

Merton Council

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

22 February 2022

Supplementary agenda

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Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 22 February 2022

Wards: Borough wide

Subject: Supporting Merton residents living in social and private rented accommodation

Lead member: Cllr Aidan Mundy, Chair Sustainable Communities Panel

Contact officer: Rosie McKeever, Scrutiny Officer

Recommendations to Cabinet:

- A. Review full time equivalent support to the Housing Enforcement Team with the purpose of recruiting a minimum of one additional officer. This enacts the recommendation of our Tenant's Champion. To be completed by end of calendar year 2022.
- B. Retire the role of Merton Tenant's champion in May 2022 unless appropriate resource and support can be identified as recommended in concluding remarks of champions report
- C. By end of 2022 review and update as required Merton's Housing Enforcement Policy 2019-2024 to enable clarity of scope, escalation and resolution for officer's responsibility to inspect and audit repairs reported by tenants of registered providers i.e. housing associations operating in the borough.

Note: This maybe through stronger dialogue or an audit of referred casework. A similar arrangement exists under Mitcham and Morden MP and Clarion Housing.

- D. As part of the panels performance monitoring item report quarterly metrics on numbers of (i) private and social housing condition complaints (ii) inspections and category 1 vs category 2 hazards identified (iii) other metrics as appropriate to support the Housing Enforcement team convey the full scope of their work and responsibilities
 - E. Identify and report back to scrutiny options to engage local housing sector for the purposes of Merton's house building and housing enforcement policies e.g. MERHAG II
 - F. Commission an internal and external communications strategy that will (i) promote the aims and objectives of Merton's Housing enforcement policy to both social and private tenant's in an accessible and engaging format, (ii) streamline reporting of risks due to poor housing conditions (iii) targets and shares learnings with appropriate stakeholders to reduce common issues experienced by tenant's and increase confidence.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Merton Council's Sustainable Communities Overview Scrutiny panel has heard evidence from officers, regulators, housing associations in regards to the conditions social housing tenants are experiencing on the Eastfield's Estate and across the borough.
- 1.2. The panel has heard from Clarion Housing Association who informed members that the conditions on Eastfield estate were not representative of company best practice and that steps have been taken to improve current stock. The panel receives monthly reports updating on process and keeps the situation under review.
- 1.3. The panel has worked with the Cabinet member, Clarion Housing and Tenants associations to agree recommendations to improve residents reporting experience and reduce delays in delivering high quality social housing.
- 1.4. In July full council established Cllr Nick Draper as Merton's first tenants champion to provide additional oversight and public representation to tenants on issues of repair and equality of access to information.
- 1.5. Cllr Draper agreed to write a report on his experience as tenants champion to inform the next steps of that role. The report finds without significant investment in the role it is unclear how sustainable a tenant's champion is. The report also makes clear there is a need for increased enforcement and support for tenants in the borough. The full report is available in appendix a

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. On 21 May 2021 Kwajo Tweneboa tweeted pictures of his home on the Eastfield's estate. The images of disrepair were circulated in both print and broadcast media. A subsequent ITV documentary by journalist Daniel Hewitt identified persistent issues relating to living conditions and repair in the estate.
- 2.2. Prior to the documentary Clarion Housing were asked to attend the panel and answer questions on the condition's experiences by residents. Over four meetings of the panel we've heard recognition of failures and steps the housing association are putting in place to improve the quality of existing stock.
- 2.3. While regeneration of Eastfield's and estates like it are the long term solution there are steps that can be taken to address disrepair in the existing stock. In recognition of this Council appointed Cllr Nick Draper as Tenants Champion to pilot an approach similar to (the non-stock holding) Richmond Council's Tenants' Champion, a service that that has been in place for more than 10 years. Within the remit included:
 - (i) Work to support both tenants and leaseholders who rent or lease their properties from a housing association and also private renters in the borough,
 - (ii) Provide support by giving someone for residents to contact if they had long running, unresolved complaints with their landlord, and by providing relevant information to renters more generally;

