

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet**

**Date:** Wednesday, 17 January 2024

**Venue:** The Atrium, Perceval House, 14-16 Uxbridge Road,  
Ealing, W5 2HL

### **Attendees (in person): Councillors**

P Mason (Chair), J Anand, J Blacker, L Brett, D Costigan, S Donnelly, P Knewstub, B Mahfouz and S Manro

### **Also present (in person): Councillors**

G Malcolm and J Gallant

### **Apologies:**

G Shaw

### **Attendees (virtual): Councillors**

K K Nagpal

## **1 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies received.

In accordance with paragraph 2.6(a) of the Council's Constitution, the following speakers addressed the Cabinet with regard to the following items:

Council Plan Performance Report Quarter 2 2023/24

- Cllr Malcolm
- Cllr Gallant

5 Year Housing Capital program Procurement

- Cllr Gallant

Housing Delivery Update

- Cllr Gallant

The meeting was held in a hybrid format with members and officers able to join the meeting remotely. However, regulations did not allow for members attending virtually to be counted as present in the attendance section of the minutes, and their attendance would not count as attendance in relation to section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. Members attending virtually would be able to speak but would not be able to vote. Cllr K K Nagpal attended virtually.

**2 Urgent Matters**

There were none.

**3 Matters to be Considered in Private**

There were none.

**4 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

**5 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday 6 December 2023 be agreed and signed as a true and correct record.

**6 Appointments to Sub Committees and Outside Bodies**

There were none.

**7 Council Plan Performance Report Quarter 2 2023/24**

**RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted the key performance highlights against the 2023/24 Council Plan Delivery Plan.
- II. Noted the progress on the Council Plan numeric targets.
- III. Noted the progress against the Corporate Health Check indicators at Q2 2023/24.

**REASON FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

Performance management is an essential part of a high performing organisation and therefore not providing a performance report was discounted as an option. This report presents progress on the delivery of the Council Plan 2022-26, with specific reference to Q2 performance against the 2023/24 Delivery Plan.

## 8 5 year housing capital program procurement

### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Authorised procurement of multiple contractors to deliver the planned program for 2024-2029 and the variation to the Housing Procurement Strategy previously agreed by Cabinet in Jan 2023, which approved the use of short-term interim procurement arrangements.
- II. Authorised the Strategic Director of Housing & Environment following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Genuinely Affordable Homes, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to invite and evaluate the contracts with values set out in Confidential Appendix A of up to 5 years each with an option to extend for up to another five years.
- III. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Housing & Environment following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Genuinely Affordable Homes, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services to award contracts following the procurement procedure referred to in Recommendation 1.2.

### **REASON FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

1. The Housing Procurement Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 25 January 2023 and recommended that contracts will be of a duration of a minimum of 4 years but ideally longer term, with contractual break clauses (e.g., 5 years plus 5 years) moving away from a spot purchase-based approach, to foster better working relationships with contractors and make the contracts attractive to the market, encourage investment by contractors and encourage a partnership-based approach.
2. The Housing Procurement Strategy initially identified 23 contracts relating to the delivery of repairs, maintenance, compliance, and planned works. Further stock evaluation and changes to legislation suggest that additional works required may lead to additional contracts being required in addition to those already identified.
3. The Housing Procurement Strategy identified 8 contractor lots to be awarded in a geographical split across the borough. Market engagement has identified that this would offer us the most efficient route to achieve value for money. The budgets will be in line with the HRA Business plan which will be approved in February 2024, and these remain in development.
4. The Housing Procurement Strategy recommended market engagement prior to procurement. This work has been completed and forms the basis for the changes this report seeks to have approved.
5. Cabinet approved the HRA 5-year Capital Programme on 25 January 2023. As noted above this will be refreshed and will be considered and approved at February 2024 cabinet.

