

29 September 2022		ITEM: 6
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Housing Development Programme Update		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A	
Report of: Keith Andrews, Strategic Lead – Housing Development		
Accountable Assistant Director: Kevin Munnely, Assistant Director – Regeneration and Place Delivery.		
Accountable Director: Sean Clark, Corporate Director of Resources & Place Delivery		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report seeks to update members on progress on various sites considered for housing development .

1. Recommendation(s)

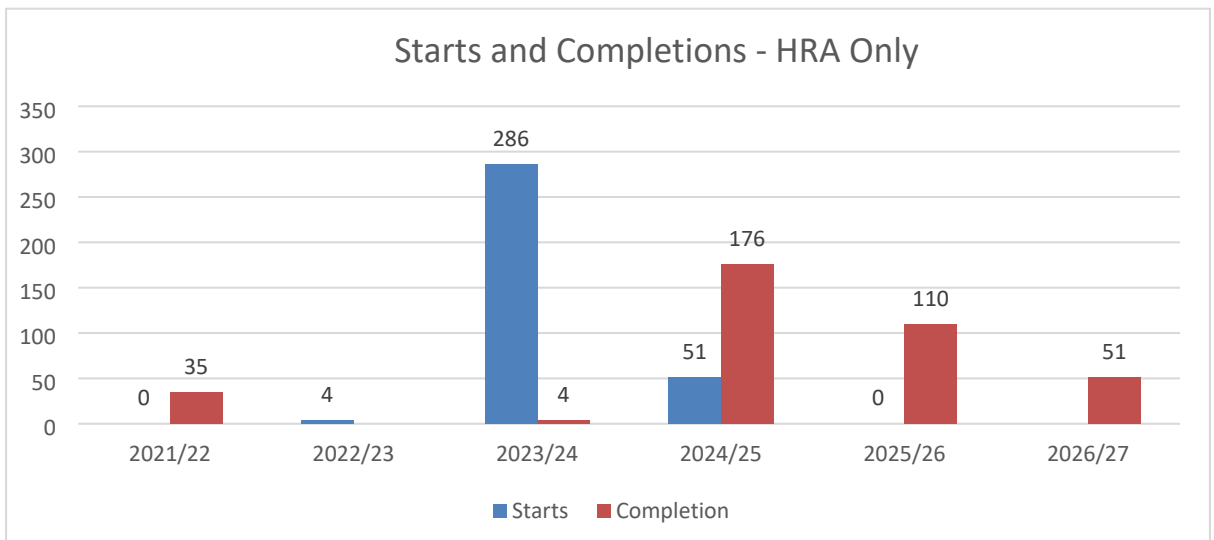
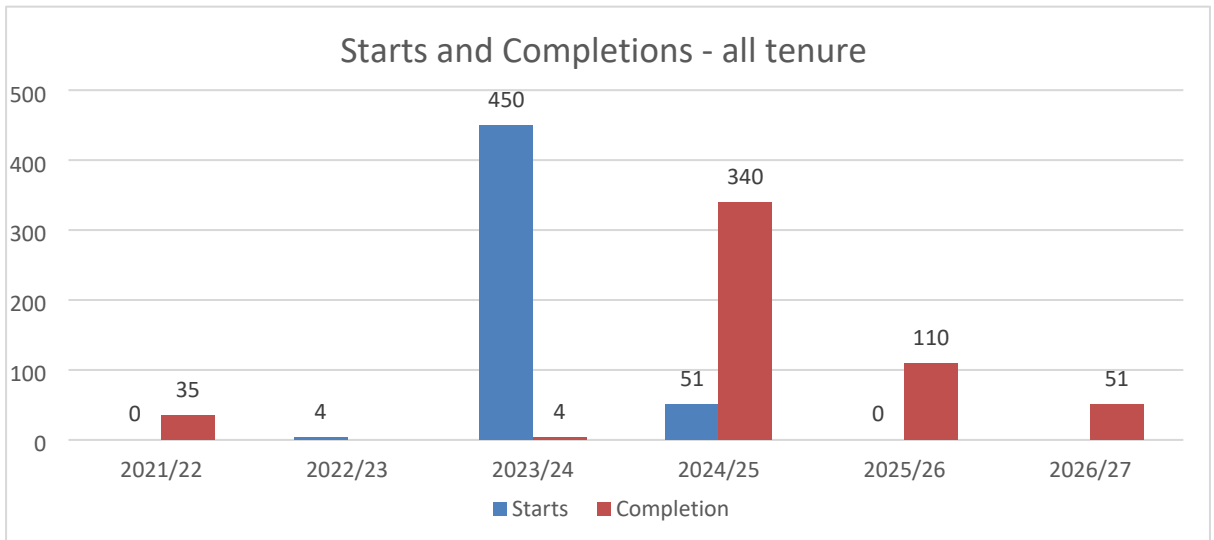
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- 1.1 Note the updates on sites being considered for housing development.**
- 1.2 Note the sites no longer being considered for Housing Revenue Account housing development at Argent Street, Grays and Richmond Road, Grays.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Reports are presented regularly to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the Councils housing development programme and projects.**
- 2.2 Since the last update report to Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee the Beaconsfield Place development in Tilbury (Formerly known as the Calcutta Road project) of 35 flats for older people has now been completed and the property is now in management within all dwelling allocated to tenants in the Housing Revenue Account.**