- 2.4. Cllr Draper has reported back to the panel and identifies while the champions work has benefited residents limitations regulating from available resources and support means the role cannot grow. The paper outlined options for succession and advocates for strengthening the existing housing enforcement team through additional recruitment and building up relationships with the wider sector.
- 2.5. The three options outlined in the paper are:
- (i) A **single Councillor** appears at first to be the cheapest and most effective solution. An experienced Councillor, fully conversant with which Officers and other individuals to call on where needed, with a good grasp of the law, an open yet analytical mind, loyalty to the needs of the job rather than to Party advantage, and with a very thick skin, could perform adequately.
 - (ii) A **cross-party group** of Councillors acting in accord would in theory get past any accusation of partisanship: work could be shared, lead spokesperson rotated, experience pooled.
 - (iii) A **dedicated Officer**: recruited for the role for his/her existing skills, would in my opinion be the most effective response. The Officer would report to both the Head of Housing and to the Cabinet Member, with access to various Officer teams, in particular Legal, Adult Social Care and Environmental Health. I believe there would be sufficient work to keep such an Officer permanently employed in Merton, and that his/her proactive work might actually save the Council (and, incidentally, the Housing Associations) money in the longer term.
- 2.6. In response to the report this paper pulls together available information from the panels deliberations and recommends a way forward to improve the quality of housing through greater information for tenants and enforcement in social and private housing sectors.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Extensive stakeholder deliberations in scrutiny. See list of meetings below. Further engagement with tenants and their experience is encouraged to successfully deliver the aims of these recommendations.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. It is anticipated these recommendations will be rolled out and complete by end of calendar year 2022.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are implications on FTE and scaling of Merton Council's Housing enforcement unit. Additionally, there will be financial implications for putting in place new IT systems such as online reporting, automation or routine

submissions for support but more work will have to be undertaken to identify the cost of these. There will also be an additional pressure on our communications team.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The Council will have increased capabilities available to enforce Housing Act across domestic social and private landlords.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Increased equity of information access and improve living conditions.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. No specific implications at this time

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. No specific implications at this time

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Cllr Nick Draper, Tenants Champion Feedback report

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. Merton Council Sustainable Communities Panel

- (i) [24 June 2021](#)
- (ii) [2 September 2021](#)
- (iii) [1 November 2021](#)
- (iv) [18 January 2022](#)

- 12.2. Full Merton Council meeting

- (i) [7 July 2021](#)

Tenants Champion Feedback report

February 2022

Cllr. Nick Draper

This report deals with the first, experimental, Tenants Champion role. It offers suggestions as to how the role could proceed in the next Council.

Overview

I was asked to take on the role of Tenants Champion last summer (2021) and initially defined the role during the autumn. At that time the expectation was that most complaints would come from Clarion tenants. I worked with Clarion to restate and redefine their complaints process. The resultant brochure/leaflet was distributed throughout the Clarion Group's properties in October/November. The expectation was that results would be statistically significant by February. Where Clarion is concerned this has not proved to be the case.

Since Clarion's process was distributed I have had two complaints about their repairs passed to me, which I advised on. I have also had similar complaints from Wandle, L&Q and Moat tenants, in very low quantities, and in each case referring the tenant to their complaints processes proved successful.

I have however had a significant number of complaints from **private sector** tenants, and the worst disrepair cases have come from this sector. I have had varying success with these cases, as the sector is by its nature far less regulated than the Housing Association (HA) sector, and solutions have had to be found on a case-by-case basis. Eviction is occasionally used as a persuader in the sector, usually legally, as is rent increase. As often as not I have found myself offering limited legal advice on matters which deviated from the tight definition I gave myself.

Two factors which I included briefly in my initial definition have taken up a disproportionate amount of time: firstly, where tenants have been less than honest about their situation and second, far more seriously, where tenants have mental health problems that their complaint to me has uncovered.

Definition

At Scrutiny I defined the role as ONLY dealing with repair issues, thereby ruling out:

- Overcrowding
- Rent arrears
- Legal and other similar problems
- Dissatisfaction with the area or type of accommodation

I made it clear that I would attempt to pass these cases on to ward Councillors.

