

Housing & Growth Committee

25th October 2022



Title

Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers (RPs)

Report of

Housing & Growth Committee Chairman Cllr Ross Houston

Wards

All

Status

Public

Urgent

No

Key

No

Enclosures

Appendix One- Barnet Annual Performance Review 2020.21

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Summary

Registered Providers (RPs) are key partners for the Council in delivering on the Housing Strategy goal of increasing the housing supply, including affordable housing. As the providers of accommodation for about 9000 households in the borough, RPs also have a key part to play in assisting tenants affected current issues such as cost of living crises and increasing fuel costs, providing training and employment opportunities, improving health and wellbeing, and providing effective landlord services and neighbourhood management. The Council has completed an Annual Performance Review of the top seven developing RPs operating in the borough to obtain a view on how RPs are performing and how they are adapting to the changing regulations and requirements regarding fire safety and sustainability.

Officers Recommendations

1. That Committee note the Barnet Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers 2021/22 as attached in Appendix 1.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 At the meeting of 19th October 2015, the Housing Committee requested that a Performance Review be completed on an annual basis and reported to the Committee. The report provides an overview of how Registered Providers (RPs) are performing and how they are adapting to the changing regulations and requirements.
- 1.2 There are 58 RPs managing over 9000 affordable homes (excluding Shared Ownership) in the borough, of these 58 RPs only 17 have stock over 100 units and 5 RPs have stock over 500 units in Barnet. The main RPs currently developing in Barnet are Notting Hill Genesis, Metropolitan Thames Valley, One Housing Group, L&Q, Clarion, Home Group and Network Homes; all non-profit RP's. This review will monitor the seven RPs listed above. The review does not cover a review of Barnet Homes, or the RP subsidiary Open Door Ltd connected with the Barnet Group. Appendix 1 is an Annual Performance Report for 2021/22 for housing management and housing development activities and includes Fire Safety and Sustainability. The Performance Review presents an analysis of the performance of these 7 large RPs that are building new affordable homes in Barnet.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The attached Performance Review highlights that RPs are providing satisfactory landlord services and are proactive in responding to current issues such as the Cost-of-Living crises. New initiatives are well thought out and aimed at assisting residents facing hardship this year. The BOOST team will be re engaging with RPs welfare teams to encourage partnership working to ensure all residents can access additional services in Barnet.
- 2.2 The Council continue to liaise with RPs on relevant work streams such as development, sustainability, and fire safety; due to the large number of RPs in the borough, this is largely through email and one to one meetings with RPs on an ad hoc basis.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) remains high on RPs agenda. Although most RPs have not highlighted Barnet as an area with severe ASB, one RP has concerns with how ASB caused by residents with mental health issues is dealt with and would welcome a more proactive approach to deal with these kinds of issues. RPs have been making improvements to prevent further ASB including improving door entry systems and CCTV.

- 2.3 RPs have shown commitment to developing sustainability programmes on existing stock and new developments. The Council will be working with RPs on the retrofit agenda going forward and reaching out to RPs not included in this Performance Review to identify their future plans and collaborate to reach the Councils target to achieve Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band B by 2030. This supports the Councils Sustainability Strategy Framework adopted in December 2021, this includes an action plan of how the Council will deliver its net zero commitments by 2042. The Council have set up a housing retrofit working group which includes investigating grants and funding opportunities and plans on how the Council can work with RPs to achieve EPC band B by 2030.
- 2.4 RPs have focussed Fire Safety Teams and are forthcoming in providing data to the Council. Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) are up to date and work programmes are in place to complete required FRA works. The majority of the Building Safety Act 2022 came into force in April with further sections in June, and RPs have prepared themselves to meet the

changes in legislation. Current legislation is targeted at blocks of at least 18m (7 storeys tall) however liaison will continue throughout the year with the newly appointed Tower Blocks Officer with all RPs to further identify blocks between 11-18m

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 None

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The Council will continue to carry out an Annual Performance Review and take up any issues where poor performance has been identified.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The Council are in the process of developing a work programme to enable the delivery of the Council's new priorities.

5.1.2 One of the Council's priorities will be to invest in more CCTV, better lighting, and community safety hubs. Some of the RPs included in this review have provided CCTV and improved lighting on their residential estates, through liaising with RPs further work can be introduced to provide a joined-up approach on mixed developments.