6. It is anticipated that from approval of the recommendations it will take 6 months to complete procurement and have contractors ready to deliver any capital works.
7. Currently limited capital contracts are in place to enable delivery of capital works from quarter 1 2024. Limited capital works can be undertaken with current procured contractor resources. If recommendations 1.1 and 1.2 are approved, the delivery of capital programme would be phased from quarter 2 and fully commence in quarter 3 of 2024. Although only limited works would be completed in quarter 1, the broader strategic approach would significantly improve the procurement benefits and future delivery opportunities.
8. Work is currently in progress to produce full specifications for all works required to enable procurement to commence once approval is granted. This will also include defining the routes to market. All routes to market will be fully compliant with the council's CPRs and PCR 2015.
9. Final contract values will be determined once the HRA budget is approved in February 2024. Procurement will not commence until approval of HRA budget in February 2024. Delivery of any elements of the capital programme requiring procurement would be delayed until July 2024, however this has been factored into our plan. Confidential Appendix 1 provides an indicative costed plan for 24/25 and indicative values for a 5-year plan.
10. Following initial feedback from market engagement and advice from external experts (Lumensol), procuring short term contracts for any capital program would result in poor contractor engagement, poor value for money and potential reputational risk for the council.
11. A 1+1 term capital program would take 6 months to complete procurement and have contractors ready to deliver any capital works.
12. A minimum of 5 years is industry standard for capital contracts with the option to extend for a further 5 years. This is benchmarked within the industry to ensure true partnering contracts are placed.
13. Stock condition reports will inform the planned programme from 2025 onwards. We expect there to be variations to the programme as a result of the information this will provide, and we will manage this through the flexibility of the contracts we procure.

## 9 Housing Delivery Update

### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted the status of the council's Housing Development Programme and progress toward its 4,000 Genuinely Affordable Homes (GAHs) objective.

### **Committed projects**

- II. Noted the increased level of risk on Southall Market car park (section 2.18) and High Lane (section 2.30) and that a fuller update and mitigations for approval would be presented to cabinet in early 2024.
- III. Noted the current position of Dean Gardens car park, Chesterton and Evesham Close, Shackleton Road, Norwood Road, Woodend Library (the "Package 1 Sites") (section 2.19), following the administration of

Henry Construction Projects Ltd and that a fuller update and recommendation on how to progress these sites would be presented to Cabinet for approval in early 2024.

**Allocated projects**

- IV. Noted that four projects within the GLA Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2021-26 and with grant allocations:
  - Stanhope School
  - Neville Close
  - Shillaker Court
  - Golf Links phase 4(the “Unviable Projects”) were currently unviable and that further feasibility and appraisal work was required to demonstrate if they can meet required financial hurdles prior to approval of further progress.
- V. Noted proposals for delivery of the following projects within the Housing Delivery Programme and with existing AHP 2021-26 grant allocations:
  - George Street car park (section 2.45)
  - Mandeville Parkway (section 2.46)(the “Existing Projects”).
- VI. Approved a new general fund capital budget for George Street car park of £1.050m and Mandeville Parkway of £0.200m to be funded from general fund borrowing until the full scheme costs and financing are known and approved.
- VII. Authorised the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability to procure and appoint consultants to undertake RIBA stages 1-3 and to prepare and submit a planning application in relation to George Street car park (at an estimated total cost of £1.050m should the scheme proceed through all preconstruction approval gateways and to planning decision).
- VIII. Authorised further design work (RIBA stage 3) and changes to the planning permission on Mandeville Parkway (up to a total value of £0.200m) to meet new Building Safety Act regulations and to ensure a viable scheme, and to submit a revised application.
- IX. Noted proposals for the delivery, and inclusion in the AHP 2021-26, of:
  - Perceval House car park (section 2.47)
  - 57 Greenford Road (section 2.48)(the “New Projects”).
- X. Approved a new general fund capital budget for Perceval House car park of £1.713m to be funded from the general fund borrowing until the delivery model is confirmed and/or full scheme costs and financing are known and approved.
- XI. Authorised the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability to procure and appoint consultants to undertake RIBA stages 1-3 and to prepare and submit a planning application for Perceval House car park (at an estimated total value of £1.713m should the scheme proceed through all preconstruction approval gateways and to planning decision).
- XII. Approved a total scheme expenditure budget of up to £33.219m for 57 Greenford Road to be funded from GLA grant, right to buy receipts and temporary borrowing until the scheme is completed and funded by

