

# Supplement for

## Housing and Homelessness Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)

On **Wednesday 6 October 2021** At **6.00 pm**

### Supplement for Agenda Item 7 - Housing and Carbon Reduction

#### Contents

7. **Housing and Carbon Reduction** 3 - 10

The Scrutiny Committee agreed earlier in the year the topics it wished to commission reports on. One of these reports was on the relationship between the Council's Housing function and Carbon Reduction. Malcolm Peek, Property Services Manager, will be presenting this report.

Also invited to this meeting to contribute are Councillor Diko Blackings, Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing, Housing Security and Housing the Homeless, Councillor Mike Rowley, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services, Stephen Clarke, Head of Housing. Stephen Gabriel, newly appointed Executive Director of Communities and People will be attending to watch.

The Panel is asked to consider the report, and **NOTE** it, having **AGREED** any necessary recommendations to Cabinet arising from it.

**\*\*NB** This report is to follow and will be issued as a supplement. **\*\***

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Oxford City Council, Town Hall, St Aldate's Oxford OX1 1BX



**To:** Housing and Homelessness Panel  
**Date:** 06 October 2021  
**Report of:** Head of Housing Services  
**Title of Report:** Housing and Carbon Reduction

| <b>Summary and recommendations</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Purpose of report:</b>   | To update the Housing and Homelessness Panel on the activity of the Council relating to carbon reduction in terms of its own housing stock |
| <b>Corporate Priority:</b>  | Pursue a zero carbon Oxford, Deliver more affordable housing   |
| <b>Policy Framework:</b>  | Corporate Plan   |
| <b>Recommendation(s): That the Panel resolves to:</b>                           |  |
| 1. Note the report having agreed any recommendations to Cabinet arising from it |  |

| <b>Appendices</b> |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Appendix 1        | Draft Campaign Plan |

## Introduction and Background

1. Oxford City Council (OCC) have set a target of getting 95% of the housing stock (currently at 7,626) to an EPC C or above by 2030.
2. The current MTFP (HRA Business Plan) includes circa £7m to fund this ambition. Prior to the rent reduction measures brought in by central government that negatively impacted borrowing OCC had made significant investments in energy efficiency measures not only to reduce carbon but also to help tackle fuel poverty objectives. This year has seen OCC planning how to significantly 'scale up' our programmes. Some works have already begun using both base budget together with an additional £382k of central Government funding following our successful bid to the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD) scheme. A further bid to the Governments Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) is currently being worked on. The HRA base budget is currently considered adequate to support the target achievement but this can only be confirmed once firm prices on contract packages are received.

3. Although OCC have already completed many improvements to our housing stock, there remains significant works to be completed to achieve the targets. Using data from the Councils Carbon Management database (CROHM), we can target those properties EPC D or below and understand what works are required to achieve the 95% EPC C target.
4. Each year the Scrutiny Committee undertakes a 'deep dive' into a topic of particular concern to its members over a course of multiple meetings through a Review Group. At its August 2021 meeting it was agreed that the topic for Review Group for the current civic year would be Child Poverty.

### Current Situation and CHROHM Data

5. The stock data indicates that the following numbers of properties currently fall within the respective EPC ratings:

| Maximum Sap Score  | Number of Properties | %             |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| <b>A (&gt;100)</b> | <b>2</b>             | <b>0.03%</b>  |
| <b>A</b>           | <b>21</b>            | <b>0.28%</b>  |
| <b>B</b>           | <b>138</b>           | <b>1.81%</b>  |
| <b>C</b>           | <b>4950</b>          | <b>64.91%</b> |
| <b>D</b>           | <b>2357</b>          | <b>30.91%</b> |
| <b>E</b>           | <b>136</b>           | <b>1.78%</b>  |
| <b>F</b>           | <b>22</b>            | <b>0.29%</b>  |
| <b>G</b>           | <b>0</b>             | <b>0.00%</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>7626</b>          | <b>100%</b>   |

6. A total of at least 2,515 properties require work in order to move them from an EPC rating of below C into C or above.
7. EPC surveys will continue to be carried out until March 2022 therefore the above numbers will change over time as data is validated and targeted carbon reduction programmes are delivered including main stream planned maintenance programmes which have energy efficiency savings e.g. roof, window and door replacement programmes.