The object of the exercise was to encourage Clarion tenants in particular and HA tenants in general to use their reporting and complaints processes to get repairs done as quickly and effectively as possible: I was only to intervene where Clarion or other HAs could be shown to have failed to follow their own process.

In defining the above, I acknowledged that the private sector would bring its own problems, although it is clear that I underestimated the number and complexity of these.

An area which I have redefined over the past few months is that of mould (as opposed to damp), which has been a dominant cause of complaint. Mould can often lie dormant in a property that has become empty and reappear with a new tenant, particularly where curtains and soft furnishings have transferred from one tenant to the next; equally, tenants can bring the problem onto themselves by, for instance, not ventilating their property or by drying clothes in large quantities over time on radiators. Part of the role has therefore been to establish through careful questioning whether the mould is the tenant's or the landlord's responsibility.

The Champion role has been advertised on the Council's website. It has also been advertised through the CAB, from who I have received a number of referrals.

Sample Casework

Given the small number of referrals to date and their relative complexity and diversity, I believe it is better to give a couple of anonymized casework samples to illustrate the role.

Case 1. A single parent with three children and who speaks little English is living in a virtually uninhabitable privately owned flat (damp, electrical faults, dangerous ceilings). She has been bullied by her landlord who told her she had to leave and find her own accommodation, at her cost, while he made repairs to the flat, for which he incidentally receives £1,250 pcm. via the housing benefit scheme. I have worked with the acting Head of Housing and the tenant's ward Councillor: Environmental Health have visited the property, confirmed findings, and arrangements are being made at the time of writing.

Case 2. A Wandle tenant had a boiler with ongoing repeat faults and was without heating just before Christmas. Wandle referred her to their maintenance subcontractor, who in turn referred her to Wandle. I spoke to a regional Director and explained the problem: he amended Wandle's complaints practice, and a new boiler was fitted within the week

Case 3. A single unemployed tenant lives in a sought-after Clarion flat. Currently the flat is in a good state of repair, although the tenant told me vClarion needed to make repairs to the kitchen ceiling because of water penetration from the flat upstairs, to which the tenants (according to the tenant) refused entry. The tenant has also allegedly had parcels stolen by neighbours on one side, while the disabled son of the neighbours on the other side, who allegedly screams all night, has allegedly been deliberately moved to a bedroom next to the tenant's. The neighbours from across the road have allegedly begun rumours about the tenant and the police have allegedly cautioned him following this. I have begun work on moving the tenant to a place of safety, as have Clarion, but to date he has refused to fill in any paperwork (literacy is not a problem) or otherwise cooperate. I have contacted Clarion, who know him well, and his ward Councillor, who he has also approached with a similar – but not identical – scenario; and I have had communication with a third source, to who he gave another slightly different story. In short, the tenant displays mental health difficulties. I do not see an easy solution.

Case 4. A single, elderly tenant in upstairs Clarion flat in the west of the borough wants a ground floor flat because of genuine mobility problems. He contacted me and although this is technically beyond the scope of the Champion, I contacted his ward Councillor. It transpired that the tenant is well known to both Clarion and Housing. He has been offered a ground floor flat in Mitcham with, I believe, a small garden, and has refused it as he does not like the area.

Case 5. A private sector tenant's boiler broke down in the Christmas week and was replaced by the landlord within 3 days. The tenant wanted compensation for her time without hot water, and was simultaneously refusing a rent increase. It appeared, according to the landlord, his letting agent, and

my own knowledge of the law, that the tenant did not have a case: I advised her, after a fairly long correspondence, that a lawyer might help her but that the Tenant's Champion could not.

Future of the role

I believe that there is a genuine case for championing tenants, both for repairs and for some –not all - of the wider complaints that I have found myself dealing with. After a great deal of thought, I have come to the conclusion that this is not a role for an elected member.

As previously stated, the role came from concerns about Clarion's performance. Those concerns remain, although my experience is that they may have become ingrained into our political conscience by past shortcomings while we have ignored pressing problems elsewhere – in short, that we have aimed at an easy, constant target. This may be politically useful, but it doesn't help their tenants much.