- capital receipts on transfer to its ultimate owner(s).
- XIII. Authorised the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to purchase the freehold of 57 Greenford Road and enter into a development agreement (DA) with UB6 Holdings Ltd based on the Heads of Terms attached at appendix 7, subject to further due diligence being satisfactorily completed and authorises the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability to issue a al Ex-Ante Transparency (VEAT) notice and enter into any ancillary legal documents required to facilitate the project or protect the council's interests.
- XIV. Noted the potential risk of the GLA withdrawing grant allocations for the Unviable Projects (2.33) and authorised the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability, following consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to negotiate with the GLA to vary the terms of the existing grant agreement and to substitute the New Projects and other projects which meet the agreed hurdle rates for the Unviable Projects within the AHP 2021-26 (including the Council Homes Acquisition Programme).
- XV. Noted that the working assumption (for financial modelling purposes) is for the homes created by the New Projects and the Existing Projects to sit in Broadway Living RP (BLRP) subject to agreement from the BLRP Board and approval of a viable BLRP Growth Business Plan and authorised the Strategic Director of Economy and Sustainability, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, to determine and implement the most suitable delivery or disposal route.
- XVI. Authorised the Strategic Director for Economy and Sustainability, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and the Strategic Director of Housing and Environment, to decide whether projects should proceed to the next gateway stage having considered gateway reports, RIBA stage reports, and the latest financial viability information and within approved budgets.

## **REASON FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

Housing Development Programme context

### **A continuing housing crisis**

1. Housing was perhaps the most significant economic and social challenge in Ealing, exacerbating issues of low pay, deprivation, and inequality. Poor housing affordability emerges as the primary factor contributing to deprivation throughout the borough (Shaping Ealing survey 2022).
2. According to Shelter (2023), Ealing has the 10th highest rate of people who are homeless (living in temporary accommodation or sleeping on the streets) in the UK. The number of families living in temporary accommodation is now circa 2,500, putting Ealing in the top five highest in London.
3. The waiting list for social housing stands at circa 7,500 applications. Three and four-bedroom homes have waiting times of 10 and 13 years, respectively. A two-bedroom flat has an average waiting time of six years.
4. Moreover, earnings have failed to match the rapid growth in house prices,

resulting in a significant affordability gap. The current level of unaffordability is unprecedented, with the median house price to median gross annual (residence-based) earnings ratio at 16:1. This makes it difficult for most residents to secure suitable and affordable accommodation.

5. These statistics highlight the severity of the continuing housing crisis and provide a very strong case, which has not diminished despite tough macroeconomic conditions, for the council to continue to support new housing development and regeneration in all forms which will continue to improve the overall number, quality and mix of homes in the borough.

#### **Building 4,000 Genuinely Affordable Homes**

6. In response to the housing crisis, the council committed to “continue a long term homebuilding programme” in the *Council Plan 2022-2026* and set a four year target to “deliver [start building] 4,000 new genuinely affordable homes across the borough” by April 2026.

7. GLA Affordable Housing statistics show Ealing was a top performer – second among London boroughs – in 2022-23 (up from third in 2021-22), seeing more than 2,000 affordable homes started by either the council or housing associations. 679 were council led.

8. Ealing ranked third among London boroughs with 841 completions for Social Rent and London Affordable Rent tenures between 2016 and 2022 and seventh overall for all types and tenures of new builds with 5,329 homes complete.

#### **Housing development during a market downturn**

9. The previous corporate target of starting 2,500 genuinely affordable homes (GAHs) between 2018 and 2022 was successfully achieved during a time of economic certainty and record-low interest rates.

