

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**26 February 2020**

### **COUNCILLOR ANDREW BROWN - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND PLANNING**

For the period December 2019 to February 2020

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Progress on Corporate Plan Objectives (as set out in the delivery plan)**

###### Extra Care Housing

Development has begun of the 66-unit Housing with Care scheme at Fakenham. The Housing 21 scheme will provide 30 affordable rented and 36 shared ownership homes with support for older people. We are working with Norfolk County Council to identify other possible sites for similar schemes, with possibilities in some of the towns at a very early stage.

###### Homeless & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2024

This was approved at Cabinet in December 2019 and has been published. There is an action plan attached to the strategy – some of the actions have already been completed but dates will be added soon for the remainder.

###### Housing Company

Modelling of the financial viability of a particular approach has been undertaken by financial consultants Savills and the results of this are due to be considered shortly.

###### Housing Strategy – 2020 – 2023

The key themes for the Housing Strategy will come from the Homes for Local People element of the Corporate Plan.

The Strategic Housing Team is preparing a report on the context/ profile of housing in the District. This will form the foundations of a stakeholders' workshop and consequently provide an evidence base for the emerging Housing Strategy.

The Council has secured a grant of £44,000 to undertake research into the condition of housing in the district with particular focus on the 11,000<sup>1</sup> privately rented homes. The Building Research Establishment will carry out the research on behalf of the Council using a number of datasets. The results of this research will provide information on disrepair and fuel poverty and so help inform the new Housing Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> Estimate from Experian and will be subject to review as a result of the research.

**Other Items**

Community Housing Fund

The Strategic housing team continue to support new and existing community-led housing groups. We have a new Community-led group forming in Swanton Novers. A local steering group of eight people held its first meeting on February 6<sup>th</sup>. A local land owner is willing to provide a site free of charge. The local community are most concerned about the needs of elderly residents who need suitable housing to enable them to remain in the village.

**2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

There is a report to Cabinet in March 2020, recommending the purchase of two homes to be used as temporary accommodation for homeless households.

## **4 Performance Information**

### **Affordable Homes**

We project that there will be 104 new affordable homes completed in 2019/20. We have taken out of the 2019/20 projections a Broadland Housing Scheme in Roughton which will not complete until 2020/21.

As at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 housing associations have delivered 54 of these homes on eight sites.

### **Environmental Protection Team**

The Environmental Protection team is responsible for tackling disrepair and poor energy efficiency in privately owned housing, including the private rented sector.

The team use the housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS). This is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. In particular the team focuses on HHSRS Category 1 hazards; Excess Cold hazards, Falls hazards and Disrepair.

In the period December 2019 to January 2020 (Year to 30 November 2019 for comparison):

- Number of complaints received: 19 (61)
- Number of those complaints resulting in inspections: 10 (52)
- Number of those dwellings inspected with category 1 hazards: 2 (28)
- Number of dwellings made decent of those above dwellings assessed: 0 (8)
- Total number of dwellings made decent: 5 (17) (including cases carried forward from previous period).

If necessary, the team will take enforcement action against an owner. This means that it may take time to address a category 1 hazard and explains why of the 5 dwellings made decent – all five were first identified before 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

### **Housing Options Team**

#### Your Choice Your Home: Housing List and Properties Let

Total numbers on Housing List as at 31 Jan 2020 = 2993, of which:

- Housing Register Priority Card: 0
- Housing Register Band 1: 233
- Housing Register Band 2: 189
- Housing Options Register: 497
- Transfer Register: 2074

Number of affordable homes let (includes shared ownership sales):

- 242 (April to December 2019)
- QTR 1 – 89
- QTR 2 – 66
- QTR 3 – 87

#### Homelessness

Numbers Currently in Temporary Accommodation as at 30 Jan 2020 = 36

Number of new Approaches to the Service

QTR 1 – 250

QTR 2 – 262

QTR 3 – 244

Current Live Cases: 167 of which:

- Prevention Duties: 36
- Decisions pending: 2
- Relief Duties: 53
- Main Housing Duty Accepted: 25
- Review: 0
- Triage: 51

Rough Sleepers – 8 (6 confirmed 2 not verified)

#### **IHAT (integrated Housing Action Team)**

The IHAT provide adaptations to properties. The aim is to enable residents with disabilities/mobility problems to continue to live independently in their homes. The team work with residents across all tenures.

The IHAT has a budget of nearly £1.2 million in 2019/20. The team use this money to fund adaptations such as stair lifts, ramps and level access showers. The maximum grant is £30,000 and in a small number of cases the grant is part funding extensions to properties to provide additional living accommodation, including ground floor shower rooms and bedrooms.

Cases are becoming increasingly complex and as a result the average grant has increased from £5,923 in 2015/16 to £9,579 in 2019/20.

In the year to 31<sup>st</sup> January the team has committed to spend £847,342 of the annual budget. This work will provide adaptations for 91 customers. Actual spend in the year to date is £1,005,140 and includes spending on adaptations which were approved in the previous financial year.