

7 January 2015		ITEM: 9
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Programme Update for the Transforming Homes Programme		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Non - key	
Report of: Portfolio Holder for Housing – Councillor Lynn Worrall		
Accountable Head of Service: Kathryn Adedeji – Head of Housing – Investment and Development and Corporate Commercial Services		
Accountable Director: Barbara Brownlee – Director of Housing		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on one of the Council's key strategic housing programmes - Transforming Homes. The programme embodies a number of key work elements including internal and external refurbishment works, thermal efficiency works and damp and mould works to properties. The report seeks to bring the committee up to date with works in the aforementioned area.

The report demonstrates progress in:

- Accessing and utilising external funding sources in furthering improving thermal efficiency;
- Developing and progressing programmes which address damp, mould and condensation issues;
- The continued and expanding delivery of tangible benefits to the local economy and community;
- Meeting headline performance indicators in the Transforming Homes programme – which met its Year 1 targets and continues to perform well during the first three quarters of Year 2.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That the progress of the Transforming Homes programme be noted.

1.2 That the progress in meeting key targets across a range of programme measures be noted.

1.3 That the success in maximising connections with and benefits to the local community be noted.

1.4 That the success of the Housing Service in accessing available funding in order to best protect and develop Council homes be noted.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Transforming Homes Programme is a five-year, £68m, Council commitment to deliver on-going improvements to the Council's housing stock. The programme is delivering a range of high quality works to modernise the interiors of our residents' homes and schemes to maintain the estates' built infrastructure and external fabric.

2.2 Thurrock achieved 100% Decent Homes Standard as of the 1st of April 2011. This is detailed in the HRA Business Plan 2011 – 2014. In 2013 the Council embarked on £68m 5-year programme to deliver works to tenanted properties that went beyond the statutory Decent Homes Standard.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Transforming Homes - Beyond Decency A New Thurrock Standard

3.2 The Housing Department is currently in its second year (2014-2015) of delivering improvement works to tenanted properties to the new Thurrock Standard. The programme is focused on replacing:

- Kitchens over 20 years of age
- Bathrooms over 30 year of age
- Boilers over 15 years of age
- Electrics over 25 Years of age
- Windows over 30 years of age or single glazed
- Roofs over 40 or 50 years of age
- Maximise energy efficiency of homes with the aim of ensuring a minimum SAP rating of 80
- Eradication of damp and Mould issues

3.3 Transforming Homes - Thermal Efficiency Programme

3.4 A key objective of the Transforming Homes programme is to improve the thermal efficiency of as many homes as possible, which helps to support the reduction of fuel poverty. The Council secured external funding to undertake external insulation works as part of Energy Company Obligation. Changes to this obligation in Autumn 2013 substantially impacted the number of homes initially identified for which external funding would remain applicable. The first phase of the programme was completed in December 2014 at an estimated cost of approximately £1.2m. Thurrock Council has been successful in

utilizing external funding opportunities and therefore the Authorities contribution is approximately £700k.

3.5 The Council's Housing capital improvement programme already has within it a number of measures that will improve the energy efficiency of homes, including but not limited to roof insulation, boiler replacement, cavity wall insulation and window replacements.

3.6 Through undertaking energy efficiency studies (outlined in Cabinet report titled Housing Thermal Efficiency and External Funding proposals, 5th June 2013), the Council prioritised works to resident homes on the basis of those paying the most for their fuel and heat costs. The streets below formed part of the first tranche of thermal efficiency works.

- St Chads Road
- Lenthall Avenue
- Moore Avenue
- Hathaway Road
- Christchurch Road

3.8 Residents have been extremely satisfied with the Thermal Efficiency programme with 88% rating it as good or excellent.

3.9 Transforming Homes - Damp & Mould Programme

3.10 Damp and mould problems in the borough have been recognised through the provision of additional £2m across the five-year programme. Addressing damp problems in properties at the time of capital works is optimal both in terms of efficiency and effectiveness of works programming and minimising disturbance to the resident.