10. Despite the council’s impressive recent track record in housing development, there are formidable new challenges presented by the prevailing economic conditions and political uncertainty: high interest rates, build cost inflation, construction skills shortages, contractor insolvencies, an uncertain sales market and a decline in private rented sector lettings, and a lack of clarity around new building safety regulations to name some. Each threaten the viability of committed and new projects.

11. As a result, over the last 18 months, the construction industry in the UK has experienced a major downturn, with the housebuilding sector particularly badly affected. Housebuilding programmes across the country have either been scaled back or stopped. A recent Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH, 2023) survey suggests 44% of all local authorities with build programmes, are reducing their housing capital programmes, and 25% are halting them altogether.

#### **A. Committed projects**

12. This section provides a status update on all committed projects – those on site and under contract/development agreement – within the Housing Development Programme. A number of these projects are now challenging to deliver within the original timeframes and budgets due to the housing market conditions described above.

13. A Housing Development Programme Overview table, with key information on all current projects, is provided as confidential appendix 1.

Schemes on site (directly delivered) (AHP 16-23)

14. The delivery of homes funded through AHP 16-23 began in September

2021 following decisions to undertake direct delivery of these developments. All proposed developments were tendered through existing construction procurement frameworks. The last project in the programme to start on site did so in October 2023.

15. Southall Market car park and Package 1 started on site prior to April 2022 and were counted toward the earlier 2,500 GAHs target.

16. In October 2022, following the fallout from the mini-budget, a successful negotiation with the GLA secured circa £9m additional grant to safeguard delivery of the final four AHP 18-23 projects.

17. Section 1 of appendix 2 provides a short status update on all projects currently on site (directly delivered) within the AHP 2016-23:

- Southall Market car park
- Package 1 (Dean Gardens car park, Chesterton and Evesham Close, Shackleton Road, Norwood Road, and Woodend Library)
- Lexden Road
- Northolt Grange
- Sussex Crescent
- Golf Links phase 3

**Southall Market car park**

18. In June 2023, developer Mackenzie Homes made the council aware of cost escalations impacting the JCT contract sum and the ability of them and their contractor to meet the net maximum commitment agreed in the Forward funding Agreement. Mackenzie has requested additional capital above the agreed contract sum to complete the development. Council officers were currently conducting due diligence regarding the request; the findings of this process would be included in a forthcoming Cabinet report, anticipated for March 2024. In the meantime, work on site has stopped until a decision is reached.

**Package 1 delivery (former Henry Construction Projects Ltd sites)**

19. The original build contract for the development of the sites forming Package 1A (Chesterton and Evesham Close, Shackleton Road, Norwood Road and Woodend Library all leased to BLRP) and Package 1B (Dean Gardens car park on land owned by the council) was approved by Cabinet in December 2021. Following a competitive tendering process, Henry Construction Projects Ltd (HCPL) was awarded a JCT 2016 Design and Build Contract for all five sites.

20. Work started on each site in January 2022 and continued through to April 2023. Issues regarding the HCPL programme were raised as early as September 2022, with progress continuing behind schedule into 2023. Consequently, practical completion dates were missed at Norwood Road and Chesterton and Evesham Close and Liquidated and Ascertained Damages (LADs) were imposed in accordance with the contract.

21. Pay Less Notices were issued for all sites in May 2023 due to the poor quality of workmanship on site and instructions requiring these to be rectified were also issued. Consequently, no payments were made to HCPL in that month.

22. HCPL went into administration on 9 June 2023, which gave grounds for BLRP and the council to terminate each of the build contracts with HCPL, following receipt of external legal advice and without any financial penalties to either BLRP or the council.



23. On termination of the build contracts, BLRP and the council took control of the sites and contracted with a trusted supplier to initially make the sites secure and subsequently to make them safe. In addition, a specialist was procured to assess the situation and review the delivery options for both BLRP and the council.

24. A detailed update on Package 1, including proposals for investigation, remediation, and enabling works and a full assessment of potential next steps will be included in a forthcoming Cabinet report, anticipated for early 2024.

