

Melton Borough Council

Appointment of Housing Repairs and Maintenance Partner

Draft Scope of Service, Specification and Requirements

1. Summary

This paper sets out the principal themes and objectives that should be incorporated into the Scope of Service, Specification and Requirements for the proposed housing repairs delivery partner that will work collaboratively with the Council to deliver housing repairs and maintenance services to Melton residents. The partner(s) will be expected to make a pivotal contribution to shaping and co-producing the detailed housing repairs and maintenance delivery model.

The paper identifies the requirements the Council has of the housing repairs and maintenance partner and specifies the detailed proposals sought in the form of method statements from interested parties. It is designed to be incorporated as part of the tendering documentation that will be required in the forthcoming procurement of the housing repairs and maintenance service at Melton.

1.2 Background and Context

As part of its commitment to quality services, the Council aims to provide a reliable and quick repair service to its tenants. The repairs and maintenance service has been developed by the Council in consultation with the Tenants Federation Executive Committee (TFEC) through regular feedback and engagement. Tenants are able to become involved in a number of ways, ranging from conducting regular post inspections of repairs and works undertaken to void properties, completing surveys, mystery shopping, focus groups, or by taking part in the repairs and maintenance Service Improvement Groups. Tenants have been involved in all of the key decisions taken to develop the repairs and maintenance service and will be at the heart of the procurement process to identify a new long term contractor partner.

The Housing repairs and maintenance service has gone through a number of substantial changes since it was provided by an in house DLO. The Council took the decision to externalise the service in 2005 and the contract was awarded to Jeakins Weir with the workforce transferring under TUPE.

It is the view of informed tenants that service quality remained of a high standard under Jeakins Weir who maintained a directly employed local craft operative workforce and established a local office and depot. In April 2012, the contract was competitively tendered with assistance from Ridge consultancy. There was extensive tenant involvement throughout the tender process and in evaluating the bids received. The contract was based upon the National Housing Federation Schedule of Rates against which bidders had to indicate the percentage uplifts or discounts that would apply to the prices.

The contract was awarded to G Purchase who was subsequently bought out by Wates Living Space.

1.3 General Description of the Service

The service is provided to approximately 1,800 properties in the Melton Borough Council area and comprises:

- Responsive repairs
- Empty property repairs
- Planned maintenance: including painting and repairs, roofing, fencing etc
- Aids and adaptations

Calls from residents are currently received by the Council Customer Services team at the Council's main Parkside office. The current contractor has a presence by two members of their staff at the Contact Centre with the aim of improving repairs diagnosis, arranging appointments, enhancing team working and general communication, and developing better mutual understanding.

Job orders are raised by the Council Customer Services team on the Northgate IT system and are given an appropriate priority according to their urgency. The same information is also entered on the Council's CRM system. Although both systems are provided by Northgate they do not interface so information has to be keyed in twice. The orders then have to be sent over to the contractor based in Loughborough through another transaction which at the time of visiting was proving to be problematic as orders were taking a long time to arrive.

Appointments are not made at the time the tenant calls but through a phone call that the contractor makes to each tenant offering an AM or PM slot and a date that corresponds with the priority category given. We were advised that it takes two days or more for the contractor to get in touch with a tenant reporting a repair. Wates Living Space services the contract from their Loughborough depot which is 16 miles away, or a 35-minute drive without traffic.

There is no current planned category although some repairs may be transferred from reactive to planned where the contractor refers them to the client. It is a stated intention to develop and implement a more robust referral mechanism for moving appropriate repairs and maintenance works into planned programmes.

In considering the future options for the housing repairs and maintenance service the Council wishes to achieve alignment of all housing investment including repairs and maintenance with the Council's strategic priorities and local circumstances and with the expectations of key stakeholders so that the chosen options are properly tailored to what is known to be the particular requirements of Melton. The Council considers it essential that all the principal stakeholders were consulted on and engaged in both the review of current provision and in shaping the evaluation of the available options so that they correspond with local needs so that there is an emerging sense of collective ownership of the preferred solution.

The Council has benefited from and has sought to apply the learning and insight developed through the Chartered Institute of Housing's recent year long Working Together Repairs project which involved eleven landlords across the country and identified next best practice for housing repairs and maintenance.

Insight from Working Together Repairs and Maintenance

- Recognition that the golden age of ready funding for social housing is over and that Value for Money considerations now prevail, meaning that repairs and maintenance must deliver as stock investment as well as in its role as a service to tenants.
- Adoption of a framework for repairs & maintenance services that encourages and supports tenants to look after their home as part of a rights and responsibilities agenda in landlord and tenant relations.
- Acknowledgement that a sustainable organisational culture based upon collaborative working and driven through smart and efficient business processes are the foundation for promoting excellent two-way communication with residents, rapid and effective problem solving and for delivering high levels of productivity and user satisfaction.

This new agenda has been distilled into a series of key action points:

1. **Providing the Right Leadership and Culture:** the imperative for a well-motivated team with a 'can do' ethos and embracing integrated working with the client
2. **Repairs Futures:** planning for an effective 21st Century workforce
3. **Choices and Responsibilities:** the importance of fairness in provision; tenants looking after their home
4. **Investing in the Asset:** adding value to the asset through repairs and intelligent asset management
5. **Value for Money:** reinventing partnering and driving down costs through collaborative working; securing value from procurement
6. **Business Process Transformation:** acting on legitimate repairs demand; designing a low cost, high value self-service repairs and maintenance platform
7. **Data, information, knowledge & maximising the impact of IT:** from data mountains to usable insight; IT and Repairs: lack of integration is compromising investment
8. **Measuring & Managing Performance:** creating ownership and facilitating a high productivity environment
9. **A Commercial Model** that enables work to be undertaken as either responsive or planned maintenance according to need and value delivered
10. **Property MOTs and Planned on Demand:** evaluating new models of repairs and maintenance provision

This has informed the various opportunities available to Melton for moving toward a more innovative approach that can in time involve a less onerous valuation and payment mechanism that both delivers higher added value for the asset and brings improved user satisfaction.

This can also be designed to assist in moving the balance of expenditure towards **asset-led investment** through planned maintenance by redirecting reactive repair demand where appropriate. It is also premised upon managing **tenant-led demand** more effectively through adjusting expectations and influencing behaviour.

1.4 Review of Housing Repairs Service

In 2016 Melton Borough Council commissioned an independent review and assessment of the current Housing Repairs, Voids and Planned Maintenance contract:

- ***An independent review of the service***
- ***Research on best practice and the potential to move beyond a traditional Schedule of Rates approach with its high transaction costs***
- ***Production of a report by June 2016 giving Members appropriate options and recommendations on a negotiated extension of the existing contract and what should be sought from those negotiations, or to commence a new procurement process***

The Review found there was scope for service improvement and modernisation to support more effective delivery, realise better outcomes for residents and obtain improved value for money.

