

Cabinet Lead's Report for Communities and Housing
For Council 7th December 2016
Cllr Leah Turner

HOUSING

Additional Proposals for Affordable Housing Provision

Following Cabinet approval in September 2016, I am really pleased to report considerable progress has been made on two initiatives. As you will be aware, Affordable Housing Developers Contributions should be paid to us where a percentage of affordable housing is not provided in a new development.

Agreement was reached by Cabinet for a joint project with EHDC, Havant Housing Association and Two Saints which will provide a conversion of a five bedroomed house in Havant. This will be converted and extended to provide 10 units of much needed accommodation for single homeless.

Under Delegated Powers we are now considering a second initiative, this to be in partnership with Merlion Housing Association, this would be a shared equity scheme in Purbrook.

Both schemes if successful will result in additional affordable housing units in the Borough. I will give members further updates as the initiatives are progressed.

Hampshire Home Choice

Last month I attended my first meeting of HHC in Winchester. Chaired by our own Head of Housing Tracey Howard, this was an informative and constructive meeting.

We discussed at length The Reduction in Benefit Cap. The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, will reduce the benefit cap to £23,000 in Greater London and £20,000 elsewhere in the country, for all working age claimants. The Benefit Cap came into effect on 7th November 2016 and will impact on a number of households across the HHC sub region.

There are likely to be 174 families impacted negatively in the Havant Borough and Housing Teams will be working closely with these families.

Homelessness

There are currently three families in Bed and Breakfast. In Quarter 2 there were 325 successful homelessness preventions. Our annual target is 1050, therefore we remain on track. The Housing Dept. saw 1467 visitors during the quarter.

Affordable Housing

Halyards, Goldring Close, Hayling Island. 25 Affordable Rent and 14 Shared Ownership Units. Final completions due February 2017. Provider Aster Communities.

The first of 23 affordable units at Station Road, Hayling Island are expected to be handed over on 16th December 2016 and then throughout 2017. Provider First Wessex.

Ranelagh Road, Havant Phase 2. 12 affordable rent and 12 shared ownership units. Final completions are due in early 2017. Handover dates have slipped due to slow sales on site plus a redesign onsite to improve viability. Provider Radian Housing Association.

Due to a delay caused by Southern Water, the 14 affordable units at St Georges Walk, Waterlooville are not expected to be handed over until April 2017. Provider First Wessex.

Land North of Bartons Road, Havant. 14 affordable units but completion not expected until January 2018. Provider Radian.

Berewood Phase 2. Waterlooville. 98 affordable units split equally between Social Rent, Affordable Rent, Grainger Lets and Shared Ownership. Phased handovers throughout 2017 and into early 2018. Provider Grainger Trust.

Wellington Park Phase 5 Waterlooville. 41 affordable units. Although the site falls within WCC area, Havant applicants to Hampshire Home Choice make up the majority of new tenants due to arrangements with WCC. Provider Stonewall Housing Association.

There are other developments in the pipeline which I will report on as they become permitted and affordable housing confirmed.

COMMUNITIES

Bidbury Mead Pavilion Project

100k has been ring fenced by HCC for the development of the Pavilion to allow the space to be improved to meet modern day standards. A project plan has been submitted to HCC in order to draw down the funds to be held within HBC budgets. Work will then begin to develop the project further, including obtaining drawings, costs, and relevant internal protocol. Potential for further match funding can then be explored. HCC received this money from their sale of the Bedhampton Arts Centre.

Play Park Conditions Survey

Currently a survey is being undertaken by a contractor. This will:- Establish the condition of surfacing within Play Parks, the overall condition of all play equipment, and finally any equipment that could be recommended as a replacement for items beyond their useable life. This survey is being undertaken across the majority of sites within the Borough and will tell us the priority areas for future investment.

Front Lawn Recreation Ground Project

This project continues to progress. The Hampshire Football Association have been identified as the preferred operator for the management of the site. It is expected that they will formally sign contracts in early 2017. The project team continue to work through the final stages of procurement to identify an approved contractor for the build phase.

Christmas Events throughout the Borough

There are events and Christmas Tree Lights turn on across the Borough. The first to open is the wonderful Leigh Park Grotto followed by Emsworth with it's lovely Lobster Pot Tree. Next are various activities at Waterlooville with Hayling Island being the last on their Late Night Christmas Shopping Night. I can report that all the volunteers have found the organisation of these events frustrating to say the least, this year. Our partners and the paperwork causing no little angst. We will certainly try to simplify this next year with one of our Members looking into the costs of battery operated lights for us. Our residents deserve the Christmas cheer our events bring and we will endeavour to continue to provide it.

Community Champion Awards in Waterlooville

The new nursing home, Wellington Vale on the Taylor Wimpey development were looking for a Community Star who deserved recognition for their contribution to the Waterloo Community. Our own Jackie Buckley chairman of the Waterloo Events Team was nominated among others and she won the award. Well done Jackie.

She was invited to "cut the ribbon" opening the home and won £500 to donate to charity. The four runners up each received £100 to donate to local charities.

Events

In the last month, the Community Officer (events) administered 8 events taking place on HBC land. Guiding all the organisers through what is required by HBC in the way of policies and procedures.

Councillor Grant Scheme

6 Community Grants have been administered since the scheme was launched in October. 2 on Hayling, 2 in Waterloo, 1 in Hart Plain and 1 in Bedhampton. A total of £2,200 has been spent so far towards local initiatives.

Community Development

The Armed Forces Covenant. HBC has completed their research into the availability of local support and advice for Veterans and serving members of the Armed Forces Community. This research will enable us to provide a web based signposting service with links to the public, private and charitable organisation we have found locally. This service goes live on our website shortly. We aim to work in partnership with all the relevant people to work towards shared priorities, make better use of limited resources and offer a more cohesive service to the Armed Forces Community. A Covenant re-signing ceremony and application to join an Employers Recognition Scheme is scheduled to take place in 2017.