3.11 A total of 487 properties have received damp and mould surveys to date under the transforming homes programme, with 410 receiving works relating to damp and mould issues. This is in addition to the 959 surveys undertaken through our responsive repairs service. Works programming is coordinated to ensure that wherever possible damp and mould works are undertaken through the capital programme, with data showing that in the first two years of the seven wards the programme has commenced in there are currently two key areas of Tilbury and Chadwell St Mary, in which damp remedial work has needed to take place.

3.12 While there are known issues with regard to damp in parts of the borough, typically being exacerbated by a high water table, it is also recognised that there are similar problems related to condensation and resident lifestyle issues. This parallel issue is being addressed through a programme of communications and guidance to residents regarding managing condensation issues in the home as a means of minimising mould problems. To this end the Council has developed a damp and mould leaflet detailing how the

Council will manage damp and mould issues, and guidance to residents in managing their lifestyle to reduce damp and mould occurring.

3.13 Delivering Social Value - Local Deliverables

3.14 Another key element of the programme is about job creation and investment in our local communities. The key local deliverables outputs achieved since the programme commenced are detailed in table 1 below. Over the lifecycle of the Housing investment programmes we are aiming to create over 100 apprenticeships and support the retention and or creation of over 500 local jobs. Along with support a range of community investment projects, work placements and training opportunities.

Table 1. Local deliverables outcomes for Year 1 & 2

Element	Outcomes to date
Apprenticeships	22 completed or in progress
Spend in the local economy	£11m, 36% of programme spend
Local employment	32% of the workforce locally based – 86 local jobs
Unemployed returned to work	31, including 16 long term unemployed
Community benefits	Range of benefits to the wider community including renovation of war memorials, community facilities, support for local schools & businesses

3.15 Summary of Programme Update for Years 1 & 2

3.16 Transforming Homes Programme Key Headlines

- The Transforming Homes programme commenced in August 2013.
- As of December 2014 refurbishment works have been undertaken on 3,400 properties.
- Substantial works have been completed in the following wards: Tilbury St. Chads, Ockendon, Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park, Grays Thurrock, Belhus, Stanford East & Corringham Town, Little Thurrock Blackshots, Grays Riverside, Little Thurrock Rectory & Chadwell St. Mary.
- 78% of residents surveyed have rated the Transforming Homes programme as either good or excellent. A substantial proportion of residents have also been satisfied with the quality of the works (80%) and the politeness and manner shown by staff (84%).

3.17 Programme Key Outputs for Year 1 & 2 (2013-2015)

3.18 Key outputs of the Transforming Homes programme are detailed in the table below. Over 3,400 homes have been modernised so far on the Transforming

Homes Programme. While the programme is focused on kitchen and bathroom refurbishment, a range of other works have been undertaken including the replacement of front and rear entrance doors and roofs.

- 3.19 In addition to the 3,400 properties which have had their internal works completed during the Transforming Homes programme a considerable number of other properties have been scheduled for the works but have not received them.
- 91 homes received an internal works survey which determined that the property already met the necessary Transforming Homes standard and would therefore not require any works to be undertaken
 - Over 200 homes which were scheduled for internal works in Year 1 and 2 have been classified as no accesses or refusals. In these instances, the Council has attempted to undertake the works but the resident has either refused or not allowed access to the property. The Council will continue to liaise with the residents in these properties throughout the five-year programme, and if possible, carry out the works at a later date.
- 3.20 The table below details some of the key operational and strategic outputs of Transforming Homes and how they contributed to each of the Councils corporate objectives.

Table 2. Key Programme Achievements to date

Council Key Corporate Priorities	Key Achievements
Creating a Great Place for Learning and Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 local apprentices completed or in progress through the programme; KPIs and strategies to support the engagement with, training and employment for unemployed, not in employment education or training, or looking to develop skills in a range of trades and skills.
Encouraging and promoting job creation and economic prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 86 local people were employed on the programme • 16 long term unemployed working on the programme • 50 Neets or Long term unemployed – completed training and work placement courses developed through Housing programmes – with over 50% now in employment of full time training. • KPIs designed to ensure Contractors commit to and provide local employment, apprentices and work experience; • KPIs designed to ensure significant

