

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 15 October 2024

Subject: Housing and HGGT Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nigel Bedford

Recommending:

That the report of the Housing and HGGT Portfolio Holder be noted.

1. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT)

EFDC officers continue to liaise with key stakeholders across the five Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) authorities and relevant site promoters. This is undertaken in the context of wider Garden Town activities. Key updates in terms of the Garden Town are:

- The HGGT Stewardship Charter has been agreed by the Joint Committee and sets out the approach to be taken to ensure effective care and management of the new places created as a result of the Garden Town development. The Charter will become a material consideration in planning and related decisions.
- The Joint Committee has also agreed the Re-Imagining How We Can Travel Differently' - A HGGT Modal Framework to achieve HGGT modal transition objectives as agreed in the HGGT Transport Strategy. The Framework would enable the 5-Council partners to programme and plan those initiatives, working with the modal shift assumptions, in planning permissions for the HGGT sites. It would also assist in seeking funding, where required, from other public and private sources.
- Following a feasibility study for a HGGT Bike Share Scheme, a programme plan for delivering a bike share scheme in Harlow is being progressed. The bikeshare scheme aligns with HGGT's sustainable transport objectives, ensuring bikes are available for shared use by individuals at low cost.
- As part of the Sport England Place Partnership Expansion in Harlow, HGGT is contributing towards the Pedal Power initiative to purchase more bikes and GPS trackers to monitor modal share. The scheme will provide free bikes to residents in disadvantaged communities to significantly increase cycling, active travel and physical activity levels.
- Two Sustrans' employed Active Travel Officers are now in post and are working with Harlow schools, workplaces and community to promote active and sustainable travel. They are currently working with 2 workplaces and 4 primary schools, with more to come.
- The East of Harlow Masterplanning Guidance Supplementary Planning Document has now been adopted by Harlow District Council's Cabinet on 12 September 2024, which follows adoption by EFDC in May 2024.

2. Housing

Loughton Broadway at the heart of the Debden estate is about to undergo a £5.3 million refurbishment. Ground floor commercial tenants and residents of the first and second floor flats are receiving letters, outlining a series of phased works over the next 12 months. Scaffolding is expected to go up in January, keeping the festive trading period clear for local shop traders.

The contract approved by the Council includes the following:

- Roof replacements
- Window and balcony door replacements
- Front entrance door replacements
- Balcony and walkway replacement
- Concrete and brickwork repairs
- Bin store upgrades
- Redecoration of previously painted areas
- New flooring to communal stair cores
- Compliance works (fire and electrical)

Support for tenants and leaseholders has been prioritised. The Council is committed to working individually with each commercial and residential leasehold tenant to manage costs by spreading or deferring payment. Landlord costs, including those for residential properties not sold under right to buy are picked up directly by the Council.