

## Report to Council – 13 December 2018

### Report of Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods, Cllr Jenny Brooks

## Housing

### Housing Delivery Programme

This Administration has embarked on its most ambitious Housing Delivery Programme since the 1970s, which will see in excess of 630 homes built over the next five years. This will include more than 280 council and low cost home ownership houses providing options for residents with a wide range of financial circumstances:

- **James House – 57 flats.** Started on site in March 26<sup>th</sup> with completion now due in May 2019
- **Newbury Avenue - 5 bungalows.** A building contractor has been appointed and work is due to commence this month and finish next July.
- **Marjorie Waite Court – 29 unit extension and 4 bungalows.** Planning permission was obtained in July and a building contractor has been appointed to build the scheme. Work is due to start in early March.
- **Shared Ownership programme – 65 homes** to be purchased by March 2021. Launched in August and to date 27 households are progressing towards purchasing a home and are at various stages in the application process. The sale of 6 homes has been agreed.
- **Groves Regeneration Project** - exploring options to regenerate Groves housing estate, including new homes, improvements, and better use of open spaces. Research now at stage of high level design options and masterplanning. Government funding received for Regeneration Officer post to continue work on the Groves project and to look at other areas of the city too.
- **Lowfield – 165 homes** including community build, self build, houses, apartments, bungalows, a care home plus a significant area of new public open space. Planning permission was obtained in August and work is being undertaken to prepare the tender documents. Work will start on site in early 2019. Initially this will include site preparation such as the removal of old school foundations and the installation of the new entrance road. The procurement of the house building contractor will take place during this period. The first homes are expected to be ready for occupation by the end of 2019.

- **Lincoln Court** - Detailed design work is underway for the refurbishment and 10 unit extension at Lincoln Court.
- **Burnholme, Fulford and Haxby Hall** – Work is ongoing with development partners to create modern care homes.
- **Burnholme and Askham Bar – around 140 new homes.** Design, planning and public consultation work will take place in Spring 2019 with the aim of planning permission being obtained later that year.
- **Duncombe Barracks – around 35-40 new homes.** Completion of the land purchase should take place, with design, planning and public consultation to take place in order to obtain planning permission before the end of 2019.

The Government abolished the HRA borrowing cap in the October Budget. As a result of this a report is to be considered by Executive in January setting out how an accelerated housing development programme across multiple sites will be progressed.

### **Older Persons Accommodation Strategy**

The council is to carry out a city wide engagement and consultation with residents, housing providers, carers, and advocacy groups, to develop a local evidence base for the Older Person's Accommodation Programme. This will be used to help shape future projects and to inform planning policy.

### **Replacement of ICT**

Between January and March 2019 an initial 5-year contract will be signed for the replacement of all the ICT systems that housing and building services use. This is an investment of nearly £2 million, which will replace 27 existing systems with a single one. It will improve staff and customer experience and create significant efficiencies.

### **Housing options / Homeless**

In December 2016 City of York Council achieved the government 'Gold Standard' award' becoming the third local authority in the country at that date to do so. This recognises the quality of services offered to homeless and potentially homeless households. The 2018-23 Homeless Strategy 'Preventing Homelessness Together' has been produced which will build on this success.

James House, due for completion in May 2019, is an example of this Administration's commitment to some of the most vulnerable residents in the city. There will be 57 modern flats, all with their own facilities, for people

currently living in hostels under Homeless Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 (relief duty) or Housing Act 1996 (full duty).

The Homeless Reduction Act was passed in 2017; this is the biggest change in legislation for many years. The duty on statutory bodies to refer people who they believe may be homeless or at risk of homelessness became part of the implementation of HRA 17 in October 2018.

In June 2018 the decision was made to leave North Yorkshire Home Choice and introduce a new allocations policy once the IT system has been replaced.

The service is reviewing the use of existing social housing stock to consider the possible investment/re-design opportunities to meet the needs of complex/vulnerable customers in particular to mitigate the medium and long term impact of welfare benefit reform. Work is in progress with Changing Lives to re-model some hard to let stock.