The independent review included an assessment of the current contract and delivery arrangements and evaluated the overall cost of the service and the value for money that it offered compared to peers, as well as the impact upon residents and upon the stock itself. The review of the repairs and maintenance contract was based on an end to end assessment that combined the twin perspective of the needs of the customer and of the needs of the building asset. This was undertaken through examination of the following features of the service:

- **Repairs service accessibility:** ease of contacting the service and being able to report a repair that is understood and accurately diagnosed by the call handler
- Being offered **convenient appointments** at first contact and within a reasonable time period that meets resident expectations
- **Keeping residents informed** about the progress of their repair and especially of any follow on works or changes in appointment arrangements
- **Reliability of repairs and appointments** for residents and avoiding or minimising the proportion of no access calls
- Completing the whole of the work required **right first time** at the first visit without the need for ancillary trades or follow on work
- Means of work specification and type of **schedule of rates banding** that is in operation and how well this corresponds with a lean business process
- Method of **work measurement and valuation** and the volume of individual transactions and contested billing that this generates
- The **value added** to the stock as a result of reactive repairs and the balance between reactive and planned expenditure
- A flexible, agile and **productive workforce** that have the right skills and materials, are empowered to deliver and have the mobility to respond promptly to operational needs when deployed

- **Costs that compare well with other providers** and a continuing programme of securing savings and efficiencies
- **Productive partnering style working relationships** which are focused on delivering value for the resident and for the property asset
- **Systematic testing of user satisfaction and of work quality** and structured organisational learning from the findings

An outcome from the Review report was identification of improvements that can be initiated and led by the client and to identify the important features that characterise modern and effective repairs and maintenance delivery which can be implemented at Melton.

1.5 Options Appraisal

The Options Appraisal was undertaken immediately after the review and set out the available options for future delivery of the Housing repairs and maintenance contract and provided an objective assessment of the merits and drawbacks associated with each of the following approaches and the potential they offer for successful repairs service delivery:

- **Traditional Contracting**
- **Partnering Contract**
- **Separate Lots**
- **Joint Venture**
- **Direct Labour Organisation**
- **Managed Service utilising a corporate structure such as an LLP**
- **Shared Services with another Landlord**

It assessed how the principal options emerging that are judged to be potentially applicable would fit with the Melton context and reached conclusions and recommendations on how the Council should proceed. The appraisal took the two most suitable options (*a term partnering contract and a combination of in-house direct labour and local contractors*) and subjected them to more exhaustive evaluation. The option that was found to be most closely aligned with Melton's needs was a partnering style housing repairs contract.

A short contract extension was recommended because time was needed to develop and prepare for the introduction of a partnering approach. It was also recommended that work is invested in developing a procurement offer that can secure a partner or solution that will work collaboratively with and complement the Council in delivering its agenda. The preferred partner or solution would be aligned in its work with the Council's overarching strategic objectives and ambition for the Borough and would be able to fulfil a broad definition of value for money. The next section of this report begins that process.

Section Two:

2.1 Principal Objectives of the Council for the Housing Repairs Service

The option appraisal compared the range of repairs delivery models from across the sector and the new approach has been developed to bring the housing repairs service into alignment with Melton requirements.

The partnering approach needs to complement the Council's Asset Management Plan which contains the following Strategic Aims:

- *To get the service right first time.*
- *To achieve VFM from a tenant perspective in a clear and transparent way.*
- *To provide a safe and sustainable environment for generations of tenants.*
- *To make better use of the knowledge we have about our assets.*

A set of operational priorities were adopted and a number of these relate directly to repairs and maintenance:

- Rationalisation of the number of property databases to facilitate decision making
- Understanding maintenance demand to improve and standardise materials specifications, to support contractor efficiency and productivity and to undertake a higher proportion of work as planned maintenance
- Adoption of new Performance Indicators to understand demand: single fix visit; percentage repairs that stay fixed; average time taken to complete repair
- Achieving value for money by driving down repairs and maintenance costs through procurement and performance partnering

The Council is now working on updating the strategy in the light of recent experience and to incorporate emerging good practice. This is being undertaken in conjunction with a review of corporate asset management requirements

2.2 Repairs Policy

The Council's Housing Repairs Policy commits it to keeping properties in a good condition and to meeting its statutory responsibilities. The Policy recognises that delivery of a high-quality repairs and maintenance service is a key priority for residents and aims to deliver cost effective services to meet customer need and sustain the life of the stock through:

- Carrying out repairs and maintenance necessary to meet legal and statutory obligations, to safeguard the health, safety and security of residents including out of hours
- To process repairs accurately and promptly through all stages from initial request, ordering, inspection and payment
- To offer appointments for routine work and provide acknowledgement of the repair request, giving a unique reference number and details of the repair and target time
- To complete most repairs after one visit, make appointments for any follow up visits and keep customers informed at all times
- To give the relevant staff adequate training in the repair and maintenance policy and procedures, legal repairing obligations, building technology, customer care

- To prioritise repairs and maintenance to take account of the danger to health, safety and security of the resident and /or the building and provide a consistent and fair service
- To operate a fair and consistent policy to recover the costs or where appropriate waive the cost of any repairs and maintenance carried out which are the customers' responsibility.
- To provide clear and appropriate information about which repairs and maintenance the Council is responsible for and which the resident is responsible for taking account of vulnerability
- To resolve repairs and maintenance service failures as promptly as possible, keep customers informed and where appropriate, provide compensation
- To set criteria for deciding whether repairs should be pre and post-inspected
- To ensure that only correct invoices for completed satisfactory work are authorised for payment and are passed for payment within procedure timescales.
- To ensure probity meets audit requirements by separating repair ordering and authorisation functions and levels of authorisation responsibility.
- To gather and analyse regular feedback about the service from customers.

The Repairs Policy is an important foundation for the approach to Partnering and when reviewed and implemented will inform how the service is developed.

2.3 Principal Partnering Features

The principal features that will distinguish the new partnering contract from the previous traditional contract are:

1. **A collaborative approach:** characterised by openness and trust and a shared approach to service planning and problem solving in which the client actively seeks input from an experienced partner in order to address key challenges and meet objectives
2. **A High Performing Service:** identifying the key cost, quality and user satisfaction measures and ensuring the performance dashboard is consistently at or above target levels
3. **Managing Responsive Repairs Demand:** working with the client to manage reactive repairs demand in line with the tenancy agreement; ensuring housing property assets benefit from and are sustained through the investment made in repairs which add value to the stock and do not just satisfy tenant demand
4. **Core business process:** flows seamlessly from the first point of contact and keeps the resident well informed throughout; supports a reliable appointment commitment, right first time completion and good post works communication
5. **Delivering Quality through Repairs:** securing buy-in to the Council's quality standards across all areas of work so that repairs reflect resident pride in the Borough as a place to live
6. **Communication and Sharing Information:** keeping customers informed throughout their repairs journey; sharing and analysing data to produce information that informs service planning and improvement

7. **Learning from what we do in order to improve:** using feedback, post inspection findings and the full range of data generated to generate learning and insight which is used to improve effectiveness, reduce costs and add value through repairs
8. **Empowering People:** trusting staff and the workforce to make the right judgements and choices on repairs and maintenance and to shape service improvements that will make a difference for residents and for sustaining the stock
9. **Resident feedback and engagement:** developing new ways of working with residents around repairs and maintenance improvement; building resident confidence and ownership in and advocacy for the repairs and maintenance service
10. **Value for Money:** creating a high productivity environment; minimising cost to deliver repairs and maintenance efficiently; ensuring repairs and maintenance deliver impact as stock investment as well as meeting tenant demand; using procurement and supply chain management to optimise value
11. **Visibility of Service Improvement:** promoting the outcomes and achievements of the repairs and maintenance service and ensuring that the quality of repairs and maintenance enhances the Council's reputation as a landlord
12. **Community Impact:** identifying and implementing key initiatives that will bring the repairs and maintenance partnership closer to local communities and will generate recognition and appreciation from residents
13. **Smart Use of Information Technology:** ensuring that the opportunities presented through a new repairs and maintenance ICT system for improved communication, full visibility of repairs and maintenance orders for customer facing staff; streamlined business processes and significantly enhanced value from repairs and maintenance are prioritised and are owned by the repairs and maintenance partnership

Key Changes

We have highlighted below some of the areas where the partnering contract will introduce a substantial change in approach and one that Melton has been developing and preparing for.