### **Estate Regeneration**

25. The housing estate regeneration programme has been in operation since 2008, after the results of the Estate Review were published.

26. Most of the schemes (Dean Gardens, Green Man Lane, South Acton, and Havelock) were procured as partnership arrangements direct with registered providers (RPs) or with RPs and a developer-contractor. This was in response to the restrictions on HRA finance and prior to the Localism Act 2011. It placed responsibility for finance onto the RP who in turn retained ownership of the new housing stock but provided the council with nomination rights to the new homes at affordable rents. All these estates provide homes for shared ownership, private sale, and in some cases discount market rent.

27. Later schemes (Copley, Golf Links, and High Lane) are structured so that the affordable housing stock remains with the council. These estates also provide homes for sale, shared ownership through the council, and discount market rent. Some have private sales through Broadway Living.

28. All existing affordable housing on the estates is replaced with an up-to-date and appropriate housing mix, and rents are set at levels low enough to encourage existing tenants to stay and take up such opportunities.

29. Section 2 of appendix 2 provides a short status update on all estate regeneration projects underway:

- Copley Close
- Dean Gardens (Sherwood Close)
- High Lane
- Green Man Lane
- South Acton
- Havelock Estate

30. The council's JV partner's contractor for this project, REAL Contracting, went into receivership in October 2023. The Council is in discussion with Rydon, REAL's parent company, regarding progressing the scheme. Recent reappraisal of scheme finances has demonstrated that it is still viable. High Lane will be included alongside Southall Market car park and Package 1 in a forthcoming Cabinet report, anticipated for early 2024, which will recommend next steps to take the project forward.

### **B. Allocated projects (Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26)**

31. Since the Mayor of London announced funding allocations for the AHP 2021-26 in August 2021, worsening macroeconomic conditions have had a significant impact on the housing sector, the council's and BLRP's ability to deliver the projects receiving funding.

32. Considering these challenges, and in agreement with the government, the GLA invited investment partners, in February 2023, to make limited changes to their AHP 2021-26 programmes. The most recent approval of AHP 2021-26 allocations was in July 2023.

### **Unviable projects**

33. With a continuing downturn in the housing market, Beacon Partnership were commissioned by the council to reappraise all AHP 2021-26 projects during Q3 2023 using revised financial assumptions (including recently benchmarked cost estimates by Beacon and a borough-wide assessment of property values by Savills) and hurdles.

34. The exercise resulted in several projects being deemed currently unviable. Stanhope School, Neville Close, Shillaker Court, and Golf Links phase 4 fail to meet the required financial hurdles. Measures taken to improve viability and an assessment of the potential for partnerships and alternative delivery routes failed in creating proposals which met financial expectations.

35. Additionally, Stanhope School has received DfE funding toward the rebuild of the school, and the Secretary of State for Education is considered unlikely to approve the release of education land for housing.

36. In June 2023, the Housing Development team met with residents of Neville Close and Shillaker Court to discuss the potential redevelopment and in both cases most residents were happy with the condition of the blocks and wished to remain. Furthermore, a resident ballot is required at Neville Close due to there being general needs housing on the estate and the timescale required for this would prohibit a start on site by March 2026, even if a positive outcome were considered likely.

37. On Golf Links phase 4, a more accurate estimate of the cost of buy backs and securing vacant possession has been produced and this prevents phase 4 being considered viable on its own.

38. Considering the issues, it's recommended that replacement projects are sought for the Unviable Projects in the AHP 2021-26 programme and that alternative viable options are explored for Neville Close, Shillaker Court, and Golf Links estate prior to their inception into the gateway process.

