

REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 7 DECEMBER 2021

TITLE: DELIVERY OF COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING PROGRAMME – UPDATE

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RECOMMENDED that Committee:

- A** Notes the progress made on delivering the recommendations of the Scrutiny Report on Council Housebuilding.

BACKGROUND

1. In March 2021 the Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet that the recommendations set out in the Delivery of Council House Building programme scrutiny report presented by appointed consultants be adopted.
2. There are a total of 20 recommendations contained within the report covering both strategic and operational aspects.
3. Since the adoption of the report, the Regeneration, Housing and Planning teams have worked together on progressing the recommendations to help support the successful delivery of a Council Housebuilding programme.
4. Appendix A highlights the progress made on each of the recommendations.

ISSUES/PROPOSALS

5. The recommendations covered a wide range of areas of work which included measures aimed at improving the understanding of the supply and demand for Council Housing in order to influence what is built as part of the Council House building programme, ensuring adequate staff are employed and that existing staff have access to project management training.
6. Work has continued on the development of new Housing Strategy which is due to be considered by the Councils' Policy Development Working Group and Cabinet early in 2022. The Housing Strategy covers a number of priorities that

includes “Creating a suitable supply of new housing to meet local housing needs” under which the objective of “Develop a Council Housebuilding Programme” is included.

7. In addition to the Housing Strategy a further, more detailed document called the Council Housebuilding Delivery Plan is being developed. This is a framework that outlines the processes and decision making points linked to Council Housebuilding. It is not a public document as it includes details that are commercially sensitive. It covers details on the processes to be undertaken to develop the pipeline of future Council Housebuilding including undertaking feasibility studies on sites and how sites are prioritised, deciding on what is due to be built on each site, assumptions linked to financial modelling and how schemes are to be funded as well as outlining practical aspects of the housebuilding process including the use of professional services and contractors.
8. The Council House building Delivery Plan document will be a live document that will be updated as new practices are adopted and others are reviewed and refreshed.
9. The Council Housebuilding Delivery Plan includes a planned five year pipeline of Council Houses to be delivered as outlined below:

Year	Target number of new Council Homes built
2021/22	18 units
2022/23	60 units
2023/24	100 units
2024/25	120 units
2025/26	120 units

10. The five year pipeline has been established after reviewing the feasibility and priority of each site, exploring funding opportunities and considering practical issues such as lead-in times for each scheme. To ensure a continuous pipeline of schemes work on schemes across the whole programme is undertaken in parallel to each other.
11. Currently, there are two Council housebuilding schemes progressing on site that are due to be completed by April 2022. These are 16 houses at Bushey Croft and 2 houses at 4 The Hill. A £460,000 grant from Homes England has been awarded for the Bushey Croft development which is being developed by Borrás Construction. The two units at 4 The Hill are being developed by HTS Group Ltd.
12. It is recommended that Committee notes the progress that has been made on successfully delivering against the recommendations of the scrutiny report and as a result clear targets of Council Housebuilding have been set which will be delivered against.

IMPLICATIONS

Environment and Planning (Includes Sustainability)

None specific.

Author: Andrew Bramidge, Director of Strategic Growth and Regeneration

Finance (Includes ICT, and Property and Facilities)

None specific.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Housing

As contained within the report.

Author: Andrew Murray, Director of Housing

Community Wellbeing

As set out in the report.

Author: Jane Greer, Director of Communities and Environment

Governance (Includes HR)

As contained in the report.

Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Support

Appendices

Appendix A – progress report

Background Papers

None.

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

None.