

	<h2>CHIEF OFFICER IN CONSULATION WITH COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DELEGATED POWERS REPORT</h2>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Barnet Homes Housing Management on Regeneration Estates</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Deputy Chief Executive</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>Colindale, Underhill, West Hendon</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>None</p>
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Summary

Council plans are currently in place to regenerate the Grahame Park, Dollis Valley and West Hendon estates, the council homes which are under the management of Barnet Homes.

Continued delays in the regeneration programme over a prolonged period has inevitably resulted in the deterioration of the stock and non-compliance with the Decent Homes Standard. Delays have often been incremental over time making an effective and efficient approach to planned maintenance untenable. This has resulted in an increased demand for responsive repairs and pest control interventions and made all aspects of housing management increasingly challenging.

This paper sets out the variety of extraordinary factors being experienced on regeneration estates and makes a recommendation that a dedicated team be setup to oversee management of regeneration estates and additional funding be approved to adequately respond to the complex situation as it now currently exists. The specialist regeneration function would offer a dedicated point of contact for regeneration residents and bring the relevant services together into one regeneration estate specific team.

Decisions

- 1. That funding of £301,600 be approved from the council's Housing Revenue Account for the year 2020/21 for Barnet Homes to deploy additional management resources on the regeneration estates of Grahame Park and Dollis Valley.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Council plans are currently in place to regenerate the following estates that are at present managed by Barnet Homes:
 - Dollis Valley
 - West Hendon
 - Grahame Park
- 1.2 Due to impending regeneration plans, the regeneration estates were not included in the bid to central government for Decent Homes funding prior to 2004 and have therefore not received the level of investment of other Barnet Homes stock in the borough. The approach to capital investment for the last circa 15 years has been predominantly essential H&S/compliance related maintenance work that is necessary to ensure the properties remain safe, including the replacement of electrical rising mains, fire protection and essential lift refurbishment works.
- 1.3 Continued delays in the regeneration programme over a prolonged period has inevitably resulted in the deterioration of the stock and non-compliance with the Decent Homes Standard. Delays have often been incremental over time making an effective and efficient approach to planned maintenance untenable. This has resulted in an increased demand for responsive repairs and pest control interventions and made all aspects of housing management increasingly challenging. This paper sets out the variety of extraordinary factors being experienced on regeneration estates and makes a recommendation as to the resources required and approach to be taken to adequately respond to the complex situation as it now currently exists.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Management Considerations

These can be considered in five main areas:

2.1.1 Building Maintenance

Due to the lack of investment as outlined above, the delivery of effective responsive maintenance services becomes increasingly challenging as time progresses and the condition of buildings deteriorates. This particularly applies to communal building parts and estate elements, but also dwellings internally where damp can be prevalent. On certain estates, these issues include pest infestations, sometimes linked to regeneration construction work itself.

2.1.2 The communal areas of regeneration estates, whilst maintained, look very poor as no cyclical decorations have been carried out for many years.

This issue has come into stark focus with recent high-profile issues on the remaining blocks of Marsh Drive on the West Hendon estate resulting in the decision to accelerate the decanting of the blocks by 18 months.

2.2 Housing Management

The general decline of the condition of the estates due to prolonged periods of a lack of investment and change of demographic to one of large concentrations of predominantly non-secure tenancies used for temporary accommodation purposes has, on some estates, presented significant challenges in relation to ASB and therefore the delivery of quality estate based services such as caretaking and cleaning. Incidences of ASB are far more prevalent on regeneration estates than the rest of the Barnet Homes stock and in conjunction with far less Police resources, has seen particular issues on West Hendon and Grahame Park which are intensive to manage.

2.2.1 For a variety of reasons, non-secure tenants are less likely to report repairs and estate issues or engage generally with Barnet Homes and due to the vastly different offerings with each group of tenants, there is often a different relationship and level of satisfaction with landlord services between them and the secure tenants.

2.3 Non-secure tenancies

The decision to use naturally occurring vacant units on regeneration sites as Temporary Accommodation was taken at the outset of the regeneration programme in the early 2000's as this was deemed to be the best use of the assets available to meet the need at that time. As the stock is owned by the Council it means the alternative costs of private rented Temporary Accommodation are not borne by the General Fund.

2.3.1 Whilst all secure tenants on regeneration estates are guaranteed new homes in the newly developed estates, non-secure tenants can often be left on different regeneration estates for long periods of time, some over 20 years, without any guarantee of the housing they will be offered at time of decanting.

