

Minutes of Health & Housing Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 3 September 2015, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor S Hore (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Bibby	K Hind
P Dobson	J Holgate
P Elms	R Newmark
R Elms	M Robinson
M Fenton	R Sherras
L Graves	J White
R Hargreaves	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Strategic Housing Officer, Senior Accountant.

225 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor S Brunskill.

226 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

A Councillor referred to Minute 66 regarding the appointment to working groups and suggested that the Chairman of Planning and Development Committee should be a member of the Strategic Housing Working Group. Committee supported this action.

The Chairman referred to Minute 70 regarding the approval of the use of nationally described space standards on all new affordable housing schemes. This has been referred to Planning and Development Committee by the Accounts and Audit Committee.

227 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

228 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

229 REQUEST FOR ASYLUM SEEKER DISPERSAL IN THE BOROUGH

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to approve Ribble Valley Borough Council participation in the Asylum Dispersal Programme across the North West. The Home Office provide accommodation and support for asylum seekers and their families whilst their cases are processed and determined, and have appointed SERCO to supply accommodation in the North-

West. This would be by entry into 5 year leasehold arrangements with private landlords. SERCO had identified at this stage that there could be provision of 5 properties accommodating up to 20 asylum seekers (including some family accommodation) in the Ribble Valley based in Clitheroe and Longridge where the support network and social infrastructure is available. If the application for asylum is granted, the applicant would cease to be available for this support after 28 days, at which time Ribble Valley Borough Council may have housing responsibility depending on the applicants personal circumstances.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. agree to Ribble Valley Borough Council being included in the Asylum Seeker Dispersal Programme;
2. agree to work with SERCO to deliver a maximum of 5 units in the towns of Clitheroe and Longridge as a pilot which will be reviewed within 6 months from the first occupation;
3. agree to notification of the properties to be included in the scheme to be reported to the Strategic Housing Working Group and feedback, monitoring and reports from multi agency forum meetings to be reported to the Strategic Housing Working Group.

230 ALTERNATIVE MODELS FOR DELIVERING AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITH PRIVATE FINANCE INSTITUTIONS

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to approve further investigation of the use of private investment to deliver affordable housing in the borough. The issue had arisen due to difficulties in identifying Registered Providers for delivery of affordable units on new housing sites in the borough as legislative changes had reduced their ability to deliver affordable housing and invest in new schemes. One private investment company had made a presentation on 15 July 2015 to the Strategic Housing Working Group, setting out their proposals to support affordable housing delivery.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree to investigate further the use of private investment to deliver affordable housing in the borough, and to liaise with other local authorities that have used private finance on used schemes and consult with the Homes and Communities Agency.

231 PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE ADDRESSING HOUSING NEEDS POLICY

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the failure of the Addressing Housing Needs Policy, adopted in January 2012 setting out the affordable housing requirements in the borough, to deliver sufficient bungalows, which are the older persons accommodation in the highest demand. Developers are reluctant to provide bungalows on sites, as they deliver fewer units per square metre than the equivalent of apartment type accommodation. However, statistical evidence from the SHMA and the housing waiting list confirmed the need for bungalow accommodation, reflecting the higher than average pensionable age population in the borough. It was recommended that paragraph 5.1 of the Addressing Housing Needs Policy be amended to read:

“Providing housing for older people has been a priority within the Housing Strategy for many years. However, the market has not met the needs of older persons and their preferred accommodation type. The housing waiting list and the SHMA clearly support the need for bungalows, therefore there is a requirement for 15% of larger developments to be bungalows for the elderly built to lifetime homes standard and this will be achieved by:

- on sites over 10 units or more, a requirement of 15% of the units to be bungalows for older persons;
- of the 15% of older persons accommodation, a minimum of 50% will be affordable and included within the affordable offer of 30%;
- the remaining 50% of the older persons accommodation could be market housing and sold at market value or rent. A local connection requirement will be applied to these units.”

RESOLVED: That Committee agree to amend paragraph 5.1 of the Addressing Housing Needs Policy as set out, to reflect the housing needs of older persons in the borough and that this be referred to the Planning and Development Committee.

232 2014/15 YEAR END PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee’s information outlining details of performance against our local performance indicators. Regular performance monitoring was essential to ensure that the Council was delivering effectively against its agreed priorities both in terms of the national agenda and local needs.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

233 CAPITAL MONITORING 2015/16

The Director of Resources submitted a report providing Committee with information relating to the progress of the approved capital programme for this year. Slippage from the previous year was also reported. To date, just under 43% of the annual capital programme for this Committee had been spent or committed and it was noted that the majority of the capital programme for this Committee was grant related. Expenditure was driven by the applications that are received for this funding. It was likely that the budget would be fully committed for disabled facilities grants and a waiting list was being used as estimates suggested that not all schemes could be funded from the remaining 2015/16 budget. There was a budget available to support further applications for landlord/tenant grants in 2015/16.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

234 REVENUE OUTTURN 2014/15

The Director of Resources submitted a report on the outturn for the financial year 2014/15, in respect of the revenue budget for this Committee. There was an overall underspend of £134,621 for this Committee and, after allowing for

transfers to and from earmarked reserves, this underspend decreased to £62,461. The main variations for this underspend were highlighted.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

235 REVENUE MONITORING 2015/16

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the position for the first four months of this year's revenue budget as far as this Committee was concerned. The variations between budget to date and actuals had been split into groups of red, amber and green variance. These were highlighted for Committee's information. At this stage, the comparison between actuals and budget to date shows an underspend of £53,984 for the first four months of the financial year 2015/16. After allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves, the underspend is increased to £62,336.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

236 GENERAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

There was no report available due to the absence of the Head of Environmental Health Services.

237 REPORT FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

238 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be an Exempt Information Under Categories 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

239 GENERAL REPORT – GRANTS

The Chief Executive submitted details of five disabled facilities grants and four boiler replacement grants.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

240 AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information on the affordable housing schemes in progress and proposed in the borough. The minutes of the Housing Working Group held on 15 July 2015 were included for Committee's information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Marshal Scott (414400).