### Projects and Works to Achieve the Targets

8. An example of some of the possible areas of works required is below, although this is not an exhaustive list.

Solar options which include dual coil cylinders and PV panels

Remedial works to seal chimneys  
Roofing works to joists, rafters and insulation  
Solid floor alterations  
LED lighting  
Wall insulations internal and external  
Draught proofing  
Hot water system alterations  
Controls and automation of systems  
Component elements (windows, doors)

### **LAD and SHDF Projects**

9. OCC has successfully applied for LAD1b funding and is in the process of improving 240 properties. As part of this programme 90 of the 240 will have a whole house assessment which is part of the PAS2035 approach dictated by BEIS to receive funding. The whole house assessment will produce a medium and long term plan for each property and using this information we can get them to an EPC C in the medium term and increase our knowledge of the practical implications of doing further works whilst the property is occupied and indeed what is practical to achieve overall. Improvements will need to be sequenced in the correct order and linked with cyclical maintenance programmes. Renewable energy and other insulation measures can also be considered as part of a whole house retrofit and planned when a property becomes empty to avoid disruption.
10. OCC is currently producing a bid to the SHDF to implement energy efficiency improvements in voids working with Oxford Direct Services. ODS are in the process of getting their PAS2030 accreditation so they can implement improvements as part of the PAS2035 whole house retrofit. The target is 125 Void properties currently at EPC D or below to be brought up to at least an EPC C. This will target fabric first and to get our properties heat pump ready. It will also need to look at ventilation as part of the works.

### **Resources and Draft Timeline**

11. These programmes will need additional staffing resource to deliver namely:

12. External expert support:

An external carbon and sustainability consultancy will need to be procured and is required to specify, price and validate the works and then prepare both works and tender packages acting as Contract Administrator, Quality auditing, QS and commercial functions to support the packages of works.

13. Internal client team:

Our own internal property services team will require a suitable team with the relevant skills to advise on technical aspects and client the works to ensure maximum benefits and value can be achieved. This team would oversee the

programmes, assist in the development of the packages needed, bring together the Employers requirements on new build and Schedules and product specifications with ODS, seek and secure external funding opportunities and provide the reporting function required to both Council and Central Government on global carbon targets and performance.

14. Resident Engagement and Communication:

In addition we will need to increase our resource with regard to resident engagement and support and we are currently starting to plan a communications campaign to secure maximum buy in and take up. (See Appendix 1 for Draft Campaign Plan)

15. Additional resources can be contained within the current budget allocation

16. Resourcing Energy works is currently very challenging as many of the social housing providers including local authorities are looking to implement carbon projects and the demand and cost for this skill sector is currently very high. Contractors in the market are in demand and OCC will, like many organisations face challenges in the supply chain. The advantage we hope to achieve with ODS becoming qualified and approved with PAS2030 accreditation to undertake this work will enable a significant amount of the work to be carried out in house or managed via specialist contractors where necessary.

17. Below is an initial indicative draft programme over the target period. It is possible that work packages may be achievable earlier and the initial analysis and creation of the packages will determine the overall programme. This will be identifiable in year two onwards and the programme can be fully confirmed.

| Year No | Calendar Year | Activities   |
|---------|---------------|--|
| 1       | 2021 - 2022   | Procure Consultant – Prepare specifications and packages for ODS – Tenders<br>Continue to work with ODS on their PAS2030 and MCS accreditation<br>ODS and OCC to ensure the management and staff are in place to manage the EPC C 2030 works.<br>Bid for SHDF to partially fund the Voids programme<br>Implement LAD1b improvements<br>Communication Campaign begins |
| 2       | 2022 - 2023   | Resident Engagement and communications campaign continuation<br>Procurement of works packages<br>Plan packages for latter part of 2022/2023, 2023/2024 & 2024/2025 include validation of works, final costing, planning applications, specifications. Begin work onsite packages for 2022/2023   |

|   |             |  |
|---|-------------|--|
| 3 | 2023 – 2024 | Start on site for 23/24 work packages – Finalise design & package for 2025/26 inc validation, specification, planning applications & S20 process |
| 4 | 2024 – 2025 | Start on site for 24/25 work packages – Finalise design & package for 2027/28 inc validation, specification, planning applications & S20 process |
| 5 | 2025 - 2026 | Start on site for 25/26 work packages – Finalise design & package for 2028/29 inc validation, specification, planning applications & S20 process |
| 6 | 2026 - 2027 | Start on site for 26/27 work packages – Finalise design & package for 2029/30 inc validation, specification, planning applications & S20 process |
| 7 | 2027 – 2028 | Start on site for 27/28 work packages  |
| 8 | 2028 – 2029 | Start on site for 28/29 work packages  |
| 9 | 2029 - 2030 | Start on site for 29/30 work packages  |

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
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## Campaign plan: Council homes decarbonisation

### Background

Oxford City Council has set a target of getting 95% of its council housing stock (currently 7,626 homes) to an EPC rating of C or above by 2030.

