

MINUTES OF MEETING Cabinet Member Signing HELD ON Wednesday, 17th January, 2024, 11.30 – 11.40am

PRESENT:

Councillors: Peray Ahmet

ALSO ATTENDING: Jahedur Rahman, Ayshe Simsek

17. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The chair referred to the notice of filming at meetings and attendees noted this information.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

19. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21. DEPUTATIONS/ PETITIONS

There were no deputations.

22. FIRE SAFETY CONTRACT BUDGET VIREMENT

The Leader of the Council considered the report which sought approval of the proposed virements to make adequate budget provision for the expenditure required to implement the fire safety programmes outlined in the report.

The Operational Director for Housing & Building Safety provided an update on the current position of the Regulatory Notice issued to the Council in March 2023 by the Regulator for Social Housing for breach of the Home standard. It was noted that the Council had made significant progress in fulfilling the voluntary undertaking.

In March 2023 there had over 8000 homes without a valid electrical safety certificate, and this has reduced to 600 all which are due to repeated no access. These remaining properties were those that the Council were currently not able to access and were seeking legal intervention.

It was noted that once the Council have completed all of commitments to the regulator as part of the voluntary undertaking, there would be an application to the Regulator for Social Housing to remove the notice.

The proposed virement would support delivery of 1300 of the remaining 2000 overdue high-risk actions which is part of the Council's voluntary actions. This has been reduced from over 4000 high risk actions. The remainder were in several smaller programmes allocated to individual teams and being delivered through in – house or existing supply chains. The funding would enable the contracts to deliver these critical works.

Noted that the asset management strategy sets out the Councils position to get to zero non decent standard homes by 2028.

Noted a positive co regulation relationship had been developed with the Regulator for Social Housing to ensure the Council were on track in delivering the Voluntary undertaking and significant amount of work had been undertaken to complete all the recommendations from the Housing Ombudsman investigation.

RESOLVED

To authorise virements to cover the cost of capital and revenue expenditure for the financial year April 2023 to March 2024, to a total of £2,100,540.00, of which £980,320.0 is revenue and £1,120,220.00 is capital, in order to implement the fire safety programme.

Reasons for decision

In January 2023, the Council wrote to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), the body that provides independent oversight of all registered social housing providers including local authorities and Housing Associations and made a voluntary self-referral for a potential breach of the Home Standard.

The RSH assessed the evidence provided as part of the self-referral and confirmed that the Council has indeed breached two parts of the Home Standard. As a result, the RSH published a Regulatory Notice on 6th March 2023. This notice remains “live” for 12 months or until full compliance is achieved.

In July 2023, the council entered a Voluntary Undertaking with the Regulator of Social Housing with the aim of achieving full compliance and discharge of the Notice.

The Voluntary Undertaking was agreed by Cabinet in July 2023 and delegated the authority to the Chief Executive to enter a Voluntary Undertaking with the Regulator.

The Voluntary Undertaking requires Haringey Council clearing the backlog of high-risk fire actions by 31st March 2024. Failure to do so can result in direct intervention from the Regulator of Social Housing.

These works require the use of multiple external contractors due to both resource requirements and specialist certification.

As part of the programme development to deliver the works required to meet our commitments, the value has been established and is additional to previously budgeted provision within the current financial year.

Alternative options considered.

Do Nothing

Doing nothing will mean that the Council will fail to meet its commitments to the Regulator provided in the Voluntary Undertaking.

23. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date