



City of Westminster

Climate Action, Housing and Regeneration Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	14 November 2022
Portfolio:	Climate Action, Regeneration & Renters
The Report of:	Councillor Matt Noble
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- 1. Key decisions made in the preceding period since my last Policy & Scrutiny report dated 18 October:**
 - 11/10/2022 – GLA Negotiated Grant Agreement for Affordable Homes, Funding for Funding Uplift
 - 11/10/2022 – Grant Agreement for the GLA’s Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26
- 2. The following report includes my priorities and delivery progress to date of the new administration.**

Climate Action

Sustainable City Charter

The Sustainable City Charter has now been refined and finalised following feedback from business partners in late October. The launch of the Charter is set for tomorrow, 15 November 2022.

Energy Advice & Support

Our Green Doctors service has been extended to provide an additional 400 support slots to low income and vulnerable residents over the winter. The service has delivered 82 consultations since their mini contract extension in the summer – saving the average household £263. More information can be found via the link [The Green Doctor - Warm Home Advice | Westminster FIS](#).

Green Bond Update

Discussions continue with Finance colleague on the offer of the Council’s Green Bond. Officers are exploring a potential launch date of February 2023. An update will be brought to this Committee in due course.

Biodiversity in Westminster

In line with the New Administration’s ambitions to increase biodiversity in Westminster, officers met in a first Greening and Biodiversity Working Group to discuss how we streamline our approach in this

area and how we plan to meet national/ GLA requirements. A meeting has been scheduled for mid-November with Natural England to find out more about our responsibility within the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy requirements.

Regeneration

Truly Affordable Housing Strategy

Since its Cabinet signature on 17th October significant progress has been made under the Truly Affordable Housing workstream which aims to align housing delivery with our Fairer Westminster vision of meeting the demands of the housing waiting list and increasing the number of truly affordable homes in the borough. We plan to deliver at least 160 new homes to support affordable housing in Westminster, taking our total stock to at least 1362 affordable units (a breakdown of unit size can be found in the table below).

Our initial proposals include, change of tenure from intermediate rent to social rent at the Council's developments at Luton Street, Ashbridge, Luxborough, West End Gate, Torridon and Carlton Dene and change of tenure from market homes to affordable rent, and within affordable tenures, at 300 Harrow Road and Westmead development schemes. These initial tenure changes would result in an additional 143 social rent homes, primarily larger family sized homes. Discussions are ongoing and when notable progress is made an update will be made available to the Committee.

Affordable Unit Bed Sizes							
	1b	2b	3b	4b	5b	TBC	Total
Total	501	435	307	69	5	45	1362
%	37%	32%	23%	5%	0%	3%	100%

Infills Programme

Adpar, Queens Park Court and Torridon schemes have recently been approved for contract award and for works to start on site. The teams are mobilising, and construction is due to commence on these sites towards the end of the year. These three 100% affordable tenure schemes will deliver a total of 64 social rent homes, with 20 of these being provided as Community Supported Housing. The approval to proceed follows recent approval for additional GLA grant funding to support scheme viability.

Church Street Programme Update

The Church Street ballot has opened for registration, with voting set to go live on 28 November until 19 December. The public announcement of the results will then be made in January.

The delivery partner procurement is progressing, with the final procurement strategy going through internal governance approvals currently and we are aiming to implement in the early new year. There are 11 residential properties remaining in occupation, 6 of these are expected to be vacated shortly. The remaining 5 require further negotiations. There are 12 commercial occupiers

still in possession of the ground floor commercial units. Updated strategies for achieving vacant possession via negotiation are being assessed at the moment in order to make progress with this.

Ebury Programme Update

Work continues to explore the options available to deliver more social housing through this scheme and to secure GLA funding in support of more affordable delivery. Discussions to date have been positive.

Phase 1 delivery of 226 homes is continuing well and is on target for completion in accordance with the contract programme in Q2 2024.

Renters

Housing in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Licensing Update

Since our HMO Licensing Policy went live in September 2021 we have recorded a Licence fee income of £1,682,156 to date. Officers have inspected 569 properties, and we issued a total of 1,465 licenses. Officers are currently exploring ways to expand this policy, aligning with the new Administration's goals of increasing protections for residents in the private rented sector.

Private Rented Sector (PRS) Update

Recently we have responded to a proposal for a Decent Homes Standard for the PRS. While we are supportive of its aims we are concerned that the proposal is not the best way of achieving this and will continue to push Central Government to be more forward thinking and do more in this area.