5.1.3 Declaring a climate emergency is another top priority, RPs have developed varied sustainability programmes including improvements such as electric vehicle fleets and charging points, low carbon heating, retrofit programmes and tree planting programmes.

5.1.4 RPs have supported the priority of increasing the number of affordable family homes, last year RPs developed 249 new affordable homes for Barnet residents.

5.1.5 The new emerging Local Plan for Barnet will continue to prioritise the need for affordable housing, including family housing, helping people into work, health, and wellbeing, and creating safer neighbourhoods.

5.1.6 A key principle of the Council's Growth Strategy is to shape changes to places to secure healthy, resilient, and cohesive communities. The strategy identified the need to increase the supply of housing and deliver more housing that people can afford, as well as creating job and skills development opportunities for local people, as key priorities.

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

5.2.1 There are no direct resource implications arising out of this report.

5.2.2 There was a decrease in families affected by the benefit cap in 2021/22, and in May 22 unemployment rate was at 3.7%, the lowest for 50 years. However, the onset of the cost-of-living crisis is likely to see an impact in the Discretionary Housing Payment applications. Barnet council was allocated £33,000 for the Covid-19 winter grant to support those struggling to pay utility bills and daily living costs. The Council through BOOST (a partnership between Barnet Homes, Jobcentre Plus, Barnet & Southgate College to offer employment and benefit advice in Barnet) will continue to assist households affected and

RPs are also working with their residents to assist. BOOST is looking to strengthen their working relationship with welfare teams within each RP.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 Constitution, Article 7, Committees, Forums and Partnerships sets out the terms of reference of the Housing & Growth Committee which includes:

- Responsibility for housing matters including housing strategy, homelessness, social housing and housing grants, and private sector housing.
- Responsibility for regeneration strategy and oversee major regeneration schemes, asset management, employment strategy, business support and engagement.
- To receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

5.3.2 Specifically the Housing & Growth Committee may submit budget proposals to the Policy and Resources Committee relating to the Committee's budget for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable.

5.3.3 RPs are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), The RSH is an executive non-departmental public body of the department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The performance framework includes "Economic" standards such as the Governance and Financial Viability Standard and the Value for Money Standard and "Consumer" standards such as the Tenant involvement and Empowerment Standard.

5.4 Insight

5.4 The report is informed by the responses provided by RPs to a survey.

5.5 Social Value

5.5.1 RPs continue to provide support to residents in Barnet, they have programmes in place offering employment, skills, training and economic inclusion programmes to local residents. Many RPs have further increased their offer to residents including hardship funds, fuel vouchers and debt advice to help to assist with the current cost of living crises.

5.6 Risk Management

5.6.1 RPs have a major role to play in accelerating housing development in Barnet and a reduced capacity for them to develop is a key risk that will impact on the Council's ability to provide the new homes to meet the demand from a growing population. COVID-19 and Brexit has meant that many developments were on hold until restrictions were lifted, or have suffered delays or increased costs with materials, and utilities as a result there have been delays to completions thus resulting in some developments being delayed until 2022.23.

5.6.2 The Mayor of London's Affordable Homes Programme 2021- 26 first bid allocation in Barnet was announced with 217 affordable homes included (105 social rent homes and 112 affordable homes). The housing products include Social Rent, London Living Rent and Shared Ownership. The Shared Ownership is a new model that reduces initial shares from 25% to 10%. There have yet to be any Shared Ownership completions with applicants purchasing less than 25% shares in Barnet. This is running alongside the Affordable Homes Programme 2016-2021 which included 1585 homes in Barnet.

- 5.6.3 RPs should continue or revisit their partnership working with BOOST to ensure that they are correctly identifying the skillset required in Barnet, so that they can tailor training accordingly and gain additional financial support for residents.
- 5.6.4 Building Safety Act 2022 increases the requirements on RPs regarding existing and new buildings. The Council will continue to monitor RPs and offer signposting to training where applicable.
- 5.6.5 RPs play a key role in Barnet’s Sustainability Strategy Framework, in particular retrofit agenda. RPs will be monitored and included in the communications policies to take this agenda forward.

