



Housing Management and Almshouses Sub (Community and Children's Services) Committee

Date: MONDAY, 20 JULY 2020
Time: 1.45 pm
Venue: VIRTUAL MEETING – ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY

Members: John Fletcher (Chairman)
Mary Durcan (Deputy Chairman)
Randall Anderson
Marianne Fredericks
Alderman David Graves
Barbara Newman
Dhruv Patel
Susan Pearson
William Pimlott
Peter Bennett
The Revd Stephen Haines
Jason Pritchard
Ruby Sayed

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Access to the virtual public meeting
Members of the public can view the virtual public meeting via:
<https://youtu.be/rP5ITQ0QJ2w>

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Reports

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
3. **MINUTES**
To approve the public minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 20 January 2020.

For Decision
(Pages 1 - 6)
4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**
Members are asked to note the Sub Committee's Outstanding Actions List.

For Information
(Pages 7 - 10)
5. **HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 11 - 20)
6. **RENT ARREARS DURING COVID-19**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 21 - 26)
7. **CITY OF LONDON ALMSHOUSES UPDATE**
Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

For Information
(Pages 27 - 28)
8. **HOUSING DELIVERY PROGRAMME - HOUSING DESIGN GUIDE**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.
Appendix 1 – Cost Overview prepared by Turner & Townsend (to follow)

For Information
(Pages 29 - 34)
9. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**
10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

11. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Part 2 - Non-Public Reports

12. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To approve the non-public minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 20 January 2020.

For Decision
(Pages 35 - 36)

13. **CCTV INSTALLATION ACROSS HOUSING ESTATES**

Report of the Director of Community & Children's Services.

For Decision
(Pages 37 - 46)

14. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

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HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB (COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE
Monday, 20 January 2020

Minutes of the meeting held at Guildhall at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Mary Durcan (Deputy Chairman)
John Fletcher (Chairman)
Randall Anderson
Marianne Fredericks
Alderman David Graves
Barbara Newman
Susan Pearson
William Pimlott
Peter Bennett
Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines

Officers:

Paul Murtagh	- Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, Community and Children's Services
Julie Mayer	Town Clerks
Sonia Marquis	Community and Children's Services
Jason Hayes	Community and Children's Services

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jason Pritchard.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 20th November 2019 be approved as a correct record.

4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Members received the Sub Committee's outstanding actions list and an updated version was tabled, showing updates since the despatch of the agenda.

The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services, was heard in respect of a recent meeting with the Deputy Commander of the London Fire Brigade. Members noted that, post Grenfell, the 'stay put' advice remained, with more emphasis on the Fire Brigade, service providers, the City of London Corporation and its residents working together to ensure our premises are as

safe as possible. The Deputy Commander was aware of and satisfied with the work of the City Corporation is doing in keeping fire safety at the forefront.

The sprinkler installation project was underway, and a Design Consultant had been appointed. The Community and Children's Services and Housing and Almshouses Sub Committees would receive a fire safety update report at their respective March meetings. Members noted that no fire safety concerns had been raised in respect of the ventilation ducts in the City's HRA properties.

5. HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services which provided an update on the progress on the Housing Major Works Programme and advised Members on issues affecting progress on individual schemes.

There was some discussion on planning delays, noting that resourcing for dealing with planning applications was an issue generally in local authorities. Members suggested that timescales should take into account the likely delays in the planning process, so as not to show regular unavoidable slippage. Officers explained that they have tried to assist the planning process by arranging pre-planning meeting. Tenders were sent out very quickly once the approval notice was received.

Officers now kept a comprehensive 'Issues Log' which documented all stages in the programme for each project, including details on delays and slippage and why they had occurred. The Assistant Director advised that, currently, only 2 planning applications were awaiting decision; one from Islington (Holloway Estate) and one from Lewisham (Sydenham Hill). Members were reminded that the Housing Major Works Programme, by its very nature, will continue to generate a large number of Planning and Building Regulations applications, particularly in respect of the fire safety improvement works such as sprinklers and fire doors. Members noted that, in some cases, developers were able to assist with resourcing in local planning authorities, to get large applications through quicker. However, this could be problematic if, as in the City's case, multiple boroughs were involved.

In response to a question about window replacement at Crescent House, Members noted that this would be a separate stream of work, running parallel with the wider window replacement programme on the Golden Lane Estate.

In concluding, the Chairman suggested, and Members agreed, that future estimates should come with a health warning that they might be subject to planning delays in other authorities. Given that poor resourcing in planning departments and subsequent delays was a London-wide issue, the Chairman of the Community and Children's Services Committee agreed to speak to the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee about the possibility of raising this at the Local Authority Leaders' Committee.

RESOLVED, That – the report be noted.

6. **UPDATE ON MIDDLESEX STREET GARAGES**

The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services was heard in respect of the Middlesex Street garages project. Members noted that completion of the City of London Police project in the basement of the car park had now slipped from the beginning of February 2020 to the first week in April. Officers were working with residents in respect of their necessary relocation and had found them very co-operative. The Assistant Director advised that the Memorandum of Understanding would be presented to the March meeting of the Sub Committee.

The next meeting of the Middlesex Street Development Working Group would involve a presentation from 'Studio Weave', who had been commissioned to research the best use of the ground floor car parking space, alongside the Petticoat Lane Markets. Members noted that the top floor had limited access and Montague Evans, who has also worked on the Islington Arts Factory, had been commissioned in respect of commercial advertising. The Director agreed to investigate a leak to the Podium, which had just come to his attention.

In concluding, the Chairman thanked the Assistant Director for this update and welcomed the opportunity this project provided to maximise a City Corporation asset. The Chairman and Members were keen for this project to progress within the next 15 months.

7. **GREAT ARTHUR HOUSE RECLADDING SERVICE CHARGE FIGURES**

The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services was heard in respect of service charge figures for Great Arthur House recladding works. Members noted that the outturn figure for the project, as of today, was £11.1m (£10m negotiated settlement for works). Members would receive a report of the City Surveyor at their next meeting, formally closing the project.

The Assistant Director advised that most residents had been visited in respect of the end of defects liability survey and there would be a further inspection on the external façade over the next two weeks. If Members were aware of any residents who had not been visited, they were asked to let the Assistant Director know as soon as possible.

Members noted that the City Corporation had lost its appeal against the decision of the First Tier Tribunal's; i.e. - that leaseholders were not liable to contribute towards the cost of the recladding works. The City has applied to seek Leave to Appeal further. Members noted that Counsel's opinion was that the City had strong grounds to appeal. There was some discussion about the level of legal fees, should the matter be escalated to the Supreme Court, and Members noted that it was unusual for these to be fully indemnified. Members were concerned at the impact on Leaseholders but, accepted that this was an aspect of Right to Buy Leases which had never been properly addressed.

Members were reminded that, given its wider significant impact, this matter was a responsibility of the Community and Children's Services Committee (the Grand Committee of this Sub Committee). The Chairman and Deputy Chairman (of the Grand Committee) had been sighted on Counsel's opinion and supported the decision to appeal. Members would receive a report as soon as possible on the next stages in the legal process, the legal costs to date and, Counsel's estimate for potential future legal costs.

