



Council Briefing Note 27th September 2023

**HOUSING & PROPERTY SERVICES PORTFOLIO
– COUNCILLOR SIMY DHYANI**

Housing Operations

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- We are providing ongoing tenancy sustainment support & enablement services for residents.
- We have improved satisfaction results for residents living in temporary accommodation.
- We have delivered a housing needs & allocations briefing to members of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- We have completed over 40 nominations for Hightown's new affordable housing development in Maylands.
- We have completed allocations to the Council's new build developments at Beechfield, Dione Road, Housewood End & Wilstone.
- Our waste pilot on housing estates has been completed which will inform our Housing Transformation Programme going forward.
- We have reviewed elements of our cleaning service & improved workforce scheduling.

Strategic or significant operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- There has been an increase in individuals requiring homeless, housing help or support, including refugees with complex needs resulting in extended casework timescales and time in temporary accommodation

Safe Communities

Significant service achievements since last Council meeting:

- The CCTV teams activity has been pivotal in securing a conviction of a Hemel Hempstead resident for GBH, following infliction of significant injuries to the victim.
- 3 civil penalties for Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing offences served, 1 paid in full & 2 payment plans agreed.
- 1 prohibition & 2 housing improvement notices have been served.
- We have helped 84 afghan individuals across 24 households to access accommodation in the private sector – alleviating demand for temporary accommodation and homelessness casework support.
- We have developed a new Humanitarian Response service funded via government grant to provide ongoing resettlement support.

Strategic or significant operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- We are currently monitoring community tensions and activity that could lead to counter-terrorism concerns.
- We are reviewing the Council's Anti Social Behaviour case review procedure, in order to enhance the opportunity to hear the victim's voice.

Property Services

Significant service achievements since the last Council meeting:

- The upgrades of two communal heating systems at supported housing schemes are near completion. These upgrades will introduce renewable technologies that will reduce our running costs and carbon footprint. The installations were completed over the summer months to reduce tenant disruption
- Fire safety works are on site at Gade Tower. The project will upgrade all doors and include refurbishment of the communal areas.
- Non-compliant decking material present on the balconies at Kylna Court has been removed and replaced. The approved designs to remediate the materials on the roof top terrace are going through the approval process and we hope to be on site before the end of this financial year.
- All five buildings over 18 metres have been registered with the Building Safety Regulator and the Council has provided supplementary information, where requested.
- 10 buildings that are measured above 11 metres are being inspected quarterly to ensure we comply with the door inspection regime brought in under the Building Safety Act.
- Successful drop In Session have been held at Emma Rothschild Court with residents, councillors and Key DBC staff, with positive feedback from residents.
- Planned works programme schedules have been finalised for the remainder of the financial year with clear and measurable targets.
- Damp & Mould inspections has been completed and relevant works raised.
- The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1 funding project at Northend has been completed. 24 homes were included in the energy efficiency project that has increased the average EPC of these properties up to an A. Some external landscaping works remain that will provide the finishing touches to a successful project.

Strategic or significant operational matters which your service would like full Council to be aware of:

- On the 7 September the government issued new guidance relating to damp and mould '*Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home*' The Council's policy is being reviewed in-line with this document and will re-issued.
- Purchase of Osborne Property Services by Cardo Group – Initial due diligence checks have been completed and Council officers are meeting with the Cardo Group Senior leadership team in October.
- Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) identified in 3 blocks in small sections above plant rooms and a communal staircase – All impacted properties have been written to and action taken to install protective decking beneath the RAAC was completed on 11th September. This protective decking will remain in place until the

RAAC has been fully removed as part of roof replacement works due to be completed this financial year.

Strategic Housing & Delivery

Significant service achievements since last Council meeting:

- We have handed over two new build developments in Dione Road, Hemel Hempstead – 4 social rented houses and Barton Close, Wilstone – 6 social rented houses
- We have received Homes England Grant allocations of **£10.9m** in total for 56 social rented flats at Paradise Depot and 32 flats and houses for social rent at Marchmont Fields.
- We are planning a Registered Providers Forum in November.
- An independent review of resident engagement has commenced.
- The Tenants & Leaseholders Committee met in July to scrutinise our approach to building safety and provided helpful and positive feedback.