

<b>Item No.</b> 6.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 4 March 2024	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Overview & Scrutiny Committee
<b>Report title:</b>		Updating the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Canada Estate - 2017/18 QHIP Works	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		Rotherhithe	
<b>From:</b>		Desmond Vincent AD Building Safety and Major Works	

## RECOMMENDATION

This paper recommends:

1. That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee note the update and the project plan for next steps

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. This paper provides a progress update on the commitments made by the Council on the key issues discussed at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on the 29 November 2023. The paper further provides a project plan (see Appendix A) for the deliverables to resolve the issues discussed.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### Staffing - New Task and Finishing Team (TFT)

3. The Council gave a commitment to set up a new delivery team of qualified individuals, who could review and deliver the remediation elements and contractual engagement with stakeholders.
4. The first phase was to obtain approval for the TFT in line with the Council's governance process. This approval was given in February 2024.
5. The next phase was to undertake a recruitment process to appoint an experienced lead officer, with extensive public sector experience and relevant professional qualifications to lead the TFT. The recruitment and appointment are now complete and the officer is now in post.
6. The Council has now commenced the recruitment to the remaining posts in the TFT. The recruitment exercise is anticipated to be completed by April 2024. Currently, the TFT has a Chartered Surveyor supporting the lead officer as Discovery Lead.

## **Review of Scope (Additional Works)**

### **Access onto Balcony**

7. It was raised that the re-design of the new windows installed in the two tower blocks (Columbia Point and Regina Point) now prevents safe access to the balconies.
8. An independent consultant has been commissioned to undertake an options appraisal on the validity of installing doors in the high-rise windows to access the balconies. This will include implications for planning, building control, safety, feasibility (and cost) of redirecting services, etc. It will also include assessing alternative options (like-for-like, sliding doors, etc).
9. Appointment of the independent consultant is ongoing, and further details are provided in the project plan.

### **Signage**

10. There has been some confusion around the information contained in the Fire Action Notices installed in the blocks of flats. It has been confirmed that the existing signage is compliant.
11. However, the Fire and Building Safety Team is undertaking a wider review of fire signage across the Borough to identify any areas of improvement that are required. This review will be completed by the end of March 2024.

### **Insulation**

12. There is a recurring query from the TRA about the condition of and breaches to the cavity wall insulation. Further intrusive surveys conducted during the progress of the works on the cavity walls confirmed that the insulation remained intact and fit-for-purpose. This will be discussed further with the TRA.

### **Type 4 Surveys**

13. Type 4 surveys have been submitted at Regina Point and Columbia Point. The survey reports are being reviewed to ensure compliance with the Council's Type 4 specifications and recommendations will be shared with TRA.

### **Communication/Consultation**

14. In line with the Council's commitment to continue to engage positively with, and get support from relevant stakeholders, we have scheduled meetings with relevant stakeholders, including residents and ward councillors.
15. A meeting of the Canada Estate TRA was held on the 6 December 2023, where a discussion took place between officers and residents regarding outstanding issues with the Major Work's project and proposals to deal with

the concerns of residents following the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the 29 November 2023.

16. A meeting with the Chair and other representatives of the Canada Estate TRA is scheduled for the 29 February 2024. This will facilitate an initial discussion on the programme contained in this report and the terms of reference for the independent review of the Major Works project. It is expected that a date for the full meeting of the Canada Estate TRA to consult on the Council's proposals will be agreed and, will be held by mid-March.
17. The Council is writing to all residents of the Canada Estate to advise them of its proposals to deal with the concerns raised by residents following the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2023. An estate-wide residents consultation meeting will subsequently be arranged to ensure that as many residents as possible on the Canada Estate are able to participate in the discussions.

### **Audit**

18. The proposed audit of the project will be undertaken in two phases, as described below

#### **Audit 1 – Canada Estate as part of the QHIP (External Review)**

19. The TRA on the Canada Estate has been consulted on the draft brief/terms of reference for the procurement of a multi-disciplinary consultancy to undertake an independent audit/review of:
  - The works carried out at the Canada Estate as part of the QHIP.
  - The way in which the contract for these works was managed and delivered.
20. Once the brief/terms of reference have been agreed upon with relevant stakeholders (including resident representatives), we will procure a suitable consultant.
21. The purpose of this independent audit/review is to identify what went wrong in the project delivery, any lessons that need to be learned and recommendations for improvement. It is expected that this work will be completed by mid-June 2024.
22. As previously agreed, it is intended that the resident's representatives will be involved in the process for the appointment of the independent consultant. This will be discussed with the TRA in order to agree on the extent and scope of their involvement.

