

POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 FEBRUARY 2021

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- (1) Question from David Webb to the Leader of the Council (Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities)**

Interim Affordable Housing Policy – September 2016. This represents the Corporate Policy position as of September 2016 and sets out the approach the Council will take until further notice in respect of affordable housing policy and financial contribution calculations. What steps are the council going to take to achieve affordable housing and reduce the waiting list for council homes and when will this be completed?

Thank you for your question Mr. Webb. The need for affordable homes within the borough is greater than ever and the Council's commitment to addressing this housing need is well documented with the Council's Southend 2050 Outcomes & the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy both reflecting this.

In order to address this need, the Council is undertaking a range of acquisitions and development programmes with the intention to increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough and in turn reduce the number of households on the Council's Homeseekers Register. Since 2019, the Council has undertaken a successful Acquisitions Programme which purchases property from the open market and utilises it for Council housing. 38 properties have been purchased so far via this Programme and a further 20 properties will be purchased this year via the Next Steps Accommodation Programme which looks to provide supported Move On accommodation in the borough and is part funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Council also continues to build its own housing via the Housing Revenue Account Land Review and Modern Methods of Construction Projects. To date 35 Council homes have been built via these projects and over 40 are in the pipeline to be developed over the next two years. Looking further ahead, the large-scale redevelopment projects of Better Queensway, Roots Hall and Fossett's Farm will also look to increase affordable housing in the borough as part of their wider housing delivery. It should be noted that the Council is not alone in the development of affordable housing and continues to work in partnership with registered providers to assist them to develop their affordable housing developments which the Council is able to utilise for lettings via the nomination agreements process.

- (2) Question from David Webb to the Cabinet Member for Transport, Capital & Inward Investment**

In this year proposal budget the proposed Capital Investment Programme for 2020/21 to 2024/25 (Appendix 12 to the report) be approved and it be noted that the changes to the approved programme will result in a proposed Capital Investment Programme of £204.8M for 2020/21 to 2024/25 (Appendix 12 to the report) of which £51.3M is supported by external funding. What is the capital investment programme 2021 - 2021/25 and how much will they cost?

Thank you for your question Mr. Webb. The proposed Capital Investment Programme for 2021/22 to 2025/26 is £168.6M (Appendix 13) of which £25.6M is supported by external funding.