- 2.3 The project was shortlisted for an award in the national Inside Housing Development Awards 2022 under the Best Older People’s housing development category.
- 2.4 It has also been shortlisted for an award together with the Heathlyn Close development in Chadwell St Mary in the Essex Housing Awards 2022. The project was not an award winner in the national awards and the final decision on the Essex Awards will be in November.
- 2.5 The total number of potential dwellings on new build projects under consideration is currently 505 of which 341 are anticipated to be HRA. The charts below show anticipated starts and completions for these sites.



- 2.6 Members are asked to note that two of the projects previously considered for housing development are no longer progressing. The development proposed for Argent Street Car Park, Grays has been withdrawn due to the newly identified high cost of diverting underground services. The Richmond Road, Grays site has been identified as an opportunity to generate a substantial

capital receipt to support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. The property is now being marketed and a final decision will be taken following the outcome of that.

- 2.7 Members will be aware generally of inflationary pressures in the economy. There has been significant build cost inflation in the construction sector with the Build Cost Information Service reporting an increase in their All-in Tender Price Index of 12.5% over the last 18 months and other commentators suggesting annual tender price forecasts of between 2.5% to 5% for each of the next three years.
- 2.8 The cost of borrowing to the Council required to fund the developments has also increased. In addition, a recent government consultation on a potential cap to the HRA rental increases is likely to constrain HRA financing of investment in general. Further detailed analysis of these impacts across the HRA generally and development in particular is being carried out and will be reported to a future meeting of this committee, but collectively they will inevitably present challenges to scheme viability.
- 2.9 It should also be noted that at the time of writing the implications of the package of intervention recently directed by the Secretary of State remains under consideration in respect of the Housing Revenue Account. As a result, any implications for the housing development programme at this point are not known and will be reported in due course.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Following planning approval, a building contract has now been let to build 4 new three bed Council homes at **Loewen Road, Chadwell St Mary**. Once constructed these new homes with associated parking are to be let in line with the Council's Housing Allocation policy. The contractor is due to take possession of the site in September 2022 and be completed Summer 2023.
- 3.2 Sites currently being reviewed for housing development are set out below.
- 3.3 The **Broxburn Drive** project is on land held within the HRA in South Ockendon. The proposal is to develop up to 33 new Council homes together with improvements to the existing estate. There have been three phases of resident consultation undertaken to date and a planning application is currently being prepared.
- 3.4 Proposals to redevelop the part of the Civic Offices known as **C01** continue to be developed and detailed discussions with planning are underway. The Councils Property team are preparing to commission demolition contractors to commence site clearance in Spring 2023.
- 3.5 **Vigerons Way** is a small garage site located in the ward of Chadwell St Mary, held within the HRA. The site suffers from anti-social behaviour. The project is well progressed to develop 8 two bed roomed houses for rent within the HRA

with allocated car parking and an upgraded access road. Having previously completed resident consultation a planning application has now been submitted.

