

Overview & Scrutiny PDSQs 07.02.2022

Questions	Response
Item 6.1 Delivery Report – Housing and Homes	
Housing Delivery and Supply page of presentation	
1. 827 new homes - completed and occupied. These are a combination of new build and purchases” can we have a breakdown between s106 new build purchases, purchases of pre-built properties, and genuinely new homes commissioned and built by LBTH?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Build – 225 2. S.106 – 157 3. Acquisitions – 422 4. Others (conversions) - 23
2. of the other 1,219 properties adding up to 2,046 how many will have been commissioned and built by LBTH as opposed to others?	<p>This breaks down as 1,185 new build homes, 2 conversions and 32 acquisitions.</p> <p>If further clarification is required we can provide this.</p>
3. "RP's have delivered 1,613 new homes (905 rented**, 705 intermediate) since 2020/21” how many these were s106 properties in new private developments?	<p>This is based upon completions from 2020/21 to the timing of the report.</p> <p>The split is 1,063 via s106 agreements with developers and 550 from RP led schemes.</p>
Annual Delivery Report – Housing & Homes	
4. Housing Management – Tower Hamlets Homes What is the number of stage one and stage two complaints received in 2020/21?	There were 1312 Stage 1 complaints received and 125 Stage 2 complaints received in 2020/2021
Housing Supply and Delivery	
5. Considering the council utilise a matrix/model which Savills independently verify A. when was Cabinet last able to review the Savills analysis underpinning the housing delivery and supply assumptions?	<p>A. We have used Savills over a number of years to produce and support us in the preparation of the HRA Business Plan. Savills are experts in this area and by using their model we are benefitting from the knowledge acquired through their time in the sector and the</p>

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B. Have the assumptions regarding projected impact to the HRA been back tested? And if so, when and who reviewed the back testing?

experiences of their other local authority clients. The assumptions and variables are discussed with between Finance, the Housing Supply team, THH and Savills, and there is plenty of opportunity to raise challenges and create alternative scenarios within the model. The completed model is not taken to Cabinet, instead the output is reviewed and presented to the Senior Management Team, Lead Members, and the Mayor where there is a further opportunity to discuss the underlying data, variables, and assumptions with officers, often supported by a representative from Savills.

B. The HRA business Plan is a forward planning tool. A full review of the variables and influences on the Plan is performed annually to ensure that the most up to date position is being reflected.

Item 6.2 Delivery Report - Community Safety

Reducing Violence and safeguarding those at risk of violence and exploitation

1. Have we done enough through the council's housing options –

a) when will the Draft Domestic Violence Housing Protocol for officers be published?

a) There have been a number of innovations in the Council's work with households becoming homeless or threatened with homelessness as a result of domestic abuse in 2021/22. A new IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate) Service for homeless households fleeing domestic abuse commissioned by the Council and provided by Solace is being delivered within the statutory housing options service pathway. In addition the Housing Options Service is delivering the new 'priority need' duties to homeless DA applicants as per the DA Act and its new definition of domestic abuse and the newly updated Homelessness Code of Guidance (Chapter 21. Domestic Abuse - Guidance on providing homelessness services to people who have experienced or are at risk of domestic violence or abuse). A commitment to achieve DAHA accreditation will result in further innovation and codification of the Housing Options approach to domestic abuse.

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b) When will the draft be updated (and published) in line with the requirement from the recent Domestic Abuse Bill?	b) Consequently, given the recent state of flux, the DV Housing Protocol will be updated once the necessary transitions are embedded, operational approaches agreed and stabilised, which it is anticipated will be in 2022/23.
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Item 6.3 The Council's 2022-23 Budget Report and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022-25

<p>Ref: 6.3k Appendix 7B Capital Budget Detail , item 6.3</p> <p>1. Can we have a more detailed breakdown of this as not enough detail to fully understand what the spend is on. For example Basic Needs/Expansions £119 m does not match known school projects</p>	<p>Appendix 7B shows high level programme budgets for service areas. Individual schemes within each programme category are subject to further work and a detailed list cannot be provided at this time. With reference to the Basic Needs/Expansion, in addition to the schemes referred to specifically in the report, the programme budget includes capital funding for previously approved schemes such as St Anne's School, Stepney Park Primary and SEND provision at Beatrice Tate and Harpley School</p>
<p>2. How much is Liveable Streets / Healthy Streets?</p>	<p>In 2020/21, £9.5m was allocated to the Liveable Streets programme in Bethnal Green, Wapping, Barkantine, Bow and Brick Lane. In 2021/22, a further £4.2m was allocated for Old Ford West, Shadwell, Whitechapel, and Mile End. Of this £13.2m has been spent. A further £3.2m has been allocated for 2022/23 onwards.</p>
<p>3. Can we have a column added for total project costs including historical spend so that we know total costs per project i.e. new Town Hall, South Dock Bridge - which can also be done on the main summary where the row is for a single project?</p>	<p>South Dock Bridge: Approved budget: £20.0m Spend to date: 0.761m</p> <p>London Square: Approved budget £1.457m Spend to date: £0.48m</p>

