

Committee	Dated:
Housing Management & Almshouses Sub Committee	15 November 2021
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 latest update report highlights specific areas of ‘slippage’ or ‘acceleration’ since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee on 20 September 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 28 October 2021.

10. Following recent requests from Members, projects that have been added to the original five-year Housing Major Works Programme over the last few years have been highlighted in this latest progress report. This helps to demonstrate the extent as to which the scope of the five-year Housing Major Works Programme has increased since its inception. Members will note from the latest progress report that the value of these additional projects is approximately £23.4million (a 43% increase in the cost of the original programme).
11. Members will note from the progress report at Appendix 1 that, currently, with the exception of H39 – Window Replacement and External Redecorations (Multiple Estates), there has been no significant change to the status of the various projects since the last meeting of this Sub-Committee. Members are asked to specifically note the following updates:

Slippage in relation to timing of contract

H39 – Window Replacement and External Redecorations (Multiple Estates)

Works continue on our first site in this project at Dron House, with our external consultant, Playle & Partners LLP carrying out the Project Manager function on behalf of the City Corporation. Unfortunately, however, due to the previously reported internal resource issues, the commencement dates for the works at Southwark, Holloway, Windsor House, William Blake and Sydenham Hill Estates have been delayed and reset for February/March 2022.

Progress of note on key projects

H40 – Golden Lane Estate Window Refurbishment/Replacement

An Issues Report is being drafted to seek approval to restructure the project to allow the prioritisation of different blocks on the Estate thereby, mitigating the risk where any delay to the design process for one block delays progress with all others.

The report also seeks approval to amend the project scope to include roofing renewals. Surveys of the existing roofs at the Golden Lane Estate have been completed and reveal that the existing roof coverings have reached the end of their useful operational lives. In addition, the surveys noted the paucity of roof insulation present in the existing installations at many blocks. This should be addressed at the earliest opportunity to improve energy efficiency within the buildings and to ensure compliance with current building standards. Combining the roof works with the windows element allows for a single design perspective, which will considerably benefit moves to a joined-up approach to maximising energy efficiency and aligning with the Net Zero Carbon initiative. It also creates the opportunity to realise cost efficiencies (shared use of access equipment) and minimise disruption to residents by allowing works to proceed concurrently.

For blocks such as Crescent House, should the option to replace the upper-level windows be approved, the simultaneous replacement of the roof is a necessity as the components are integrally designed.

H43 – Decent Homes Harman Close

Works are now approaching completion, with the final element – insulation – due to finish mid-late November. The project is forecast to be under budget at completion despite the challenges of working in Sheltered Housing with vulnerable residents throughout the pandemic.

H45 – York Way Estate Communal Heating Replacement

The installation of the distribution pipework has now been completed. Some final survey works are being undertaken and, we are expecting to commence the in-flat installations in late November/early December.

H46 – Middlesex Street Estate Communal Heating Replacement

The distribution pipework in Petticoat Tower is now complete and works are ongoing in the plant room to install all the new equipment. Distribution pipework around Petticoat Square is currently on hold, as there have been objections to the planning permission for the external distribution pipework from a handful of residents. We are currently working with an independently appointed architect and the City of London Corporation's Planning Department to agree a suitable solution. Unfortunately, this will likely delay the completion of the project back to the summer next year.

H54 – Fire Door Replacement Programme (Multiple Estates)

The pricing submission from our approved contractor, GERDA, has been received for Lot 1 (Holloway and York Way Estates) and is being formally evaluated in conjunction with colleagues in City Procurement. The submitted cost is within previously approved estimates.

12. As Members will appreciate, there will always be problems with contracts and projects such as those contained within the Housing Major Works Programme. The COVID-19 situation has had a significant impact on service delivery in the last 18 months or so but, with the easing of restrictions, we are seeing most of our projects picking up gradually.
13. 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

14. As highlighted at previous meetings of this Sub-Committee, the Major Works Team has been significantly under-resourced since the recent departure of two of its Project Managers. A recruitment process has been carried out to find suitable replacements and, one successful appointment has now been made. Unfortunately, however, this has had a significant bearing on the delivery of the Window Replacement Programme at the Holloway Estate, William Blake Estate, Windsor House, Southwark Estates and the Sydenham Hill Estate. Should there be any further problems with the current recruitment process or, existing Project Managers leaving, this could lead to delays in other projects.

Appendices

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

Paul Murtagh

Assistant Director, Barbican & Property Services

T: 020 7332 3015 E: paul.murtagh@cityoflondon.gov.uk