

**STRATEGIC HOUSING BOARD**  
**14 OCTOBER 2020**

**COUNCIL NEW BUILD PROGRAMME UPDATE**

1. Summary.

1.1. This report provides an update on the Council's new build housing programme.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1. That the contents of the report be noted.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. On 25 October 2012, The Council entered into an agreement with the Secretary of State under the terms of which capital receipts from the sale of Council homes were to be retained locally to be invested in the provision of new affordable housing. Since then, the Council has developed three of its sites in Temple Hill, providing 86 new homes for local people on the Council's housing register. All homes are fully occupied.

3.2. Ongoing Projects

3.3. As part of an ongoing process, four potential new build sites were identified to take forward. These are detailed below:

- Gilbert Close Garage site – 14 units
- Milton Road Garage site – 7 units
- Keary Road former Garage site – 6 units
- Mead Crescent former depot – 3 wheelchair accessible units

3.4. Following consultation events held in 2019, and some amendments to the original plans, and resident feedback, planning permission was granted for Milton Road, Keary Road and Mead Crescent. A planning application for the proposed scheme at Gilbert Close has been submitted. A decision is expected on 8 October 2020. This particular scheme was delayed due to extended archaeological surveys/works that have been required due to the sensitivity of the site and its close proximity to the 'Swanscombe Skull' site; designated as an area of special scientific interest. At the time of writing, these issues have mostly been agreed by KCC and some ecology and archaeological works are now commencing. Housing Services has also completed the conversion works to the former office/lounge area at Hilltop Gardens into a 2 bedroom flat, which is now occupied.

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3.5. An OJEU compliant procurement exercise was carried out for a suitable contractor to carry out the building works on all four sites. This exercise has now been completed and the successful tenderer, TSG Building Services, has been appointed and working on the sites.

3.6. The Housing team have also purchased a number of properties on the open market; mainly former right to buy properties, and will continue to seek opportunities to do this. A new Policy on the Acquisition of Private Properties was presented to Cabinet on 23 July 2020 and approved [Min.No.xxx].

3.7. Looking ahead, the Housing team is currently assessing other potential purchase and conversion opportunities and these will be identified and feasibility studies undertaken, as required.

#### 4. Financial Considerations

4.1. The Council currently holds total retained receipts of £5.5m under the 1-4-1 receipts scheme, which projecting forwards would require an estimated spend of £16.59m by 31/12/2022.

4.2. The 2020/2021 to 2022/23 Capital Programme includes £16.59m for new build housing. An ongoing programme is factored into the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

4.3. To date, as a participant in the 1-4-1 scheme, the Council has successfully spent £13.9m delivering 86 new homes for local people and a further £1.83m on the purchase of ten market properties since 2016. A further 5 properties are currently in conveyance totalling £1.1m.

4.4. Under the conditions of the 1-4-1 scheme there has always been a risk that the Council would be unable to spend sufficient 1-4-1 receipts before the end of the rolling 3 year period. To mitigate this risk, the programme has been planned and kept under review to minimise the risk of under achievement.

4.6. The Government has allowed some delay to spending, due to the pandemic, until the end of December 2020 but the Council will be writing to them again to request a further delay to facilitate and support our new build ambitions.

#### 5. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

5.6. To support the Council's overall vision to make Dartford 'the place of quality and choice, a place where people choose to live, work and enjoy their leisure time.

5.7. To support the strategic aim to facilitate quality, choice and diversity in the housing market, assist in meeting housing need in Dartford and deliver high

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quality services to service users; and to create strong and self-reliant communities.

6. Financial, legal, staffing and other implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	As detailed in this report.
Legal Implications	None
Staffing Implications	None
Administrative Implications	None specifically at this stage
Risk Assessment	N/A

7. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable.

8. Appendices

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
		Peter Dosad (01322) 343327	Housing/ External Services	N/A