In the interim, Members noted that the service charge was being invoiced and collected but no action was being taken for non-payment. The City Solicitor had advised that it was a legal requirement to continue to collect service charges for this work, despite the legal proceedings, otherwise the City Corporation would forfeit the right to do so. The Assistant Director was not aware of how many residents had taken up the City's offer of a loan but agreed to check (***Post Meeting Note – 5 leaseholders had taken out a loan with the City***). Furthermore, as the final cost of the works had only just been finalised, the final bill to Leaseholders could now be confirmed.

8. **HOUSING MANAGEMENT POLICIES - PROGRESS UPDATE**

Members received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in response to a Member's request for a review of those policies which had been completed, those in progress and/or those due to be started. In respect of the outstanding reviews, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, the Chairman suggested, and Members agreed, that every effort should be made to complete all outstanding reviews by the end of 2020. Officers agreed to confirm whether this would be achievable at the next meeting. Members also suggested that it would be helpful to see a table showing existing policies, with their renewal dates, on a more regular basis, so that progress could be monitored. As previously advised to Members, the Pets Policy was due for review and, in light of findings from the recent work on social isolation, it would be given priority.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. **TENANCY POLICY REVIEW**

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of the Tenancy Policy, which was first approved in 2017 and was now due for review. Member noted that the Policy had been modified to clarify the City of London Corporation's approach to joint tenancies following a relationship breakdown. No other material changes had been made to the Policy.

Members expressed some concerns in that, in its current form, the draft policy might not give residents enough protection against them becoming 'voluntarily homeless'. Whilst residents were advised to seek legal advice and officers worked with them to ensure this would not happen, Members suggested that it should be more visible in the Policy and the City Solicitor should be asked for his input. Members also suggested that 'significant period' and 'appropriate action' should be more specific and all references to legislation and available assistance should have a web page link.

RESOLVED, that – the Draft Tenancy Policy for use by the Housing Service be amended, in accordance with the suggestions set out above, and presented to Members at the March meeting of the Sub Committee for approval.

10. **DECENT HOMES KITCHEN AND BATHROOM CONTINGENCY 2: GATEWAY 6 - OUTCOME REPORT**

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of compliance with the Decent Homes Criteria. Members noted that the Projects Sub Committee had granted an amnesty to ensure that all long-outstanding completed projects were closed properly. This was one of those reports and, whilst the project had been completed within budget, there was a concern expressed about the records kept. The Assistant Director advised that this project had been completed several years ago and there was now an asset management database in place, which had considerably improved record keeping and project management tools.

RESOLVED, that – the project be closed.

11. **DECENT HOMES - CENTRAL HEATING INSTALLATION PROGRAMME (CHIP) - VARIOUS 2010/11, 2011/12 AND 2012/13: GATEWAY 6 - OUTCOME REPORT**

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of bringing heating systems up to the Decent Homes Criteria. As with the previous report, Members noted that the Projects Sub Committee had granted an amnesty to ensure that all long-outstanding projects were closed properly.

RESOLVED, that – the project be closed.

12. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

Members noted that the Community and Children's Services Committee would receive a presentation on the repairs service at its March meeting. The Assistant Director advised that this was timely, as the repairs service had recently been re-tendered and there had been a recent dip in performance. Members were asked to speak to the Assistant Director in respect of any specific concerns. The Chairman agreed to meet with the Assistant Director in respect of emerging trends concerning mould, damp and slow progress by some sub-contractors. Any other Members of the sub committee, who felt that could make a contribution, were also invited to attend this meeting.

14. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item
15

Paragraph
3

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 20th November 2019 be approved as a correct record.
16. **NON- PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**
There were no non-public questions.
17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 3.20 pm

Chairman

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julie.mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk

HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB-COMMITTEE (HMASC)
Outstanding Actions – July 2020 update

Date Added	ITEM	Action	Officer and target date
22.7.19	TENANCY VISITS	Members requested a themed report, setting out how the data was being used and where improvements had been made.	Dean Robinson/Liam Gillespie On HMASC Agenda for 23 March
22.7.19	HOUSING UPDATE AND RISK REGISTER REPORT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new regime was being piloted on 2 estates and would be introduced on all estates later this year. 2. Members asked if future reports could have more breakdown in respect of anti-social behaviour, by location, including trends from previous years. 	Liam Gillespie <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members asked to receive a further report on the new inspection system once it had been fully rolled - expected May 2020. 2. Noted.
16.9.19	NEW PORTSOKEN COMMUNITY CENTRE – GOVERNANCE OPTIONS	Officers are working with 'Locality' in respect of scoping the community work. Handover of the building is expected late 2020.	Carol Boswarthack Governance report expected at either the March or May meeting of the Sub Committee
20.11.19	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT PARKING	Brief for the Housing Revenue Account Parking Consultant had been drafted and advice would be taken with colleagues in the Commissioning Team, with a view to engaging someone to carry out an initial review.	Liam Gillespie On HMASC Agenda for 23 March
20.11.19	FIRE SAFETY	The sprinkler installation project was underway and a Design Consultant had been appointed.	Paul Murtagh Update Report on agendas for March Community and Children's Services and Housing Management and Almshouses Sub Committee.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB-COMMITTEE (HMASC)
Outstanding Actions – July 2020 update

20.11.19	VISITS TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH ESTATES	Members suggested that these be split across 3 visits, possibly before or after a meeting of the Sub Committee.	Liam Gillespie/Julie Mayer To be arranged once the new Sub Committee is elected in May 2020.
20.11.19	GREAT ARTHUR HOUSE – RECLADDING WORKS	1-Gateway 6 Project Report 2-Report on next stages in the legal process, the legal costs to date and Counsel’s estimate for potential future legal costs.	Paul Murtagh/City Surveyors 1-On HMASC agenda for 23 March. 2-Members to receive a report as soon as possible.
20.11.19	HOUSING POLICIES RENEWAL TIMETABLE	1-Update to next meeting as to whether all outstanding reviews could be completed by the end of 2020. 2-Members to see a table showing existing policies, with their renewal dates, on a more regular basis. 3-In light of findings from the recent work on social isolation, Pets Policy to be given priority.	Liam Gillespie 1- HMASC on 23 March 2 – tba 3 - tba
20.11.19	DRAFT PARADES POLICY	Draft Policy to be presented to the Community and Children’s Services Committee (CCSC).	Liam Gillespie On CCSC agenda for 6 March 2020.
20.1.20	TENANCY RENEWAL POLICY	Work to avoid voluntary homelessness to be more visible in Policy. ‘Significant period’ and ‘appropriate action’ should be more specific.	Liam Gillespie/Sonia Marquis Revised report on agenda for HMASC 23 March 2020.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND ALMSHOUSES SUB-COMMITTEE (HMASC)
Outstanding Actions – July 2020 update

		All references to legislation and available assistance should have a web page link	
20.1.20	HOUSING MAJOR WORKS PROGRAMME	<p>Future estimates to have a health warning that they might be subject to planning delays in other authorities.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Community and Children’s Services Committee to speak to the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee about raising this at the Local Authority Leaders’ Committee.</p>	Randall Anderson/Paul Murtagh
20.1.20	MIDDLESEX STREET GARAGES	<p>Members to be sighted on Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>The Director agreed to investigate a leak to the Podium, which had just come to his attention.</p>	<p>Paul Murtagh</p> <p>MoU on HMASC Agenda for 23 March</p>

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Committee	Dated:
Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee	20 July 2020
Subject: Housing Major Works Programme – Progress Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Paul Murtagh Assistant Director Barbican & Property Services	

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress that has been made with the Housing Major Works Programme and to advise Members on issues affecting progress on individual schemes.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. At its meeting on 27 November 2017, the Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee received a presentation from officers in Housing Property Services on the scope of, and progress with, the Housing Major Works Programme. Members subsequently agreed that it would be useful if further updates and progress reports be brought to future meetings of this Sub-Committee.
2. The first update and progress report was presented to this Sub-Committee at its meeting on 12 February 2018. This fourteenth update report highlights specific areas of ‘slippage’ or ‘acceleration’ since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee on 23 March 2020 as well as, progress against the programme as originally reported in November 2017.

