

Colleagues, this will be my final Housing Portfolio Holder update before NDDC is reborn.

Before I hang up my boots, I wanted to talk about some of the things I am most pleased to have achieved during the time I have had the honour of being the council's lead on Housing

Let me start by drawing your attention to a number of significant affordable housing developments successfully built over the years, such as those in Shaftesbury, Blandford, Gillingham, Sturminster Newton, and many other places

Everywhere you go around North Dorset you can see evidence of the hard work that has gone into building new affordable homes over many years, and this could not have been achieved without the support of you here today. This has been very much appreciated.

We have supported these schemes, and put money into them to ensure that local people have somewhere decent and inexpensive to live.

This does not just ensure that some settlements remain viable into the future, but can be instrumental in helping these communities to flourish.

For a variety of complex reasons, 2018/19 will not be a vintage year in terms of affordable housing completions, though we are expecting 2019/20 to be much, much better, as evidenced at committee through the redevelopment of our old offices at Nordon.....Looking forward I am expecting these homes to be extremely popular with local people.

One of the key things I have focused on over the last few years is ensuring that our relations with the predominant housing association, Spectrum, now part of Sovereign, are as good as they can be.

We regularly meet with them at a senior level, which helps us to better understand their business, but also helps them to appreciate what our priorities are for North Dorset communities

And we hold them to account.....in the last year, for example, we have challenged them over their disposals programme, over certain aspects of disrepair to their homes and so on. We also meet regularly with other key housing associations locally, including Magna, Stonewater, Aster and Yarlington.

One of my most important roles as a ward member and the Housing lead is to do what I can to help local people experiencing housing-related problems

I know that is something that we all do as elected members, and if you are anything like me, housing-related problems are amongst the most complex and

hard to resolve issues that we come across, not to mention the sheer volume of cases brought to our attention.

I'm sure you'll agree that it can be humbling to see the personal difficulties that some people are going through, and how gratifying it can be to have been of assistance.

We are moving into a brand new era, which for Housing will be exciting.

Whereas two/ three years ago, we brought three council Housing services together, in April we will be bringing a further two districts together into one.

I can see huge benefits from being in the same organisation of other related services, such as adult social care, social care commissioning, public health...rather than battling against each other and protecting the budgets in our own little silos, we'll all be part of the same organisation, we'll be collaborating instead of competing, which can only positive thing

I think that the future for Housing within Dorset Council looks promising, exciting, challenging, and rewarding.

I'd like to thank Clive Milone, Sarah Howe & of course all of the dedicated Housing team for their input over the years, and all those who have contributed to our successes and without whom none of it would have been possible.

That concludes my final Housing Portfolio Holder briefing. Thank you very much.