Like most other Housing Associations throughout Britain, Clarion have suffered from a withdrawal of state funding over the last twelve years. They were not an effective organisation at the outset, and have found it difficult to adapt. Clarion deemed that a complete rebuilding and regeneration of three of their estates was necessary, and some would say that this was an underestimate. The solution to all of this, reclaiming possession of our housing, is in fact no solution at all: Merton is not in a position either to buy it back or to manage it. In my opinion the only hope we have of improving life for our tenants – and leaseholders – is to work cooperatively rather than aggressively with Clarion: repairs, and the Tenants Champion, form a small part of that cooperative work. I appreciate that this viewpoint may be politically unacceptable.

Part of the thinking behind the Tenants Champion was to copy the Richmond model. The model, which was introduced by Richmond Conservatives at the time of their stock transfer, has been adopted and adapted by the ruling Liberal Democrats with some success. It was however set up essentially to improve engagement between tenants and housing associations, and while that is a valid aim, I don't think it addresses the real (or perceived) hardships I described in the case studies. It certainly is of no help to tenants of private landlords. I believe that the approach I have taken is what is most needed for Merton. The following is a suggestion as to how this could be made practicable.

There are three options for who could take on the role of Champion:

- a) A Councillor
- b) A cross-party group of councillors
- c) A dedicated Officer, working with fellow Officers as necessary

A **single Councillor** appears at first to be the cheapest and most effective solution. An experienced Councillor, fully conversant with which Officers and other individuals to call on where needed, with a good grasp of the law, an open yet analytical mind, loyalty to the needs of the job rather than to Party advantage, and with a very thick skin, could perform adequately. Such a Councillor would however be in high demand for other roles as well and, short of constant delegation to other Councillors and to Officers, would quickly become overwhelmed. He/she would almost certainly need to come from the ruling Group and have the ear and approbation of the Cabinet Member. Succession would also present challenges. Long-term, this would not be the bargain it first appears to be.

A **cross-party group** of Councillors acting in accord would in theory get past any accusation of partisanship: work could be shared, lead spokesperson rotated, experience pooled. In my experience,

such an arrangement would be too fragile to survive, particularly if Members failed to share the work, and the occasional blame, equally. The risk of failure is too great.

A dedicated **Officer**, recruited for the role for his/her existing skills, would in my opinion be the most effective response. The Officer would report to both the Head of Housing and to the Cabinet Member, with access to various Officer teams, in particular Legal, Adult Social Care and Environmental Health. I believe there would be sufficient work to keep such an Officer permanently employed in Merton, and that his/her proactive work might actually save the Council (and, incidentally, the Housing Associations) money in the longer term. If, however, a case for a full-time Officer in just this Borough does not add up, there is scope for sharing with other boroughs, as we do our regulatory services team. The Officer could also be used to map out the case for a register of private landlords, assisting the ruling Group should they wish to pursue a clean-up of the private sector.

There is however also a case for abandoning the Champion project as over-complicated and insufficiently supported. Tenants' properties are their greatest asset and, when this is threatened, they may choose to sidestep a Champion system they may see as obstructive, and go instead for a sympathetic ward Councillor, or an Opposition Councillor, or any independent person who may support their cause. They may not enjoy the prospect of following a Housing Association's repairs and complaints procedure if what appears to be a quicker and easier solution presents itself. In coming months, for instance, we will see teams of canvassers knocking on Housing Association doors and asking tenants to report problems direct to us as politicians, and some will do so, assuring us that their complaints have fallen on deaf ears, and we will promise action. In doing so we will jeopardise the success of the Tenant's Champion, but I know that we will do it anyway. It's in our nature.

The decision to continue with or to abandon the Tenant's Champion won't be mine. Councillors may choose to adapt the model I chose or to adopt something completely different. In conclusion, though, I sincerely hope that some form of Champion system is retained, if only for private sector tenants, the least regulated and most vulnerable of all or many tenants.