Considerations

3. The City of London Corporation (City Corporation) is committed to investing around £55million on a Major Works Programme for the maintenance, refurbishment and improvement of its social housing portfolio. The works, in the main comprise:
 - Window replacements;
 - Re-roofing;
 - Decent Homes (new kitchens and bathrooms);
 - Electrical rewiring and upgrades;

- Heating replacements;
 - Concrete repairs.
4. The funding for these extensive works, which are intended to bring all the City Corporation's social housing stock up to, and beyond, the Decent Homes Standard, comes from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), which is ring-fenced solely for housing. The HRA is made up of:
 - Income from rents;
 - Income from service charges.
 5. The Housing Major Works Programme was originally intended to be a 5-year programme however, the size and complexity of some of the projects included, along with initial staff resourcing issues, has meant that it is more likely to take 7 or 8 years to complete.
 6. The Housing Major Works Programme is monitored and managed at several levels both corporately and within the department. This includes:
 - Gateway Process;
 - DCCS Committee;
 - Projects Sub-Committee;
 - Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee;
 - Housing Programme Board.
 7. The Housing Programme Board (HPB) is a cross-departmental group, chaired by the Director of Community & Children's Services and comprising senior officers from:
 - Housing Management;
 - Housing Property Services;
 - City Surveyors;
 - Planning;
 - Finance;
 - Town Clerks;
 - City Procurement.
 8. For the purpose of the HPB, officers have developed detailed report templates that show progress of the various works programmes and these are analysed and discussed monthly. At its meeting on 27 November 2017, following a presentation from officers in Housing Property Services on the scope of, and progress with the Housing Major Works Programme, Members agreed that a simplified version of the progress reports be brought to future meetings of this Sub-Committee.
 9. Attached at Appendix 1 to this report, for Members consideration, is the latest version of the progress report for the Housing Major Works Improvement Programme. Unfortunately, due to the current COVID-19 situation, this progress report has not yet been submitted to and considered by the HPB.

10. Members will note from the progress report at Appendix 1 that there are currently 14 projects that have 'slipped' since the last meeting of this Sub-Committee. However, this is the first report on progress with the Housing Major Works Programme since the outbreak of COVID-19 and, hopefully, Members will understand the impact this has had on the programme. Members are asked to specifically note the following updates:

Slippage to contract start date

H39 – Window Replacement and External Decoration (Multiple Estates)

Although we have been able to carry out some site surveys and desktop work such as preparing design drawings and specifications, the COVID-19 situation has meant that slippage on this project generally, across all the estates is around 6 to 7 months than last reported. In the current climate, of course, this is subject to further change although, we are looking at ways to mitigate further slippage.

Members will be aware that we did, prior to lockdown, carry out a procurement exercise for the Window Replacement programme at Dron House. The tender submissions came in significantly higher than budget and, the Chamberlain is currently undertaking an assessment of the financial viability of the project given the scale of the public health crisis and, the higher than expected tender submissions. This assessment will have implications for the Window Replacement and External Redecoration Programme across all of our estates and, it may be necessary for the programme to be re-prioritised and staggered over a longer period of time.

H41 - Great Arthur House - Front Entrance Door Replacement

Design work has been ongoing where it has been safe to do however, it has not been possible to access the properties to carry out the necessary detailed internal surveys. The design period is currently scheduled to finish in November however, this relies heavily on further easing of the current restrictions. The full extent of the slippage to this programme has yet to be confirmed but, is highly dependent on the wider public health situation.

H42 – Petticoat Tower Front Door Replacement

Gerda Security Holdings are to be appointed to carry out the replacement of the front entrance doors in petticoat Tower. However, for the reasons outlined above, it is not currently possible to access all of the properties to complete the work safely. As a result, the scheduling of the delivery of the contract cannot be confirmed at this stage.

H50 – Southwark Estates – Concrete Testing and Repairs

Concrete testing to the 7 blocks that make up the Southwark Estates has now been completed. Receipt of the testing reports was delayed by 3 months due to the testing contractor 'furloughing' staff due to the COVID-19 crisis. The reports have now been received in full. Whilst revealing no major problems to the structures of the buildings the testing has identified a significant number of minor repairs to be completed. As the required works are all to the exterior of the buildings the works contract will be able to proceed as envisaged albeit reprogrammed to avoid the worst of the winter months where low temperatures would affect the durability of the concrete repairs. Overall delay to programme is 6 months.

H54 – Fire Door Replacements (Multiple Estates)

A procurement route has been identified that will allow for a speedy award of this contract that will ensure the works will be completed to a high standard and specification and, will provide us with competitive and sustainable costs. A business case, supported by the Chairman of the Community and Children's Services Committee, has been submitted to City Procurement for the direct award of this contract through the OJEU compliant Hyde Framework and, this is now being progressed.

As with all other projects, there is an ongoing uncertainty as to when it will be possible to access residents' homes to undertake the necessary surveys and to complete the works. In this case however, the work includes the replacement of communal doors, which can progress largely unhindered. The current delay to this project is 3 months although, we are hopeful that further delays can be minimised.

H55 – Installation of Sprinklers

This project is also subject to significant delays as a result of our inability to access homes to carry out the necessary internal pre-tender surveys. All other design work has progressed well with the current start date set for March 2021. Clearly, however, this will also be subject to changes in the COVID-19 crisis. The current overall delay to this project is 7 months.

Extension of projects in delivery

H23 – Lift Refurbishment – Middlesex Street Estate

Works were suspended for 3 months as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions and, the contractor having to furlough his staff. The contractor has now resumed on site with an anticipated completion date of September 2020.

H24 – Balcony Doors and Windows – Petticoat Tower

Works are currently on hold until further notice as, it is not possible to comply with the guidelines around safe-distancing during the installation process. The resumption date and subsequent completion date will need to be confirmed when circumstances allow.

H25 – Replacement Stairwell Panels – Petticoat Tower

As in the case above, works are currently on hold until further notice as, it is not possible to comply with the guidelines around safe-distancing during the installation process. The resumption date and subsequent completion date will need to be confirmed when circumstances allow.

H26 – Water Tank Replacement/Repairs

Works are now completed on all blocks with the exception of Hatfield House on the Golden Lane Estate. The work at Hatfield House requires a complete drain down of the water supply which, will cause disruption to the supply for up to 3 days. Given the current health situation, with so many residents confined to their flats, this work simply cannot proceed. The works on this block will recommence when it is safe to do so and residents have been informed.

H43 – Decent Homes – Harman Close

Although the majority of this work has been completed, there are some minor works and snagging still left to be done. It is expected that this may take between 6 and 9 months to be completed.

H44 – Refurbishment Works - City of London & Gresham Almshouses

Works are currently on hold due to the current health crisis and the number of vulnerable residents in our homes. The resumption date and, date for completion are yet to be confirmed however, it is currently estimated that there will be a delay of between 6 and 9 months.