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	<p>New Town Hall: Approved budget: £123.350m Spend to date: £70.276m</p>
<p>Item 6.5 Leisure Estate Investment Plan</p>	
<p>1. "There is a backlog of condition issues, with an estimated total cost of £11.3m needing to be funded over the next decade" why is there a backlog and who was responsible for the structure of St Georges Baths for example?</p>	<p>The Council has committed funding to maintain key elements of the leisure estate's facilities in the past, alongside meeting all the other priorities that it must address.</p> <p>The backlog refers to condition issues at all the Council's leisure centres as we bounce back from the pandemic, excluding St George's, based on surveys carried out in 2021. The backlog is a combination of works that are anticipated to be needed in the forthcoming period, and some that are needed promptly due to individual components or elements of the fabric requiring attention.</p> <p>The Council is responsible for meeting the costs of major repairs to the structure of St George's Leisure Centre.</p>
<p>2. "The cost of remedial works to allow the existing St George's building to reopen has been estimated as £9.9m" can we have a breakdown of these costs and why they differ so much from re-opening costs at Tiller for example.</p>	<p>The condition needs of the two centres are entirely different, and recent surveys have shown that Tiller and all the leisure centres other than St Georges are in a reasonable condition. The works that have been completed at Tiller are far less complex and extensive than those that would be needed at St George's Leisure Centre. The pool has been repaired and retiled, lighting upgraded and the plant improved. The total cost was approximately £500,000.</p> <p>Tiller and St George's are different in their design, which also impacts upon the cost and complexity of undertaking works. The pool at St George's is on the first floor, with the tank extending into the ground floor. The mechanical and electrical plant is in the basement beneath, effectively entombed by the pool tank, with only two staircases for access.</p> <p>The breakdown of costs that would be required at St George's is set out below. Please note this represents those works considered necessary to allow the building to reopen. An additional £3.5m would be needed soon thereafter</p>

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	<p>to keep the building open for up to 5 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Concrete and Fabric Works £0.65m – Replacement of Plant £4.85m – Electrical Works £1.8m – Asbestos surveys, specialist fees & contingency estimated at £2.6m – TOTAL £9.9m
<p>3. The Wapping resident's group 'Friends of St Georges Pool' want permission to have access to the building to carry out a detailed independent feasibility and refurbishment improvement study to establish whether the proposal to build a new pool is better value for money for the council. Will the council allow this?</p>	<p>The Council has been clear about the need to proceed to decisions in relation to St George's Leisure Centre in a timely way. It would therefore not be appropriate to grant access to the site for investigations that have not been commissioned or approved by the Council, to a timescale which would run beyond the point at which decisions should be made.</p> <p>The Council asked the London region office of Swim England to review its proposals for St George's Leisure Centre to provide an independent view of the same. Their response to the question whether the site should be refurbished or redeveloped was as follows: "Our preference would be to support the redevelopment proposal as it will assist in providing the local community with a sustainable facility thus reducing operational costs and carbon emissions."</p>
<p>4. Why does it "look very unlikely for multiple reasons" that the Tiller road redevelopment could be included in the OHG redevelopment next door?</p>	<p>There is insufficient space for the footprint of a full specification leisure centre when combined with the proposed residential development on the same site. Accommodating both would be extremely difficult to achieve without compromising aspects of either or both the leisure centre and residential elements. The phasing of building works was also a factor in the decision, as it would be difficult to build a new leisure centre while keeping the existing facility open, given the pressure this would place on the available space and phasing of the residential building works. Both the Council and One Housing have explored this opportunity in a spirit of open collaboration, enabling the range of issues set out above to be explored to test what is realistically</p>

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	possible.
5. Has the plan taken in the major works which will be needed to maintain the boiler system at York Hall?	£3m has been allocated over the next three years to meet the condition needs of the Council's leisure centres, excluding St George's. This will include investment for York Hall, some of which is expected to be for the heating system. The precise allocation of funding across the whole estate will be finalised in the near future.
Item 6.9 Disposal of property at 53 Antill Road, E3 5BT	
1. Why did we pay £825k for a derelict property? which was not materially different in value from other properties sold on that street in recent years in I assume better condition?	In buying the property the council received a valuation report. It was upon this that an offer was made. The valuation took account of the dilapidated state of the property. The agreed purchase price was below the valuation figure.
Item 6.10 Future of Commercial Road Car Pound	
1. Why won't Tower Hamlets Council develop this site itself or with a housing association partner? it is smaller than Blackwall Reach for example	<p>The Council currently has a full building programme planned, and does not have the capacity to undertake a project of this magnitude. From reviewing the appraisals undertaken by our external valuers last year the total construction costs (factoring all associated outgoings) will be well in excess of £40m and in the intervening period costs have increased. Putting this considerable cost into one scheme puts significant pressure on the Councils Capital Finances.</p> <p>Part of the wider issue is that it falls within the York Square Conservation area which will have potential impact on the development issues. Furthermore, in respect of a potential ground floor commercial development, the likely anchor tenant of a supermarket is reduced with a Sainsbury Local directly opposite, which complicates ensuring the correct commercial facilities are provided for the market.</p>

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<p>2. As the feasibility study included options for a scheme to deliver 120 residential units, what were the reasons for the site not being utilised for the council's house building programme?</p>	<p>The site will generate a substantial volume of affordable homes regardless of the party who constructs them because of the Planning requirement to have an element of Affordable Housing. The sale of the land will also facilitate additional 'pump-priming' for other Council led schemes within the following years</p>
<p>3. Will the Cabinet agree to defer decision on this item to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the recommendations set out in the report and provide feedback for Cabinet's consideration?</p>	<p>The lead member is happy to meet with Overview and Scrutiny members to discuss this further. We feel the proposal does represent best value and do not want to defer this decision so we can proceed with realising the value of the capital receipt which will allow for the timely building of social housing on other council sites.</p>
<p>Item 6.11 LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Re-Visit Findings and Action Plan</p>	
<p>1. Which opposition Councillors met the LGA?</p>	<p>The LGA re-visit was a follow up visit from the LGA Full Peer Review undertaken in 2018. As this was a one-day visit focused on our progress against their recommendations, an agenda was agreed with LGA which included a range of stakeholders including Executive Members, partners, and residents.</p> <p>The Council will look to undertake another full Peer Review in 2022 or early 2023 which will involve non-executive and opposition councillors.</p>