Nick Draper
09/02/2022

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 22 February 2022

Subject: Clarion Housing Association Update

Lead member: Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and Climate Emergency

Recommendations:

- A. No decision will be required as the report is for information only.
 - B.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Clarion Housing association manage over 8,800 Homes across the London Borough of Merton.
- 1.2. Lead officers at Clarion attended the Council's Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the 1st November 2021 to provide an update on operational activities and initiatives across their housing stock.
- 1.3. At the request of members this report provides an update and progress report against these initiatives. The updates have been broken down into a number of individual work streams:-
 - Merton Customer Engagement Strategy
 - Regeneration
 - Waste Management
 - Repairs and Maintenance
 - Priority Estates – Eastfields, Sadler Close
 - Planned Investment

2 WORK STREAMS

- 2.1 **Merton Customer Engagement Strategy** – Members have been updated at previous Committee meetings of the intention to launch a wide ranging strategy to engage local residents and stakeholders across its homes in the London Borough of Merton. The overall aim of the strategy is to identify the key challenges and issues faced by residents in their home and draw up targeted local action plans to deliver improvements in resident satisfaction and their neighbourhood.
- 2.2. Progress and milestones achieved to date are summarised below:-
 - Completion of draft strategy and overriding principles and objectives
 - Clarion Group Board Sign off

- Successful recruitment to three Resident Liaison Officer positions - These roles will be pivotal in delivering the engagement days and monitoring follow up actions to a conclusion
- Initial scoping of priority estates, download of data, statistical information paired with local knowledge culminating in the formation of the draft priority programme
- Sign off by the Merton Community Panel on 24 January on the principles of the Resident Engagement Strategy and the panel's role in its co-creation and ongoing supervision
- Completion of physical inspections and stock condition surveys at 25% of our homes across five priority estates by our external consultants
- Successful recruitment of a data analysis post to support data gathering work and tracking of actions arising from the estate engagement days

2.3. Next steps and milestones:-

- Sadlers estate agreed with Merton Community Panel as the location for the first engagement day to be held on 25 and 26 February
- Baseline satisfaction survey of residents on Sadlers estate w/c 14 February
- Analysis of feedback from the engagement day, delivery on repairs and other actions arising from the event
- 'Plan on a page' currently being prepared to be distributed to all Merton residents. More detailed plan to be circulated to councillors and other stakeholders once ready
- Continuing recruitment to admin positions to support the prioritisation, scheduling and delivery of actions arising from estate engagement days

2.4 **Merton Regeneration** – Work continues on the three Regeneration sites across the London Borough of Merton of Eastfields, High Path and Ravensbury:-

Eastfields Phase 1

- S.73 application in process to adjust the maximum parameters of development. Some elements of the design have increased by a storey whilst some others have reduced by a storey, as well as some other amendments to form. The tallest element of development, a nine-storey residential block overlooking the new linear park, has been increased to 10 storeys, in order to accommodate the maximum number of resident decants whilst also accommodating the additional plant space requirements for the sustainable and net zero carbon compatible energy strategy. Determination due at February 2022 planning committee.

- Reserved Matters application was submitted in December 2021 for the 201 replacement and affordable homes which comprise Phase 1. This application also includes significant areas of public realm and the energy centre which will feed the entirety of the estate once the regeneration of Eastfields is completed. Determination due at the March or April 2022 planning committee.

High Path

- Phase 1 construction will be complete in mid-February 2022, providing 134 Replacement Homes (for resident homeowners who have chosen to stay) and social rented homes for existing High Path tenants;
- Phase 3 Reserved Matters application to be submitted in Q3 2022 for the first open-market element of the regeneration at High Path. This phase is likely to provide between 350 and 380 homes depending on the final design along with ground floor retail / commercial space. The energy centre for High Path is delivered as part of Phase 3, with Phases 1 and 2 being connected to this net zero compatible energy source upon completion of Phase 3 (circa 2027);
- Revised Outline Planning Application to be submitted in Q2 2022, this application being for the additional density of affordable and open-market tenures at High Path;
- LBM Members were invited to attend a site visit on 28 January, and a second site visit with the Merton Community Panel was held on 3 February.