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proportion of programme spend is within the borough; Strategies to develop local business through the development of procurement skills & training;
Building pride, responsibility and respect to create safer communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 3,400 properties improved; 80% of residents satisfied with the quality of the works; Renovation of eight War Memorials by the contractors; Strategies in place to extend opportunities to long term unemployed and those not in education, employment or training; Undertaking improvement works to local community halls
Improving health and well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the £68M five-year capital programme, £2m has been specifically ring-fenced to tackle and eradicate damp and mould issues. Improving information to residents to assist them with reducing condensation and associated mould. Coordination & partnership with existing community organisations in order to engage communities and individuals seeking training or employment;
Protect and promote our clean and green environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KPI framework designed to ensure minimisation of waste and improved recycling
Key Programme Achievements	
Other Key Programme Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent contractor performance against KPIs; Ensuring all works were undertaken in quick timeframes in order to limit potential disruption to residents: 83% of occupied properties had their core works completed within 20 days; 85% of voids properties turned around within 30 days from receipt of keys.

3.21 Key Programme Indicators

3.22 In delivering the Transforming Homes Programme, the Council implemented a number of established industry key performance indicators to monitor the delivery of the programme and the performance of contractors. Table 3 below details outturn against these targets. The Council is pleased to report it met

its targets for Year 1 and has continued to perform well during the first three quarters of the Year 2 programme.

Table 3. Key performance measures

Core TH Performance Measures	Performance
Average Days to Complete Properties	17
Satisfaction with TH Programme	78%
Employment of Apprentices	22
Properties to Benefit from Internal TH works	3,400

3.23 Table 4 displays the number of specific internal and external works undertaken since the programme begun. Year 2 external works are due to commence in January 2014.

Tables 4: Internal & External works completed

Internal Works Component	Properties	External Works Component	Properties
Kitchen	2731	Windows	35
Bathrooms	2542	Doors (front)	810
Rewires	1127	Doors (rears)	437
Separate W/C	>600	Roofs	27
OT works	>300	Fencing	17

3.24 Managing Resident Expectations

3.25 The Council is dedicated to ensuring that every resident experiences the minimum level of disruption and the highest level of service while improvement work is ongoing. To assist with this, the Council has used the experience from Year 1 to put in place a series of further improvements, some of which are include:

- Earlier identification of residents or properties with specific issues so that all parties involved are more prepared.
- Improved communication between the contractor and Thurrock Council when residents request additional work or works outside the scope of the programme.
- Continuous close monitoring of satisfaction responses so that issues can be quickly addressed and remedied.
- Further resident visits so that senior managers are able to continually stay in touch with the issues on the ground and how residents feel the works are progressing.
- Resident information packs have been improved

- Also an increased number of contractor and Resident Liaison Officers have been employed.
- The Council has taken on dedicated resident liaison officers who will also call and visit residents to address any urgent concerns residents may have which may not have been addressed by the contractor.
- All residents are provided with a dedicated number for Council staff employed specifically to support them through this programme and this number is contained in the resident booklets handed to residents and on the project boards/signing in sheets will be utilized whilst transforming homes work is taking place within each property

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The committee is asked to note the progress in the various areas of Transforming Homes programme implementation. The report demonstrates progress across this range of variables, and there is no required recommendation for other action following this.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The report above notes a range of measures undertaken in the course of programme implementation which ensure residents are engaged in the development and ongoing provision of capital works service provision. There is no further consultation required with regard to the specifics of this update report.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 There are no recommendations contained in this report which substantiate impact on corporate policies, priorities performance and community impact.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
Management Accountant

There are no financial implications following from the recommendations of this report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Assaf Chaudry**
Major Projects Lawyer

This report provides an update on the strategic housing programmes and Transforming Homes programme. The report is merely seeking to bring the committee up to date with works. In these circumstances there are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebeca Price**
Community Development Officer

There are no diversity and equality implications following from the recommendations of this report.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

There are no other implications following from the recommendations of this report.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Not applicable

9. **Appendices to the report**

None

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Housing