

## COALFIELDS AREA COMMITTEE

17 March 2021

### REPORT OF GENTOO

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The following report provides an update from Gentoo for the Coalfields Area Committee from December 2020 to March 2021.

#### 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. Update on Neighbourhood Services

- 3.1 Gentoo has carried out a review of service charges to ensure they are consistent, fair and transparent. Service charges cover only the cost of providing the service and no profit is made. The review included charges not currently made (such as stair lift maintenance and communal laundries) as well as existing charges. We have written to 7,000 tenants and leaseholders to advise them how this will affect them. Charges will be phased in over the next three years to allow for a period of adjustment.
- 3.2 86% of tenants will see an increase of less than £5 per week and 95% of leaseholders will see an increase of less than £10 per week. Many will have the new elements of the charges covered by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. Both leaseholders and tenants with an increase of more than £2 per week who are not covered by benefits will be proactively contacted by our Money Matters Team and local Neighbourhood Coordinators to offer assistance, budgeting guidance and benefit checks.

#### 4. Investment & Renewal

- 4.1 The Avenue Vivienne site continues to progress, and we have advertised and conducted viewings on the first 5 new homes. All 5 potential tenants have accepted and will be due to move around then of March. We eagerly anticipate more new homes late Spring/early Summer. This date may change if further restrictions are imposed due to Covid 19.
- 4.2 Further investment works continue, throughout the Coalfields area. A mix of heating upgrades, window replacements, roofing and gable end works. Unfortunately, our contractors are encountering quite a few access issues. However, we and our contractors, are trying to resolve these issues quickly, at the convenience of our tenants.

#### 5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Note the content of this report.

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