Ravensbury

- All phases have approved Reserved Matters
- Phases 2 and 3 continue on-site
- Final site perimeter hoarding adaptations shall take place in February, with additional visuals and community artwork installation

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Activity

- Information gathering began with Section 16 notices being posted and hand-delivered to all households affected by the following phases of the regeneration:
 - Eastfields Phase 1;
 - High Path Phases 2, and
 - Ravensbury Phases 3 and 4.
- These notices require householders to confirm who has an interest in the property, and
- A good response has been received, with a polite reminder sent to addresses where responses have not yet been received. These reminders are open in terms of a time to respond.

2.5 Waste Management

We are working with Veolia to assess how we can improve the storage and collection of waste. Where collections are missed, these are being reported to Veolia via the Local Authority by our Estate Services team. We hope that through this continued interaction progress can be made towards reducing the

overall number of missed collections currently being experienced. In the interim we have had to manage the volume of refuse locally as issues arise.

2.6 Additional resources have been introduced to assist with:-

- Skimming overflowing bins (Clearing the overflow to allow residents to continue using the refuse facilities until the bins are cleared)
- Delivering additional bins to cope with the volume of refuse
- Utilising our internal bulk collection team to completely empty bins where we know the refuse collection is not due.
- Rotation of bins on certain sites where we have a sufficient amount to replace full bins with empty bins. Storing the full bins in a secure location on site until collection date

2.7 In addition to the above, we also run a weekend and an evening bulk service where we can identify refuse issues and address them accordingly. These services are part of the Merton promises from the stock transfer.

We are currently exploring introducing dedicated vehicles and teams that could focus on some of our more problematic estates that need an enhanced service in regards to bulk refuse collection.

2.8 **Repairs and Maintenance** – The interim WIP target of 1,200 jobs has been met and we continue to keep this under review and amend the target to drive future reduction.

2.9 We continue to see a steady demand for the service with simple repairs completed effectively. Our bigger challenge is repairs that are more complex; in some cases COVID was affecting access and impacting the workforce however this appears to be reducing. The introduction of the planned reactive team is also supporting the work around more complex repairs.

2.10 Quality of Materials - Whilst public procurement rules and regulations are prescriptive and limit how we can specify materials, we do specify that materials used in any of our contracts are compliant with any and all regulatory and industry quality standards in relation to their use, design and manufacture. We also expect all works completed to be delivered with a 12 month warranty for materials and workmanship. Any repairs required in this period would be at the contractor's costs and therefore at their financial risk further discouraging the use of cheap or sub-standard materials. We monitor properties for repeat repairs that would indicate any trends in failure such as materials used or tenant abuse. We also engage with the wider supply chain for known issues and manufacturers recalls for products where appropriate so that we can replace products that we know have been identified as problematic.

2.11 **Priority Estates – Eastfields Update** – All outstanding repairs following the estate day have now been concluded. Our RLO's have kept in touch with residents and are following up on the last of the completions to ensure they are satisfied with the repairs. RLO's are also picking up any new complex repairs to monitor through to resolution.

