

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 9 March 2017

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor B Bayford (Chairman)

Councillor F Birkett (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs M Brady, Mrs C Heneghan, S D Martin, Ms S Pankhurst
and Mrs C L A Hockley (deputising for D L Steadman)

Also Present: Councillor Mrs K Mandry (for item 8) and T M Cartwright, MBE
(for items 7 and 8)



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D L Steadman.

2. MINUTES

Members enquired whether there has been any progress with the sites identified for parking improvements in 2017/18 as outlined in item 8 of the minutes. The Tenancy Services Manager reported that the sites are still at the design stage. A further three sites are being considered at Simpson Close, Melvin Jones House and Gaza House.

It was AGREED that the minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel held on 19 January 2017 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 or disclosures of advice or directions made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. HEALTH UPDATE

The Chairman provided a copy of the recent Friends of Fareham Community Hospital's newsletter as an update on local health issues.

Members noted that a Business Support Manager has now been appointed at Fareham Community Hospital.

Councillor Mrs Hockley commended the Council's "Fareham in Bloom" team for the excellent work that has been done in improving the flower beds at the Hospital entrance.

7. HOMELESSNESS UPDATE

The Chairman reminded Members that at the meeting of the Council's Executive on 06 February 2017, a proposal was put forward that provision be made within the budget to fund an outreach worker to support the increasing number of rough sleepers in the Town Centre. The Executive Leader indicated that the Health and Housing and the Public Protection Development and Review Panels would be the appropriate forum to discuss the need for this resourcing and that if it were considered necessary, provision could be made

from within the existing spending reserve. Following discussions with the Executive Member for Public Protection and the Chairman of the Public Protection Policy Development and Review Panel, it has been agreed that it would be appropriate to discuss this issue at the Health and Housing Panel.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor T M Cartwright MBE, Executive Member for Public Protection addressed the Panel on this item.

The Panel received a verbal update and presentation from the Housing Options Manager on Homelessness within the Borough. The presentation provided Members with an overview of the Housing Advice and Homeless Service in Fareham, highlighting the costs involved in providing this mandatory service, the advice and assistance provided, the role of the Two Saints Organisation and the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol.

Members also received a detailed update on the numbers and circumstances of the rough sleepers in the Borough who were identified from the annual 'single night snapshot' that is taken across the country using street counts and intelligence driven estimates. Of the 18 people identified, 7 were found to be engaging with local services, 2 have subsequently been sent to prison, 1 has a room at a hostel, 1 has been assisted into private rented accommodation and 1 has been supported to return to their original area. The remaining 6 people are not engaging with any interventions or assistance that is offered and there is a need to find new ways of working so that solutions can be found to secure successful outcomes for these vulnerable people. This will involve greater collaboration with partnership agencies.

Following discussion and debate it was concluded that it is clear that the issue appears to be that there is a small group of rough sleepers who, for a variety of reasons, will not engage with the appropriate agencies that could assist them.

It was AGREED that no additional budget provision for an outreach worker be made available, but that officers in the housing department be asked to review, in conjunction with other agencies, how this problem can best be tackled and to report back to the Panel at a time to be agreed. Councillor Mrs M Brady requested that it be noted in the minutes that she did not agree that additional budget provision should not be made.

The Housing Options Manager was thanked for providing an excellent presentation which was very informative.

8. TENANCY MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Operations on Tenancy Management Performance.

At the invitation of the Chairman Councillors T M Cartwright, MBE and Mrs K Mandry addressed the Panel on this item.

Members enquired whether the Vanguard intervention carried out recently has resulted in easier ways for residents to make payments. The Tenancy

Services Manger advised that a system is currently being implemented that will provide residents with greater flexibility and choice in respect of the direct debit payment scheme. This will enable residents to make weekly payments as an alternative to monthly payments and will make it easier for them to manage their finances.

It was AGREED that the Panel notes the information contained within the report.

9. FINAL REVIEW OF WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17 AND DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Operations on the final review of the Work Programme 2016/17 and the draft Work Programme for 2017/18.

Members requested that an update on Homelessness be added to the Work Programme 2017/18 at a meeting that Officers consider most appropriate.

It was AGREED that Members:-

- (a) reviewed the Panel's Work Programme for the current year 2016/17;
- (b) agreed a proposed Work Programme for 2017/18, subject to the inclusion of an Update on Homelessness at the meeting considered most appropriate by Officers; and
- (c) submits the proposed Work Programme for 2017/18 to Council for endorsement.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.15 pm).