

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel (to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 7 March 2019

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs K Mandry (Chairman)

Councillor S Dugan (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: I Bastable, J M Englefield, Mrs C L A Hockley, Ms S Pankhurst
and Mrs K K Trott

**Also
Present:**



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were tabled for Members' information.

The Chairman advised Members that Vivid Housing has declined the invitation to attend a future meeting of the Panel. However, they have agreed to attend an informal briefing where they will provide an overview of their tenancy management services and new housing development plans.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 13 November 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that in October 2018, the Government launched the Private Rented Sector Access Fund and invited local authorities to bid for funds to provide additional support for single homeless people. Officers submitted a bid for funds and the Chairman was pleased to advise Members that confirmation was received last week that the bid was successful.

The Chairman also announced that a report on the future housing numbers in the Borough will be brought to the next meeting of the Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel which will be held on 12 March 2019. The Chairman of the Planning & Development Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Tom Davies, would like to invite Members of the Housing Scrutiny Panel to attend the meeting as this item may be of interest. The report describes the process for compiling the Housing Need for the Borough using the standard methodology and population projections along with an explanation of why the housing need figures have changed in recent years.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Panel considered the Executive items of business which fall under the remit of the Housing portfolio, including individual Executive Member decisions, that have taken place since the last meeting of the Panel.

The Panel considered the decision shown at item 6(1) of the agenda.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel considered the following item of Executive Business:

(1) Fareham Housing Development Sites

The Panel discussed the lengthy process involved in preparing sites ready for development and heard how the delegated authority agreed by the Executive in respect of the contract award and appointment of contractor(s) for the Hampshire Rose and Bridge Road development sites has helped to accelerate the delivery of the sites.

7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

Members received a presentation by the Strategic Lead for Affordable Housing which provided the Panel with an update on the progress being made in developing the key sites that are being led by Fareham Housing. The presentation also gave a summary of the processes and procedures that need to be followed in delivering the sites and gave an update on the progress being made with preparing the Council's Affordable Housing Strategy.

A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

8. TENANCY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE REPORT

The Panel considered a report by the Managing Director of Fareham Housing which provided Members with information about the Housing management and maintenance services provided by the Neighbourhood Team and the Repairs and Maintenance Team.

Members discussed the forthcoming informal meeting to be held with Vivid Housing Association and requested that background information such as the numbers of properties held by Vivid and details of other Housing Associations that own properties across the Borough be provided as background information in advance of the meeting.

On considering the report, Members raised a number of questions and comments for clarification which included nomination rights for Housing Association properties, the differences in the levels of Social rents and Affordable rents, some indication that tenancy arrears are rising as a result of the implementation of Universal Credit, responsibilities for people who are made homeless as a result of being evicted from Council properties, reporting measures for responsive repairs and actions arising from Fire Risk Assessments.

The Chairman invited Members who have not yet had the opportunity to visit the depot, to contact the Head of Building Repairs and Maintenance Service to arrange to do so.

RESOLVED that the Managing Director of Fareham Housing be thanked for providing the report.

9. CHANGES TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL FUNDED SOCIAL INCLUSION SERVICES IN FAREHAM

The Panel received a report by the Managing Director of Fareham Housing which sets out the findings of the County's 'Transformation to 2019 Review', the implications to provision of Social Inclusion services in Fareham, and work being undertaken by Fareham Borough Council to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough.

On considering the report, Members raised a number of questions and made comments for clarification which included the changes to the level of floating support as a result of the reduction in County funding.

The Head of Housing and Benefits outlined the successful bid made to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The funding will be used to improve access to private rented accommodation.

Members enquired whether there was anything they could do to assist officers with the provision that is made for rough sleepers. The Head of Housing & Benefits referred Members to the Fareham StreetAid website, which is an online resource that comprises a number of agencies working together to help vulnerable people off the streets of Fareham.

The Panel thanked the Managing Director of Fareham Housing and the Head of Housing and Benefits for providing an extremely well prepared and informative report.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive that the Flexible Homeless Support Grant is used to fund the commissioning of Social Inclusion Services in partnership with Hampshire County Council from 01 August 2019.

10. HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL PRIORITIES

The Panel considered the tabled item – Housing Scrutiny Panel Priorities Plan, attached as Appendix B to these minutes.

Members felt that the plan is a good reflection of the current priorities for the Panel and agreed that changes can be made in due course if necessary.

RESOLVED that the scrutiny priorities for the Panel be approved.

The Chairman announced that the Managing Director of Fareham Housing, Paul Doran, will be retiring at the end of March and that this had been his final meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel. The Chairman placed on record her thanks to Paul for the support and advice he has given over the years and wished him a long and happy retirement.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.55 pm).

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Tabled Item-
previous minutes

Minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel (to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 22 November 2018

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs K Mandry (Chairman)

Councillor S Dugan (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: I Bastable, J M Englefield, Mrs C L A Hockley, Ms S Pankhurst
and Mrs K K Trott

Also Present: Councillor F Birkett (for Item 11)



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Housing Policy Development and Review Panel meeting held on 20 September 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. INTRODUCTION TO THE HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL

The Panel received a presentation by the Head of Democratic Services which provided an introduction to the newly formed Housing Scrutiny Panel and outlined the role and function of the new Panel. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

Having considered the presentation, made comments and raised questions for clarification, the Panel RESOLVED to consider the scrutiny priorities for the Housing portfolio under item 11 of the agenda.

7. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

The Panel considered the Executive items of business which fall under the remit of the Housing Portfolio, including Individual Executive Member decisions and Officer delegated decisions, that have taken place since the last meeting of the Scrutiny Board on 04 June 2018.

The Panel considered the decisions shown at items 7(1) to 7(2) of the agenda.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel considered the following items of Executive Business:

(1) Appointment of Employer's Agent for Hampshire Rose and Bridge Rose Housing Development Sites

The Panel asked for details of when work will commence on site.

(2) Housing Revenue Account Borrowing Programme Funding Bid

No comments were received.

8. AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation by the Affordable Housing Strategic Lead which provided Members with an update on the Affordable Housing position. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes as Appendix B.

The presentation outlined how the funding bids that were submitted to central government in September are now obsolete as the Government has abolished the cap on borrowing against the Housing Revenue account. The Panel was given a broad, example cost illustration to build a 2 bed-roomed house which demonstrates how any borrowing will need to be carefully considered and managed to ensure that the debt can be serviced.

The presentation also gave an update on the Hampshire Rose, Bridge Road, Sea Lane and Wynton Way sites which have been allocated for development.

RESOLVED that the Affordable Housing Strategic Lead be thanked for a very informative presentation.

9. FIRE ISSUES AND PRECAUTIONS REPORT

The Panel considered a report by the Managing Director of Fareham Housing which informed Members of the progress with the fire issues and precautions in Fareham Housing.

Members were given an update to paragraph 17 of the report and heard that some types of the new composite doors that are now required to be exposed to additional testing to ensure their performance in the event of a fire are starting to become available and will be fitted where applicable.

Following discussion regarding the destruction of smoke alarms that reach their point of expiry it was agreed that the Property Manager will provide a response to Members to inform them how the process of disposing of smoke alarms is managed.

The Panel commented on the excellent service provided by the Housing team and thanked the Managing Director of Fareham Housing for his report.

10. HOUSING ASSOCIATION SCOPING REPORT

The Panel considered the draft Scoping report that has been prepared to extend an invitation to Vivid Housing Association to attend a future meeting of the Panel to provide information on the tenancy management services that they provide to tenants living in Fareham.

Members requested that the scoping report be amended to include a summary of how the Housing Association is motivated to provide good customer service and an understanding of delivery plans for future affordable homes.

RESOLVED that, subject to the inclusion of the additional items put forward by the Panel, the Scoping report be approved.

11. HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL PRIORITIES

The Panel considered the scrutiny priorities for the Housing Panel that align to the Corporate Strategy 2017-23 and which will help ensure that corporate priorities are delivered.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor F W Birkett, Executive Member for Housing, addressed the Panel on this item.