2.4 Large Panel Systems

Barnet Homes manage large panel system (LPS) built blocks on two of the regeneration estates, those being West Hendon and Dollis Valley. The investigatory works only concern blocks that are five storeys or more, therefore this relates to the following:

- Dollis Valley
 - 43-135 Garrowsfield (latest scheduled Vacant Possession date 2025)
 - 64-106 & 122-156 Mill Bridge (latest scheduled Vacant Possession date VP 2023)
- West Hendon
 - 1-232 Marsh Drive (schedule Vacant Possession October 2020)

2.4.1 LPS construction essentially means it was constructed using large panels of concrete slotted together and then held in place with vertical and horizontal metal ties. The collapse of a block (Ronan Point) constructed using a similar technique, following a gas explosion, led to this type of construction being phased out. Following the Grenfell Tower Fire Government advice was updated, and all such blocks are being surveyed to test whether they are sound and where there is piped gas whether the block could withstand a gas explosion.

2.4.2 Ridge and Partners LLP were instructed by Barnet Homes to carry out intrusive surveys to the above blocks and the results for Marsh Drive showed that whilst the blocks remain sound for short-term use, we would need to remove the piped gas if we plan to use it long term. In conjunction with Cadent (the gas network distributor) Barnet Homes have agreed a number of immediate measures that reduce the risk of any explosion even further.

2.4.3 If it was planned to keep Marsh Drive occupied beyond 12 months, then as a minimum the piped gas would have to be removed and be replaced with an alternative heating system.

2.4.4 In relation to the blocks at Dollis Valley, whilst an initial survey has been received further investigations are required. Cadent have already confirmed their expectation that the piped gas to the blocks needs to be removed and capital funding has been approved and preparatory works commenced to replace the currently gas heating and hot water systems with electric systems. In conjunction with Cadent, Barnet Homes have agreed a number of immediate measures the same as those at Marsh Drive.

Planned Works Programme

2.5 Grahame Park Estate

Following significantly amended phasing plans being proposed by Notting Hill Genesis for the regeneration of the Grahame Park estate, Barnet Homes commissioned a comprehensive condition survey to provide costed options ranging from work needed to bring the estate to a basic compliant (option 1) standard, Decent Homes compliance (option 2) standard and major refurbishment (option 3) standard.

- 2.5.1 Based on an approach of assigning option 1 standard work to blocks which have a demolition date of 2024 or sooner and option 2 standard work to blocks which have a demolition date of 2025 or later. The total investment need is estimated at £33m and this funding was approved by the council's Housing and Growth Committee on the 27 January 2020. This includes option 2 standard works for properties, mainly on the north of the estate, for which no realistic phasing dates currently exist and security works to blocks which do not currently have operably controlled entrance systems.
- 2.6 West Hendon Estate
All blocks on the estate have now been demolished, with the exception of 2 blocks on Marsh Drive, 1-192 and 193-232, which now have a VP date of October 2020.
- 2.7 **Proposed Management Approach**
Whilst additional resources have been approved by the council in order to manage the West Hendon blocks and the decanting and rehousing process up to October 2020, there are also additional resources required to respond to the situation on the Grahame Park and Dollis Valley estates.
- 2.7.1 The council have given informal approval for additional HRA funding for Grahame Park and included this in the HRA Business Plan which was approved by the Housing and Growth Committee on 27 January 2020, however there is a need to formalise the wider approach to these estates giving credence to the specific challenges they pose.
- 2.7.2 It is therefore proposed that a dedicated team be setup to oversee management of regeneration estates. The specialist regeneration function would offer a dedicated point of contact for regeneration residents and bring the following services together into one regeneration estate specific team:
- Housing Management
 - Repairs and Maintenance (inc Pest Control)
 - West Hendon decant programme (non-secure and secure)
 - Estate Services
 - Resident and Stakeholder Engagement
- 2.7.3 The team would also be required to work closely with the Property Services function in coordinating the LPS related safety works, Grahame Park stock investment programme and minor capital works budget for Dollis Valley.
- 2.7.4 Central management and coordinating of resident communications across a wide variety of service delivery areas, along with a single point for stakeholder management is expected to prove sufficient during what will be an exceptionally complex period of housing management.
- 2.7.5 It is proposed that these arrangements should initially be implemented for a period of 1 year, the 2020/21 financial year, after which the arrangements will be reviewed.

