



Council Briefing Note 17th April 2024

HOUSING & PROPERTY PORTFOLIO – COUNCILLOR SIMY DHYANI

Housing Operations

- Completion of 'Planet Garden' for residents in partnership with Sunnyside.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy developed in partnership with Community Safety Team to reflect new ASB Powers and presented to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 13 March.
- GIS mapping across HRA estates to refresh data for hard and soft landscaping (inclusive of high hedges and trees on amenity land), this will support review of grounds maintenance delivery and service charges.
- Finalised a filming protocol to enable consideration of filming on HRA sites.
- Engaged with HCC and Legal Services to support delivery of improvements to sustainable travel links.
- Responded to governments consultation on Social Housing Allocations.
- Revised mutual exchange policy to ensure best use of HRA stock.
- Delivered presentation in partnership with HCC & West Essex & Essex ICB colleagues in relation to Housing & Health.

Safe Communities

- Refresh of the Safeguarding Policy to provide clearer separation between Safeguarding responsibilities in relation to Children and Adults.
- Provided peer support to local registered provider in reviewing their anti-social behaviour framework.
- Installed additional deployable CCTV cameras to support enhanced monitoring of locality anti-social behaviour activity.
- Developed an internal locality-based problem-solving framework, to support the wider Community Safety Partnership governance structure.
- Supported a Police bid for additional funding to the Police & Crime Commissioner.
- Finalised a survey of all residents to inform the Community Safety Partnership priorities.
- Delivered presentation to Health & Wellbeing Committee to raise awareness of Domestic Abuse.

Property

- Fire safety upgrade works at two tower blocks in Eastwick Row have commenced. On completion of these works, internal decorations will also be completed. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of April.
- Fire remedial repairs project has delivered positive results and managed out over 100 risks to date. Phase two of the project is currently being developed
- Planning permission has been submitted for new hybrid heating system installations at Dudley House and Oaklawn
- 100% domestic gas compliance was achieved for a third month in a row
- Stakeholder event took place on the 11th March with the key decision makers for the future Repairs and Maintenance contract. Next steps are to provide an update of progress with the

new Task and Finish Group, engage with the market to see what the market has to offer against the Council's requirements and develop working groups for key stakeholders for key workstreams.

- We have now signed 27 contracts under the Interim Contract Strategy project.
- Osborne re-branding is now complete and they are now known as Cardo.
- Cardo have two damp and mould specialist operatives starting in April. Their focus will be on treatment of mould to reduce the number of open cases we currently have.
- RAAC removal/remediation programme is on schedule to be completed by the end of March 2024

Strategic Housing & Delivery

- Cabinet approved award of Principal contractor for Eastwick Row is Bugler Developments Limited. Contract documents are in the process of being prepared so that works can recommence in May.
- A new Local Connection policy for First Homes and all other affordable home ownership tenures was taken through Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 13th March.
- The Interim Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guide is progressing alongside the Local Connection Policy. Both are targeting Cabinet in May.
- A team from DHLUC visited the Council on the 7th March and as part of that visit they went to see the on-going construction of Mountbatten View in Paradise area of Hemel Hempstead which is due to complete in January 2025.
- The team are preparing several submissions for Inside Housing Awards 2024 to highlight the work of the Development Team and the schemes being developed.
- Strategic Asset Review – Tender submissions for the Housing Estate Review are currently being adjudicated.
- The recent Homes England scheme audit report will be going to the Council's Audit Committee to report the good rating received on the 20th March.
- The development programme for new build homes is progressing well and once Eastwick Row re-commences there will be 264 homes in construction – all for social rent.
- We received the results from the 'TPAS Smart plus' resident engagement review in January. We have a strong base to build upon but need a greater focus on governance and transparency and scrutiny. To assist we will continue working with TPAS to re-engineer services starting at the end of March 24.
- Housing Strategy has now been signed off. It has benefitted from broad consultation and has a clear Dacorum focus. There will be a formal launch towards the end of May.
- We have had notification from the Regulator that we will be inspected in Q1 of 24/25. We are therefore preparing for this inspection with the SQA team being the main point of contact for co-ordinating our response.