2.4 Performance Monitoring and Management

The measurement and monitoring of performance on the repairs and maintenance contract is carried out monthly and tracks the following output indicators:

- Overall tenant satisfaction with the service
- Percentage of emergency, urgent and routine repairs completed within timescale
- Percentage of repairs that are completed at the first visit
- Overall mix of works orders by priority categories
- Recalls for non-formal Complaints and formal Complaints
- Turnaround time for voids repairs
- Appointments made and the percentage of these that are kept; % no access
- Health and safety reporting

For the new Term Partnering Contract the performance measures will be divided into a limited number of high level KPIs

- **Tenant Satisfaction with Completed Repairs**
- **Repairs Completed on First Visit**
- **Appointments Made & Kept**
- **Average duration of responsive repairs**

2.5 Access to the Repairs Service and Call Handling

The Council's Housing Repairs Policy document is being updated and renewed in conjunction with residents. This revised policy will incorporate a clear and succinct set of repairs and maintenance service standards. The responsive repair service is currently set up to receive repairs requests from residents primarily by telephone. It is recognised that being able to report repairs quickly and conveniently is important to residents.

Given the importance of good access to the service and being able to obtain an accurate repairs diagnosis at the first call that allows a near to precise specification for the repair work required to be issued, **the Council is inviting proposals for the partner contractor to provide innovative solutions for the initial customer interface with tenants for the delivery of a quality repairs service , with the ability to support the Council's culture of supporting vulnerable people and promoting independence.**

These proposals will need to evidence how the customer experience will be improved and the overall efficiency and the effectiveness of the repairs business process enhanced. In particular, the level and quality of information provided to residents to keep them informed throughout the repairs process is expected to be comprehensive and render it unnecessary for them to make any avoidable repeat or chasing calls about their repair.

The Council is keen to see the introduction of repairs reporting through the Council's website or via an application which supports this and enables the repair needed to be accurately diagnosed using interactive software and a firm appointment to be booked for the work to be carried out.

2.6 Rechargeable Repairs and Support for Independent Living

The Council has published a list of repairs, which were developed in consultation with tenants, which are the responsibility of the tenant, and is keen to enforce the policy of recharging for the cost of carrying out any repairs and maintenance that are not attributable to fair wear and tear. Residents are asked to pay for any repairs and maintenance following damage to, or misuse of their home caused by the tenant, their family or friends. However, the ratio of income collected to charges raised could be improved upon and suggests that the application of the policy should be reviewed to address this and ensure that a high proportion of rechargeable repairs and maintenance income is secured.

It should be noted that the Council organises a monthly Tenants' Awareness Course which has been designed to support new tenants to manage their home. This is a one-off session which introduces the Tenants Handbook, money management, health and independent living. The course is open to

anyone who is looking to take up a new tenancy, or is an existing tenant whether with a Private Landlord or a tenant with a Social Landlord i.e. with a Housing Association or with the Council. By making this practical support available the Council is investing in the capacity of future tenants to look after their home and undertake the repairs and maintenance they are responsible for. This enables them to sustain their tenancy and helps create conditions conducive to households becoming independent and successful.

As part of the Term Partnering Contract there is the opportunity for the partner to make available structured assistance that gives tenants some support and guidance in looking after their home and in carrying out repairs that are their responsibility. This could take the form of:

- **New Tenants Induction Visit:** to explain the features of their new home and how they should look after it, guidance on heating and ventilation, location of key services e.g. cold water stop tap, and the specific repairs and other responsibilities they are taking on
- **DIY Courses and Craft Trade sampling:** making available opportunities for interested tenants to try their hand at repairs
- **Sponsorship of community garden competitions**

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for implementing this at Melton

2.7 Repairs Information

Information on the repairs service is provided in the guide Repairing and Maintaining Your Home which includes timescales to complete repairs. In addition, there is a set of Frequently Asked Questions for repairs and maintenance which offers broadly the same content in a question and answer format for ease of user navigation.

Tenants who are vulnerable or have special needs receive a quicker response to emergency work such as heating and hot water repairs all year round. A key objective of the service is to maximise the proportion of repairs that are completed at the first visit and it is important that this can be accurately monitored. The service should offer appointments flexibly at convenient times for tenants who cannot be at home during normal working hours as a contribution to a more accessible service and an enhanced customer experience.

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for implementing this at Melton

2.8 New Repairs Categories

Melton are amending and simplifying repairs categories in line with emerging good practice in the sector which focuses upon understanding and responding to customer and property demand and the level of risk presented. It addresses customer preference for either an immediate repair or at a time that is convenient for the customer. In effect this envisages just two repairs categories:

- Emergency repairs which are carried out the same day as they are reported
- Repairs by appointment at a time that is convenient for the tenant

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for implementing this at Melton

2.9 Scheduled or Batched Repairs

Good practice approaches analyse average responsive repair costs across individual estates and neighbourhoods to help identify frequent repair trends that could be batched into preventative

maintenance packages. This is aimed at reducing average repair costs and increasing the ratio of planned to responsive maintenance expenditure.

2.10 Tenant Satisfaction

Published research has identified those features of public services that are of most importance to customers (figures in brackets are the percentage that considers this aspect of highest importance):

Table: Drivers of Satisfaction with Public Services

1. **Delivery (30%)** - the service delivers the *outcome* it promised and manages to deal with any *problems* that may arise
2. **Timeliness (24%)** – the service responds *immediately* to the initial customer contact and deals with the issue at the heart of it *quickly* and without *passing* it on between staff
3. **Professionalism (18%)** – staff are *competent* and treat customers *fairly*
4. **Information (16%)** - the information given out to customers is *accurate* and *comprehensive* and they are kept informed about *progress*
5. **Staff attitude (12%)** - staff are *friendly, polite* and *sympathetic* to customers' needs

Source: Ipsos MORI

For repairs and maintenance, performance on key drivers, reflecting overall satisfaction, tends to be high especially on ratings of staff. However, satisfaction with service delivery and timeliness, the top two key drivers, is relatively lower than on the other service aspects.

In particular, areas that are crucial to customers which currently receive lower satisfaction scores are the service's ability to keep customers 'informed about progress' and the way the service 'handles problems'.

Information provision is traditionally an area where public services could improve, but what this highlights is the importance of keeping people up-to-date throughout the process, not just providing them with information at the initial contact.

