

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CABINET HOUSING PANEL – 18 JULY 2022  
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME UPDATE

**1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the council's Affordable Housing Programme (AHP).

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 Members to note the content of this report

**3 Explanation**

- 3.1 On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012, Cabinet agreed a range of methods to deliver the council's Affordable Housing Programme (AHP) and that a monitoring report should be presented to this committee, setting out the budget and progress in delivering new affordable homes. An overview of progress to date is attached at Appendix A
- 3.2 The AHP is managed via an officer project group which meets six weekly and overseen by a Steering Group, which meets quarterly. The Steering Group provides strategic direction, considers the budget and recommends any reallocation of funds between different delivery methods as required.
- 3.3 A Delivery Strategy was agreed by members in 2019.

**Implications**

Legal Implication(s)

- 3.4 The council has signed an agreement with the government to deliver the AHP using available Right to Buy receipts, in accordance with the rules in the agreement.

**4 Financial Implication(s)**

- 4.1 The budget for the programme is monitored through the normal budgetary control reports, which are reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The current budget for the programme in this financial year is £42,878,000 which includes a £16.1m roll forward from last year's capital budget.
- 4.2 The government recently made changes to the conditions, which include an increase in the time limit for the use of receipts, from three years to five years and an increase in the proportion of the cost of the replacement home that the receipts can be applied to (from 30% to 40%)

- 4.3 Increasing the time limit for the use of the receipts from three to five years – this covers not just future receipts but existing ones (back to 2017 – 18).

## **5 Risk Management Implications**

- 5.1 The risks related to this proposal are:
- 5.2 There are no direct risks arising from this report, as it is for information only, however the AHP has a risk management strategy in place which includes a Strategic Risk Register and an operational risk register associated with every project. The Steering Group and Project Group monitor the risk registers and associated controls and mitigation plans.
- 5.3 Included in the risk register is a brief regarding the Building Safety Bill which was passed into law April 2022.
- 5.4 The Building Safety Act is designed to give residents more power to hold builders and developers to account and toughen sanctions against those who threaten safety.
- 5.5 The Act will create a clear, proportionate framework for the design, construction, and management of safer, high-quality homes.

## **6 Security and Terrorism Implication(s)**

- 6.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

## **7 Procurement Implication(s)**

- 7.1 There are not procurement implications arising from this report.

## **8 Climate Change Implication(s)**

- 8.1 The delivery of new affordable homes provides mechanisms for a range of products and initiatives that help reduce carbon emissions and tackle fuel poverty. New homes are built to high standards that help address climate change concerns, including CO<sub>2</sub>, water and waste reduction; use of local labour and transport and modern methods of construction all consider the green footprint.

## **9 Human Resources Implication(s)**

- 9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

## **10 Health and Wellbeing Implication(s)**

- 10.1 The provision of good quality affordable homes has a positive impact on health and well-being.

## **11 Communication and Engagement Implication(s)**

- 11.1 There is a communication strategy linked to the AHP

## **12 Link to Corporate Priorities**

- 12.1 The subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate objective 'Planning for current and future housing need' and specifically to the achievement of providing more affordable homes and is linked to a statutory requirement, under the Homeless Reduction Act

## **13 Equality and Diversity**

- 13.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was not completed because this report does not propose changes to existing service-related policies or the development of new service-related policies.

Name of author	<i>Harvinder Sarohi-Parhar</i>
Title	<i>Housing Development and Strategy Services Manager</i>
Date	16 June 2022

Background papers to be listed (if applicable)

Cabinet report 2012

Appendices to be listed

Appendix A Affordable Housing Programme Overview