



## **Councillor Richard Musgrave, Deputy Leader of the Council**

### **Report to Council on 21 March 2023**

As this will be my last report to Full Council, I would like to place on record my thanks to the Council's Officers for their support and guidance over my time as a Councillor, and to wish them well for the future. I would also like to thank my fellow Councillors for their service; I am proud of what we have achieved on behalf of others. It has been an honour and privilege to serve as the Councillor for Appleton Roebuck and Church Fenton at Selby District Council.

#### **Housing Repairs**

I am pleased with the work that has been undertaken address the backlog of repairs created during the various Covid lockdowns and subsequent periods of operating restrictions, with 99.98% of the original backlog having now been cleared. This was particularly challenging given the limitations of the current repairs management system which made it difficult work to accurately assess the work orders. The new housing management system is now being implemented which should improve the team's ability to effectively undertake all repairs to our housing stock.

#### **Voids**

The number of voids being received was another challenge as the Council continued to see high levels within the refurbishment category (75% of voids) which significantly impacted on our ability to bring these properties back in to use in a timely manner.

The problem was exacerbated by the increase in the cost of undertaking repairs. I was grateful for the support of Council in January when I brought a report setting out the financial challenges and seeking additional funding to address the financial pressures. Officers are working to clarify the valuations to confirm spend on these properties to facilitate an expedition of these works.

We are continuing to work closely with our external contractor partners to support our internal delivery of these works, as well as sub-contracting out delivery of the larger void properties through our recently created framework.

#### **Planned Maintenance**

As outlined in previous reports, our primary focus for this year's programme was around compliance related works to ensure we can deliver a 'safe and legal' portfolio on day one of the new council.

To this end, we issued stock condition surveys and electrical tests to our contractor who is making good progress completing them.

In addition, the Council invested £1.144m to upgrade the thermal efficiency of 29 prefabricated concrete panel bungalows in Sherburn. Work progressed well and was completed in January.

### Housing Standards in Rented Properties.

Following the tragedy of Awaab Ishak, officers have continued to work in collaboration with colleagues across the North Yorkshire Councils to respond to requests for information from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and from the Regulator of Social Housing regarding the processes in place to manage these issues and how the reduction of this risk can be better prioritised to ensure a decent standard of properties for tenants in all sectors in the District. The stock condition survey will provide invaluable information to identify any potential issues of damp and disrepair.

### Expenditure of Section 106 monies

One of the most important challenges for the housing officers was to ensure that the substantial section 106 monies are expended to provide affordable homes in the Selby District. The Selby District Housing Trust has received consent from the Charities Commission to allow the Council to purchase their properties to ensure that they continue to be available for social housing. This will increase the Councils stock by 34 properties.

In addition, the Council has exchanged contracts with Persimmon Homes to secure the purchase of 22 affordable homes at the Staynor Hall development.

Officers are continuing to work on other Options for the remaining balance of the S106 monies so that this programme is handed over to the new Council with a clear plan to use the rest of this time limited funding.

Latest figures show that of the original section 106 monies on 31.3.22 of £7,735.858 we have now committed a total spend of £6,003,794. This leaves a balance to be spent of £1,732,064. Officers continue to work to identify opportunities to use these funds to provide more affordable housing in the Selby District as required by the terms of the agreements.

**Councillor Musgrave, Deputy Leader and Lead Executive Member for Housing**