Additionally, over one in five people are dissatisfied with the 'overall time' it took to deal with the reason for contact.

Tender Requirement

Potential Partners are invited to submit proposals for addressing the above findings with the aim of maximising user satisfaction with and confidence in the housing repairs service

Section Three:

3.1 Deliverables from Partnering

The Council aims to provide a high quality, cost effective and efficient repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that is properly aligned with its asset management strategy, responds flexibly to the needs of tenants and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time.

The repairs contract review has shown that the choice of contract form and the selection of a suitable partner organisation to deliver the service are critically important decisions which will determine resident satisfaction, performance, efficiency and how well service standards are being met.

The Council has engaged closely with its tenants to monitor delivery of the current contract and is now in a position to use this insight to identify the principal objectives sought from its repairs and maintenance service and the principal priorities for improvement. The repairs and maintenance partner that Melton appoints will need to work collaboratively:

Deliverables from Partnering

- To achieve high quality services with consistent levels of customer care and accountability
- To work with the Council on improving impact and driving down costs so that the service represents increasingly good value for money
- To demonstrate understanding of and alignment with the Council's strategic objectives and capacity to work collaboratively to enhance effectiveness, offer integrated working with other parts of the landlord service and generate efficiency savings over the life of the contract
- To provide stability and allow Melton to invest with confidence in building the long term beneficial impact of the service for residents and the community
- To design, implement and embed a robust and effective end to end core business process which forms a hub for all performance, productivity and financial reporting to managers
- To engineer and install corresponding IT solutions that support and drive delivery of all information and customer communication needs and achieve consistently high quality services

3.2 Shared Strategic Intent

In order to realise these deliverables the partnering relationship needs to be based upon alignment of purpose and intent and show a good level of compatibility between the respective organisational cultures. The principal ingredients of a successful repairs and maintenance partnership include:

- Establishment of trust and credibility through open and honest communication between the client and contractor partner and sharing of information and opportunity to shape and influence the service with all stakeholders including tenants
- Collaborative working that focuses on stretching service improvement objectives driven by intelligent analysis of delivery outcomes and feedback and kept under continuous review

- Excellent all round communication: keeping tenants fully informed throughout the repairs process, enabling feedback from customers on completed repairs and publicising repairs performance and access information
- High quality and fully compliant repairs and maintenance work delivered safely and competently by well trained, multi-skilled operatives using fit for purpose and guaranteed materials
- Team approach can allow space for creative ideas and collaboration to flourish
- Generates local employment and training opportunities and plays an active role in supporting community initiatives
- Analysing repairs and maintenance to inform replacement/planned programmes and targeting heavy users of the service for diagnostic visits and planned home works designed to reduce dependency on the responsive repairs service
- Researching and understanding the resident profile and shaping services flexibly to meet individual customer needs; shared objectives and ongoing involvement of the end user
- Associated training and community benefits would be well received by residents
- Closer IT integration and real time reporting
- Good repairs diagnostic systems operated by well-trained staff at the initial point of contact by tenants and a high degree of accurate, right first time capture and specification of the repair required and the time it is likely to take in order to generate an appointment slot of the correct duration
- Coordination of operatives in the field to meet emergencies and scheduled appointments and to maximise Right First Time completion
- Ongoing customer engagement with evaluation of repairs service delivery
- Can deliver some efficiencies through business process redesign and supply chain management, optimising use of resources and minimising non-productive time and administration delays
- Customer safety, safeguarding and appropriate health and safety measures
- Responding to and remedying complaints quickly and adopting structured learning from these to prevent recurrences
- Flexible and adaptable and incorporates annual service review to stay on track; track record of innovation;
- Potential for initial diagnosis, inputting and appointment making at first point of call, either from partner/or dedicated 'repairs' which links into customer expectation; enhanced value for money from fewer priority orders; potential to self-serve on the website for tenants who can
- Improved value for money: more asset management rather than short term facility management approach; reducing failure demand
- Shaping a service that takes into account the people and the property and supports independent living.

3.3 Partnering Risks

Good practice partnering contracts can deliver consistently high levels of performance, evidence value for money and genuine innovation. As with any contractual relationship Partnering is not entirely risk free and a drawback arising from its popularity is that some participants have presented themselves as committed partners but have failed to remain loyal to the spirit of openness, trust and collaboration and instead allowed purely commercial considerations to predominate:

Potential Risks and Drawbacks with Partnering

- Some contractor partners adopt a cynical approach to partnering as a cloak for extracting excessive value for themselves – *selection of the right partner needs to include thorough and exhaustive testing of their track record and the organisation's alignment with and capacity to deliver the Council's values and strategic objectives*
- Lack of client side skills in the sector to make a success of partnering – *the client team is the lead in the partnering relationship and must have the range of skills, experience and capacity to drive this; the client needs to project and promote the principles of partnering and encourage reciprocity on this from the contractor partner*
- Open book agreements may have to be policed, adding to costs – *a full and audited open book approach is not being recommended as it would add to costs and is unlikely to generate savings*
- Clients often have to retain traditional technical clienting skills and capacity – *it is recommended that there is appropriate client capacity in place to undertake the range of clienting responsibilities including post-inspecting a sample of all completed repairs, overseeing voids repairs and monitoring cost and quality*
- Open book can degenerate into cost plus – *the Partnering approach will be premised upon the development of a strong shared understanding of costs so that there is certainty and agreement on this; open book principles will apply only in relation to sharing information but will not be a basis for charging*
- Client can still be outgunned by powerful national contractors – *important that the selected partner is genuinely committed to a long term partnering relationship and is prepared to engage constructively with Melton's long term agenda*
- Possibly more popular amongst contractors than it is with clients who often now price in a partnering premium – *additional costs are unlikely to arise as a consequence of the type of partnering proposed at Melton; any additional cost that may be incurred should be redeemable through the benefits of collaborative working*

The procurement approach adopted needs to avoid or test for each of the above potential shortcomings which can otherwise derail good intentions.

3.4 Development of Partnering Ethos

Melton is seeking an externally procured Partnering Contract which tests for a partner's ability to work collaboratively and transparently to deliver the Council's objectives and aims to reduce transaction costs. This could in time include the progressive development of alternative pricing mechanisms once there is a shared understanding of repairs and maintenance costs and mutual trust between the Council and the partner around what is to be included or excluded.

Based upon the findings of the contract review the balance of evidence and risk supports the pursuit of a partnering style housing repairs and maintenance contract. This entails the Council scoping very clearly the standard of service it is seeking and designing the procurement process so that it identifies a suitable long-term partner that is comfortable with and can contribute to all aspects of the Council's expectations for the service. It can also offer evolving contract arrangements that

support the introduction of best practice and innovation, and a reduction in the proportion of service costs that are committed to transactions and processing.

