

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

Date: Thursday, 3 February 2022

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs K Mandry (Chairman)

Councillor (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: S Dugan, Mrs C L A Hockley, Ms S Pankhurst, Mrs K K Trott
and Mrs L E Clubley (deputising for N R Gregory)

Also Present: Councillor Mrs T L Ellis



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fazackarley and Councillor Gregory.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel held on 28 October 2021 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. EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

(1) Fareham Borough Council Shared Ownership Policy

There were no comments or questions for clarification in respect of this item.

(2) Fareham Housing Disposals at 12 Hartlands and development of land adjacent to 51 Bellfield

There were no comments or questions for clarification in respect of this item.

(3) Local Authority Delivery 2 (LAD2) Funding Scheme for energy efficiency measures to Council homes - Update

There were no comments or questions for clarification in respect of this item.

(4) Fareham Borough Council Interim First Homes Policy

There were no questions or comments for clarification in respect of this item.

(5) Conversion works at 92 Gordon Road, 1 Arundel Drive and 1A Arundel Drive

A query was raised in respect of this item with regard to proposed use of the property acquired by the Council at 92 Gordon Road. It was noted that this would be clarified at item 7 on the agenda which would provide an update on Housing delivery.

7. AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation by the Head of Housing Delivery which provided members with an update on progress with Fareham Housing sites and other relevant strategic housing matters. A copy of the presentation slides is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

The Head of Housing Delivery clarified that the recently acquired property at Gordon Road will provide emergency accommodation for individuals/families who become unexpectedly homeless and who need temporary accommodation whilst alternative arrangements can be made. It is not intended to be used to house rough sleepers.

The Head of Housing Delivery provided information about a review of the Housing Register which will shortly be complete. The review is intended to ensure the information held on the Housing Register is up to date. At this stage it is expected to show a significant reduction (from approximately 1,000 to 650) in households on the Register. As a result of this there is expected to be a review of the Affordable Housing Strategy during 2022/23 to reflect updated information around need.

Concerns were raised by the Panel that the rising cost of living may push many people into fuel poverty which could result in an increase in demand for Council owned accommodation due to people losing their homes.

Members thanked the Head of Housing Delivery for a very interesting and informative presentation.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel notes the content of the presentation.

8. DRAFT HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY - ADOPTION

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Mrs T L Ellis addressed the Panel on this item.

The Panel received a report by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer which presented the Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and accompanying Delivery Plan for members consideration following completion of a period of public consultation. The report set out the key findings of the consultation and asked that the Panel consider the Strategy prior to referral to the Executive at its forthcoming meeting on 07 March 2022.

Members raised concern that there may be an increase in homelessness and rough sleeping as a result of people losing their homes through fuel poverty and the rising cost of living. The Head of Housing and Benefits advised that the Delivery Plan aims to assess data to provide an understanding of future needs so that a more strategic approach can be taken to ensure people in need ask for assistance at an early stage so that they can be signposted to organisations who can help. The Panel discussed the need to ensure that services and assistance are well publicised and suggested that in addition to

information being provided on the website, Council noticeboards and local community hubs could be used to raise awareness of help that is available.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) considered the Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy attached at Appendix B to the report;
- (b) considered the Draft Delivery Plan attached at Appendix C to the report; and
- (c) recommends to the Executive that they adopt the Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy and Draft Delivery Plan at their forthcoming meeting on 07 March 2022.

9. TENANCY MANAGEMENT, REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL-OWNED PROPERTIES

Councillor Mrs L E Clubley left the meeting at the start of this item.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Mrs T L Ellis addressed the Panel on this item.

An addendum was tabled at the meeting to provide revised figures at *Table 2: Disabled Modifications/Adaptations by Year* as provided on page 83 of the agenda pack.

The Panel considered a report by the Deputy Chief Executive Officer which provided members with information about the housing management and maintenance services provided by the Neighbourhood Team and the Repairs and Maintenance Team.

Councillor Mrs K K Trott asked that it be put on record that the Council is lucky to have such a caring and empathic Housing Team which recognises the difficulties that people face and works very hard to achieve excellent results.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel notes the content of the report.

10. UPDATE ON PROGRESS WITH MAKING COUNCIL-OWNED HOMES MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Mrs T L Ellis addressed the Panel on this item.

The Panel received a presentation which provided an update on progress made in respect of making Council-owned properties more environmentally friendly. A copy of the presentation slides is attached to these minutes as Appendix B.

Members thanked officers for a very interesting and informative presentation.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel notes the content of the report.

11. HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL PRIORITIES

Members considered and discussed the Scrutiny Priorities for the Panel and agreed that an update be provided later in the year to see what progress has been made with the Greening Campaign.

RESOLVED that, subject to the addition of the item outlined above, the priorities for the Housing Scrutiny Panel be agreed.

(The meeting started at 6.01 pm
and ended at 7.30 pm).