

Strategic Housing and Planning Committee

11 September 2018

KRiSP Review of Storage and updated Terms of Reference

Report by Director, Growth

Call-in deadline - Tuesday 25 September 2018 at 5pm

Purpose

To consider the recommendations in the KRiSP Storage report and the housing management response and agree a way forward.

Recommendations of the Portfolio Holder for Housing

To **Resolve** that -

1. The housing management response to the KRiSP storage review report recommendations (set out in **Annex 2**) be agreed;
2. The action plan (set out in **Annex 3**) be approved including the proposal that a co-design workshop is established to take forward some of the recommendations;
3. The updated KRiSP terms of reference (set out in **Annex 4**) are approved.

Key Points

- A. Attached at **Annex 1** is the resident scrutiny panel report into storage facilities in RBK owned residential properties. The report sets out a number of findings and contains 6 recommendations which committee members are requested to consider. These cover the areas of storage policy, register, charging, allocations, monitoring and future usage.
- B. Notable findings included an inconsistency in policy around storage allocation and monitoring and charging, a lack of oversight into who is using storage and for what purpose, and a potential missed opportunity for revenue. A resident survey found the key priorities for storage to be bicycles, garden equipment, buggies and mobility scooters. The report commended the recent installation of Go Cycle bike hangars on some estates which are well used.
- C. Attached at **Annexes 2 and 3** are the Housing Managers' response to the recommendations and a proposed action plan to take them forward.
- D. All recommendations were accepted with the exception of recommendation 5 (monitoring of storage to ensure safety) which was partially accepted. The management team mitigated that the existing policies / health and safety inspections in place were adequate to ensure safety and that with over 1100 storage units in the borough, routine monitoring of all units would not be proportionate or a good use of resources. However it was agreed as part of the action plan to consult with resident service officers and fire risk assessors to identify all high risk storage areas and ensure protective measures are in place to reduce risk.
- E. Committee members are requested to agree the management response and approve the proposed actions to address the recommendations and timescales for delivery.

- F. Committee members are requested to approve the establishment of a co-design workshop to take forward some of the recommendations. This is proposed in order to maximise resident engagement and consultation prior to implementing any changes to storage policy and charging. Proposed timescales for delivery are September to December 2018.
- G. **Annex 4** sets out the updated KRiSP terms of reference (TOR) which the committee are requested to approve. Key changes to the TOR include the following:
- Clarification of the roles of the council in supporting the panel
 - Introduction of a maximum term of appointment for members
 - Increase in the remuneration for the panel Chair from £25 to £50 per panel meeting, in recognition of the additional work and time this role requires
 - Clear guidelines for the appointment and role of the independent mentor
 - A service review process flowchart
 - Officer commitment to provision of 6 monthly updates on the RAG rated action plans for each review to the KRiSP panel

Context

1. As part of the Council's commitment to co-regulation, the Kingston Resident Scrutiny Panel (KRiSP) was set up in 2013 to investigate RBK Housing Service delivery, against RBK's own housing standards and industry best practice, making recommendations for improvements that will benefit residents and the Council. The storage review is the panel's 7th investigation.
2. The investigation was undertaken by 8 KRiSP panel members over a period of 5 months from October 2017 to March 2018. The review included the following tasks:
 - Desktop review
 - Estates tour
 - Staff Interviews
 - Interviews with other Council for benchmarking / identification of good practice
 - Resident engagement in the form of interviews, a survey and mystery shopping
3. Following completion of the review report, housing management officers met with the KRiSP Chair and review lead to discuss the management response. The action plan to address the recommendations was developed in consultation with panel members
4. The KRiSP panel took part in an away day in February 2018, facilitated by an independent mentor and attended by the housing management team. Outcomes of the away day included an acknowledgement that the panel membership needed to be increased in order to:
 - reduce burden on existing members
 - ensure the scrutiny function is representative of the resident population
5. As part of the commitment to increase membership, work was undertaken to review the TOR (**Annex 4**). KRiSP have partnered with Pinnacle (the organisation contracted to facilitate resident engagement in Kingston housing services) to plan a recruitment drive over the Summer and Autumn of 2018. This will include 2 recruitment days taking place in September and training for new

members later in the year. KRiSP will also be advertising an opportunity for a resident to take on an administrative role for the panel.

