

Item No. 5.	Classification: Open	Date: 4 March 2024	Meeting Name: Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Report title:		Updating the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Devon Mansions - 2017/18 QHIP Works	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		London Bridge and West Bermondsey	
From:		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.

Communication/Consultation

7. 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 councillors.
8. The Assistant Director of Building Safety and Major Works, and the Lead of the TFT, have met with local ward councillors to provide an update on the project plan and elicit their feedback on the plan for consideration. This is an ongoing engagement.
9. A meeting with representatives from the Resident Project Group (RPG) is scheduled for officers and residents regarding 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.

Audit

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

Audit 1 – Devon Mansions as part of the QHIP

11. The RPG on the Devon Mansions 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 Devon Mansions as part of the QHIP.
 - The way in which the contract for these works was managed and delivered.
12. Once the brief/terms of reference have been agreed upon with relevant stakeholders (including resident representatives), we will procure a suitable consultant.
13. 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.
14. As previously agreed it is intended that resident's representatives will be involved in process for the appointment of the independent consultant. This will be discussed with the RPG in order to agree the extent and scope of their involvement.

Audit 2 – Major Works Team

15. 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.

Appendix A – Programme for Devon Mansions

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 Devon Mansions project.	TBC post-audit
	Recommendation from Audit 2	Will be informed, to some extent, by the proposed audits	TBC post-audit
New Task and Finishing Team(TFT)	Seek approval for TFT	Approval received - Completed	February 2024
	Appoint Lead of TFT	Appointment of Lead to TFT - Completed	January 2024
	Recruit to the team	Commenced – recruit to three new posts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Surveyor (TFT) • Clerk of Works (TFT) • Customer Relations Officer (TFT) 	April 2024
Briefing (Consultation) with Members and Officers	Review of approach and timetable with Members	Officer briefing to councillors and Lead Member on approach – seeking direction on engagement with residents in a considered way.	20 - 23 February 2024
	Consultation with Officers	Once the recruitment is complete to the TFT, we will develop a timetable for the internal review process, including consultation with officers.	April 2024
Consultation with the TRA, TMO and Leaseholders	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

Update Scrutiny	Pre-scrutiny briefing	Meeting with Local Ward Councillors.	26 February 2024
	Attend Scrutiny Meeting	Update at Overview of Scrutiny.	4 March 2024
First audit of Major Works	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
Recommendations and Programme	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 Devon Mansions 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.	TBC post-audit
Second Audit of the Major Works team	Audit to be delivered by Internal Auditors and External Auditors	This will be done after the first audit has been completed and will review Major Work's projects.	August 2024
Update Scrutiny	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