### **Existing projects**

39. George Street car park and Mandeville Parkway are named projects with approved grant allocations within the GLA's AHP 2021-26. George Street car park requires a new budget to be established and consultants procured to undertake RIBA stages 1-3. Mandeville Parkway was originally part of the AHP 16-23 and was moved to AHP 18-26 as part of the reforecasting process at the beginning of 2023. Mandeville Parkway is designed to RIBA Stage 3 and a planning application was submitted in November 2022. It is expected to go to Planning Committee in early 2024. £1.150m has been spent from the general fund to date. A redesign is now required to accommodate a second staircase in block A and to change tenures to ensure the proposal meets the new financial hurdles.

40. Sections 2.45 and 2.46 provide greater detail on each of the Existing Projects and described the specific approvals required.

### **New Projects**

41. New projects must be proposed to the GLA through their continuous market engagement (CME) process and will be subject to negotiation. The GLA expects indicative grant allocations to be used first, before additional grant is requested (including unused/returned grant), and the intention is some of the existing grant is allocated to Perceval House car park. More detail and scheme specific decisions are described in section 2.47.

42. 57 Greenford Road is a part-built scheme with permission for 90 homes

also proposed as a New Project for substitution into the AHP 2021-26. The site is now stalled due to contractor insolvency and the council has agreed Head of Terms (HoTs) with the owner for purchase of the site and a development agreement. More detail and scheme specific decisions are described in section 2.48.

#### **Interim revised AHP 2021-26**

43. For now, a smaller but currently viable affordable homes programme is recommended including Existing Projects and New Projects. Financial details of the proposed programme are included in confidential appendix 3a and 3b: Ealing Council Development Programme Independent Financial Viability Review [and addendum].

44. Adopting the draft programme has the following implications:

- The council will seek to renegotiate current grant allocations for Existing Projects to reflect changes in tenure and economic challenges and to ensure proposals meet the required financial hurdles.
- Assumed grant rates have been used in the remodelling exercise; actual grant rates need to be negotiated with the GLA and are subject to change.
- The council will seek to reallocate unused grant and profile out the indicative allocation for New Projects under the GLA's Continuous Market Engagement (CME) process.
- Under the interim AHP 2021-26, the amount of currently unused grant that is not allocated to substitute projects is at risk of the GLA redistribution.
- However, to achieve the 4,000 GAH target and not relinquish any grant, the council intends to supplement the projects in the above table, principally through the bulk purchase programme (2.59)
- The reduced programme delivers 358 homes in total, down from 1,003 (645 homes or 64% fewer)
- The reduced programme delivers 283 affordable homes (of which 179 are GAH), down from 1,003 (557 GAH) (a reduction in affordable homes of 720 or 72%; reduction in GAH of 378 or 68%).

45. George Street car park Background and current position:

- George Street car park is a council owned surface-level car park off Uxbridge Road, which forms part of the A4020 and is a short distance from Hanwell town centre and Hanwell Station (Elizabeth Line).
- The site is 0.215 hectares and comprises circa 80 parking spaces and several mature trees. It is adjacent to Clock Tower Conservation Area. It is allocated in the new Local Plan (HA05) for residential-led development. The car park is in an established residential area with terraced Victorian cottages on one side and modern split-level flats on the other; the two 'ends' are open to Uxbridge Road and Wilmot Place. Surrounding buildings range between two and four storeys.
- A feasibility study was commissioned from architects HOK in October 2020 on the assumption the nearby Hanwell Children's Centre would also be developed for housing and the children's centre would be relocated to the car park site, with the addition of 12 new flats above. The original AHP 2021-26 to the GLA was made on this basis.
- Subsequently a decision was made by the service to retain the children's centre (with that project formally removed from the AHP 2021-26 programme in July 2023), meaning the car park site may be developed for housing only.