Members discussed and put forward the following topics for consideration as Scrutiny Priorities:

- Housing Options
- External scrutiny of Vivid Housing Association - per scoping report (suggested for March 2019)
- Homelessness and Rough sleeping (suggested for March 2019)
- Update on the Impact of new Homelessness legislation (suggested for July 2019)
- Affordable Housing Updates (at each meeting)
- An update on Social Inclusion (suggested for March 2019)
- External scrutiny of Two Saints to understand the challenges they face and what can be done to help. (Scoping report suggested for March 2019 with visit suggested for July 2019)
- The Affordable Housing Strategy
- An explanation of how the Housing Revenue Account operates.
- Universal Credit and how it is impacting on residents.
- New Allocations draft proposals (suggested for July 2019)
- Tenancy Management Report & Maintenance Report (suggested for March and November each year)

RESOLVED that the topics put forward for consideration be discussed by the Chairman and the Managing Director of Fareham Housing for inclusion in the Scrutiny Priorities Plan for the Panel.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 8.00 pm).



Affordable Housing Update

Robyn Lyons



Key Site Updates

Focus Sites

'Fareham Housing' led developments

Tranche #1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hampshire Rose• Bridge Road	→ Out to tender for contractor(s)
Tranche #2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sea Lane• Stubbington Lane• Station Road, Portchester• Coldeast Scout Hut (moved from Tranche #3)	→ Working toward appointing architects
Tranche #3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wynton Way• Gosport Road (not progressing purchase at this stage)• Stock Regeneration?	

Site Updates

Hampshire Rose and Bridge Road

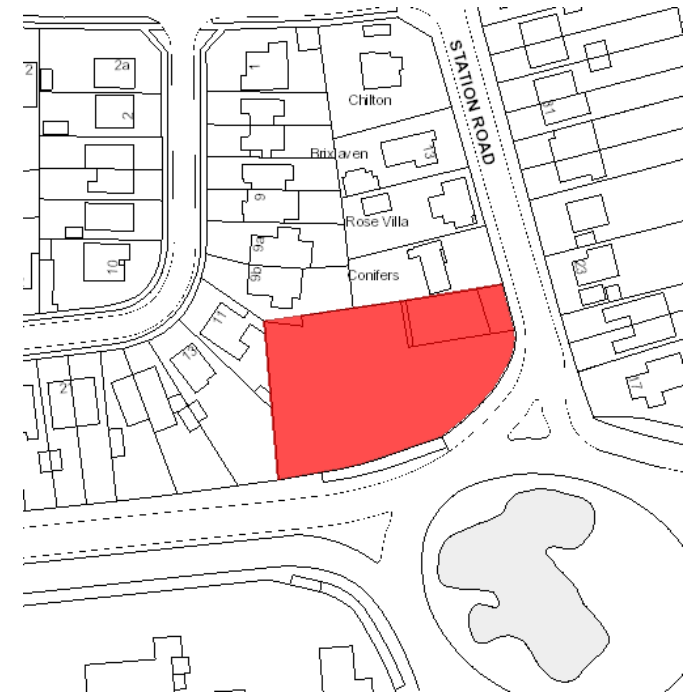
- Tender packs now out for a contractor for each site
 - Bids due back before the end of March
 - Should appoint contractors by end of April 2019
 - Bids received should indicate potential start dates
-
- Homes England Grant of nearly £1.3M awarded for Hampshire Rose
 - Homes England Grant of £270,000 awarded for Bridge Road



Station Road, Portchester

Demolition of existing structure

- Required to avoid paying rates
 - gas meter removal, mains disconnect
 - party wall surveys / asbestos surveys
 - contamination survey
 - demolition thereafter
- Should appoint architects soon to design sheltered scheme
- Will go back through the planning process during 2019
- Construction start in 2020



Why so long...

Why does it take so long between 'planning' & getting a spade in the ground?



- The plans for a planning application are only the start
- Further detailed plans are needed for construction (i.e. the technical design)

Why so long continued...

- Need to address key hurdles (e.g. ecology)
- Final tweak of plans (e.g. more disabled access, iron out some smaller issues/specifications)
- Lots of technical surveys needed (ground/soil survey, structural engineer calculations, landscape design, etc.)
- Detailed plans ('Technical Design') produced
- Employers Requirements (description of requirements, certain specifications, scope of requirements)



Why so long continued...