## **Rough Sleeping**

Last year the rough sleeper count increased substantially from 18 to 29. Action was taken to address this and in June the council was awarded £193,565 by the Government as part of the Rough Sleeper Initiative. The money is being used to put together a Complex Needs Rough Sleepers Team, made up of 3 more outreach workers in the Salvation Army EIP team, 2 Making Every Adult Matter workers, a mental health worker and a part time rough sleepers coordinator. Also, 11 extra emergency beds have been added.

The council has worked in partnership with Changing Lives, the Salvation Army, The Police and the Community Safety Hub. Additionally, Below Zero is an additional cold weather provision, a joint venture between CYC and York Council of Churches, offering up to 5 additional beds, the provision is staffed by a pool of volunteers co-ordinated by the council of churches and is supported by CYC Resettlement service at Howe Hill

All these increased resources have resulted in a reduction in the rough sleeper count to 9 this year which is a tremendous achievement and a credit to everyone concerned. The council has secured a further £250,000 from the Government for 2018/19 to allow this work with extremely vulnerable residents to continue.

## **HMO licensing**

The new regulations regarding extending HMO Licensing came in to force on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018. The new regulations not only increased the number of HMOs covered by mandatory licensing but also introduced new conditions relating to minimum room sizes and waste storage.

CYC started receiving applications for HMOs covered by the regulations from the 6<sup>th</sup> September. The Council's primary focus has been ensuring that landlords are supported through the application process and therefore 3 presentations were given which were attended by over 200 landlords, as well as traditional communications and social media to advise landlords and letting agents. In addition CYC has worked closely with other services such as planning and building control to ensure that 455 applications and is aware that there are currently a further 125 applications being made.

## **Falls Prevention Service Project**

Since its launch in Clifton Ward March 2017, the team has expanded and now has 3 Falls Prevention Practitioners working in four wards: Clifton, Guildhall and, added in November, Micklegate and Fishergate. Nearly 400 visits have been made, with low level interventions being carried out in residents' homes. Since the service was launched it has provided:

- 600 grab rails
- 213 banister rails
- 300 brighter light bulbs
- Re-fixed 21 banister rails
- 18 newel rails
- 13 window restrictors
- 8 carpet trim strips
- In partnership with North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service the team has also fitted 36 smoke detectors

Recently the service has also partnered up with a local pharmacist, enabling residents to have their medication reviewed and other simple medical checks such as blood pressure without the need to access their GP.

**Going forward:** Work is continuing to expand this project, including reviewing the in house minor adaptation service/ the handyperson service (which came in house on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018) and synergies with other services such as

grants to deliver adaptations and insulation measures to deliver **Healthier Homes Services** to support the Directorate's aim to prevent, reduce and delay the need for NHS and Adult Social Care Services.

## **Building Services**

Last 12 Months 18/19 YTD

The new structure of the service is in place with all vacancies recruited to. All employees are now in permanent positions with fit for purpose Job Descriptions that accurately reflect the needs of the service. Officers are now working with staff to embed new ways of working through a combination of coaching, formal training and peer to peer training.

All required Fire Safety Risk Assessments will have been completed by the end of December 2018.

Domestic gas safety compliance has run consistently at >99%. The figure as at the end of Nov 2018 is 99.2%. The team work closely with the Enforcement Team to gain access where this is denied by the tenant

32,321 have been completed repairs to date, taking an average of 7 days to complete each repair. The SMS text notification introduced earlier in 2018 for repairs customers is proving to be very popular.

CYC has provided 405 households with new energy efficient gas heating systems, and 4 households living in 'off gas' areas, have benefitted from high efficiency air source heating.

94 homes have received new roofs.

The Council has new contracts/sub-contracts in place for:

- Managed Stores; 10 year, £30m shared contract with University of York
- Glazing
- General Build
- Reactive Roofing Repairs
- Scaffolding
- Plasterwork
- Joinery

## **Next 12 months**

Up-coming contracts are: External Painting – currently out to tender; Standing Water, tenders out in December, Tenants' Choice tenders out in January.

Stock Condition survey– This critical piece of work, which is due to go live in January, will provide Building Services with a greatly improved understanding of CYC’s social housing stock, which in turn will allow it to plan any stock investment more efficiently – to do the right work, at the right time and in the right way.

A new Repairs and Recharge Policy has been written and agreed by the Executive Member. This will be launched in the New Year.

