to achieve sustainable communities?

- Participation in schemes to encourage the training and/or employment of local residents
- Request the most recent copy of the following documents:
 - Business Plan/Strategy
 - Regulatory and Statistical Return (RSR)/NROSH+
 - Continuous Recording (CORE)
 - Key Performance Indicators

Stage 2 - Pre-interview Questions

Prior to the formal interview, the shortlisted RPs were asked to submit responses to the following questions. No scoring criteria were given to these questions, however the responses were used for follow up questions during the formal interviews.

1. Many new developments use management companies to look after communal area, roads and green spaces. How does your organisation assess whether the charges are fair, that the companies are fulfilling their obligations and what power do you have to hold the companies to account? Please can you advise the average service charge per dwelling; the cheapest and most expensive in the borough in each of the following categories social rent, affordable, shared ownership?
2. Do you undertake affordability and pre-tenancy checks? If so, can you outline how many nominations you have refused from WBC in the last 5 years, and the reasons why?
3. Do you have a carbon reduction strategy? What percentage of your properties have an EPC rating below C? What plans do you have to bring these properties up to a C rating? And what is your timeframe?
4. What are your current satisfaction levels on responsive repairs, neighbourhood management and ASB?
5. How satisfied are your tenants that repairs are carried out in a timely manner?
6. What percentage of your annual gas safety services are completed within timescales?
7. In the last 5 years how many cases have you had which have been referred to the Ombudsman and what was the outcome of the adjudications?

Stage 2 - Preferred RP Partner Interviews

The following questions were asked during the interview panel, with each question being scored out of a maximum 10 points:

1. How can your organisation work with us to address housing need in Wokingham Borough?
2. What experience does your organisation have of large strategic developments? What steps do you take to add value to these developments and to engender and build a sense of community? What resources do you allocate to this work?

3. The cost of living is having a real impact on households. How will you ensure ongoing support especially for vulnerable residents?
4. We have a huge demand for temporary accommodation, providing accommodation for care leavers and as well as providing more specialist accommodation for our most vulnerable residents. How can we work with your organisation to address these issues? What do you foresee as the barriers? Would you be willing a number of homes each year for these categories especially care leavers and temporary accommodation?
5. We have an ageing population. How do you support older residents? For example, do you make minor adjustments for older tenants to enable them to remain in their own homes if they begin to experience mobility issues?
6. How often do you survey your tenants to ascertain satisfaction levels?
7. Are KPI's on repairs, safety and tenant satisfaction published and are they easily accessible for tenants and WBC to scrutinise?
8. Who delivers your repair service in tenants' homes? Your own DLO or sub-contractors?
9. We have shortlisted 9 high performing RPs. Why should we choose your organisation to be a partner in Wokingham?

Stage 2 - Formal Presentation to the Affordable Housing Member/Officer Group

The RPs were asked to present on the following topic. Each were scored out of a maximum 10 points.

“With the Government bringing in new tenant satisfaction measures, how will your organisation ensure that all tenants (whether Council or RP) are treated fairly and equally and receive excellent levels of service? Historically, how have you ensured that residents receive an excellent service and what evidence do you have to demonstrate this?”

Wokingham Borough Council has brought in a Tenant's Charter. How does your organisation meet the priorities of the Charter?”

This page is intentionally left blank