

**Question: CQ14.02&03**

**Cabinet – 8 February 2022**

**Re: Agenda item 14 - Project 1000: Affordable Housing Delivery Plan 2022-2025**

**Question submitted by: Councillor Tony Dyer**

Preamble:

The rising cost of market rate housing, either to purchase or to rent (with the latter often bearing a direct relation to the former), has a massive impact on the disposable income of thousands of Bristol residents as they find themselves having to spend an increasing proportion of their income to keep a roof over their heads. As the previous item has shown, for an increasing number of households, this has often led to homelessness.

Clearly, if the phrase “levelling up” is to have any meaning beyond a media lite soundbite then reducing housing costs has to be a major element of any strategy to reduce inequality, and I also include in those housing costs the increasing cost of heating energy wasteful homes. It is therefore good news to see these proposals come forward and I look forward to working with the cabinet member for housing delivery and homes to bring these plans to fruition, and in cooperation with ward councillors and local residents across the city.

**Question 1:**

**Given the fanfare regarding the announcement of the Government’s “Levelling Up” strategy, has the Cabinet Member and/or housing officers, been able to identify any concrete funding proposals within the flurry of announcements made by the Government since last Wednesday that would enable more genuinely affordable, energy efficient homes to be built in Bristol, over and above the proposals going to Bristol’s budget meeting next week?**

Preamble:

Sadly the term “affordable housing” has lost considerable credibility – often this has been due to the misuse of the term to describe homes that are barely affordable and offered at a rate only a relatively small percentage below market levels. For many members of the public (and some councillors) there is a concern that “affordable housing” more often or not means homes at 80% of market rate, far beyond the reach, for example, of most of the 16,000 tenants and families on the housing register.

**Question 2:**

**Can the cabinet member clarify that all homes built for, or acquired by, the Council’s Housing Revenue Account will be homes for rent at social rent levels, and that the minimum expectation is for these new homes to have an energy efficiency rating of A?**

The cabinet member may choose to make a similar statement regarding the makeup of affordable housing delivered by the Council's arms-length housing company, Goram Homes.