

Committee	Dated:
Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee	16 July 2021
Subject: Housing Major Works Programme – Progress Report	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children’s Services	For Information
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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 latest update report highlights specific areas of ‘slippage’ or ‘acceleration’ since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee on 22 March 2021 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 £75million 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;
 - Fire safety improvement works.
4. The funding for these extensive works, which is 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. This progress report was submitted to and considered by the HPB at its meeting on 24 June 2021.
10. Members will note from the progress report at Appendix 1 that, currently, no projects have 'slipped' since the last meeting of this Sub-Committee. However, Members attention is drawn to the ongoing resource issues set out later in this report which potentially, could impact on the expected delivery dates for some of the projects especially, the Window Replacement Programme across all our estates. Members are asked to specifically note the following updates:

Progress of note on key projects

H23 – Middlesex Street Estate Lift Refurbishment

The verification of the Final Account for this project is now complete and, has confirmed a total project underspend of £187,812. Of this sum, £88,464 relates to unused professional fees as, the project management and clerk of works roles for the project were carried out internally, minimising the use and expense of external consultants. A further £82,518 is attributed to savings realised during the delivery of the works contract in respect of unused provisional sums. The remaining £16,900 is attributable to an unused provision for staff costs. A full Gateway 6 Outcome Report is being drafted and will be submitted for Committee approval in due course.

H39 – Window Replacement and External Redecorations (Multiple Estates)

Works have now commenced on the first estate in this project at Dron House. Final financial clarifications for tenders received for Southwark, Holloway, Windsor House and William Blake are being undertaken with colleagues in City Procurement. Gateway 5 reports have been drafted and once the winning bids have been confirmed with City Procurement, these will be updated and submitted for the relevant approvals.

H45 – York Way Estate Communal Heating

Works to replace the distribution pipework are complete and work in the plant room is ongoing. The in-flat installations had been on hold as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions however, with the recent easing of restrictions, in-flat surveys are currently being done in preparation for the internal installations.

H46 – Middlesex Street Estate Communal Heating

Unfortunately, the in-flat surveys have been put on hold as, the contractor's surveyor has been signed off due to ill health. At this stage however, this will have no further impact on the completion date as, the distribution pipework and the stripping out of the plant room is still ongoing.

H53 – Play and Ball Games Area Refurbishment (Multiple Estates)

Following a competitive procurement exercise, Kompan Limited has been appointed to carry out this work which, is due to start later this month. Priority is being given to the areas at Windsor House and Eric Wilkins House as, both play areas are closed at present. It is hoped that they will both be ready for at least part of the school summer holidays. The other three areas are all still usable and, as such, if these cannot be renewed before the start of the holidays, they will be delayed until September.

H54 – Fire Door Replacement Programme (Multiple Estates)

Pilot door replacements are to take place at the Holloway and York Way Estates to find solutions to an issue identified in relation to Building Regulations whereby, in order to fit a door set that meets fire safety regulations, the walkthrough distance into the flats may need to be reduced below the recommended minimum. The supplier's recent measured survey revealed that the existing door apertures and original door frames (particularly at Holloway) are much narrower than those prescribed by modern standards. The pilots will explore whether it is possible to widen the existing openings by removing any excess plaster to bring the new walkthroughs above the required threshold.

11. As Members will appreciate, there will always be problems with contracts and projects such as those contained within the Housing Major Works Programme. In addition, we continue to operate in what are, for most of us, unprecedented times. The COVID-19 situation has had a significant impact on service delivery and, the Major Works Programme has been particularly adversely affected. The easing of restrictions is very welcome and, we continue to meet with our contractors and consultants on a regular basis to see what can be done to get these projects back up and running.
12. Members will also recognise that progress with any of the projects included in the Housing Major Works Programme can change at short notice. It is often the case that notable changes in projects will have occurred from the time that reports are written to the time that they are presented to this Sub-Committee. Where appropriate, Officers will provide further updates to Members when presenting this report.

Staffing Resources

13. The Major Works Team is currently significantly under-resourced as, two of its Project Managers recently left the City Corporation to pursue other opportunities. One of the two Project Managers had been appointed specifically to manage the delivery of the Window Replacement Programme at Dron House, Holloway Estate, William Blake Estate, Windsor House, Southwark Estates and the Sydenham Hill Estate. The recruitment process is underway to find suitable

replacements however, at this stage, there is no Project Manager in post to manage these projects.

14. In order to deal with the immediate lack of a Project Manager for the Dron House project which, as stated previously, is now underway, quotations have been sought and received for an external consultant to carry out the Project Manager function. Playle LLP has submitted the most attractive bid and, we are in the process of seeking urgent authorisation to confirm its appointment.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Housing Major Works Programme Progress Report (July 2021)

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