

POLICY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 MARCH 2023

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. QUESTION FROM DAVID WEBB TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY, REGENERATION AND HOUSING

How many council homes have been built by Southend Council in the last three years and how much have they cost to build them collectively each year and what budget have they come from?

Thank you for your question Mr Webb. Since 2019/20, four council homes have been built by Southend-on-Sea City Council. These four homes were agreed as part of a pilot of Modern Methods of Construction and were built in Saxon Gardens in Shoeburyness. These homes were built with timber frames and featured increased insulation, solar panels, solar inverters to hot water tanks and two of the homes reached Carbon Net Zero standards. The total cost of the project was £940k and it was funded via the Council's Housing Revenue Account and Right to Buy receipts. Since 2019/20, the Council has also secured planning permission for a further thirty-eight Council homes, has purchased fifty-nine homes from the open market which have been converted to Council homes and worked with our partners PSP Southend LLP and the Salvation Army to deliver a further fifteen homes.

2. QUESTION FROM DAVID WEBB TO THE LEADER (CABINET MEMBER FOR CORPORATE MATTERS & PERFORMANCE DELIVERY)

What are our corporate priorities, what are the objectives and how are we going to achieve these 2022-2026?

Thank you for your question Mr Webb. There are four corporate priorities for Southend-on-Sea City Council. These are: 'Rising to the climate change challenge', 'A city delivering genuinely affordable housing', 'A city with good quality of life' and 'A city that is strong and prosperous.' Each priority has a series of objectives.

A city rising to the climate change challenge includes: become a net Zero Carbon Southend by 2030; prevent waste, promote re-use and increase recycling; develop an active and sustainable travel network; protect our natural environment; and undertake flood and coastal erosion risk management.

A city delivering housing includes: address local housing need; prioritise the supply and quality of safe, genuinely affordable homes; make any instance of homelessness brief and non-recurrent, aiming for functional zero homelessness; maximise environmental sustainability of homes; ensure good quality housing design and maintenance; reduce the number of empty homes; and deliver the Local Plan.

A city with good quality of life includes: our vision of a city where all children achieve success; ensure young people, including those in care, feel and are safe at home, school and in their communities; enable and provide opportunities for the best start in life; enable people to age well, live well and care well; ensure that health and care services meet the needs of all; and ensure services are diverse, sustainable and high quality, including for those who pay for their own care.

A city that is strong and prosperous includes: support economic regeneration and business development; use our spending power wisely; bid for funding opportunities and attract inward investment; sustain and grow digital investment and inclusion; deliver our city centre strategy and investment plan; enhance our tourism, cultural and leisure offer; and improve community safety.

Completion of these objectives will enable successful achievement of the four priorities.

Lead services have been engaged to meet the objectives set, which are monitored and reported via the council's corporate performance reporting; this sets out how each objective is to be achieved and measures how they are performing.

Each year there is a refresh of the Corporate Plan that takes in to account the appropriateness of the priorities and objectives set, ensuring the Council remains current to all factors that could change our focus for delivery. This refresh is currently underway with senior management of the Council and a refreshed Corporate Plan will be delivered in July 2023.