



## Council Briefing Note

### HOUSING & PROPERTY SERVICES PORTFOLIO

#### Housing Operations

- The number left remaining on flexible tenancies has dropped below 1,000, marking a significant milestone.
- Applicants on the housing register who haven't bid in the last 12 months, have been written to asking if they wish to remain on the register. This helps us to improve our data, administration of the register and assess demand for housing.
- A downsizing focus group has been completed with existing tenants; this is to help inform our approach to under-occupancy through our Help to Move policy.
- Review of existing rent and licence fee functions to identify opportunities to achieve efficiencies in process.
- SH-Tunstall Remediation Notice has been closed due to significant improvement with the service and failsafe's being implemented.
- CCTV at 3 schemes has been arranged using capital grant funding.

#### Safe Communities

- Close liaison with community safety partners to monitor unrest and community cohesion concerns post national unrest/incidences.
- Collaborative cross departmental work to improve neighbourhood working and resident engagement.
- Service of 2 notice of intent to issue Civil Penalties (final yet to be served) totalling £12,500
- Warrant approved by St Albans Magistrates Court for entry into property in the Old Town for investigations in relation to a potential breach of a Housing Act 2004 Emergency Prohibition Order.
- Successful partnership working across the Homeless Prevention and Humanitarian Response teams has enabled 2 single persons (refugees) to be housed in a HMO from temporary accommodation.
- Community Safety hosted a well attended training session on prevent in the Forum for DBC Officers and our partners across Herts. Officers increased their knowledge and understanding of: terrorist organisations, radicalisation and the support available to them in order to tackle threats of extremism.
- A deployable CCTV camera was installed in Warners End to capture ASB and crime
- The CCTV Team supported the Neighbourhood Management service to mitigate the risk at Berkhamsted Car Park (Lower Kings Road). The team monitored the fire alarm for two weeks via their emergency help point until Neighbourhood Management were able to procure an external contractor to monitor the fire alarm.
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## **Strategic Housing & Delivery**

- Randall's Ride development in Hemel Hempstead handed over at the end of July providing 30 new 1 and 2 bed roomed flats for social rent.
- The proposed changes the National Planning Policy Framework and other housing delivery related government announcements are being analysed by the Strategic Housing, Investment and Regeneration Team.
- Work has recommenced at Eastwick Row in Adeyfield with Bugler Development Limited on site as the Council's main contractor. The development is due for completion late summer 2025 and will provide 34 x 1 and 2 bed flats.
- Interviews with 11 organisations expressing an interest in working with the Council as part of an Investment Partnership took place at the end of July. The interviews are helping to inform the next steps in the formal process to select an investment partner.

## **Strategy, Quality and Assurance**

- The Regulator for Social Housing released their regulatory judgement on 14th August, giving Dacorum Borough Council a C2 grading. Areas for improvement are being fed into an action plan, which will be cross-referenced against other service improvement plans and HTIP.
- TPAS have delivered their Tenant Engagement Re-engineering Exercise report to HSLT, with key recommendations for how we can better engage with our residents. We are now developing this into an action plan with the key deliverables to deliver a new engagement framework and Get Involved Strategy.

## **Property**

- The total number of open repair orders has reduced from 2883 in April 2024 to 1867 at 9th August 2024 and is continuing to reduce.
- The number of repair orders older than 30 days is also falling, from 1104 in April to 343 on 9th August 2024. This is reducing the number of complaints received.
- Using CX Feedback we can see satisfaction with the repairs service has increased each month and currently averages at 71% since the introduction of CX feedback.
- All surveys are reviewed and anything that needs follow ups are sent to the relevant team, we expect this to further decrease complaints received.
- To further increase satisfaction, we are focusing on first time fix, as we know this is our main driver to increase satisfaction, which is currently 91% when there is a first-time fix.
- Every comment on a survey expressing dissatisfaction with a repair is followed up, which we expect to reduce the number of complaints.
- The planned maintenance programme is on track to be delivered. Roofing repairs are contributing to a significant pressure on the revenue budget, so we are looking at how we can help address this with an increased focus on renewals.
- Overall, the volume of known Decent Homes failures has reduced from 206 to 140 since the start of April as work is completed.
- Our annual programme of 2000 stock condition surveys and EPCs remains on track to be completed before December.
- The EICR programme performance continues to improve with only 1 dwelling where we cannot evidence an EICR certificate and 32 properties now out of target (8 are at legal stage).
- Of the 444 Flat Fire door inspections required, 384 have been completed with more appointment being made every week.

- There are currently only 38 outstanding high risk FRA actions across 1,102 blocks of flats. Of these actions, 19 have been issued to a contractor to resolve and the other 19 are on the planned works programme.
- All properties that were due a gas safety check by the end of July have been completed.