- 3.6 The site of the former **Aveley Library and Hall** is held within the General Fund but is being considered for development as affordable housing within the HRA. The site is now vacant, and the existing buildings demolished. Resident consultation on a proposal to develop 16 low rise flats for rent was closed at the end of July and the technical team are revising designs to take account of comments made. Approval will be required in due course to allow the land to be appropriated from the General Fund to the HRA.
- 3.7 Detailed design has progressed for construction of 54 flats as affordable housing at the site of the **Darnley & Crown Road Car Parks** in Grays. The site is a short walking distance to the town centre, rail and bus stations and is in an area of high transport accessibility. In line with the Council's parking standards lower levels of onsite parking for the new homes are required which can be supplemented by measures such as car club spaces to reduce the need for car ownership.
- 3.8 The first phase of resident consultation was completed in April 2022 with information leaflets and an invitation to a drop-in session issued to 471 homes. Reaction to the proposal overall was evenly split with 51% of those expressing a view saying they thought this was an appropriate location for new homes. The design team are reviewing the proposal to take account of residents' feedback and a second consultation event will be undertaken later in the year.
- 3.9 **Lyndhurst Road** garage site in Corringham has previously been identified by the Housing service as potentially suitable as a housing development site. The site is made up of 67 garages which are predominantly vacant. There have been historic ASB issues on the site and several are derelict. Designs are under development for up to 10 houses for rent within the HRA at this location. Resident consultation will be undertaken later this year.

Thurrock Regeneration Limited Projects

- 3.10 As reported at 6th July General Services Committee the **Culver Centre and Culver Field** scheme was granted a resolution to grant planning on the 22nd September 2021. The development scheme is for 173 homes including 62 for affordable housing and incorporates landscaping. A Cabinet report on 12th January 2022 resolved to dispose of the site to TRL. Heads of terms and the facilities agreement for the sale of are being agreed.
- 3.11 Conversations have taken place with Environment Services regarding future maintenance of all play equipment and with Highways services for the adoption and future maintenance of the roads and footways. The scheme has been designed to take into account new building regulations which came into force in June 2022 and is a gas free development. The current programme

forecasts start on site in Spring 2023 and completion in Spring 2025 subject to TRL's procurement of a main contractor.

- 3.12 TRL owns the **Belmont Road** site where a planning permission was granted in 2018 for 80 homes including 28 affordable dwellings. All feasible options were explored for sustaining this planning consent and it was not possible to meet the material start condition. Therefore, it is necessary submit another planning application which is currently under development but with the aim of keeping the overall design, unit and tenure mix as previously approved. A planning application is timetabled to be submitted in early 2023.

Housing Regeneration

- 3.13 Work is ongoing to assess the potential redevelopment of existing HRA assets that would require major works to extend their lifespan at **Blackshots** and **Teviot Avenue, Aveley**. Initial resident consultation has taken place at both locations and following full assessment of options a report will be made to Committee at a future meeting alongside a comprehensive programme of resident consultation.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 Committee has requested an update on the progress of individual projects under active consideration.

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

- 5.1 This paper provides opportunity for Members of this Committee to review progress on the delivery of the Housing Development Programme.

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

- 6.1 The development of housing aligns closely with the Council's Vision and Priorities adopted in 2018. In particular it resonates with the "Place" theme which focuses on houses, places and environments in which residents can take pride.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**

Strategic Lead – Corporate Finance

There are no financial implications directly arising from this update report. The financing of the schemes are considered as part of the HRA 30-year business plan.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Gina Clarke**
Corporate Lawyer and Deputy Monitoring Officer

There are no direct legal implications as it is an update report.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**
Team Manager – Community Development and Equalities – Adults, Housing and Health Directorate

There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this update report.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder or Looked After Children

None

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):

6 July 2022, General Services Committee, TRL Progress Report

9. Appendices to the report

None

Report of

Keith Andrews

Strategic Lead – Housing Development