H47 – Electrical Testing Phase IV (Landlord’s Electrics)

Work has been delayed by 2 months due to the COVID-19 restrictions however, the contractor is due to return to site at the beginning of July. Prior to lockdown, several potentially dangerous installations were identified and made safe. Consequently, the electricians will now proceed with the main testing programme to ensure there are no further potentially dangerous installations. The emergency lighting in our flat blocks is also being tested to ensure compliance. Any major works identified as part of the testing work will form part of a new project and tender.

H48 – Electrical Testing Phase III Multiple Estates (Tenanted Flats)

Officers continue to undertake relevant processes and procedures to gain access to ‘difficult-to-access’ properties to ensure that we, as a landlord, comply with our statutory obligations and, our tenants remain safe.

Progress of note on key projects

H15 – Cullum Welch Concrete Balustrade Replacement and Repairs

The works included in this project are now complete and, the contract has been delivered on time, with the final cost £124,000 below the budget approved at Gateway 5. A final Gateway 6 – Outcome Report is expected to be submitted to the September meeting of this Sub – Committee.

H17 – Heating Replacement Phase II (Crescent House and Cullum Welch House)

Our appointed consultant, Ingleton Wood, is due to complete its detailed design drawings and specification in August, which will allow us to commence a procurement exercise in November. We expect, subject to a successful procurement exercise, to appoint a contractor ready to start the project in February 2021.

H40 – Golden Lane – Window Replacement/Refurbishment Programme

Our appointed consultant, Studio Partington, is progressing well with the design phase despite the difficult circumstances. Information gathering for the energy modelling of the estate continues, along with the external surveys of the various blocks. The design phase is due to complete in November, along with a more detailed programme for the delivery of this project.

11. As Members will appreciate, there will always be problems with contracts and projects such as those contained within the Housing Major Works Programme. However, we are currently operating in what are, for most of us, unprecedented times. The COVID-19 situation is having a significant impact on service delivery and, the Major Works Programme is badly affected. That said, we are meeting with our contractors and consultants on a regular basis to see what can be done to get these projects back up and running.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Housing Major Works Programme Progress Report (June 2020)

Paul Murtagh
Assistant Director, Barbican & Property Services
T: 020 7332 3015 E: paul.murtagh@cityoflondon.gov.uk

GOLDEN LANE ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DELIVERY FORECAST JULY 2020

WORKS TYPE	REF	PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	CURRENT STATUS	SLIPPAGE SINCE LAST REPORT	TIMELINE																																																	
							2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				2020/21																																					
							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																																		
A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	H18	Great Arthur House - Replacement windows and cladding	£10,000,000+	£8,511,920	works complete		[Timeline bars for H18]																																																	
	H21	Lift Refurbishment	£1,300,000	£1,002,010	works complete		[Timeline bars for H21]																																																	
	H16	Golden Lane - Heating Replacement (Phase 1 - All blocks excluding Crescent/Cullum)	£465,000	£415,458	works complete		[Timeline bars for H16]																																																	
	H5	Decent Homes - Phase II (multiple estate programme)	£625,400	£605,011	works complete		[Timeline bars for H5]																																																	
	H14	Golden Lane - Concrete Testing & Repairs (all blocks exc. Cullum Welch)	£1,050,000	£975,675	works complete		[Timeline bars for H14]																																																	
	H15	Cullum Welch House - Concrete Balustrade Replacement & Concrete Repairs	£820,000	£696,700	works complete		[Timeline bars for H15]																																																	
	H20	Redecorations (Int & Ext - in conjunction with Avondale Square, York Way & Middlesex St Estates)	£416,700	£299,086	works complete		[Timeline bars for H20]																																																	
	H38	Electrical Testing - Phase II (Tenated flats GLE & MSE)	£441,000	£441,000	works complete		[Timeline bars for H38]																																																	
	H26	Water Tank Replacement/Repairs (multiple estate programme)	£31,174	£10,000	on site - delay due to covid 19	6 months	[Timeline bars for H26]																																																	
	H47	Electrical Testing - Phase IV (landlords electrics multiple estates)	£355,567	£1,700	on site		[Timeline bars for H47]																																																	
	H17	Golden Lane - Heating Replacement (Phase 2 - Crescent House & Cullum Welch House)	£2,000,000	£25,000	design		[Timeline bars for H17]																																																	
	H40	Window Refurbishment/Replacement (All blocks excluding reclad sections of Great Arthur House)	£8,400,000	£83,500	design		[Timeline bars for H40]																																																	
	H41	Great Arthur House - Front Door Replacement	£675,000	£38,000	design - delay due to covid 19	TBC	[Timeline bars for H41]																																																	
	H54	Fire Door Replacement Programme (multiple estate programme)	£1,160,000	£1,000	procurement - delay due to covid 19	3 months	[Timeline bars for H54]																																																	
	H55	Installation of Sprinklers (Great Arthur House as part of a multiple estate programme)	£3,200,000	£18,000	design - delay due to covid 19	7 months	[Timeline bars for H55]																																																	

MIDDLESEX STREET ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DELIVERY FORECAST JULY 2020

WORKS TYPE	REF	PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	CURRENT STATUS	SLIPPAGE SINCE LAST REPORT	TIMELINE																																					
							2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				2020/21																									
							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																						
A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	H22	Concrete Testing & Repairs	£160,000	£170,099	works complete		[Timeline bars for H22]																																					
	H40	Redecorations (Int & Ext - in conjunction with Avondale Square, Golden Lane, York Way Estates)	£222,314	£199,069	works complete		[Timeline bars for H40]																																					
	H38	Electrical Testing - Phase IIa (Tenated flats GLE & MSE)	£440,000	£421,000	works complete		[Timeline bars for H38]																																					
	H24	Petticoat Tower - balcony doors and windows	£450,000	£168,000	delivery on hold - covid 19	3 months	[Timeline bars for H24]																																					
	H23	MSE Lift Refurbishment	£1,555,000	£1,042,000	on site - delay due to covid 19	3 months	[Timeline bars for H23]																																					
	H26	Water Tank Replacement/Repairs (multiple estate programme)	£14,003	£560	works complete		[Timeline bars for H26]																																					
	H46	Communal Heating	£3,125,639	£118,000	contractor design		[Timeline bars for H46]																																					
	H42	Petticoat Tower - Front Door Replacement	£300,000	£76,000	on hold - covid 19	TBC	[Timeline bars for H42]																																					
	H25	Petticoat Tower stairwell	£429,000	£308,000	delivery on hold - covid 19	6 months	[Timeline bars for H25]																																					
	H12	Electrical Remedial Works (non-urgent)	£385,890	£363,825	works complete		[Timeline bars for H12]																																					
	H58	Electrical Remedial Works (Phase IIb - Landlords electrics)	£368,800	£140,000	on site		[Timeline bars for H58]																																					
	H55	Installation of Sprinklers (Petticoat Tower as part of a multiple estate programme)	£3,200,000	£18,000	design - delay due to covid 19	7 months	[Timeline bars for H55]																																					
	H53	Play and Ball Games Area Refurbishment (multiple estate programme)	£272,000	£3,000	design & consultation		[Timeline bars for H53]																																					

- █ works delivery baseline (as forecast November 2017)
- █ works on site/complete
- █ works programmed (current forecast)
- █ testing/preparatory/offsite works
- programme slippage from previous report (length of arrow denotes length of delay)
- ← programme brought forward from previous report (length of arrow denotes extent)