5.7 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.7.1 Pursuant to section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”), the council has a duty to have ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act, advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristics and those who do not.
- 5.7.2 The protected characteristics are age, race, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The duty also covers marriage and civil partnership but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.
- 5.7.3 The Regulator of Social Housing requires RPs to meet the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard which provides expectations in relation to equalities.
- 5.7.4 RPs are key partners in the delivery of the Council’s Housing Strategy 2019 to 2024. A full Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the Councils Housing Strategy and concluded that the overall impact of the Strategy on the protected groups from the Equality Act 2010, as well as the Barnet Fairness Agenda, is positive. This report is for information only and therefore unlikely to result in any equalities implications.

5.8 Corporate Parenting

- 5.8.1 There are no specific Corporate Parenting considerations arising out of this report.

5.9 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.9.1 The following table shows how the Council and Re currently engage with and manage the performance of RPs.

Current Engagement/ Monitoring	Frequency	What's Involved	Engagement/ Performance
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Annual Performance Review	Annually	Standard review issued to each larger/ developing RP.	Engagement and performance
Liaison Group Meeting	Adhoc	RPs to be invited to meetings with relevant to teams to discuss issues such as Welfare Reform, Fire Safety and Sustainability.	Engagement
Development Meetings	Minimum once per year	Individual meetings between larger developing RPs and Re to discuss current developments and future development plans in Barnet. Currently via TEAMS	Engagement
General meetings/ Visits	Adhoc	Adhoc meetings and visits to RPs on partnership working over areas of mutual concern e.g., lettings	Engagement
Consultation on changes in Policy and Strategies	Adhoc	Barnet Council consult with RPs on various policies and strategies. This can be done via liaison groups, forums, and email consultation. The most recent being the Information Sharing Agreement to comply with GDPR.	Engagement
Monitoring of lettings returns	Collected quarterly and recorded as an annual PI.	RPs provide details of lettings for each quarter to confirm that RPs have met nomination agreements. Results are verified.	Monitoring.
Development Data	Constantly	Re is in regular contact with each developing RP to discuss start on site dates, completion dates and monitoring the S106 affordable housing elements. Completion statistics are recorded as monthly KPI.	Engagement and Performance.
BOOST. Barnet Homes	Regular	BOOST and Barnet Homes consult with RPs on updates via email consultation through Re	Engagement.
Community Safety MAPAC	Quarterly	Any Barnet anti-social behaviour cases that require a multi-agency approach.	Engagement

6. Environmental Impact

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications from noting the recommendations.
- 6.2 RPs have provided information on their sustainability programmes for current stock and future developments.
- 6.3 The Council have set up a housing retrofit working group which includes investigating grants and funding opportunities and plans on how the Council can work with RPs to achieve EPC band B by 2030

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Relevant previous papers are listed in the table below.

Housing & Growth Committee 16 November 2021	Decision Item 12 Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers (RPs)	Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Tuesday 16th November, 2021, 7.00 pm Barnet Council (moderngov.co.uk)
Housing & Growth Committee 24 November 2020	Decision Item 15 Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing and Growth Committee on Tuesday 24th November 2020, 7.00 pm (moderngov.co.uk)
Housing & Growth Committee 26 November 2019	Decision Item 7 Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers	https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?CId=696&MId=9930&Ver=4
Housing Committee 1 April 2019	Decision Item 8 - Housing Strategy	Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 1st April 2019, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee 10 October 2018	Decision Item 11 - Annual Performance review of Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing Committee on Wednesday 10th October 2018, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee 23 October 2017	Decision Item 7 - Annual Performance Review of Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 23rd October 2017, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee 20 October 2016	Decision Item 8 - Annual Performance review of Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing Committee on Thursday 20th October 2016, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee 19 October 2015	Decision Item 7 - Strategic engagement with Registered Providers	Agenda for Housing Committee on Monday 19th October 2015, 7.00 pm
Housing Committee, 27 October 2014	Decision Item 9 - Housing Strategy	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=7936&Ver=4
Housing Committee. 27 April 2015	Decision item 10- Summary of Feedback Following Consultation on Draft Housing Strategy	http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?CId=699&MId=7938&Ver=4