- Discharge certain planning conditions
- Tender process to appoint a contractor can only take place once technical design & ER are complete
- Pre-qualification stage to tender process (a few weeks)
- Full tender process (typically 4-6 weeks to submit bids and then bid assessment thereafter)
- Appoint contractor..... Leading to Start on Site



Affordable Housing SPD

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

- Technical planning document
- Gives more detail on the planning expectations for developers: -
 - Mix of Affordable House type (to reflect local need)
 - LHA cap (i.e. Affordable Rents no more than LHA cap)
 - Importance of Social Rent
 - When AH is required, how many?
 - Calculating the contribution (if off-site contribution appropriate)
- Executive before Summer 2019
- Then a six week public consultation period

Any Questions



Housing Scrutiny Priorities 2018-2023

APPENDIX B

Corporate Priorities		Agenda Item/Area of Work	Frequency	Last Covered	22 Nov 18	07 Mar 19	11 Jul 19	07 Nov 19	06 Feb 20	26 Mar 20	20/21	21/22	22/23
1.	PROVIDING HOUSES CHOICES												
Enable the delivery of a new Garden Village at Welborne, providing thousands of new homes, new schools and new leisure facilities		Update to inform Members on proposed provision of affordable Housing at Welborne						✓					
Prepare a new Local Plan which will plan for the provision of new homes and employment space across the Borough up to 2036		Update to inform Members of the intentions to provide Affordable Housing through the new Local Plan						✓					
Prepare and implement a new Housing Strategy, to include affordable options, which will determine the Council's future role in the provision of housing							✓						
	Members to provide a response to the new Housing Strategy Consultation						✓						
	Undertake Post Scrutiny of the new Housing Strategy							✓					

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3.	STRONG, SAFE INCLUSIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES	Frequency	Last Covered	22 Nov 18	07 Mar 19	11 Jul 19	07 Nov 19	06 Feb 20	26 Mar 20	20/21	21/22	22/23
	Promote and support the delivery of a Garden Village at Welborne, as part of a planned sustainable new community to come forward over the next 20 years											
4.	MAINTAIN AND EXTEND PROSPERITY	Frequency	Last Covered	22 Nov 18	07 Mar 19	11 Jul 19	07 Nov 19	06 Feb 20	26 Mar 20	20/21	21/22	22/23
	Enable the redevelopment of Portchester District Centre, which will include improvements to the shopping precinct, the provision of new homes and improvements to car parking facilities.											
6.	A DYNAMIC, PRUDENT AND PROGRESSIVE COUNCIL	Frequency	Last Covered	22 Nov 18	07 Mar 19	11 Jul 19	07 Nov 19	06 Feb 20	26 Mar 20	20/21	21/22	22/23
	Continue to implement the Vanguard Methodology across all Council Services to ensure a customer focussed approach and the quick resolution of problems											
	Continue to explore opportunities for shared services, partnerships and joint working with neighbouring Councils											

Housing Scrutiny Priorities 2018-2023

APPENDIX B

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	Agenda Item/Area of Work	Frequency	Last Covered	22 Nov 18	07 Mar 19	11 Jul 19	07 Nov 19	06 Feb 20	26 Mar 20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Housing Associations												
Two Saints	Scoping Report to be produced by Members to outline the topics for discussion with Two Saints.					✓						
	Two Saints to be invited to attend a Meeting of the Panel						✓					
SERVICE WORK AREAS	Agenda Item/Area of Work	Frequency	Last Covered	22 Nov 18	07 Mar 19	11 Jul 19	07 Nov 19	06 Feb 20	26 Mar 20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Tenancy Management, Repairs and Maintenance of Council-owned properties	Report to Members to provide information about the housing management and maintenance services provided by the Neighbourhood Team and the Repairs and Maintenance Team.	Bi-annual			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Provide Members with an explanation of how the Housing Revenue Account works.							✓				

Housing Options and Homelessness	Report to Members on the changes to the County Council funded Social Inclusion Services in Fareham				✓					✓		
	Report to Members to outline the New Homelessness Strategy					✓						
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support	Report to Members outlining the amended Council Tax Support Scheme					✓						