AVONDALE SQUARE ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DELIVERY FORECAST JULY 2020

WORKS TYPE	REF	PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	CURRENT STATUS	SLIPPAGE SINCE LAST REPORT	TIMELINE																																																													
							2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				2020/21																																																	
							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																																														
							A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M														
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	H6	Decent Homes Avondale - Phase II	£461,305	£392,780	works complete																																																															
	H20	Redecorations (multiple estate programme)	£607,150	£571,252	works complete																																																															
	H43	Decent Homes Harman Close	£980,000	£792,000	on hold - delay due to covid 19	9 months																																																														
	H1	Avondale Square - Window Overhaul	£453,440	£417,000	works complete																																																															
	H26	Water Tank Replacement/Repairs (multiple estate programme)	£92,104	£36,000	works complete																																																															
	H48	Electrical Testing - Phase III (tenanted flats multiple estates)	£555,266	£467,000	on site - delay due to covid 19	6 months																																																														
	H47	Electrical Testing - Phase IV (landlords electrics multiple estates)	£355,567	£128,500	on site	2 months																																																														
	H54	Fire Door Replacement Programme (multiple estate programme)	£2,790,000	£1,000	procurement - delay due to covid 19	3 months																																																														
	H55	Installation of Sprinklers (Point Blocks as part of a multiple estate programme)	£3,200,000	£18,000	design - delay due to covid 19	7 months																																																														
	H52	Avondale Communal & Emergency Lighting	£310,000	£96,000	on site																																																															
H53	Play and Ball Games Area Refurbishment (multiple estate programme)	£272,000	£3,000	design & consultation																																																																

SOUTHWARK/WILLIAM BLAKE ESTATES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DELIVERY FORECAST JULY 2020

WORKS TYPE	REF	PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	CURRENT STATUS	SLIPPAGE SINCE LAST REPORT	TIMELINE																																															
							2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				2020/21																																			
							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																																
							A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	H2	CCTV (William Blake)	£23,301	£16,900	works complete																																																	
	H5	Decent Homes - Phase II (Southwark as part of multiple estate programme)	£1,270,000	£762,240	works complete																																																	
	H26	Water Tank Replacement/Repairs (multiple estate programme)	£67,900	£25,000	works complete																																																	
	H10	Door Entry (William Blake in conjunction with Dron House)	£268,500	£212,000	works complete																																																	
	H56	Re-Roofing at Blake House (William Blake Estate)	£396,000	£393,000	works complete																																																	
	H48	Electrical Testing - Phase III (tenanted flats multiple estates)	£555,266	£467,000	on site - delay due to covid 19	6 months																																																
	H47	Electrical Testing - Phase IV (landlords electrics multiple estates)	£355,567	£128,500	on site	2 months																																																
	H39	Window Replacements & External Redecorations (Pakeman, Stopher & Sumner)	£3,330,000	£37,000	procurement	6 months																																																
	H39	Window Replacements & External Redecorations (William Blake)	£1,100,000	£52,000	procurement	6 months																																																
	H54	Fire Door Replacement Programme (multiple estate programme)	£1,454,000	£1,000	procurement - delay due to covid 19	3 months																																																
H50	Southwark Estate Concrete Testing & Repair	£1,500,000	£57,000	spec - delay due to covid 19	6 months																																																	

HOLLOWAY ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DELIVERY FORECAST JULY 2020

WORKS TYPE	REF	PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	CURRENT STATUS	SLIPPAGE SINCE LAST REPORT	TIMELINE																																															
							2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				2020/21																																			
							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																																
							A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	H36	Electrical Rewire (Tenanted Flats)	£225,000	£205,000	works complete																																																	
	H37	Electrical Rewire (Landlords)	£385,465	£373,000	works complete																																																	
	H26	Water Tank Replacement/Repairs (multiple estate programme)	£16,722	£3,505	works complete																																																	
	H39	Window Replacements & External Redecorations (Holloway)	£1,770,000	£31,100	procurement	6 months																																																
	H54	Fire Door Replacement Programme (multiple estate programme)	£537,500	£1,000	procurement - delay due to covid 19	3 months																																																

- works delivery baseline (as forecast November 2017)
- works on site/complete
- works programmed (current forecast)
- testing/preparatory/offsite works
- programme slippage from previous report (length of arrow denotes length of delay)
- programme brought forward from previous report (length of arrow denotes extent)

YORK WAY ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DELIVERY FORECAST JULY 2020

WORKS TYPE	REF	PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	CURRENT STATUS	SLIPPAGE SINCE LAST REPORT	TIMELINE																																			
							2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				2020/21																							
							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																				
							A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	H5	Decent Homes - Phase II (multiple estate programme)	£608,000	£574,297	works complete		ELEC TESTING				YORK WAY				OTHER ESTATES																											
	H20	Redecorations (multiple estate programme)	£596,000	£541,000	works complete						OTHER ESTATES				YORK WAY WORKS																											
	H26	Water Tank Replacement/Repairs (multiple estate programme)	£130,653	£49,000	works complete						YORK WAY				OTHER ESTATES																											
	H48	Electrical Testing - Phase III (tenanted flats multiple estates)	£555,266	£467,000	works complete																																					
	H47	Electrical Testing - Phase IV (landlords electrics multiple estates)	£355,567	£128,500	on site	2 months																																				
	H45	Communal Heating	£3,087,990	£152,500	contractor design										DESIGN & LEAD IN																											
	H54	Fire Door Replacement Programme (multiple estate programme)	£1,112,500	£1,000	procurement - delay due to covid 19	3 months													PROGRAMME TBC																							
	H53	Play and Ball Games Area Refurbishment (multiple estate programme)	£272,000	£3,000	design & consultation										DESIGN				PROGRAMME TBC																							

SYDENHAM HILL ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DELIVERY FORECAST JULY 2020

WORKS TYPE	REF	PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	CURRENT STATUS	SLIPPAGE SINCE LAST REPORT	TIMELINE																																			
							2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				2020/21																							
							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																				
							A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	H5	Decent Homes - Phase II (multiple estate programme)	£173,315	£46,472	works complete		ELEC TESTING				SYD H																															
	H48	Electrical Testing - Phase III (tenanted flats multiple estates)	£555,266	£467,000	works complete																																					
	H47	Electrical Testing - Phase IV (landlords electrics multiple estates)	£355,567	£128,500	on site	2 months																																				
	H39	Window Replacements & External Redecoration (Sydenham Hill)	£466,500	£23,000	procurement	6 months					DETAILED DESIGN & PLANNING																															
	H54	Fire Door Replacement Programme (multiple estate programme)	£192,500	£1,000	procurement - delay due to covid 19	3 months													PROGRAMME TBC																							

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SMALL ESTATES (DRON, WINDSOR, ISLEDEN, COLA, GRESHAM) INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - DELIVERY FORECAST JULY 2020