The HRA business plan has set aside £7m over the next four years, and the City Council has won further Government funding, to help achieve this ambition.

The City Council estimates that there are at least 2,515 homes that require work in order to move them up to an EPC rating of C or above.

| EPC      | Number of homes | %      |
|----------|-----------------|--------|
| A (>100) | 2               | 0.03%  |
| A        | 21              | 0.28%  |
| B        | 138             | 1.81%  |
| C        | 4,950           | 64.91% |
| D        | 2,357           | 30.91% |
| E        | 136             | 1.78%  |
| F        | 22              | 0.29%  |
| G        | 0               | 0.00%  |
| Total    | 7,626           | 100%   |

The upgrades – including loft and wall insulation, air-source heat pumps, LED lighting, new windows and doors, and solar panels – are free for tenants, but the City Council cannot carry out the work without tenants' permission.

The campaign therefore aims to encourage tenants of the 2,515 homes to come forwards and give permission for the City Council to carry out the upgrades.

Alongside improving carbon emissions, the work will help keep tenants' homes warm this winter and save them money on their bills – which is particularly important at the moment with rising energy prices in the UK.

The campaign will be broken down into phases over a three-month period:

- Phase one: Use advertising and editorial to encourage tenants to look out for a letter from the council
- Phase two: Send a letter to all 2,515 homes
- Phase three: Send a letter to all homes that have not yet signed up
- Phase four: Use colleagues in housing (Tenant Involvement, Tenancy Management Officers, etc) to knock on the doors of anyone who has not yet signed up

The aim will be to encourage people to submit their details – email address, phone number and home address – and permission to upgrade their homes via a web-based form.

The City Council will then be able to use the database as a longlist of interested tenants as it upgrades homes over the next four years.

### Key messages

- Save money on your bills, keep your home warm and lower your carbon emissions – sign up for a free upgrade to your home from Oxford City Council
- If you are eligible, we will send you a letter in the coming days. Look out for a letter from Oxford City Council

## Audiences

- Oxford City Council tenants

## Campaign channels

- Facebook advertising
- Posters in shared accommodation / community noticeboards
- Local media
- Local councillors
- Letter to tenants (distributed by Tenant Involvement)
- Tenant Involvement door knocking
- IVR message when tenants phone the council

## Campaign activity

| Date    | Activity   | Call to action      | Lead               |
|---------|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| Week -4 | Design posters/leaflet                                 |                     | Communications     |
| Week -1 | Write press release                                    |                     | Communications     |
|         | Brief councillors                                      | Share info          | Tenant Involvement |
| Week 0  | Facebook advertising                                   | Look out for letter | Communications     |
|         | Press release  | Look out for letter | Communications     |
|         | Posters – community notice board, shared accommodation | Look out for letter | Tenant Involvement |
|         | IVR message  | Look out for letter | Communications     |
| Week 2  | Send letter to all 2,515 homes (via Royal Mail)        | Sign up             | Communications     |
| Week 4  | Facebook advertising                                   | Look out for letter | Communications     |
|         | Press release  | Look out for letter | Communications     |
| Week 6  | Send letter to remaining homes (via Royal Mail)        | Sign up             | Communications     |
| Week 8  | Visits remaining homes – with leaflets                 | Sign up             | Tenant Involvement |

## Costs

|                                |         |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| Facebook advertising           | £5,000  |
| Poster/leaflet design          | £1,000  |
| Poster/leaflet/letter printing | £2,000  |
| Sending letters via Royal Mail | £2,000  |
|                                | £10,000 |

These are estimated costs.

Funding for the campaign will come from the £7m budget in the HRA account.

## Measuring success

The following metrics will be used to measure the success of the campaign:

- Number of tenants signed up