



Council Briefing Note 15th November 2023

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

Property Services

Resident Engagement Strategies for High Rise Blocks

Block specific resident engagement strategies are being developed with consultation events taking place at five developments in October and November. The first two events (Pelham Court and Fennycroft Road) have been well received with constructive feedback from residents. We have started actioning the resident consultation strategies for the high risk blocks owned by the Council. There was a good turnout of residents at Pelham court and staff were able to share the bespoke safety strategy for the block and pick up and address other general concerns (and appreciation) fed back from residents. All high risk blocks will have been visited by the end of November 23.

RAAC

The programme has been finalised to complete the RAAC replacement following interim safety measures being completed. All works are to be completed by March 24.

Repairs, Maintenance and Capital Delivery Commissioning Process

A scope of works has been finalised for the future contract with the commercial procurement route to be agreed with Cabinet in January 24. Once agreed, the Council will undertake a pre-tender market dialogue event to discuss the Council's requirements with the aim to commence the procurement process in April 24.

Domestic Heating and Ventilation re-procurement Process

The Council is currently reviewing Expression of Interest documents from bidders (known as Supplier Questionnaires) to identify companies to short list and invite to tender for the contract. The moderation process took place on Friday 27th October 23, with the tender process having commenced w/c 30th October 2023.

Interim Contract Strategy

Approval to award a number of non-compliant contracts was approved by Cabinet on the 17th October 23. The Council are now finalising the final contract documentation before providing these to Contractors for comment. This were also a number of contract areas where further works are required, so the team will continue to work on these prior to obtaining formal sign-off from the Strategic Director of Housing and Property Services.

Total Asset Management Contract Improvement Plan

Work has now commenced on the contract improvement plan, which is being managed by the Commercial Contract Manager who will work with colleagues across the Council and Osborne Property Services.

Contract Review

Meetings are taking place with Heads of Service across Housing and Property Services to 1) identify future contract requirements and ensure these are captured on the Housing and Property Services Procurement Forward Plan; and 2) review current contract management arrangements for all live and procurement compliant contracts.

Performance

Improvements have been reported in 6 key Performance Indicators, including the number of repairs completed on time, appointments made and kept, and first time fix rates.

Stock Condition Survey

All stock condition survey data has been loaded into the MRI Asset Test system, and we are conducting 'user acceptance testing' to resolve any issues before we sign off to implement these modules in our live system.

Osborne Property Services Ltd (OPSL)

A service improvement plan has been finalised with OPSL.

Condensation, Damp and Mould

Workshops have been held with approx. 60 residents to increase awareness and provide research data within the Net Zero innovation programme.

Communal Heating Systems Upgrades

The upgrades of two communal heating systems at supported housing schemes have been completed. One scheme (Betty Patterson House) was also suitable for Solar PV panels that have been installed. These upgrades will introduce renewable technologies (air source heat pumps) that will reduce our running costs and carbon footprint. The installations were completed over the summer months to reduce tenant disruption.

Fire Safety

Fire safety works at Gade Tower are near completion with 100% of flat entrance doors having been replaced. Internal decorations have commenced, and the lift replacement programme is also now on site

Following the completion of the remedial works to replace non-compliant materials to the balconies at Kylna Court, the removal of non-compliant decking material on the rooftop gardens has now commenced. Scaffolding has been erected and the old system will be taken down in the coming weeks followed by the installation of a compliant Ali-Deck system.

Fire safety projects at Langley House and Phyllis Courtnage House have been tendered and contracts awarded; work will be completed this financial year. An additional fire safety tender is currently live for blocks of flats at Townsend and Church Street; this project is subject to Section 20 consultation.

Community Alarm System Upgrades

The community alarm system at William Crook House has been upgraded with fire detection also being addressed at the same time. The next scheme on the programme is Phyllis Courtnage House.

Housing Operations

The Supported Housing Service was successful in assessment for EROSH and achieved re-accreditation.

The service led a positively received tenant mystery movie event in partnership with Old Town Hall team.

Engagement has taken place with the Tenant Improvement Panel to gain support for a Community Garden proposal, and the first spade was put in the ground on 30 October.

Cabinet approval has been gained to apply to vary the council's lease agreement.

The team have met the commitment to visit all HRA streets, with follow up actions & improvement plans in place.

Safe Communities

Improved satisfaction ratings for ASB have been achieved & a successful outcome in a long standing ASB case in partnership with HCC.

One property has been acquired via the Local Authority Housing Fund with a further two acquisitions in pipeline, to provide resettlement opportunities for asylum seekers.

Two Private Rented Sector warrants have been executed with support of Scorpion Team (Police) due to unlicensed HMO activity in Bennetts End.

Engagement has taken place with the Strategic Migration partnership to deliver wellbeing & employability skills support for overseas nationals.

Strategic Housing & Delivery

New Housing Forum with Registered Providers

The Council's first Housing Forum with Registered Providers takes place on the 14th November with our local housing association partners. The aim is to hold this event at least annually to promote partnership working to help meet the housing needs of Dacorum residents.

New Developments

Construction work is due to start at two new housing developments for the Council in November. Marchmont Fields and Paradise Depot, both in Hemel Hempstead, will provide 32 and 56 new social rented homes once they are completed in 2025/26. A meet the contractor event is being held for local residents on the 7th November.

Dacorum Borough Council has marked the completion of six new council homes near Tring. The homes are a mixture of two and three-bedroom houses, providing much needed housing for social rent in the village of Wilstone. One house is fully accessible. The formal opening ceremony was held on the 18th October with the ribbon cut by myself together with one of the new residents.

The homes were built on under-used Council land and are designed to complement the surrounding properties. They are energy-efficient and feature photovoltaic panels, electric air source heat pump heating/hot water and increased insulation. Each home has an electric charger point and a private parking bay.