

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

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).