### **Options considered and current recommendation**

- The expectation is to bring a proposal forward for at least 12 family sized, two storey houses, reflecting the 16 small Victorian terraces along the western edge of the car park. Viability modelling has been carried out on this basis.
- It is a relatively high value area and providing intermediate tenures such as shared ownership or discount market rent supports the delivery of the more affordable London Living Rent for the remainder.
- Internal capacity studies indicate the potential for more homes and the potential to go up to three, or even four, storeys on parts of the site. The budget requested at this stage is reflective of this expectation.
- A land value has not been factored into the modelling at this stage. This will be explored further with Strategic Property and parking services at RIBA stage 1 when a more accurate picture of the number of homes achievable is known.
- It is currently assumed the project will be directly delivered by the council with homes ultimately being held by BLRP, although this will continue to be reviewed throughout the gateway process.
- Due to the small size of the site, partnerships will not be particularly attractive. However, this small site offers the potential to generate a capital return for the council. Given the restricted access making construction challenging, it may be more prudent to dispose of the site or engage an experienced SME private developer to focus on delivering homes for open market sale. Additionally, the site's manageable scale and the focus on family sized housing make it a good candidate for a Community Land Trust (CLT) approach. These options will be further considered at gateways 1 and 2, again once a more accurate picture of the number of homes achievable is known.

## **10 Housing Strategy**

### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Agreed that there should be public consultation on the draft Housing Strategy 2024-2029 (Appendix A).
- II. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Economy & Sustainability to consider the outcome of the consultation and the Equalities Analysis Assessment, make amendments and approve the final version of the Housing Strategy 2024-2029.
- III. Delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Economy & Sustainability to approve the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan.

### **REASON FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

1. The Council is proposing a new Housing Strategy to provide safe, healthy, and secure homes for all its residents. The proposed strategy aims to deliver a step change to secure more good homes for Ealing and improve the borough's existing stock, while also addressing urgent areas of improvement.

2. The Council's immediate focus is on working for those most impacted by the housing crisis. The strategy includes four strategic priority themes to provide the foundations for long-term change in the borough.

*I. Increasing the supply of genuinely affordable homes.*

*II. Quality housing: homes that are healthy, safe, and sustainable.*

*III. Supporting people to live well in the community.*

*IV. Promoting resilience, inclusion, and fighting inequality.*

These are underpinned by four commitments about the way we will work:

- *Empowering communities*
- *Being bold and innovative*
- *Delivering through partnership*
- *A polycentric approach –Ealing's seven towns*

3. Each in turn and together support the Council's three primary strategic goals:

- *Creating Good Jobs*
- *Tackling the Climate Crisis*
- *Fighting Inequality*

4. The strategy is driven by the fact that Ealing is changing, and the Council is transforming its relationship with residents to modernise local government in a way that empowers communities and liberates the workforce. Housing is one of the most fundamental determinants of quality of life and is key to the borough's journey. The proposed strategy is built around the principle that every resident should have the best possible experience of living in Ealing, with their home being the basis for a prosperous and enjoyable life in the borough.

5. The Council recognises that the housing system needs to be underpinned by fundamentally different ways of working to tackle the climate emergency and drive an improved quality of life for residents. The proposed strategy and subsequent delivery plan include immediate actions along the above four interconnected strategic priorities, which will provide the foundations for long term change in the borough. It has been produced at a challenging time of a troubled economy, highest levels of inflation in a generation, and increasing demand for the Council's statutory services, where local authority budgets are being squeezed to their limits.

6. The proposed strategy is based on evidence showing the scale of the challenge faced by Ealing. The Council aims to make a measurable difference to the lives of residents in Ealing by providing the foundation for a thriving, healthy, prosperous, and green borough.

7. The strategy is informed by conversations with residents and tenants, reflecting the findings of the broader borough engagement undertaken in 2022, which highlighted key local issues, such as a lack of social housing, family-sized homes, and energy-efficient homes. The proposed strategy aims to respond to these and other key issues throughout its implementation.

8. The Council commissioned consultants Campbell Tickell to write the new Strategy to address the borough's complex housing challenges, ensuring it aligns strategically with the Council's other strategies and plans to meet Ealing's high expectations and ambitions. Subject to approval by Cabinet, the next step will be to carry out extensive public consultation, which will enable direct feedback to be incorporated into the strategy.