- 2.12 A Planned Works programme is continuing covering kitchens bathrooms and rewires. This programme comprises of 31 properties in total and is now nearing completion with the following progress: -
- 25 properties are fully complete
 - 1 property with work in progress
 - 3 properties with start dates agreed
 - 1 property to be surveyed
 - 1 property with access issues
- 2.13 Roof Upgrade – The evaluation of the roof upgrade options is now complete and an order has been placed with the contractor to proceed. Due to the continuous roof construction at Eastfields, the effectiveness of the proposed upgrade work requires the support of all Leaseholder and Freeholders. To this end, it is proposed that this roofing upgrade work will be undertaken to all properties and at no cost to Leaseholders and Freeholders. Mobilisation of sub-contractors and associated resources is now underway with a prospective start date anticipated during March. Letters will be issued to residents w/c 14 February.
- 2.14 Eastfields Office – The portakabin has now been delivered. UK Power Networks are due to complete their works w/c 21 February - we are still awaiting connection details from Thames Water. After that, the cabin will then need to be kitted out.
- 2.15 Eastfields Estate Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) - Eastfields estate is on a cyclical programme of FRAs, and at present all are in date. Clarion have completed a comprehensive survey of the blocks and identified some fire safety works to be completed. Works identified are flat entrance doors, communal doors, fire stopping in communal areas and emergency lights. These works commenced in November 2021 and are due to be completed by April 2022. In line with government advice Clarion also has a program of external wall inspections being taken across all multi occupancy blocks, with blocks being prioritised by risk. Eastfields will be completed during the financial year 2022/23.
- 2.16 **Priority Estates – Sadler Close Update** - The work within dwellings is now well underway within Gladstone with the first system nearing completion. HSS have created routes for the first complete system by installing 80% of the fire rated duck work to the dwellings and communal areas. Once this system is complete the Clarion and HSS teams will use the completed system to utilise lessons learnt for the rest of the estate. Early indication continues to be that work within residents' homes is less invasive and disruptive than previously anticipated. The on-site resident liaison continues to make excellent progress with accessing all the dwellings in relation to organising surveys for the impending work. Current access rate for the surveys sits at 98%.
- 2.17 The project to replace the door entry systems at the Sadler Close (Chart House, Fountain House and Gladstone House) was completed in December 2021. The commissioning of new handset-devices remains outstanding in some dwellings due to access difficulties. Outstanding work is being followed up with residents to ensure access is arranged as soon as possible.
- 2.18 **Planned Investment – Wider Merton Area** – The component renewal programme in Merton is progressing well with a number of kitchens and bathrooms successfully completed across the Borough. This work stream is

nearing completion with the programme for 2022/23 already well advanced. Our partnering contractor United Living, is also focusing upon ongoing investment in external component renewal work to complete the roof and window programmes by the end of the financial year (31 March 2022).

2.19 Planned Investment projects - Works at South View, Wimbledon are progressing well with the roofing works due to commence shortly. We are in the final snagging stage of these works prior to sign-off at both the 4 Acres Estate, Harlands Estate and the Ravensbury estate. A £550k programme of communal decorating works is currently in progress and progressing well at the High Path estate.

2.20 Several new projects are due to start between now and March 2022, including works to replace the roof and windows at 4 Lingfield Road, Wimbledon, together with internal and external decorations/repairs. Works at two blocks on London Road, Mitcham will also soon be commencing:

- 263-265 London Road: window replacements and communal decorating
- 376-386 London Road: roof repairs, external coatings, communal decorations and door entry replacement.

Works are also commencing to replace the lateral and rising electrical mains at Ricards Road, Wimbledon, together with communal decorations.

Phase 2 of the works at Glebe Estate will also be commencing at Glebe Square with replacement of roofs and windows, together with communal decorations.

2.21 Validation of Future Work - Two consultants; FFT and Savills, have been engaged and instructed to undertake approximately 800 stock condition surveys on eight estates at Eastfields; High Path, Ravensbury, Phipps Bridge, Cherry Trees, Sadlers, Laburnum and Watermeads. This survey work remains ongoing and is due to be completed by February 2022. We will then undertake an analysis of the findings to shape the required investment in the short, medium, long-term across the various estates.

2.22 Planned Investment Spend 2010 – 2022 – Please find below breakdown of spend on our planned investment programme. This only includes planned investment spend and not day to day revenue spend which would include repairs and fencing. It does not include any expenditure on the regeneration works. The 2020-21 data is still being validated and is therefore subject to change as final accounts are submitted.

- 2010-15 - £71m
- 2015-16 - £18m
- 2016-17 - £16.5m
- 2017-18 - £14.1m
- 2018-19 - £9.7m
- 2019-20 - £10.7m
- 2020-21 - £9m
- **Total spend - £149m**

- 3** **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**
- 3.1. None
- 4** **TIMETABLE**
- 4.1. None
- 5** **FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**
- 5.1. None
- 6** **LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**
- 6.1. None
- 7** **HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1. None
- 8** **CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 8.1. None
- 9** **RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1. None
- 10** **APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
- None
- 11** **BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 11.1. None

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