



Mid Suffolk Overview and Scrutiny Committees –Review Scoping Document

<p>Review Topic (name of review)</p>	<p>Voids</p>	
<p>Lead members</p>		
<p>Officer Support</p>	<p>Sue Lister, Justin Wright-Newton Ben Staines</p>	
<p>Rationale Key issues and reason for the review. Include how it relates to the Joint Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>HRA Business Plan gave figures for voids performance that show performance at a lower level than expected.</p> <p>Recent performance reporting (June 2017) shows voids at 35 days, 7 days above target.</p> <p>Poor voids performance is costly to the Council and means housing is not available for residents in need.</p> <p>‘Makes best use of existing housing assets’.</p>	
<p>Purpose of the review/Objective (quantify the outcomes the review will seek to achieve)</p>	<p>The review is to give confidence that measures are being put in place to deliver an improvement in voids performance through measures such as:</p> <p>Identifying blockages;</p> <p>Identifying causes of delays;</p> <p>Recently established BMBS team shows new management of repairs to improve voids;</p> <p>Benchmarking and examining other bodies best practices; and</p> <p>Monitoring of performance and early action to address issues.</p>	
<p>Success measures</p>	<p>What are the expected outcomes?</p>	<p>Scrutiny will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have confidence that best practice is being operated in the voids process • Be confident the processes being used deliver the lowest costs available and

MOS/17/10

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the long term, see improvements in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the transparency of the voids reporting and ○ the turnaround times for each type of property when it becomes void leading to ○ Increased income through reduced void times
	What are the likely benefits to the council and its community?	Improved voids process means homes become available quicker and rental income is increased.
	What value is O&S adding to the process?	<p>Providing reassurance that the processes being operated are best able to deliver the outcomes set by Cabinet or Portfolio Holders.</p> <p>Should we be asking for more involvement from the Committee such as providing their own researched examples of voids management?</p>
	Are there any barriers/dangers/risks?	Inactivity leading to no fundamental change being made for the long term. Setting expectations too low and in too long a time frame. Cross connection with other issues.
	How are you going to know that you have reached the end of the O&S activity?	Measurable improvements in 1 st year to 18 months with evidence of improved procedures.
Background information	<p>For Mid Suffolk, the average time to turn around an empty council property in 2016/17 was, for each of quarters 1 to 4 respectively, 35, 36, 35 and 35 days.</p> <p>This is against a target of 28 days.</p>	

<p>Methodology/ Approach (what types of enquiry will be used to gather evidence and why)</p>	<p>The points below are what the committee would like to examine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical position last year (From 17 Feb 2016) and review of the situation since that time. • Reasons for the deterioration and improvements in the void figures. • Partitioning the void figures into housing categories. • Review of the management process, structure and responsibilities. • Financial breakdown and comparison between different void periods (typically 28 days and 21 days). • Financial implications to the revenue budget. • Social implications of long void periods. • Comparison of void periods with other councils. 7 days has been quoted for other Councils! • Gain evidence from the LGA and Network of District Councils to provide national picture. • Action plan to improve the void periods and performance, including proactive management requirements. Why it is intended to take 3 years to show a small improvement and how this can be improved. • Adequacy of repair and maintenance resources to improve the void periods.
<p>Resource requirements</p>	
<p>Project parameters</p>	
<p>Specify Witnesses/ Experts/ Stakeholders (who to see and when)- subject to review as evidence becomes available.</p>	<p>A representative from another council who can talk about best practice in their council.</p>

Specify Evidence Sources for documents			
Specify Site Visits (where and when)			
Barriers/dangers/risks Identify any weaknesses and potential pitfalls	Constant change within the organisation means reasons are given for not achieving targets that could prevent potential new improvements being identified and/or made.		
Projected start date	24 July 2017	Draft report deadline	
Meeting frequency		Projected completion date	

Note:

Please can we ensure we are clear on what we are measuring. There has previously been discussion about excluding from the figures hard to let properties or those being reserved for other purposes (such as demolition).

Voids performance was last looked at by Joint Scrutiny in February 2016. Nothing has changed! The target then was 28 days. Voids performance was 34 days for standard repairs in MSDC – last performance review in June 2017 says 35 days.

The key point missing from the Feb 2016 report was benchmarking and best practice from other councils.

I think Members should be sent the papers from the Feb 2016 meeting as an aide memoir for the scoping discussion – it will also prevent officers from having to repeat what the process is etc.