Additional learning from the review

6. KRiSP used electronic surveying for the first time in this review. This had the benefit of saving time, reaching a wider selection of residents and achieving a higher response rate. However, the google form did not capture equalities information and KRiSP cannot be 100% certain that the views captured a representative and diverse range of tenants and leaseholders. For future surveys, KRiSP will request equalities information in order to monitor this.
7. In an addendum to the storage review report, KRiSP highlighted difficulties they experienced getting engagement from some RBK staff and resident associations. Housing management consider that panel members were given access to an adequate number of staff to interview but that there may have been some delays in making arrangements. To address this going forward, and as part of the TOR review, it was agreed that a lead officer for each review be appointed in the area of scrutiny, to act as a single point of contact. RBK recognises the importance of the work that KRiSP undertakes in the borough and is committed to supporting panel members to carry out reviews in a timely manner.

Consultations

8. To inform the storage review, KRiSP carried out a resident engagement survey using Google Forms. The form was sent to 826 E-mail addresses of tenants and leaseholders. 720 of these were successfully delivered with 113 responses received (a response rate of 15.7%). Of these, 42.5% were leaseholders and 57.5% were tenants.
9. A summary of the key responses is outlined below

Residents	Number	%
Have access to outside storage	62	54.9
Have sufficient storage	37 (of 51 responses)	72.5
Know how to request storage	19	16.8
Would be willing to pay for storage	49	43.4
Would not be willing to pay for storage	43	38.1
Can access their storage easily	48 (of 51 responses)	94.1

Timescale

10. It is proposed that the storage review co-design workshop is set up by the end of September 2018 with work completed by end Dec 2018. Roll out of revised policies / systems is anticipated by end Jan 2019.
11. Application of the updated TOR will be immediate upon approval with recruitment events taking place in September 2018.

Resource Implications

12. There are some internal resource implications for delivery of the storage review action plan. This will principally be officer time but with the potential to be offset by additional income generation if the co-design group makes recommendations to instigate a charging policy for storage facilities across the borough
13. The management response to recommendation 5 includes a commitment to take action to secure unlocked storage facilities. This may require a small spend in terms of additional padlocks / lock changes where required. It has been confirmed that this can adequately be resourced from existing estates and repairs budgets.
14. Continued provision of independent external mentoring service to KRiSP at a cost of up to £3000 per annum. At present this is adequately resourced from within the Strategy and Performance Consultancy budget. Benchmarking against other providers has demonstrated the contract represents good value for money and KRiSP panel members welcome the continuation of this valuable resource.
15. The updated TOR increases the KRiSP Chair remuneration to £50 per panel meeting. With a maximum of 6 meetings per year, this represents a cost of up to £300 per annum, an increase of £150 per annum on the current level.
16. Total remuneration for a maximum of 20 panel members would not exceed £8000 pa. An additional £2K pa has been allocated for additional expenses and childcare costs to enable panel members with caring responsibilities to attend. With the £3K budgeted for independent mentor expenses, the total forecast pa is £13K for KRiSP. This can be adequately resourced from within the current HRA budget.

Legal Implications

17. None at this stage for the storage review, however legal colleagues will be consulted on any subsequent changes to policy / charging for tenants that may be proposed through the storage co-design workshop
18. There are no legal implications for the updated TOR

Risk Assessment

19. Risk assessments to take place on identified high risk storage areas as part of the agreed action plan

Equalities Impact Assessment

20. An EQIA is not required at this stage as there is no change to existing policy. Subject to approval of the committee, recommendations contained within the KRiSP report will be taken forward using a co-design workshop. Any subsequent policy changes recommended will be subject to an EQIA prior to approval and implementation.

Health Implications

21. The report noted the high demand for bicycle storage both for adults and children and noted that the Go Cycles hangars were well used with some full and operating a waiting list. The provision of bicycle storage facilities improves resident transport choices and brings with it positive health benefits from a fitness and environmental perspective.

Road Network Implications

22. None arising from the specific recommendations of this report

Environmental and Air Quality Implications

23. None arising from the specific recommendations of this report

Background papers are held by the author of the report: Kelly Shirley, Policy, Service development and Partnerships Officer, kelly.shirley@kingston.gov.uk Tel: 020 8437 5040

List of Background papers

Appendices to storage investigation report

Appendix A: Desktop Review Summary

Appendix B: Resident Survey

Appendix C: Estates Tour Report & Additional Photos folder

Appendix D: Shed Tenancy agreement

Appendix E: Interviews with Andrew Donaldson, Richard Grainger, Kate Bowers & Anthonia Shodiya

Appendix F: Interviews with Hounslow & Sutton

Appendix G: Mystery shopping

Appendix H: RBK website re GoCycle Hangars information

Appendix I: Known storage data Oct 17