Section Four

Service Requirement for a Repairs Delivery Partner

4. Drivers of a Modern Repairs Service

The Council has made a careful assessment of the potential benefits that can arise as a consequence of how it designs the delivery arrangement for the housing repairs and maintenance service from 2018 when the contract with Wates ends. The principal drivers remain the same as those which informed the original decision to let the contract:

- Service Quality including timeliness, reliability and customer satisfaction
- Value for money including management of repairs and maintenance demand

However, the wider context in which the housing repairs and maintenance service operates has changed and there are some important new drivers which have a significant bearing upon this. The principal areas of interest that need to be considered and reconciled are summarised below:

4.1 Repairs and Asset Management: there is an opportunity to establish a more integrated and cohesive approach to meeting the Council's housing asset management responsibilities which reduces duplication and promotes effective partnering. The work now being led by Melton on assembling an asset management strategy and on a stock condition survey will provide a foundation for this. The partner will bring the delivery capacity and expertise needed to realise this.

4.2 Regeneration and changing the lives of residents: developing the role that the repairs and maintenance service can play in delivering wider strategic Council objectives around health and wellbeing, safeguarding and care services, for example, by making better use of the contact time operatives have with households for early identification of where intervention, advice and prevention activity may be needed.

4.3 Training and Employment: the ambition to make effective use of the training and employment opportunities within the repairs and maintenance service to transform the lives of disadvantaged people in the Borough. The chosen partner will be expected to make a positive contribution to this and cultivate closer working with other Council services to explore and develop these opportunities on a broader scale.

4.4 HRA Business Plan: following national policy changes announced by Government in 2015 including the 1% annual rent reduction, pay to stay and forced sales of high value properties it is important that all expenditure contributes to sustaining the stock assets.

4.5 Securing Value from Stock Investment: the need to adopt a clear strategy for adjusting the balance of expenditure on the stock away from reactive work that is primarily driven by tenant demand and into planned work that genuinely adds value to and extends the life of the stock and complements wider asset management objectives.

4.6 Landlord Plus: the opportunities presented by more closely integrating the landlord role as a platform for access to other Council services. In this model the repairs and maintenance service through its contact with tenants inside their homes would where required provide feedback and information that complements tenancy sustainment objectives. The work of Housing Managers will in future need to deliver a broader range of advice and low level prevention support to families and households and in the process reduce cost and duplication between Housing and other Council funded services.

4.7 Housebuilding: the opportunity for the Council to contribute directly to growth in the Borough through housebuilding and to increase the Council's turnover through direct participation in this activity. Several different teams within the Council would potentially play a role in housebuilding which subject to local market conditions and opportunities could be for the HRA or the General Fund, for social or for affordable rent or for sale or shared ownership.

Section Five

5.1 Partnering Method Statements

To make a success of partnering entails the Council scoping very clearly the scope and standards of service it is seeking and designing the procurement process so that it identifies a suitable long-term partner that is familiar with and can contribute to all aspects of the Council's expectations for the service.

It should also offer emerging contract arrangements that support the introduction of best practice and innovation as well as a reduction in the proportion of service costs that are committed to transaction and processing

It is intended to go to the market in 2017 with the aim of letting a new contract from May 2018, enabling pre-procurement preparations to be completed. The principal areas where the successful Housing Repairs Delivery Partner will be expected to lead and provide effective support are summarised below.

Tenderers are required to respond by submitting **method statements** which set out how they propose to deliver the service sought in each of the nine headings listed under Principal Outputs / Deliverables above. The method statements will be assessed as part of the tender evaluation and the Council is seeking proposals that match the specific circumstances of the new delivery model that has been described above for the Melton housing repairs and maintenance service.

5.2 Improving management and delivery of repairs and maintenance through integration with strategic asset management

This is an important objective for the repairs service which will ensure that the annual investment made in repairs will not simply respond to and assuage tenant demand but will also be expected to add value to the housing stock

- Contribute to developing and implementing the repairs and maintenance components of the new Housing Asset Management Strategy
- Develop practical ways of ensuring and measuring that repairs and maintenance delivers in terms of investment in the building asset rather than solely as an on-demand service for residents
- Develop and implement viable proposals for reducing responsive repairs demand, moving resources into planned maintenance and realising the cost efficiencies this can offer
- Contribute to the development and presentation of options to tenants and residents as part of the review of the Repairs Policy. This necessitates a sober and mature discussion about how to secure optimum value, benefit and return from finite resources
- Make evidence based recommendations for optimising the use of guaranteed and longer life materials and components that will reduce future maintenance costs
- Development and implementation of a specific housing repairs and maintenance strategy that corresponds and is in alignment with the asset management strategy
- Provide consistent input and support and make a full and valued contribution to the partnering arrangement
- Contribute to all repairs and maintenance service improvement activities and take the lead on principal improvement initiatives as directed

- Provide and present a monthly report setting out key activities and progress achieved under each of the following six headings
 - *Performance against key targets*
 - *Production of business analysis reports*
 - *Health and Safety and Compliance*
 - *Cultivation of commercial insight, judgement and enterprise*
 - *Improving repairs and maintenance through strategic asset management*
 - *Developing and sustaining customer service standards and outcomes*
- Prepare and present a detailed quarterly report to the client which identifies key activities and progress achieved under each of the six headings and according to the pre-set quarterly milestones contained in the Contract. This report should also critically evaluate the outcomes and quantify the benefits realised and make appropriate recommendations based upon these findings
- Issue regular and accessible progress information for staff and stakeholders that is designed to encourage support for and engagement with ongoing improvement activity.
- Communicate through appropriate channels with all staff, union representatives, customers, Council staff and partners to share information and knowledge.
- Prevent any barriers based upon lack of transparency arising between stakeholders and the delivery partner by ensuring high visibility, openness and accessibility

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for introducing and implementing a strategic approach that integrates repairs and maintenance with wider asset management objectives. This should include:

- ***Strategy for influencing and changing tenant expectations and behaviour towards looking after their home***
- ***Provision of guidance and coaching for tenants in looking after their homes***
- ***Interventions to address intensive users of the repairs and maintenance service***
- ***Methodology for increasing the value added to the physical stock through repairs and maintenance work and ensuring it delivers as stock investment as well as a service to tenants***
- ***Reporting on and recording a holistic check on the asset during repairs and maintenance visits***
- ***Indicators for measuring value added to the stock***
- ***Detailed proposal for the resources to be deployed to meeting this Council objective***

Partners should submit proposals for the development and application of a new method of ordering, specifying, measuring and pricing for repairs and maintenance work that capitalises upon service integration to reduce transaction costs

- ***Description of the perceived inefficiencies inherent in traditional schedule of rates based works management***
- ***Principal drivers for a new model for new works ordering, specification, measuring and pricing for repairs and maintenance work***

- *Approach to identifying and selecting preferred options*
- *Commentary and desk top evaluation of competing options to be explored*
- *Detailed proposal for the resources to be deployed to meeting this Council objective*
- *Timescales for development and implementation*

5.3 Developing and sustaining customer service standards and outcomes

- Work with the client team in implementing effective business processes that support timely and effective delivery that matches tenant expectations including designing and implementing new processes and procedures that will realise value for money, performance objectives and high levels of resident satisfaction
- Develop continuous improvement in the service that engages all stakeholders including resident groups and through importation of best practice and review of the current service model delivers the objective of enhancing performance, value for money and commercial returns for the Council
- Strengthening customer focus and customer profiling to improve access, reliability and communication that enhances the customer journey and makes the customer experience of using the service consistently positive and rewarding
- Adopting a clear definition of vulnerability and using this to identify those residents and households that may need additional support and a service that is customised to them
- Developing options and solutions that promote convenience for customers who need a non-standard service
- Cultivating productive resident engagement and working with involved tenants to shape the new service model

Achieving higher customer care standards would represent the initial challenge for the new repairs and maintenance service. The preferred partner would need to demonstrate a track record of achievement in customer service excellence and the ability to mobilise the systems and staff focus needed to meet modern customer service standards for housing repairs.