9. Focusing on the key areas below, the strategy aims to create inclusive,

sustainable, and thriving communities, that complement and enhance the unique characteristics and needs of our seven towns. At its core the new strategy will provide the strategic direction to ensure that all residents of Ealing have access to safe, affordable, and suitable homes.

#### 10. What is a Housing Strategy

11. A housing strategy is a comprehensive plan developed by local authorities to address the unique housing needs of its communities. While not a statutory requirement, it is essential for effective housing management and development. It serves as a blueprint guiding the council's actions in the housing sector, aligning with broader social, economic, and environmental objectives of the borough.

#### 12. Why is a Housing Strategy Needed

- **Diverse Housing Needs:** Ealing, like many London boroughs, is characterised by a diverse population with varying housing requirements. A housing strategy helps to identify and address these different needs systematically
- **Affordability Challenges:** Affordability is a significant concern. The strategy seeks to provide solutions for more affordable housing options
- **Development:** With ongoing development, a housing strategy ensures that growth is sustainable, balancing the need for new housing with the preservation of community character and environment
- **Homelessness and Social Issues:** Addressing homelessness and providing support for vulnerable populations is a critical aspect of the strategy, reflecting the council's commitment to social responsibility
- **Economic Growth and Stability:** Good housing policy is integral to the economic vitality of the borough, attracting investment and supporting a stable, prosperous community

#### 13. Main Components of a Housing Strategy

- **Assessment of Housing Needs:** An in-depth analysis of current and future housing demands across different demographics and socio-economic groups in Ealing
- **Affordable Housing Development:** Strategies to increase the supply of affordable housing, including partnerships with developers, housing associations, and government schemes
- **Homelessness Reduction:** Initiatives and programmes aimed at reducing homelessness and rough sleeping, through prevention, support services, and provision of emergency housing
- **Quality and Sustainability:** Ensuring that new and existing housing meets high standards of quality and sustainability, contributing to the overall health and wellbeing of residents
- **Community Engagement:** Actively involving local communities in housing decisions, ensuring that the strategy reflects the needs and aspirations of Ealing's residents
- **Integrated Approach:** Collaboration with other policy areas such as education, health, and transport, to create a holistic approach to housing and community development
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establishing clear metrics and regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the strategy and adjust as needed

#### 14. Strategic Context Overview

15. In summary, a housing strategy is a vital tool in shaping the future of the

borough, ensuring that housing development is aligned with the needs of its communities and contributes positively to the overall quality of life in Ealing.

## **11 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) Update**

### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- I. Noted the current use of RIPA in relation to surveillance and acquisition and disclosure of communications data as set out in this report.
- II. Approved the RIPA policy at Appendix 1.
- III. Approved the continuing appointment of:
  - i) Helen Harris (Director of Legal and Democratic Services) as senior responsible officer (SRO) for directed surveillance, use of covert human intelligence sources, and obtaining communications data.
  - ii) The following as authorising officers for directed surveillance and the use of covert intelligence under s.28 and S.29 of RIPA 2000 (prior to judicial approval):
    - Mike Pinder (Assistant Director, Audit and Investigations)
    - Justin Morley (Head of Legal Services - Litigation)
    - Jess Murray (Assistant Director, Safer Communities and Resident Services)
- IV. Authorised the Director of Legal and Democratic Services to:
  - i) make any further amendments to the RIPA Policy which are necessary to maintain consistency with legislation, Codes of Practice, good practice.
  - ii) make any necessary changes in authorising officers, and;
  - iii) review the authority's procedures, policies and training on a quarterly basis.

### **REASON FOR DECISION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

There is a requirement in the 2018 Code of Practice for Covert Surveillance and Property Interference, that elected members are to be kept informed about the Council's use of powers under RIPA and that Cabinet approves a policy annually to ensure the policy remains fit for purpose.

## **12 Date of the next meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 7 February 2024.

Meeting commenced: 5.00 pm

Meeting finished: 5.37 pm

Signed:

Dated: Wednesday, 7 February 2024

P Mason (Chair)