WORKS TYPE	REF	PROJECT	ESTIMATED COST	EXPENDITURE TO DATE	CURRENT STATUS	SLIPPAGE SINCE LAST REPORT	TIMELINE																																			
							2017/18				2018/19				2019/20				2020/21																							
							Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																				
							A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	H5	Decent Homes - Phase II (Dron & Windsor as part of multiple estate programme)	£686,216	£451,412	works complete		ELEC TESTING				WIN. & DRON																															
	H26	Water Tank Replacement/Repairs (multiple estate programme)	£15,810	£15,810	works complete						ISL/DRN				OTHER ESTATES																											
	H48	Electrical Testing - Phase III (tenanted flats multiple estates)	£555,266	£372,000	works complete																																					
	H10	Door Entry (Dron House in conjunction with William Blake)	£120,000	£120,000	works complete		SURVEY								LEAD IN																											
	H56	Re-Roofing at Dron House	£404,000	£363,000	works complete																																					
	H47	Electrical Testing - Phase IV (landlords electrics multiple estates)	£355,567	£128,500	on site	2 months																																				
	H39	Window Replacements & External Redecoration (Dron)	£950,000	£22,000	procurement	7 months					DETAILED DESIGN & PLANNING																															
	H39	Window Replacements & External Redecoration (Windsor)	£890,000	£21,000	procurement	6 months					DETAILED DESIGN & PLANNING																															
	H54	Fire Door Replacement Programme (multiple estate programme)	£890,000	£1,000	design - delay due to covid 19	3 months													PROGRAMME TBC																							
	H53	Play and Ball Games Area Refurbishment (multiple estate programme)	£272,000	£3,000	design & consultation										DESIGN				PROGRAMME TBC																							
H44	COLA & Gresham Refurbishment	£838,669	£122,000	delivery on hold - covid 19	9 months																																					

- █ works delivery baseline (as forecast November 2017)
- █ works on site/complete
- █ works programmed (current forecast)
- █ testing/preparatory/offsite works
- programme slippage from previous report (length of arrow denotes length of delay)
- ← programme brought forward from previous report (length of arrow denotes extent)

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Committee: Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee	Date: 20/07/2020
Subject: Rent Arrears During COVID-19	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Liam Gillespie, Head of Housing Management	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members on the current situation with rent arrears for rented properties forming part of the Housing Revenue Account.

Unsurprisingly, arrears have increased due to many tenants being furloughed, made redundant or having their working hours reduced. Arrears stand at £329,053 as of week 13 (ending 5th July 2020), which represents an increase of £107,864 since the end of the 2019/20 financial year.

Officers are working to reduce this amount by helping tenants with arrears get benefit claims into payment where possible. It is expected that a significant amount of the arrears will be covered by benefit claims, which are subject to a significant backlog.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Since the government introduced lockdown measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, many of our tenants have found themselves in financial difficulty due to losing their jobs, or having their incomes adversely affected due to reduced working hours. This has resulted in difficulty paying rent and other household bills.

2. We have been monitoring the effect on our tenants' rent payments by reporting weekly on rent arrears, as well as observing the number of Universal Credit claims made by people living in City of London properties.
3. Our Income Recovery Officers have been actively contacting all tenants whose accounts have gone into arrears, offering them appropriate advice and help to manage the situation, including signposting to advice services and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) claims portal.
4. The majority of people they have spoken to have made claims for Universal Credit, which are taking far longer than normal to process due to the huge increase in applications nationally; 1.5m claims were made between 13th March and 9th April, a six-fold increase on the same time the previous year.
5. Applications for the housing element of Universal Credit to be paid directly to the City of London are also taking longer than normal to process.
6. The Coronavirus Act 2020 contained provisions which paused housing possession claims for three months; this was subsequently extended to 23rd August 2020. Before this protection was enacted, we made a commitment to be as flexible as possible with tenants who fall into arrears due to financial difficulties caused by COVID-19.
7. Some pre-COVID arrears cases which were scheduled for hearings, or evictions, have been paused due to the government's intervention. Members may wish to note that cases which already had eviction dates confirmed prior to COVID-19 account for approximately £21,000 of the total arrears figure.

Current Position

8. A certain level of rent arrears is to be expected at any given time when managing over 1,900 socially rented properties, and the arrears figure fluctuates throughout the year, normally reducing significantly towards year end and increasing afterwards. Income Recovery Officers work hard to maximise income by providing support and advice to tenants, helping them to claim relevant benefits and to manage their rent accounts properly.
9. As of 6th July 2020, 217 of our households had reported a loss of income resulting in them having difficulty maintaining rent payments; around 185 new claims for Universal Credit have been made so far by our tenants since lockdown began.
10. At the end of the 2019/20 financial year, arrears stood at £221,189. Since then, arrears have increased and at week 13 of 2020/21, ending 5th July 2020, they stood at £329,053 (an increase of £107,864). The figure has fluctuated and the highest arrears total this year was at week 11 (£394,444).
11. While this is concerning, Members may wish to note the following:

- Most tenants whose income has stopped or significantly reduced will be eligible to claim Universal Credit, which will reduce the arrears figure as the claims come into payment
- We are expecting a significant payment from the DWP for those with an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA), i.e. a payment directly to the City as landlord, rather than to the claimant. The figure in May was £21,820.79 and we expect the June and July payments to be higher
- The total arrears figure includes several significant arrears cases (totalling approximately £21,000) which pre-date COVID-19 and were the point of eviction before the moratorium on repossessions; these will become former tenant arrears once possession orders are enforced
- As lockdown is eased, many tenants who were furloughed or whose hours were reduced will likely return to work and begin paying rent, plus arrears
- Part of the increase in arrears since year end can be accounted for by the normal pattern observed over several years; arrears are at their lowest towards year end and tend to increase in the following months (see details in Appendix 1)
- The level of arrears can fluctuate significantly due to the timing of Direct Debit payments, which are reconciled in bulk with the Orchard housing management system. If the arrears report is run just prior to the loading of these payments onto the system, the picture can appear worse than it is

Our Approach to Managing Arrears

12. Our overall aim of providing support and sustaining tenancies, rather than pursuing enforcement measures, remains in place. In cases where tenants fail to engage with us or manage their arrears, we will consider possession proceedings if it is both reasonable and proportionate to do so. This is always subject to advice from colleagues in the Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department.
13. Our approach to managing arrears should be viewed as a long-term one. We will enter into agreements with residents to pay back an affordable amount on top of their weekly rent. This is dependent on their household circumstances. Some households may be able to reduce their arrears relatively quickly, others may take some time to do so.
14. As this is a very unusual situation, we will have to accept a higher than normal level of arrears during the 2020/21 financial year.

Implications

15. The arrears situation across the HRA is being monitored closely by senior managers within Housing Services, who meet regularly with colleagues in the Chamberlain's Department to assess the risk to the HRA. While the current arrears figure is concerning, it is likely to improve in the longer-term and the risks to the HRA's ability to provide services are manageable at this point.

Conclusion

16. The knock-on effect from the closure of workplaces during COVID-19 has resulted in a significant number of tenants experiencing financial difficulties, which has impacted their ability to pay rent. Arrears have increased in response.
17. The arrears figure, while concerning, is being monitored closely and officers are working hard to engage with tenants to offer appropriate advice and support which is designed to help them sustain their tenancies.
18. In the longer term, we expect to be able to reduce the current arrears figure as benefit claims come into payment, and people return to work on the easing of lockdown measures. The risk to the HRA is being closely monitored and is subject to regular oversight by Chief Officers.