Because of the importance of customer service for Melton tenants, specific assurance on this is recommended as a highly weighted procurement selection criterion

Partners are asked to submit proposals for strengthening of customer focus, insight and learning based upon:

- *Tenderer's understanding of the principal drivers of tenant satisfaction with housing repairs and maintenance services*
- *Approach to developing customer insight across the housing repairs and maintenance service*
- *Approach to applying this insight to increasing efficiency and effectiveness*
- *Tenderer's approach to charting and understanding the customer journey and using this to improve the customer experience*
- *Examples of best practice that would fit with the new housing repairs and maintenance delivery model at Melton*
- *Examples of a successful approach to meeting the needs of those tenants who have a genuine vulnerability and need support*
- *Approach to cultivating tenant engagement and working with involved tenants to shape the new service model*

- *Detailed proposal for the resources to be deployed to meeting this Council objective*

5.4 ICT Systems and Business Processes

- Improve through closer integration and genuinely collaborative working the previously separate domains of repairs call handling and work administration planning and scheduling for responsive repairs, voids and planned maintenance
- Lead on implementing the policies, procedures and system protocols that will ensure the service is able on a consistent basis to meet the existing standard of two-hour appointment slots
- Lead on the effective application of ICT systems that enable a smooth flow of repairs from the initial point of order through to completion and post completion actions and provide full visibility of the repair order at all stages of the journey
- Develop the customer facing features of the ICT system that will enhance the provision of timely information to the customer about the progress of their repair and minimise avoidable contact and failure demand
- Develop the capacity of the service to make intelligent use of data and business analysis that informs understanding and learning about the customer and about the property asset and enables the service to invest with confidence in measures and initiatives that will enhance user satisfaction and add value to the stock
- Building upon the integration inherent in the new delivery model redesign the core empty property relet process to shorten timescales, improve lettable and reduce costs. Implement the new process and ensure the benefits are realised for the landlord service.
- Materials and supply chain: designing and optimising supply chain arrangements with suppliers and sub-contractors to ensure that value for money is being achieved. Review of materials provision for craft operatives to ensure that it optimises productive use of available time.

The level of functionality now available to the Council is limited and below the optimum being delivered in the sector. As part of the procurement it is expected that the partner would provide the contractor side of a highly functional modern repairs and maintenance system that offers:

- A proven two-way interface with the housing management system used by the Council to raise repairs and maintenance orders
- Capacity to offer flexible appointment slots that work around tenant availability to provide access
- Integrated mobile working and dynamic scheduling to move labour resources to cope with emergencies and make the most productive use of operatives in the field
- Client side staff given access to the system so the exact status of any repair order is visible to customer facing staff and the client team has full visibility of repair order progress and is able to respond to customers enquiring about the progress of their repair
- Incorporates appropriate risk management and health and safety capacity to support safe working around tenants and organises materials and labour requirements in a timely way
- Contains modern features that complement timely communication and support high productivity and efficiency
- Generates auditable performance information across the range of key performance and management indicators

The housing management system at Melton includes its own jobbing IT system which can potentially be expanded to receive housing repairs and orders. It would require upgrading to offer two hour appointments, mobile working and dynamic scheduling that would compare to that available from market leading systems.

The generation of the wide range of performance monitoring information required to demonstrate that targets were being met would need to be engineered from the jobbing system e.g. achievement of flexible appointment slots and testing of right first time completion.

An investment would be required to develop and bring the repairs operating systems up to the calibre and capability demanded for a modern housing repairs service and tenderers proposals for this are sought. Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for implementing this at Melton

Proposals should explain how a viable end to end repairs business process would be developed setting out:

- ***Knowledge of and experience in developing business processes***
- ***Principal stages, key features and critical outputs from the responsive repairs and maintenance business process that you would develop for Melton***
- ***Principal stages, key features and critical outputs from the empty property relet business process that you would develop for Melton***
- ***Principal stages, key features and critical outputs from the gas safety and servicing business process that you would develop for Melton***
- ***Principal stages, key features and critical outputs from the planned maintenance business process that you would develop for Melton***
- ***Recommended process monitoring indicators to be utilised***
- ***Detailed proposal for the resources to be deployed to meeting this Council objective***

Partners proposals are sought for developing a modern integrated ICT system for repairs and maintenance including works ordering, planning, scheduling and mobile working for operatives

- ***Approach to selecting and implementing an ICT system that enables a smooth flow of repairs from the initial point of order through to completion and post completion actions and provide full visibility of the repair order at all stages of the journey***
- ***Description of the proposed system, its principal features and the information reports that it will generate that support strategic management of the repairs and maintenance service***
- ***Development of the customer facing features of the ICT system that will enhance the provision of timely information to the customer about the progress of their repair and minimise avoidable contact and failure demand***
- ***Achieving effective integration of materials ordering, control and accountability including mobile imprest stores on operative vehicles***
- ***Detailed proposal for the resources to be deployed to meeting this Council objective and the corresponding timescale for delivery***

5.5 Cultivation of commercial insight, judgement and enterprise

The repairs and maintenance partner chosen would need to deploy a leadership and management team that is experienced at delivering in all aspects of performance. This would need to be complemented by a robust and accurate costing structure that offers the level of financial information needed to track and manage cost with the aim of ensuring prudent investment in the asset.

Part of any arrangement with a partner organisation is likely to be a target for providing annual savings that are premised on their ability to deliver the service on a commercially viable basis. They could, for example, be required to work on a fully transparent open book basis and to agreeing a formula with Melton for sharing of profits generated in future.

- Provision of support to develop, implement and place on a sustainable commercial footing the new housing repairs and delivery model
- Designing and putting in place a strategic approach to cost reduction and securing enhanced outputs from available resources across the repairs and maintenance and asset management service
- Provision of housing repairs and maintenance know-how and expertise to develop the business processes needed
- Development of a more suitable and cost effective method of specifying, measuring and pricing repairs and maintenance work that yields lower transaction costs including how supply chain partners are paid for works undertaken, whilst still providing accurate and detailed asset data
- A proven productivity and costing model which sits at the heart of and is fully integrated with the business process and information management system and enables active management of cost reduction
- Development of apposite and lean repairs and maintenance business processes
- Design of alternative options for ordering repairs and maintenance work to reduce transaction costs
- Input to monitoring and management of budgets to assess and financial performance and identify key interventions required to address challenges

Streamlined Pricing Mechanism

In order to allow a reduction in transaction costs that would realise a saving for reinvestment, the development of a suitable price per property approach could be explored. This would require there to be an accurate and shared understanding of repairs costs and clear agreement in advance of what is included and excluded. The other essential precondition is firm evidence of mutual trust between the partners and confidence in each other's long-term intentions.

Alternatively, this approach could be expedited based on an explicit and independently audited open book arrangement which allows for full transparency of labour and financial resources and provides for a flow of detailed property information into the asset management base. This open book framework should also include sharing of any surpluses generated above an agreed level.

