

Questioner	Question	Answer
<p>Councillor Edwards</p>	<p>Harrow Lane Playing Field</p> <p>The above site situated in Ashdown Ward has been marketed over several years. The Council was advised in 2021 that Ilke Homes had been selected as the preferred contractor to build 140 “affordable” homes with a mixture of social rented and shared ownership housing to a zero carbon standard.</p> <p>My question is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has the Harrow Lane site been sold</li> <li>2. If yes what was the date of the sale</li> <li>3. What was the net sale price after costs.</li> </ol>	<p>Councillor Barnett:</p> <p>Contracts were exchanged for the sale of the Harrow Lane site on 9 September 2021 with completion subject to a registered provider condition. Completion has not yet taken place so I am unable to confirm the net sale price after costs.</p>
<p>Councillor Patmore</p>	<p>York Buildings</p> <p>The above building which is owned by HBC had been empty and abandoned for many years.</p> <p>The Council agreed to convert the upper three floors into six gas heated one bedroom flats as much needed accommodation for affordable rent. This lengthy conversion which came at a cost of some £1.1m (£183k per unit) was completed six months ago. Are the flats still empty?</p> <p>What is the schedule for the Council to find tenants to live in the flats and what will the annual rental income be to the authority?</p>	<p>Councillor Evans:</p> <p>Since the development has taken place the Council has registered with Homes England and become one of their Investment Partners. This has been a necessary requirement following the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer of its housing back in 1996. The main benefit of doing so is that that it provides opportunities for the council to directly deliver affordable housing by securing additional funding from government. As a consequence the Council has been able to bid and secure £303,910 through Homes England to help cover the cost of delivering the six units at York Buildings. The additional capital ensures that the homes can be let at Affordable Rents.</p> <p>By delivering homes directly at affordable rent, the council will be making a valuable contribution towards the overall supply of the affordable housing in the town, necessary given the significant demand for housing and the impact that it’s having on homelessness presentations and temporary accommodation costs.</p> <p>Officers are currently working on developing the necessary policies and procedures that are a requirement of Registered</p>

		<p>Provider landlord status. This will be traditional Council Housing and as such Cllrs will need to be aware of the key rights and responsibilities which follow from this designation. A report will be taken to Cabinet in August which will expand on this further and once agreed the plan is to move tenants in shortly afterwards.</p> <p>The resulting units will be set at a maximum rent of 80% of the market rent and the council would further limit rents to the prevailing Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate. All rent collected will be payable directly to the Council.</p> <p>Whilst there has been an unavoidable delay in letting the flats, the longer term benefit to the council is the provision of 6 much needed new permanent affordable homes and a contribution of £300,000 of external funding to help offset the councils costs.</p>
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