Liam Gillespie

Head of Housing Management

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HMASC 20th July 2020

Rent Arrears During COVID-19

APPENDIX ONE

Table showing rent arrears figures for tenanted HRA properties

2018-19, 2019-20 and current year to date

2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	TOTAL		TOTAL		TOTAL
WEEK 52	£ 191,417.00	WEEK 52	£ 191,189.00	WEEK 53	£ 221,189.00
WEEK 2	£ 247,803.00	WEEK 2	£ 231,044.00	WEEK 2	£ 294,755.00
WEEK 4	NOT RUN	WEEK 4	£ 212,675.00	WEEK 3	£ 269,800.00
WEEK 6	£ 237,771.00	WEEK 6	£ 227,692.00	WEEK 4	£ 271,331.00
WEEK 8	£ 217,966.00	WEEK 8	£ 203,869.00	WEEK 5	£ 294,754.00
WEEK 10	£ 239,854.00	WEEK 10	£ 206,289.00	WEEK 6	£ 331,778.00
WEEK 12	£ 231,306.00	WEEK 12	£ 195,460.00	WEEK 7	£ 315,647.00
WEEK 14	£ 229,766.00	WEEK 14	£ 189,103.00	WEEK 8	£ 313,170.00
WEEK 16	£ 226,511.00	WEEK 16	£ 246,474.00	WEEK 9	£ 312,611.00
WEEK 18	£ 267,865.00	WEEK 18	£ 200,019.00	WEEK 10	£ 349,796.00
WEEK 20	£ 277,643.00	WEEK 20	£ 233,091.00	WEEK 11	£ 394,444.00
WEEK 22	£ 262,861.00	WEEK 22	£ 215,124.00	WEEK 12	£ 357,377.00
WEEK 24	£ 277,098.00	WEEK 24	£ 228,104.00	WEEK 13	£ 329,053.00
WEEK 26	£ 238,545.00	WEEK 26	£ 213,297.00		
WEEK 28	£ 266,138.00	WEEK 28	£ 221,564.00		
WEEK 30	£ 252,358.00	WEEK 30	£ 197,141.00		
WEEK 32	£ 270,268.00	WEEK 32	£ 211,465.00		
WEEK 34	£ 239,562.00	WEEK 34	£ 200,101.00		
WEEK 36	£ 255,247.00	WEEK 36	£ 207,261.00		
WEEK 38	£ 239,483.00	WEEK 38	£ 213,951.00		
WEEK 40	£ 321,963.00	WEEK 40	£ 232,605.00		
WEEK 42	£ 294,504.00	WEEK 42	£ 242,031.00		

WEEK 44	£ 272,568.00	WEEK 44	£ 197,756.00		
WEEK 46	£ 287,475.00	WEEK 46	£ 217,736.00		
WEEK 48	£ 247,223.00	WEEK 48	£ 190,163.00		
WEEK 50	£ 248,793.00	WEEK 50	£ 216,099.00		
WEEK 51		WEEK 51	£ 186,409.00		
WEEK 52	£ 191,189.00	WEEK 52	£ 212,177.00		
		WEEK 53	£ 221,189.07		

Committee Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee	Dated: 20 July 2020
Subject: City of London Almshouses Update	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children's Services	For Information
Report author: Jacqueline Whitmore, Sheltered Housing Manager	

Summary

This report gives Members an information update on the City of London Almshouses, in Lambeth. Some of the information in the report also relates to the eight Gresham Almshouses on the estate.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. This report is presented to alternate meetings of the Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee, it updates Members on operational matters relating to the Almshouses and their residents.

Current Position

2. Waiting List

There are currently three vacancies at the Almshouses which officers anticipate offering once the Covid-19 regulations are eased. There have been requests for applications during the lockdown period which officers have been able to progress electronically in readiness for the office opening, to enable interviews with perspective residents to take place. Officers are keen to build a short waiting list again and look forward to seeing applicants for assessment.

3. Social activities

As the Community Hall is closed at present all plans for social activities have been suspended although we anticipate a party will be the first event to plan once we are able to do so.

4. Refurbishment Programme – Update

Negotiations with our contractor undertaking the refurbishment works, TSG are ongoing. Residents will be consulted regarding work recommencing on or around 1 August when government shielding restrictions/advice are due to end, with resident safety foremost in the plan to start works. Operatives will concentrate on exterior works and void properties, initially only undertaking internal works when residents are comfortable to allow operatives in their homes. Full protective measures will be taken, including risk assessments as required.

5. Resident welfare - Update

Throughout the period of 'lockdown' due to Covid 19, the Almshouses Manager has continued to work from her office supporting residents albeit in a different way to her normal routine. The Manager has maintained the daily checking routine and has increased contact via telephone and the monitoring system to the more vulnerable residents who may need more support, especially those with dementia. The Manager has identified residents with dementia have deteriorated more quickly than we would normally note; officers consider this is due to isolation and change in routine as social interaction, and routine are important to many with dementia.

Jacqueline Whitmore
Sheltered Housing Manager

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Committee(s): Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee	Date(s): 20 July 2020
Subject: Housing Delivery Programme – Housing Design Guide	Public
Report of: Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Michael Gwyther-Jones	

Summary

This report provides Members with information relating to the City of London Corporation’s (the Corporation) commitment to ensure our social housing projects are undertaken in compliance with a consistent and comprehensive Housing Design Guide (HDG). The guidance sets out the appropriate design standards required by the Corporation such as space standards and energy performance targets, but also our preference for specific mechanical & electrical components ensuring synergy and efficiency with our long-term maintenance strategies for housing stock.

As highlighted in the Housing Strategy for 2019-23: ‘Healthy Homes; Vibrant Communities’, the purpose of the HDG is to set out our employer’s requirements for a wide range of aspects which include: sustainability, fire safety, energy & carbon management, environment & biodiversity, promotion of health & wellbeing, accessibility, stimulating social value, security, how we create and work with digital models of buildings, and a response to the climate change emergency.

The HDG will also inform and support the procurement of both design services & contractors, forming the basis of a generic employer’s requirements for Housing Design Standards, and will be adaptable to the full range of housing projects which may consist of small clusters of new build, to major housing estate regeneration.

It is of interest to consider that over 100 years ago in 1918, the Tudor Walters Committee published its recommendations on design standards for council housing. These standards were about space and design, but also about energy, transport, and green space. The standards enabled by the 1919 Housing and Town Planning Act which was the origin of council housing in the UK, and together these were seen as fulfilling Lloyd George’s, the then Prime Minister’s commitment for ‘homes fit for heroes’.

Recommendations: The Committee is asked to:

1. Endorse the approach being taken with the ‘Housing Design Guide’ and acknowledge the comprehensive guidance and standards which are contained in the main document and the supporting appendices.

