

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 9 NOVEMBER 2020**

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>
1.	Cllr Scutt– Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Housing and Communities Committee	<b>Item 2.1 £100 million Affordable Housing Programme Update</b> Para 3.1 – Is the Committee able to advise as to the reason for the hold-up referred to, and can the Committee advise on the impact this is having and will have on the progress of the Programme?
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Cllr Chris Boden – Chairman of Housing and Communities Committee	Cllr Scutt – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	BEIS have advised that the reason for the delay following the review meeting held on 8 <sup>th</sup> September 2020 is that ministers and officials are heavily focussed on the covid situation and more recently local and national lockdown arrangements. They acknowledge that this is frustrating.
<b>No.</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>
2.	Cllr Scutt– Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Housing and Communities Committee	<b>Item 2.1 £100 million Affordable Housing Programme Update</b> Para 3.2 – Is the Committee able to advise on the reason for deferral of the £15m from 2019 and the hold up in the £30m for this year 2020 and the impact this is having and will have on the progress of the Programme In relation to both matters, the lack of £45m for progressing the Programme would appear to be not insubstantial and a question arising is whether this will result in fewer than the planned 2000 houses being built within the planned period that is to 31 March 2022?
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Cllr Chris Boden – Chairman of Housing and Communities Committee	Cllr Scutt – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	The deferral of £15m from financial year 2019/20 has not been specifically reasoned to us, but our interpretation is that BEIS wanted to see more progress of starts on site in order to recommend the release of monies to the minister. The £30m of monies for financial year 2020/21 is pending the outcome of the review held on 8 <sup>th</sup> September 20. The amount of money outstanding is substantial and grant papers being recommended to the committee on 9 <sup>th</sup> November are being

			requested for approval subject to sufficient funding being received from BEIS. We have received no indication from MHCLG that we will not receive the outstanding £45m of funding for the remainder of our housing programme.
<b>No.</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>
3.	Cllr Scutt– Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Housing and Communities Committee	<b>Item 2.1 £100 million Affordable Housing Programme Update</b> Para 5.1 – of 668 housing units begun, only 237 have been completed. What assurances have been given, reliably, as to the completion date of the remaining units of the 668?
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Cllr Chris Boden – Chairman of Housing and Communities Committee	Cllr Scutt – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Of the units started on site the grant money is generally paid in phased payments as the houses are progressed, including a final payment only upon practical completion. Projected completion dates are shown in Appendix 1 to the report.
<b>No.</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>
4.	Cllr Scutt– Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Housing and Communities Committee	<b>Item 2.1 £100 million Affordable Housing Programme Update</b> When it is said that the Combined Authority is ‘chasing those schemes and providers to deal with preconstruction issues as quickly as possible, to commence starts on site’ what response has been received to date, if any, and has any assurance been given by those providers as to their start and projected finish date/s?
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Cllr Chris Boden – Chairman of Housing and Communities Committee	Cllr Scutt – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Responses have been received, most are updating us on approvals or technical issues. We are going to continue to communicate with providers to monitor and assess the position of when starts on site will take place. If there is a position where a start on site is delayed and will not be anticipated to take place before 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022, the scheme will be withdrawn from the programme.
<b>No.</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>
5.	Cllr Scutt– Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and	Housing and Communities Committee	<b>Item 2.1 £100 million Affordable Housing Programme Update</b> Para 5.8 – what is meant by completion ‘in some form’? That is, it is difficult to comprehend the nature of completion that is simply ‘in some form’. It is understood

	Communities		that 'completion' would indicate completion as in 'finished'.
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Cllr Chris Boden – Chairman of Housing and Communities Committee	Cllr Scutt – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	This is where some units in a scheme may have completed, but not all. Scheme delivery and construction programmes are normally phased, or in some cases approved schemes involve multiple sites.
<b>No.</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>
<b>6.</b>	Cllr Scutt– Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Housing and Communities Committee	<b>Item 2.1 £100 million Affordable Housing Programme Update</b> Para 5.11 – reference is made to the possibility of a further lockdown period under Covid 19 – a lockdown was able to be anticipated taking into account the history of Covid 19. What steps have been taken to factor in this lockdown and what impact will it have on the programme as a whole, including the matters referred to in relation to paras 5.1, 5.8?
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Cllr Chris Boden – Chairman of Housing and Communities Committee	Cllr Scutt – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Current lockdowns are not meant to be affecting the construction industry, although there maybe some risk to supply chains, especially if the nature of any future lockdowns becomes more comprehensive.
<b>No.</b>	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>
<b>7.</b>	Cllr Scutt– Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Housing and Communities	Housing and Communities Committee	<b>Item 2.1 £100 million Affordable Housing Programme Update</b> Para 5.21 - What concrete steps are being taken to resolve the outstanding release of the £45m of funding? and How realistic is it to assume that the £45m will be provided: (a)To enable completion of the programme by the expiry date whether that date is 31 March 2022 or if this is not the expiry date, the set expiry date; (b)At all?
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	Cllr Chris Boden – Chairman of Housing	Cllr Scutt – Overview and Scrutiny Lead for	As advised in responses to earlier questions we have been in regular communication with BEIS, both at Officer level, Chief Executive level and the

	and Communities Committee	Housing and Communities	Mayor is now raising this at Ministerial level. We have received no indication from MHCLG that we will not receive the outstanding £45m of funding for the remainder of our housing programme. If the expiry date is determined to be 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021 rather than 2022, then we will not achieve 2,000 units started on site.
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