Focus on Realising the Benefits of Partnering

There needs to be early and sustained focus on realizing the benefits that a partnering approach can offer such as the economies of scale and distillation of expertise from working with an established

provider of housing repairs, proven capability in developing IT, strong customer focus and the efficiency savings and community impact which they promise to deliver.

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for implementing each of the above objectives at Melton

5.6 Workforce Development

It is recognised by residents that service quality is directly linked to the development of and investment in a skilled local workforce that understands and identifies with the Council's mission and values and is working to deliver this. In accord with this the partner is expected to be:

- Leading on the development of the workforce and management of repairs delivery staff to build a high performing team that is motivated, skilled and customer focused
- Developing the core job specification for housing repairs operatives to include a wider set of skills and a good communicator providing guidance and coaching to tenants on looking after their home; promoting energy efficiency and advising on heating, ventilation, insulation and lighting
- Cultivating a workforce that is empowered to provide a broader spectrum of assistance to tenants which in turn enables them to understand their impact on the home and how they should be looking after it their more help for tenants and provides a more varied workload
- Developing operatives' role as the eyes and ears of the landlord checking any DIY work and advising on tenants' repair responsibilities; holistic check on the asset during repairs visits; make best use of the time craft operatives spend with tenants and in their homes by recording and using their observations and insight to address tenant and property needs
- Encouraging two way conversations between operatives and customers about looking after their home and provide advice and practical support to do this as safe home ambassadors
- Contributing to workforce leadership, culture and performance by raising the ambition of everyone in the service to realise best practice
- Creating a high productivity work environment through development of a flexible and agile workforce
- Establishing a strong rapport and understanding between the craft workforce and repairs administrators and the client team

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for development of a modern, skilled and flexible workforce

- ***Approach to developing a high performing workforce that is motivated, skilled and customer focused***
- ***Expanding the skill repertoire of craft operatives: coaching and advising tenants on looking after their home, energy efficiency etc.***
- ***Approach to developing operatives' role as the eyes and ears of the landlord checking any DIY work and advising on tenants' repair responsibilities; holistic check on the asset during repairs and maintenance visits; make best use of the time craft operatives spend with tenants and in their homes by record and use their observations and insight to address tenant and property needs***

- *How you would contribute to workforce leadership, culture and performance and raise the ambition of everyone in the service to realise best practice*
- *How you would set about creating a high productivity work environment through development of a flexible and agile workforce*
- *Detailed proposal for the resources to be deployed to meeting this Council objective*

In addition Partners are invited to submit proposals for development of an associated productivity and costing model that drives the commercial viability of the service

- *Description of the principal features of a high productivity and managed cost environment for repairs and maintenance*
- *Approach to measuring and managing productivity of the craft workforce for:*
 - ✓ *Responsive repairs and maintenance*
 - ✓ *Empty property repairs*
 - ✓ *Gas safety and servicing*
 - ✓ *Planned maintenance*
- *Approach to and options for developing and incentivising high productivity*
- *Description of how non-productive time will limited and controlled*
- *Detailed proposal for the resources to be deployed to meeting this Council objective*

5.7 Safety and Compliance

The future partner will hold a key responsibility for ensuring the safety of residents and of the workforce and is expected to:

- Support Melton in providing a comprehensive and effective housing compliance regime as part of the new delivery model with the aim of managing risk and putting in place programmes that give assurance on tenant and property safety
- Provide an accountable construction Health and Safety management service that provides a safe working environment for all staff and for residents and the public
- Developing initiatives and ways of working that support a more environmentally sustainable repairs and maintenance service and bring tangible benefits for residents
- Provide comprehensive health and safety management including:
 - Compliance with all relevant legislation and the Safety Policy of the Council
 - Conduct of risk assessments for work, plant and materials
 - The chain of managerial accountability for Health and Safety
 - Staff briefing and provision of information and training to enable them to work safely at all times
 - Monitoring of day to day compliance with health and safety requirements
 - Investigation of accidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses and recommendations for preventing them in future

- Contribute to the development and implementation of a compliance management system for asbestos, water quality, gas and electrical safety and for fire risk assessment and safety

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for the introduction of safety and compliance management systems

- **Description of and approach to a comprehensive and effective housing compliance regime to manage risk and help guarantee tenant and property safety**
- **Description of and approach to providing a comprehensive construction Health and Safety management service that provides a safe working environment for all staff and for residents and the public**
- **Description of value for money measures that you would introduce for a more environmentally sustainable repairs and maintenance service**

5.8 Managerial expertise and technical capacity

The repairs and maintenance partner is expected to bring the managerial expertise and technical capacity that will enable Melton to meet key service objectives:

- Enhanced customer expectations around service delivery timescales, order progress notification and testing of customer satisfaction driven by wider consumer experience of ordering products and services online
- The growth of dynamic scheduling and offering a range of appointment slots that improve convenience for tenants
- Improved communication with the customer and keeping them well informed throughout the repairs process
- Development and expansion of property compliance requirements e.g. fire safety in flatted premises
- Mobile working and the wider application of new technology to facilitate operational communication e.g. use of photographs and apps to confirm attendance, record property condition and evidence work undertaken
- Enhanced role of the repairs operative visit to identify any matters relating to the tenancy or the property that the landlord should be aware of including compliance, health and safety and safeguarding issues

Appointing a repairs and maintenance delivery partner is designed to create a collaborative approach to maximise the focus on realising the Council's strategic objectives for the service and to reduce client exposure to risk as a consequence. It is the Council's intention that the arrangement can be shaped to ensure there is substantial risk transfer to the service provider by providing the option of adopting a model of remuneration that is dependent upon achievement of performance and financial targets.

The repairs and maintenance partner is expected to provide Melton with immediate access to:

- Provision of experienced and knowledgeable operational management to shape, lead and manage the transferring workforce and newly appointed operatives and to direct the repairs process in line with specified customer care, quality and value for money objectives

- Highly functional and proven IT systems that will meet all of the required business and communication needs, introducing and integrating better IT systems for delivering an effective repairs and maintenance service
- Delivery of a quality service through implementation of effective business processes and procedures that are efficient and deliver value for money,
- A proven productivity and costing model which sits at the heart of and is fully integrated with the business process and information management system and enables active management of cost reduction
- Supply Chain Development: developing innovative and better materials, subcontracting and other supply chain models and arrangements to ensure that value for money is being tested and improved on a continuous basis.
- Added value services and transfer of commercial know-how to bring innovation to the way in which services are provided; implementation of excellent HR practices that build a high performing team that is motivated, skilled and customer focused
- Commercial marketing capability and preferential brand recognition that enhances reputation and credibility

The key objectives for this approach are to: -

- Improve the timeliness, quality and reliability of repairs and maintenance service delivery to Melton residents
- Create a productive work environment characterised by good communication and in which staff share in the success of the service
- Realise the commercial benefits of collaborative partnering with a trusted private sector partner
- Create opportunities for greater flexibility and innovation that will benefit residents
- Reduce the cost and risk to the Council of delivering the service

The partnering approach being adopted at Melton envisages the Council as the operational client retaining effective control and assurance over service direction and continuity whilst the partner provider supplies the proven management expertise, capacity and skills to establish a viable business process and to lead an enhanced service.

