

HOUSING COMMITTEE ADDENDUM Public Questions

4.00PM, WEDNESDAY, 22 JUNE 2022

COUNCIL CHAMBER

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ADDENDUM

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Subject: Questions
Date of Meeting: 22 June 2022
Report of: Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 To receive any questions submitted to Democratic Services.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.2 That the Committee responds to the questions.

3. Questions:

1. Daniel Harris

Question:

"June is National Pride Month and I just wanted to say I am very encouraged to see this month there will also be an LGBTQ+ Housing and Homelessness Conference being held in the city. Excellent news and good to hear officers will also be attending.

I've been very vocal in the needs locally for specific provision and am glad the conference will have a wide scope. Praise to the Switchboard for this work. I continue to get a large number of LGBTQ+ Vulnerable clients who report serious loneliness, suicidal thoughts, planning and other serious mental health issues, much of which is not being helped the longer they stay in chaotic environments.

From the equality data you capture how many people are currently placed in Homelessness Accommodation who define as LGBTQ+?"

Supplementary will be:

"Can the council please tell me the procedure for those living in homelessness accommodation, for reporting incidents of hate crimes, bullying and other forms of abuse that take place in accommodations provided by the council either in-house or contractually via private or charitable organisations?"

These can include homophobic, transphobic, disability related, racial and religious incidents for example"

2. Jim Hornsby

In 2019 the council's roofing suppliers photographed brickwork staining caused by blocked rainwater downpipes. I reported the same problem. Two years later a maintenance team successfully repaired the blockage.

The P&I team said the windows should be replaced at the same time as the roof at an extra cost of £35,000. We said the only window that needed attention was in the common ways. Later, the team dropped the requirement and the damaged window was repaired by maintenance.

My question is could the council save money by acknowledging leaseholders constructive suggestions and distinguishing between maintenance and major repairs?

3. Jackie Strube on behalf of Hanover Action

In November 2021 Hanover Action was promised a timetable early in 2022 that will enable the deliver of the delayed £5.2m warmer homes grants by the end of this 2022/23. In March you agreed we need greater urgency to put this resource to good use. As well as a climate crisis, we have a cost of living crisis especially affecting energy, so we desperately need reassurance that BHCC has the capacity to deliver this budget (first agreed to be spent in for 2020/21 2 years ago). We ask that you agree to send Hanover Action a timetable setting out actions leading to a stated anticipated launch date for the main warmer homes grant scheme within 4 weeks?

4. Jim Deans

The Kerlake report calls for an increase in social rented homes and this is supported by national and local charities.

Whilst some progress has been made recently, the BHCC Progress Update and Performance Report for 2021/2022 Q4 indicates that we are "Off track" to achieve the 800 additional council homes target.

We are aware that the Council has land available and that central government appear to be willing to grant funding, in addition to contributions from private sector developers.

We are also aware that other Local Authorities have shown that cost effective, decent, zero carbon council homes can be built to meet the increasing demand for social housing.

What is stopping our Council building at scale on council-owned land to meet the demand for social rented homes?