Main Report

Background

2. The City of London is committed to delivering good quality housing which satisfies recognised standards of design & construction, and which can be benchmarked against good practice. The HDG will ensure consistent design standards are implemented and establish the methodology and good practice required to achieve these standards. It is also essential that effective protocol which supports meaningful engagement with residents and stakeholders is given priority and is common practice across the whole of our housing delivery programme.
3. The HDG will support the Corporation's commitment to deliver over 700 socially rented homes over the next 10 years. It will also provide a useful reference point for other forms of tenure. London is facing an acute shortage of homes and particularly socially rented homes where many more need to be built. In order to achieve this vision, the Corporation will maximise the best use of its available housing land and ensure the homes we build are of the quality that our residents deserve.
4. Political attention is focused on the need to significantly increase the rate of house building and particularly affordable housing. However, alongside this aspiration there are growing concerns regarding the quality of the new homes. There have been many cases where new homeowners are struggling to achieve a satisfactory resolution when defects are reported to developers. The key principal is the new housing we deliver needs to be fit for purpose, protected by warranty, performs well in practice, and provides ongoing feedback for continuous improvement with fabric and technology, energy and water use.
5. The design of housing can affect the quality of our lives as well as our physical and mental wellbeing. The quality of people's homes matters to their short-term safety and long-term quality of life. For many who live in poor-quality, cramped, unsuitable accommodation, they are far more likely to suffer from a wide range of illnesses, such as cancer, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Well-designed housing can support the changing needs of our residents and help create a sustainable environment for new and existing residents. The HDG will enable people to embrace healthy lifestyles, secure socially inclusive developments, and foster more cohesive communities.
6. There is a fundamental need to ensure that the design consultants and contractors we commission have been procured based on comprehensive and adequate briefing information at the outset. The HDG provides that complete and detailed reference point which can be applied to all new build housing projects both large and small.
7. The HDG brings together a range of standards in a comprehensive manner, covering all elements of design and construction including layout & space, accessibility, to the more granular requirements for particular components. It also sets out guidance for communal spaces, external spaces, public realm, as well as upholding our responsibility for the environment, biodiversity, responsible procurement, and wellbeing of the communities we support.

Standards Implemented

8. A previous information report was presented to and authorised by HMASC committee in 2018 which set out the design requirements for Fire Safety, LABC Warranty, Secured-by-Design and Access & Equality.
9. Fire integrity & fire detection is a high priority for social housing, and there is a need to exceed current guidelines beyond the scope of the Fire Safety Reform and the LACORS Fire Safety Guide for blocks of flats. The key design principles which have been incorporated into the HDG include the following:
 - New apartment blocks will be provided with Fire Suppression installations (sprinklers) irrespective of the height of the development.
 - LD1 Fire Alarm System to be installed - A system throughout the dwelling, incorporating detectors in all circulation spaces that form part of the escape routes from the dwelling, and in all rooms and areas in which fire might start, other than toilets, bathrooms and shower rooms.
 - Fire suppression & Fire compartmentation to be 3rd Party Accredited
 - The external fabric of the development to be non-combustible.
 - Provision of Fire Escape Stairs & Lifts to be compliant with Building Regulations.

LABC Warranty

10. The HDG requires all new housing developments where possible to be provided with a LABC Warranty, this is consistent with best practice and advice obtained from the COL District Surveyor and the COL Insurance & Risk Manager.

Secured by Design

11. The HDG requires all new social housing projects to be designed to achieve 'Secured by Design' standards. The external environment needs to offer security to its end users both in terms of reality and perception. For the safety and long-term security of residents and visitors to any development, all requirements for emergency service access and maintenance access will be compliant with current policy, legal obligations and best practice.

Access and Equality

12. The HDG supports the provision of flexible and accessible developments which are adaptable over the life of a building. New housing should support family life in the flexibility of homes built with easily accessible, built in, long-term adaptability to suit growing and aging families or new owners and tenants. The HDG will support the development of well-connected, walkable neighbourhoods which provide a choice of homes and accessible infrastructure, services and supporting uses and facilities in order to enhance health and wellbeing, social inclusion and community cohesion.

Housing and Climate Emergency

13. Climate change is a defining issue of our time and a challenge which requires a collaborative approach for positive environmental leadership across the organisation. The need for credible leadership for carbon neutrality underpins one of the fundamental aims of the HDG.
14. The UK Government has declared a Climate Emergency committing to achieve Net Zero Carbon by 2050. Supporting the roll-out of low and zero carbon technologies, promoting sustainable transport, restoring natural environments and contributing towards a circular economy are some of the key actions that could deliver the 2050 target
15. There has been a significant growth in new public commitments to climate action, including many London boroughs. To date, 28 London boroughs have declared a climate emergency, 22 of whom have set a goal of net zero emissions by 2030.
16. Councils have influence over around 70% of carbon emissions, but to achieve carbon neutrality or zero carbon will require definitive action by boroughs and lobbying for further funding and policy levers where necessary. This is particularly the case when it comes to improving the energy performance of homes in London and reducing carbon emissions from the sector, which currently accounts for around 36% of all emissions in the capital.
17. The construction industry has a major impact as well as being impacted by these conditions. In December 2018, the Mayor of London also declared a Climate Emergency. The years to 2030 will be most critical in mitigating the effects of climate change and London has accounted for this by pledging to match all the targets to achieve Zero Carbon as soon as 2030.
18. In construction terms - a response to the Climate Emergency must take into account the design, new build and retrofitting of our housing stock. Important aspects are firstly embodied carbon of the materials and operational energy. Embodied carbon can dominate a home's lifecycle carbon to 2030 and be 30-50% over 60 years. Heating and hot water for homes also make up 25% of the total energy use and 19% of our greenhouse gas emissions.
19. Furthermore, although most homes are naturally ventilated, rising temperatures will result in increasing need for active cooling, which in return will increase the energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
20. The HDG performs a significant role in delivering a carbon zero future since the Corporation is committed to provide at least 700 new social rented homes, making 25% of Corporation's current portfolio.
21. The Corporation supports the declaration of Climate Emergency and aims to take the measures needed to achieve Carbon Zero by 2030. The HDG aims to align with the Committee on Climate Change (CCC's) report for low-carbon, sustainable homes, in support of the main targets set by the UK Government. Exemplar initiatives such as low-carbon heating and sustainable urban drainage systems are adopted from the CCC's report and are promoted within the HDG.

22. Several London Boroughs have been exploring a range of options to improve efficiency in council-owned housing including boiler replacements, heat networks, and renewable energy generation measures such as solar panels. Standards relating to all these aspects are contained in the HDG.
23. The HDG aims not only to set design standards, but also deliver performance in-use. Within the HDG, there is practical guidance that can help developers and designers in putting the UK Government's overarching targets and aspirations into practice. The HDG places an emphasis on a fabric first design approach, maximising the performance and material in use. This is achieved by early stage considerations, such as sustainable material sourcing and designing for deconstruction, reuse and repair, while contributing towards a circular economy that moves away from gas, as the primary fuel source.
24. Alongside the City's Responsible Business Strategy and Climate Action Strategy, this HDG aims to drive new residential developments commissioned by the Corporation towards the ambitious standards required when responding to the Climate Emergency.

Modern Methods of Construction / Design for Manufacture and Assembly

25. In considering how to meet its ambitious target of enabling the delivery of 300,000 homes per year by the mid 2020's and net-zero carbon target by 2050, the government is promoting the delivery of non-traditional construction techniques, broadly known as 'modern methods of construction' (MMC). The term 'MMC' essentially refers to a wide range of construction techniques, meaning anything that differs from 'traditional' building methods.
26. The HDG highlights that MMC or Design for Manufacturing and Assembly (DfMA) presents an opportunity to increase the speed of delivery, construction quality, environmental performance while reducing the impact of construction nuisance to local residents and improving health and safety on construction sites.
27. The HDG requires project teams to presume a preference to explore and adopt an appropriate level of off-site fabrication for all projects. Project teams are required to produce a written assessment on the feasibility of MMC and DfMA as an integral part of the early design stage report.

Cost Overview

A cost review of the HDG has been completed by an independent Quantity Surveyor, and this cost appraisal has been included in Appendix 1

Appendices

- **Appendix 1** – Cost Overview prepared by Turner & Townsend

Michael Gwyther-Jones, Head of New Developments and Special Projects,
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