The market for provision of repairs and maintenance partnering is well established. It is recognized that creating the conditions for the success of a repairs and maintenance partnering contract and securing the full benefits of the new arrangement will require:

- Clear leadership by example and ongoing engagement from senior management so that the partnering ethos and the benefits of a commercial approach and techniques can imbue the whole organisation
- Briefing, training and induction for the stakeholders, staff and managers involved so that they are receptive, reassured and have realistic expectations about the benefits that the partnering can confer
- Involvement of tenants and residents from the outset in a clearly structured framework that provides transparency for all aspects of the arrangement and gives them a prominent role in identifying aspects of the service that should receive attention and in shaping the outcomes sought

- A relentless focus upon early benefit realisation in the form of cost reduction, service enhancements and the development of an increasingly lean client model

Repairs Delivery Partner

The principal benefits will be that of having the insight and know-how of an experienced and commercially astute management team that understands the sector. This brings capacity and focus to the new Housing repairs and delivery model and in particular to ensuring that the service is quickly able to generate and evidence progress in improving performance, value and user satisfaction that the Council is seeking. The partner will be expected to:

- Contribute to the design and implementation of the new housing repairs and delivery model and bring aspects of good practice and added value
- Contribute to creating efficient repairs and maintenance business processes
- Initiate and promulgate commercial awareness across the service
- Focus upon cost reduction through innovation and introduction of good practice e.g. move to a new pricing model that supports reduced transaction costs
- Improving the value added to the building assets through repairs and maintenance
- Intelligent use of data and business analysis to inform organisational learning
- Supporting the challenge of changing tenant behaviour to take greater responsibility for looking after their home
- Developing the role and contribution of operatives e.g. multiskilling, flexibility, better communication with and coaching of tenants
- Increasing customer satisfaction levels and contributes to wider community benefit

A high performing housing repairs and maintenance service

Based upon high performing housing repairs and maintenance contracts across the country we consider that the ingredients of a successful repairs and maintenance partnership for Melton will display the following features and characteristics:

- Capitalise upon the opportunities that arise out of the service integration that the new housing repairs delivery model presents to shorten and streamline business processes, simplify and improve communication and reduce waste and duplication across all aspects of repairs and maintenance
- Establishment of trust and credibility through open and honest communication between corporate asset management or the strategic client, the operational client team, the commercial delivery partner and all stakeholders
- Collaborative working that focuses on stretching service improvement objectives driven by intelligent analysis of delivery outcomes and feedback which are kept under continuous review
- Excellent communication and keeping tenants and residents fully informed throughout all repairs and maintenance processes that affect them
- High quality and fully compliant repairs work delivered by well trained, committed and flexible multi-skilled operatives
- Generates local employment and training opportunities and supports and sponsors worthwhile community activities and regeneration

- Analysis and understanding of repairs and maintenance demand which informs planned replacement and renewal programmes and targets heavy users of the service for diagnostic visits and preventative works
- Strong understanding of the resident profile and shaping of services flexibly to meet individual customer needs
- Good coordination of operatives in the field to meeting emergencies and appointments and maximising Right First Time completion of responsive repairs
- Customer engagement with evaluation of all aspects of service delivery including quality, convenience and value for money
- Optimises the prudent use of resources and seeks to minimise non-productive time and administration delays
- Prioritises resident safety through a robust compliance regime which gives assurance that all known or predictable risks are being actively managed
- Explicitly addresses and allows for all safeguarding issues as part of standard business processes and adopts all appropriate health and safety measures
- Responds to and remedies all complaints quickly and seeks to identify, understand and remedy the underlying causes in order to prevent any recurrence

General Duties and Requirements of the Partner

- Working collaboratively with Council staff to implement appropriate systems, processes and controls which will enable Melton to deliver the published repairs and maintenance service standards in a cost effective and commercially astute way achieving measured performance targets and generating reliable and accurate information about property condition and household wellbeing
- Lead on identifying areas of the repairs and maintenance service where service impact, quality and efficiency can be improved and on developing practical solutions which are deliverable within targeted timescales and yield verifiable results that benefit residents, the Council and its stakeholders
- Development and implementation of reliable and workable mechanisms for generating coherent customer insight and profiling for repairs and maintenance delivery and for securing improving levels of customer feedback and satisfaction with service outcomes
- Development of constructive and open working relationships with Council managers and staff and other partner organisations
- Implement effective systems and arrangements that promote timely communication and transfer of relevant technical, professional and commercial knowledge systems to Council staff
- Ensure that all work undertaken for the Council meets standards that are fully consistent with future achievement of the Customer Service Excellence Standard and Investor in People accreditation
- Provide strategic and operational support to the client team to establish effective business planning arrangements that are commensurate with realisation of the recognised repairs and maintenance service objectives and can deliver the priorities of the Council, expressed views of tenants
- Contribute to and where directed programme manage and coordinate the staff-led organisation-wide reviews of current business processes and practice to improve outcomes for residents and increase the overall efficiency of the repairs maintenance service

- Work with managers to scrutinise cost and income trends, ensuring that there is effective financial management of the trading account and budgets;
- Initiate and support measures designed to widen tenant and resident involvement in actively testing and appraising service quality and value for money and provide resources and technical input that enables the learning and insight generated to add value to the service
- Provide input on all aspects of supply chain management and procurement including sourcing new suppliers and innovative products, materials and techniques that can enhance technical efficiency and provide good value for money
- Contribute to the development and implementation of effective change management processes which give staff appropriate levels of ownership and influence over service design so that they take responsibility for successful delivery and benefit realisation
- Contribute to the establishment of effective repairs and maintenance ICT integration which permits seamless and integrated workflow and links unproblematically to key ancillary systems

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for implementing this at Melton

5.9 Service Improvement Objectives

The partner is expected to contribute to the following shared service improvement objectives and to deliver these through collaborative working with the client team:

1. *Viable end to end repairs business process*
2. *Development and application of a new method of ordering, specifying, measuring and pricing repairs and maintenance work that capitalises upon service integration to reduce transaction costs*
3. *Development of an associated productivity and costing model that drives the commercial viability of the service*
4. *Introduction of a strategic approach to asset management*
5. *Strengthening of customer focus, insight and learning*
6. *Development of a modern, skilled and flexible workforce*
7. *Introduction of housing repairs and maintenance supply chain management system*
8. *Development of a modern integrated ICT system for repairs and maintenance including works ordering, planning, scheduling and mobile working for operatives*
9. *Introduction of safety and compliance management systems*

Potential partners are invited to present viable proposals for implementing this at Melton

5.10 Introduction of housing repairs and maintenance supply chain management system

Partners proposals are sought on:

- ***Approach to reviewing and rationalisation of materials and subcontractor supply chain***
- ***Options for designing and optimising supply chain arrangements with suppliers and subcontractors to ensure that value for money is being achieved.***
- ***Approach to review of materials provision for craft operatives to ensure that it optimises productive use of available time***
- ***Options for the development of greater economies of scale than currently available to Gateshead***
- ***Detailed proposal for the resources to be deployed in meeting this Council objective***