A summary table of the resources is below:

Role Title	Role Function	2020/21 Cost
Housing Officer	Dedicated Housing Officer for Grahame Park and Dollis Valley estates	£60,000
Additional Caretaker (Grahame Park x4) & (Dollis Valley X1)	Estate cleaning, bulk refuse collection/management & general estate environment standards	£121,600
Maintenance Officer	Dedicated officer for the Grahame Park and Dollis Valley estate	£60,000
Administrator	Administrative functions	£30,000
Pest Control	Implementing recommendations of expert consultant on Grahame Park Estate	£30,000
		£301,600

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 An alternative option considered was to maintain existing levels of resources on these estates over the next twelve months, however this is not recommended due to the obvious need to effectively manage the estates through what will be an extremely intensive and complex period of activity as outlined in section two above. As has been evidenced on the West Hendon estate during 2019/20, there is a propensity for a variety of factors to create risks for the council and Barnet Homes.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Once the decision is approved, Barnet Homes will formally request the funds through a Change Request Form to be authorised by the Head of Housing Strategy / Director of Growth.
- 4.2 Following the authorisation of the Change Request Form, Barnet Homes will recruit to the vacant positions and establish the new dedicated team to operate from April 2020.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2019 to 2024 is based on three main outcomes, one of which is "a pleasant, well maintained borough that we protect and invest in". The wider regeneration of Dollis Valley, West Hendon and Grahame Park estates, of which this

expenditure relates to, will replace poor quality existing homes with mixed tenure high quality developments.

5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 The total financial cost to the councils Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is £301,600 of revenue funding. Provision for this sum has already been made in the HRA Business Plan agreed by the Housing and Growth Committee in January 2020 for 2020/21 in addition to the £33m of capital stock investment on regeneration estates, to ensure that it is affordable against other priorities identified.

5.2.2 The Housing Finance Manager has reviewed these costs in light of the HRA approved Budget and has agreed these costs will be covered by the 20/21 HRA Budget. This DPR on approval will be captured through the Change Notice process and charged to the following account:

- 10921 Supervision & Mgmt427000 Miscellaneous Expenses

5.3 **Social Value**

5.3.1 Having consideration to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013, there are no specific social value consideration arising from this proposal

5.4 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 Article 7 of the Council's Constitution states that the Housing and Growth Committee has responsibility for:

- housing matters including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, commissioning of environmental health functions for private sector housing.
- regeneration strategy and oversee major regeneration schemes, asset management, employment strategy, business support and engagement.

5.4.1 Article 10.4 of the Council's Constitution states that decision making by Chief Officers in consultation with Theme Committee Chairmen (including Housing & Growth) have delegated authority to make decisions which are not key decisions and which have a value between £189,330 and £500,000. A written report will be prepared for every decision.

5.5 **Risk Management**

5.5.1 There is a risk that the HRA is not able to fund the additional expenditure, thereby creating a position whereby insufficient reserves remained in the account at the end of the financial year. This risk has been mitigated by budgeting a corresponding commitment to the value required within the budget monitoring process, which ensures it has been factored into the 2020/21 HRA budget and is affordable.

5.6 **Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act, Section 149 outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant
- protected characteristic and persons who do not
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant characteristic and persons who do not

5.6.2 The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

5.6.3 Changes to policies and services are analysed in order to assess the potential equalities impacts and risks and identify any mitigating action possible, through an equalities impact assessment, before final decisions are made. Consideration will also be made to the equalities and data cohesion summary.

5.6.4 A full equalities impact assessment has been completed for both the Housing Strategy and Housing Allocations Policy. These findings are reflected in the Barnet Homes delivery plan and the EIAs are kept under review and updated as appropriate. The Barnet Group has an equalities strategy in place which fully supports the Council's equalities aims and principles. Equalities Impact Assessments are undertaken as and when required.

5.7 **Corporate Parenting**

5.7.1 The decision does not have a direct or indirect impact on looked after children and care leavers.

5.8 **Consultation and Engagement**

5.8.1 A consultation exercise with Barnet Homes tenants and leaseholders was completed as part of the Management Agreement development in 2015 and this exercise identified the priorities for Barnet Homes. These priorities are further reviewed through biennial resident satisfaction surveys. Consultation with residents was also undertaken as part of the Housing Strategy.

5.9 **Insight**

5.9.1 No specific insight data has been used in this report.

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 N/A

Chairman:
Has been consulted

Signed

Richard Coates

Date 7 April 2020

Chief Officer: Cath Shaw
Decision maker having taken into account the views of the Chairman

Signed

Date 21 April 2020