#### **Audit 2 – Major Works Team (Internal and External Review)**

23. The council's internal auditor has been commissioned to look at the case, and the council's external auditor will then review the case also. The audits

will cover the full range of concerns raised on the finances, and all aspects of the governance around that. There will be a quantity surveyor review, and that will inform final payments or recovery of funds. If any concerns regarding fraud emerge then fraud investigations will also be undertaken.

### **Repairs and Other Estate Related Matters**

24. The Council is taking a more collaborative and holistic approach to repairs and other estate-related matters by bringing together relevant services within the Council, including Repairs and Environmental Services, to deal with such issues as mice infestation and damp and mould as raised by residents. This is expected to be dealt with in about 4-6 weeks.

## Appendix A – Programme for Canada Estate

Agreed Next Steps	Actions	Update	Forecast Completion
Overall Programme	Recommendations from Audit 1	Gateway 1 approved. Gateway 2 March 2024 and Audit 1 to be completed within 4 months	July - August 2024
	Delivery Programme	Will be informed, to some extent, by the independent audit of the Canada Estates project.	TBC post-audit
	Recommendation from Audit 2	Will be informed, to some extent, by the proposed audits	TBC post-audit
<b>New Task and Finishing Team(TFT)</b>	Seek approval for TFT	Approval received - <b>Completed</b>	January 2024
	Appoint Lead of TFT	Appointment of Lead to TFT - <b>Completed</b>	January 2024
	Recruit to the team	Commenced – recruit to three new posts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Surveyor (TFT)</li> <li>• Clerk of Works (TFT)</li> <li>• Customer Relations Officer (TFT)</li> </ul>	April 2024
<b>Review of scope (Additional Works)</b>	Access onto Balcony	Consultant instructed to carry out feasibility study and provide options.	March 2024
	Signage	Existing signage is compliant however, the Fire and Building Safety Team is undertaking a wider review of fire signage across the Borough to identify any areas of improvement that are required. This review is due to be completed by the end of March this year.	March 2024
	Insulation	Further intrusive surveys were conducted on the cavity walls, which confirmed that the insulation was intact, dry and, was not causing damp issues. This information has been shared and discussed with the TRA. – Completed	2023
<b>Briefing (Consultation) with Members and Officers</b>	Review of approach and timetable with Members	Officer briefing to councillors and Lead Member on approach – seeking views on engagement with residents in a considered way.	20 - 23 February

	Consultation with Officers	Once the recruitment is complete to the TFT	April 2024
<b>Consultation with the TRA, TMO and Leaseholders</b>	Consultation Briefing with Residents	Having obtained approvals for the TFT and the independent audit of the major works projects, we will be arranging a consultation event with the TRA and other residents.	March 2024
	Consultation with the Leaseholders	As mentioned above, with consultation with residents	March 2024
<b>Update Scrutiny</b>	Pre-scrutiny briefing	Meeting with Local Ward Councillors	20 February 2024
	Attend Scrutiny Meeting	Update at Overview of Scrutiny	4 March 2024
<b>First audit of Major Works</b>	Going out to tender for an independent consultant.	A draft brief has been prepared and needs to be consulted with TRA for their input.	March 2024 (2 weeks)
	Tender review with residents (Quality)	This is a joint approach with residents on quality of submission for appointment.	March 2024
	Appointment	Appointment - including lead in time to commence works.	April-May 2024
<b>Recommendations and Programme</b>	Recommendation	Review and agree programme following completion of the audit. Note that the procurement process for the audit is progressing well.	July-August 2024
	Council's Compensation Review	Will be informed by the independent audit of the Canada Estate project.	July 2024
	Consultation with Residents	This will follow on from the completion of the audit.	July 2024
	Formal Consultation	This will follow on from the completion of the audit.	August 2024
	Develop and agree a programme	This will follow on from the completion of the audit.	September 2024
<b>Second Audit of the Major Works team</b>	Audit to be delivered by Internal Auditors	This will be done after the first audit has been completed and will review Major Work's projects.	August 2024

	and External Auditors		
<b>Update Scrutiny</b>	Pre Scrutiny	This will follow on from the completion of the second audit.	TBC post-audit
	Attend Overview of Scrutiny Meeting	This will follow on from the completion of the second audit.	TBC – post audit
	Develop and agree a programme	Based upon recommendations and agreed approach by Councillors.	TBC – post audit