

COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE**14 JUNE 2017****REPORT OF GENTOO****1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The following report provides an update from Gentoo for the Coalfield Area of Sunderland from April to end of May 2017.

2 Background

- 2.1 Area Committee agreed that regular updates from Gentoo would be presented to each Committee meeting to enable members to be up-to-date on current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities.

3. Neighbourhood Services Update

- 3.1 We have now begun the re-registration of our existing housing register customers to our new online Allocations system "HomeHunt". The main features of the new Allocations system include the banding of applicants, affordability checks, limiting the number of bids customers can make during each weekly advertising cycle and removing Excellent Customer Status. Due to the size and complexity of this the re-registration exercise we are rolling the re-registration programme out in three tranches to our existing customers and will announce a "Go Live" date for the new system shortly.

- 3.2 During 2016/17 our Money Matters Team dealt with 1,699 referrals to help customers manage their money. As a result of this £424K worth of unclaimed benefits were identified and over £635K worth of debt was identified and consolidated. We also continue to track the impact of other Welfare Reform measures on our customers, including Universal Credit.

- 3.3 We have seen a great reduction in and around the Easington Lane area in terms of Youth disorder reports as a result of the Jubilee perimeter wall removal and new landscaping – residents have reported a vast improvement overall and are happy with the work we have carried out. We will continue to monitor the situation.

4. Business Update

- 4.1 Consolidation of Gentoo Group Limited and Gentoo Sunderland Limited into one registered body "Gentoo Group Limited" has now taken place. This has allowed us to simplify our structure, strengthen our governance and refocus our business on the provision of social housing and related services in Sunderland.

5. Community Partnership Coordinator Activity

- 5.1 We continue to work with local groups such as Hetton New Dawn at their 'Transforming lives' and 'Memory' sessions, Moorsley residents group recently completed face paint training so they can now do their own events. We will be supporting SNCBC who were awarded Big Local Funding to start 3 x new Toddler groups and 1 after school club in the first week of June.
- 5.2 The main focus for last quarter was promoting volunteering opportunities for local residents and tackling social isolation, working with SNCBC and Fencehouses YMCA we recruited 4 residents to continue the Nidderdale Lunch Club. A successful partnership event at ELCAP took place to promote Aspire grants and the benefits of

volunteering where several residents were also recruited to volunteer in the community at ELCAP, New Dawn, etc.

- 5.3 Focus for the next few months will be environmental events and projects, including working alongside Big Local funding specifically aimed at environment based projects. CPC estate walkabouts have also now started and there is a Big Local group walkabout taking place on the 13th June to look at environmental issues. Further, a community clean up with Fencehouses YMCA is planned for July and we also have 2 community consultation events planned during July in Easington Lane and Moorsley.

6. Investment and Renewal

- 6.1 As previously advised Gentoo has been conducting stock condition surveys on all of our homes. The information from these surveys has now been collated and reviewed and our new Asset plan is due to go before our Board shortly for comment. Once approval is given to the plan we will roll out across the areas as this plan will set out works which are to be scheduled in Coalfields area over the next 5 years. Further information relating this plan will be brought to future meetings.

- 6.2 Our renewal plan remains as previously advised in March 2017 report.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Note the content of this report.

Contact Officer: Samantha Humble, Head of Operations,
Tel 0191 5256071, Email: samantha.humble@gentoosunderland.com