The team have been fully engaged in agreeing the requirements for the new system and in workshops to agree processes for when the new system is rolled out. They are also heavily involved in the evaluation of the tenders that have been received.

Total Mobile, the mobile phone software that trades staff receive and report job progress through, will be rolled out to Voids & Electrical teams during the next year. It will shortly be possible to complete Minor Works Certificates for electrical works through this software, which will make this process much more efficient, reducing paper work, and allowing for more effective tracking of safety compliance

Area based reporting will go live in January. These changes within the works management system will allow the monitoring and understanding of repairs performance to be more effective, thus ensuring the CYC is delivering a great service for tenants and residents.

## **Safer Neighbourhoods**

### **Safer York Partnership**

The York & North Yorkshire Domestic Abuse Strategy has been re-drafted and approved by Safer York Partnership and the North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership

The Counter Terrorism Action Plan has been refreshed and consultation is taking place on the first phase of the physical security measures in the city centre. Extra measures have been put in place for the Christmas markets.

### **Community Safety Hub – Multi-agency working**

### **City Centre Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group Actions:**

The aim of this multi-agency task group is to reduce nuisance begging, rough sleeping, busking and selling and alcohol-related disorder. Also, it works with city-centre businesses to manage waste presentation. Actions have included:

- A new Text to Give initiative.
- Review of the busking policy and more focus on safety of buskers.
- Targeted drug and alcohol outreach services
- Obtaining a Criminal Behaviour Order for an entrenched rough sleeper with positive conditions to seek medical help and support
- A monthly City Centre meeting has been established by CYC. Attended by the BID, Salvation Army and NYP, the purpose of the meeting is to share information and intelligence on those who are committing the most serious forms of ASB and/or criminal activity in the city centre.
- Over 80 premises are now signed up to the BID's No Loitering Scheme. This is primarily to prevent begging and rough sleeping in shop doorways.
- The Neighbourhood Enforcement team continue to work to manage business waste presentation in the city centre working closely with the BID.

### **Fly-posting**

The Neighbourhood Enforcement team has recently reviewed the legislation it uses to take action against this offence. This approach has deterred a number of businesses who routinely fly-post over a wide area of the city.

### **Water Safety**

A number of visits have recently been made to riverside licensed premises in order to gauge their views of the number of potential 'near misses' that occur where people are deterred from entering the water, either from being in drink or through attempted suicide.

This information will be used alongside police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service data, to build a more accurate picture of these incidents in order that a multi-agency response can be developed.

### **British Heart Foundation – Pack for Good initiative (reducing waste from student households)**

The Neighbourhood Enforcement team work in partnership with both universities and the British Heart Foundation to encourage students to recycle and reduce waste rather than abandon unwanted goods, particularly at the end of term. This is done by locating recycling banks or boxes on and off campus at key locations.

## **Operation Eyeball**

Operation Eyeball is a county-wide operation with the aim of reducing fly-tipping and unlawful waste carriage through the sharing of best practice, information and intelligence. It is led by a multi-agency working group.

Work is taking place within the group to improve awareness around fly tipping at a local level via NYP Community Messenger, an on-line information service run at a local level by North Yorkshire Police.

In addition, the National Farmers Union are working with officers to devise a flyer for all their members to help engage farmers affected by fly tipping to come forward for assistance and to enable investigations.

## **Crime Not To Care campaign**

The Neighbourhood Enforcement team launched this year-long campaign in February 2018 in partnership with Keep Britain Tidy. Its aim is to educate the public of their duty of care over the disposal of domestic waste.

## **Prevent**

There have been 6 referrals about 5 different individuals in 2018. Of these we are currently working with 2 of the individuals.

Working with North Yorkshire CC, we will be rolling out the graphic novels in the Hurt by Hate series, and ensuring that schools receive the appropriate levels of support to deliver these packages to pupils.

## **Premises Closure Orders**

Working with colleagues in the North Yorkshire Police and Legal Services, we have obtained 4 Premises Closure Orders which have given immediate respite to neighbours from serious anti-social behaviour.

I would like to thank officers across the portfolio for all their hard work.

Cllr Jenny Brooks  
Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods