



Cabinet Member Report for Housing

Northampton Borough Council

28th April 2014

New Council Homes

On 12th March Cabinet agreed the decision to build 100 new council homes at Dallington Grange. The development will be the largest social housing development in Northampton for more than 20 years. This major development will be built on land owned by the Borough Council and will be financed by selling a parcel of land in the area or with money received from ex-council houses sold under 'right to buy' legislation. This Administration is committed to increasing the number of council houses available for rent, and I am pleased that we are able to provide 100 new homes for families in our town.

ALMO

The work programme for the creation of the ALMO is progressing well. The ALMO will have a new Shadow Board which will make decisions relating to the set-up of the ALMO, which is due to launch on 5th January 2015. Cabinet has agreed that the ALMO Board structure will comprise of five tenants, five council nominees, four independent members and two employees.

HMOs

On 9th April Cabinet agreed to introduce additional licensing for Houses of Multiple Occupation in Abington, Castle, Kingsley, Delapre & Briar Hill Kingsthorpe, Obelisk, part of Phippsville, Semilong, Spring Park, part of St James, St David's, Sunnyside and Trinity. The additional licensing has been introduced to help protect tenants from unscrupulous landlords by bringing smaller properties into the licensing regime that are currently not included. Cabinet has also agreed to consult on the possibility of extending the scheme to other parts of the town. This Administration supports and welcomes responsible landlords in our town, and is committed to protecting tenants from landlords who fall below the standards expected.

Decent Homes

The Decent Homes Programme has now entered the final year of funding and we have four contractors delivering approximately £1m of work every week. With such a large programme it is inevitable that some problems will arise but the vast majority of customers are happy with the end product, and we are working with both tenants and the contractors to ensure they meet their targets.

Fire Safety

We have been advised by the Fire Service that the Borough Council is one of the top performing landlords in the county. We have developed a strong working relationship with the Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service and have been commended for the work carried out in ensuring that all our dwellings with communal areas comply with fire regulations.

Welfare Reform

As a result of the changes in Housing Benefit for under occupiers, we have seen a reduction in demand for family homes, and are now implementing a low demand strategy in some areas. This year we will focus on preventing more homelessness to help at risk families and reduce temporary accommodation costs to the tax payer.

Councillor Mary Markham
Cabinet Member for Housing