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Portfolio:	Housing Services
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The following report includes priorities and delivery progress to date of the new administration.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

As part of our commitment to decarbonise the Pimlico District Heating Undertaking (PDHU) this time of year (summer months) enables planned maintenance to take place on the network whilst the heating is switched off during the summer months. A strategic options paper is currently being prepared which will address the carbon reduction challenges PDHU presents, being the single largest emitter of carbon under the management of the council.

Rough Sleeping and Homelessness

Westminster City Council invests c. £7m annually (not including Government funding or other external funding sources) in services designed prevent rough sleeping, provide a wide range of high-quality accommodation with support, develop and deliver pathways out of rough sleeping services into the community.

The homelessness and rough-sleeping team has recently gone through a restructure will go live in August and is equipped to deliver high quality customer-centred services that tackle and prevent homelessness. To create a culture of collaboration across the service and a team with the range of expertise to optimise the very best outcomes and delivery by providers and commissioned services.

During the Westminster Street count completed in partnership with St Mungo's on 14 June the teams saw 229 people up from 178 during the previous street count in March. The high number of individuals seen on the street continue to be from the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

In Mid-May the Council was notified that our bid for funding 22 – 25 had been successful in securing £21,529,188 from DLUC which we plan to use to tackle homelessness and rough-sleeping as a top priority of the new administration.

Anti-Social Behaviour

We are committed to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) in all forms in conjunction with the Council's general ASB teams and well as the police. The Housing team has planned for ASB Awareness week which is taking place this week with multiple opportunities for residents to be involved.

As part of ASB Awareness Week, the Minister for Safeguarding, Rachel Maclean MP will be visiting Westminster City Council on the 19th of July.

The Safer Westminster Partnership (SWP) will sign up to the 5 Key Principles of ASB. The principles are there to act as best practice for Community Safety Partnerships, ensuring that victims of ASB are receiving the best support from Local Authorities and Community Safety Partnerships.

Empty Homes

Reducing and identifying the number of empty homes in Westminster is commitment currently underway with the recent decision to create a new officer post at Council dedicated to this issue. More details will be available at the next Committee meeting.

Major Works

We have made an excellent start to the new financial year with both our partnering contractors Axis Europe and United Living performing well.

We currently have 30 projects on site, with up to 50 further projects commencing during this financial year. This volume of projects represents historic highs for the Council and will deliver the right major works to the right buildings across the city and improving the built environment for huge numbers of residents.

We believe that the Term Partnering Contract allows the flexibility required to ensure Value for Money continues to be achieved for residents and the Council alike. We are, however, actively exploring ways to achieve better value from our Service Providers, such as through Social Value initiatives, and the introduction of further control measures into the partnership.

Repairs

We are working towards 400 voids this year being improved with retro fit works including secondary insulation, Secondary glazing, in home sensors to monitor damp, mould and humidity and provide early alerts for our residents. This includes the installation of smart technology, heating systems to bring our homes energy ratings down to an B or C.

We are starting a new programme of In Home M.O.T. surveys, commencing with whole house surveys and condition reports on 250 community supported homes. We will also be carrying out 250 surveys of the highest and lowest repair demand across our properties to support families.

As part of our new repairs service each surveyor will have a target to visit 250 homes per year per to pre inspect and case manage in dwelling repairs and support residents in patches and areas. Smart App technology is available to case manage repairs and provide live updates to residents on existing repairs and issues with a single point of contact for escalations

Communicating with Residents and Leaseholders

Working on how we communicate effectively with residents and leaseholders and how we implement technology to best deliver services continues to be a top priority of the administration. As part of our new Resident First initiative, we have launched Community Thursdays where all the extended Housing Management Team along with local based staff will undertake one or two estate walkabouts each week.

A letter is shortly to be posted to all residents to introduce their local Housing team. We have recruited a full complement of Housing Officers and increasing the number of surveyors. Resident reps have direct email and mobile numbers for their local Housing team. A review of Housing web pages is also underway which will consider their accessibility and content to ensure residents can access local information as well as at a Citywide level.

The Housing Contact Centre which handles Housing Repairs and Customer Services enquiries has undergone several introductions of enabling technology to support service delivery such as: our omni-channel solution called 8x8 allows our customers to engage with us via their channel of choice. Our customer relationship management system known as CRM captures all levels of customer contact in one system to allow a clear history and sight of the customer journey. CRM sits as an overlay on top of Orchard. Knowledge Base on dynamics which is a reference guide used to support staff and boost their knowledge. Our customer portal (Self-appointed Repairs) has been developed to enable residents to raise and manage repairs. Moving forward we plan to continue to introduce new channels as we evolve.