

Report of Head of Housing Partnerships

Report to Housing Advisory Board

Date: 10th November 2015

Subject: Appendix A - Progress Update on the Council House Growth Programme

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The Council Housing Growth Programme seeks to maximise the amount of new housing delivered within the city and increase council house stock available for letting to council tenants on the Leeds Homes Register.
2. The council has an ambitious programme to deliver c1,000 new council homes through acquisitions, new build and purchasing long term empty homes.
3. Funding amounting to £99.37m has been allocated to deliver this programme along with £42m to fund the Little London Beeston Hill and Holbeck regeneration scheme.

Recommendations

4. The Housing Advisory Board is requested to note the progress to date on the council house growth programme.

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Housing Advisory Board with an update on progress in respect of the council house growth programme. This includes:

- Acquisitions
- New Build
- Long term empty homes

2 Background information

2.1 The council has an ambitious programme to deliver in the region of 1,000 new council homes in Leeds. This is the largest programme of new build council housing since the early eighties.

2.2 The council house growth programme comprises of three main strands:

- Acquisitions – off the shelf acquisitions provide an opportunity to purchase properties, either built properties or purchasing from plan.
- New build – through this programme, the Council aims to build modern homes taking account of design quality, space standards, energy efficiency and modern technology.
- Long term empty homes – the council has set aside funding to purchase 100 long empty properties by March 2018 to be refurbished and let as council housing. To qualify as a long term empty home, the property has to have been empty for 6 months. Earlier this year, Capita were awarded the contract to carry out valuations and conveyancing on behalf of the council for this programme.

2.3 Resources totalling £99.37m have been set aside for the council house growth programme to deliver the acquisitions, new build and long term empty home programme. In addition to this, £42m to support the council housing new build within the Little London and Beeston Hill and Holbeck (LLBHH) regeneration area have been made available through the Housing Revenue Account. These will deliver a total programme of c1000 new council houses.

3 Main issues

3.1 A progress update on each of the council house growth work streams is outlined below.

3.2 Acquisitions:

3.3 Off the shelf acquisitions are proving to be a quick and cost effective solution to deliver good quality new homes for rent.

3.4 Over the last year, the council has purchased 23 new homes from Bellway in the Gipton area. These have all been let to customers on the Leeds Homes Register.

3.5 The council has recently exchanged contracts with a developer to purchase 8 homes on the former Lord Cardigan Pub site in Bramley. The developer is preparing to start construction works within the next month and the development is scheduled to complete in summer 2016.

3.6 New Build:

3.7 The table below provides a progress update on each of the council house new build sites:

Site	Ward	Units	Programme
LLBHH Regeneration	Beeston + Holbeck, City and Hunslet, Hyde Park and Woodhouse	388 new build units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contractor – sc4L comprising of Keepmoat - Mix of apartments and family housing - All units to be completed and handed over to the council by the end of March 2017. - 145 units have been delivered to Sep 2015
East Park Road	Burmantofts and Richmond Hill	32no 1 + 2 bed apartments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contractor - Geo Houlton and Sons Ltd - General needs apartments - Scheduled to complete Q4 2015-16
Extra Care Yeadon	Otley and Yeadon	45no 1 + 2 bed apartments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contractor - Henry Boot Construction - 45 extra care apartments with communal lounge, restaurant, multi-use room - 10 apartments to be marketed for shared ownership - Scheduled to complete Q2 2016-17
Swarcliffe Drive	Crossgates and Whinmoor	18no 1 + 2 bed apartments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contractor – Britcon - General needs apartments for older people (55+) - Scheduled to complete Q2 2016-17
Broadleas	Bramley	24no 2 + 3 bed houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently evaluating tenders to procure a partner to deliver Broadleas, Garnets and Whinmoor Public House - Programmed for a 2015-16 contract award - Scheduled to complete Q1 2017-18
Garnets	City and Hunslet	25no 2 + 3 bed houses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently evaluating tenders to procure a partner to deliver Broadleas, Garnets and Whinmoor Public House - Programmed for a 2015-16 contract award - Scheduled to complete Q1/2 2017-18

Whinmoor Public House,	Crossgates and Whinmoor	22no bedroom houses	2	- Currently evaluating tenders to procure a partner to deliver Broadleas, Garnets and Whinmoor Public House - Programmed for a 2016-17 contract award - Scheduled to complete Q3 2017/18
Beeches	Gipton and Harehills	27 units		- Programmed for a 2016-17 contract award - Scheduled to complete Q3/Q4 2017/18
Mistress Lane	Armley	TBC		- Programmed for a 2016-17 contract award - Feasibility study underway to determine number of units - Expected to complete Q4 - 2017/18
Westerton Walk	Ardsley and Robin Hood	45 units		- Applied for funding under Care and Specialist Supported Housing Fund for 45 extra care apartments - announcement is expected in late October 2015 - Scheduled to completed Q4 2017/18
Barncroft	Killingbeck and Seacroft	16 units		- Site investigations underway - Scheduled to complete before Q4 2017/18

3.9 Long term empty homes:

- 3.10 In April 2014 the Council was successful in securing almost £2m HCA (Homes and Communities Agency) grant supported by £7m HRA funding to purchase 100 long empty properties to be refurbished and let as council housing between 2015-18.
- 3.11 To date, one property has been bought, refurbished and let and a community centre (Palace Youth Project) is currently in the final stages of conversion / refurbishment to deliver 2 family houses.
- 3.12 In addition, so far this year, the council has sent 356 letters since July to the owners of empty properties. This resulted in 75 responses from interested property owners. Of these, 64 properties have been passed to Capita for valuation; to date 25 valuations have been carried out and the council has agreed a price with 9 owners and awaits responses from a further 9 owners. The estimated average total cost for all the properties that have been valued (including the refurbishment, valuation and legal costs) is around £83,000 which is well within budget.

3.14 Budget position:

3.15 Of the £99.37m resources to deliver the acquisitions, new build and long term empty homes programmes, £21m comes from Right to Buy receipts; almost £8m of this has been allocated to new build and almost £4m committed to grant registered providers. Providing the schemes are delivered in line with the programme, the Right to Buy receipts are allocated until Q4 2017/18.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 Executive Members are briefed regularly on progress and via the Members Steering Group. Ward Members are briefed on schemes / acquisitions within their ward and are consulted and engaged at specific intervals on the development of proposals for new build sites. Public consultation events take place prior to submission of a planning application.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 Equality and Diversity Impact screening has been undertaken for the Council House Growth Programme and has been determined that the proposals have a positive impact in terms of Equality and Diversity and that a full assessment is not required.

4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan

4.3.1 The development of new council housing will address priorities within the City Priority Plan to provide additional affordable housing and to support housing growth.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The programme and budget is managed through the Housing Growth Team in conjunction with Corporate Resources and Environment and Housing Finance Teams.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 There are no legal implications resulting from this report.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are no specific risks associated with this report.

4.6.2 A risk log for the programme is managed by the Council Housing Growth Programme Board is presented to each programme board meeting.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The Council Housing Growth Programme seeks to maximise the amount of new housing delivered within the city and increase council house stock available for

letting to council tenants on the Leeds Homes Register. It aims to do this via the following routes:

- Acquisitions
- New Build
- Long term empty homes

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Housing Advisory Board is requested to note the progress to date on the council house growth programme.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.