

Classification: Public

Key Decision: No

Gravesham Borough Council

Report to: Housing Services Cabinet Committee
Date: 21 March 2023
Reporting officer: Daniel Killian, Director (Housing)
Subject: Housing Directorate – Changes and Improvements 2019-23

Purpose and summary of report:

In 2019, the Council adopted an ambitious Corporate Plan following a period of consultation with residents. Within that plan, there were specific commitments in relation to Housing in the Borough and this report seeks to outline to Members a summary of progress made in relation to those commitments, and how service changes and improvements have had an impact on both the Council and the community it serves.

Recommendations:

1. For information only.

Key Implications:	
Item	Implications
Legal	n/a – this report is for information only
Finance and Value for Money	n/a – this report is for information only
Corporate Plan	n/a – this report is for information only
Climate Change	n/a – this report is for information only

1. Housing & the Corporate Plan 2019-23

- 1.1 In October 2019 a new Corporate Plan covering the 2019-23 period was adopted with the ambition of: *Delivering a Gravesham to be proud of*. The plan was based on a number of sources; consultation with our community, statistics outlining community needs in the borough and the manifesto pledges of the elected administration.
- 1.2 The plan focussed on three key objectives:

- 1.2.1 **People** - a proud community; where residents can call a safe, clean and attractive borough their home.
 - 1.2.2 **Place**: a dynamic borough; defined by a vibrant and productive local economy taking advantage of the growth in the area, supported by its strong and active community.
 - 1.2.3 **Progress**: an entrepreneurial authority; commercial in outlook and committed to continuous service improvement, underpinned by a skilled workforce and strong governance environment
- 1.3 Linked to each of the three objectives were a number of commitments to ensure delivery of the objectives, and for Housing in particular, the following commitments were made:
- 1.3.1 **Deliver an ambitious and diverse programme of building** – increase the supply of market and affordable housing.
 - 1.3.2 **Enforce a high quality of private housing** – work with landlords to tackle property standards, empty homes and homes in multiple occupation.
 - 1.3.3 **Provide a proactive, supportive and financially efficient housing service** – high-quality tenant management experienced through a service making full use of its assets.
 - 1.3.4 **Safeguard residents** – put in place a package of housing measures and creative interventions that support the most vulnerable people.
 - 1.3.5 **Deliver a skilled in-house building management team** – progressively improve the standard and efficiency of local housing.
 - 1.3.6 **Improve resident wellbeing** – provide and preserve a suite of high-quality play areas and promote opportunities for active lives.

2. Housing Directorate & Change

- 2.1 Following the adoption of the Corporate Plan 2019-23, it was recognised that the Housing Service was dispersed across the authority, with two senior officers responsible for different parts of the service within two different Directorates. The dispersal of the different service areas was seen as a barrier to making progress and achieving the commitments made within the Corporate Plan and therefore, this led to an initial restructuring of the senior management in May 2020, and then ultimately, a Housing Directorate being formed in April 2021 with responsibility for all housing functions.
- 2.2 The initial restructure and subsequent forming of a Housing Directorate was used as an opportunity to review all service areas, with a view to making improvements and ultimately, setting each department up to deliver the services needed. The Corporate Plan was used as a benchmark for service delivery expectations, and therefore, each service area was designed with the delivery of the plan in mind.
- 2.3 Working with officers and internal and external stakeholders, an improvement plan for Housing was created setting out what actions need to be completed to achieve the ambitious Corporate Plan 2019-23 objectives.
- 2.4 A significant amount of change has taken place over the last four years, ranging from simple process changes to day-to-day work to consulting on, and implementing staffing restructures and increasing the workforce to deliver on our

commitments and responsibilities as a social housing landlord and local authority. Whilst not an exhaustive list of changes and improvements within the Housing Directorate, Appendix 1 summarises some of the changes and projects that have progressed over the last four years to help achieve the aims of the Corporate Plan 2019-23.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 It is important to reflect on how a service has progressed over a period of time, not only to recognise achievements but also to plan for the future and to ensure service delivery remains relevant to those it is designed for. The sheer volume of change experienced within the Housing Directorate over the last four years was required for several reasons, but mainly because each service area had not been given the focus or attention it required. The creation of the Housing Directorate and the new Housing Management Team created during the corporate plan period has very much put a spotlight on the Housing Directorate, and that will drive forward continuous improvement for tenants, residents, and our customers.

4. Appendices

- 4.1 The following documents are to be published with the report:
- 4.1.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of change and improvement – Housing Directorate 2019-23.

5. Background Documents

- 5.1 There are no background documents.

Lead Officer: Daniel Killian, Director (Housing)

Email: daniel.killian@gravesham.gov.uk

Secondary Implications	
Risk Assessment	n/a – this report is for information only.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	<i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i>
	<p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of personal data or special category data or criminal offence data? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner’s Office website via the above links. No</p>
	<p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? n/a</p> <p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at gdpr@medway.gov.uk. n/a</p>
Equality Impact Assessment	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. n/a</p>
	<p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. n/a</p>
	<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i>
Crime and Disorder	n/a – this report is for information only.
Digital and website implications	n/a – this report is for information only.
Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults	n/a – this report is for information only.