

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 8 February 2024

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor (Chairman)

Councillor S Ingram (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: R Bird, H P Davis, Mrs C L A Hockley and Mrs K K Trott

**Also
Present:**



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F Birkett and Mrs K Mandry.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel held on 30 November 2023 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) Housing Allocations Policy

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

(2) Emergency and Temporary Accommodation Pressure

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

7. STAFFING UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation by the Director of Housing which provided Members with an update on the new staffing structure of the Housing Team and outlined job roles and responsibilities within it. A copy of the presentation slides is attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

Members congratulated the Director of Housing on the new structure and thanked her for an excellent presentation.

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

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

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Housing which provided Members with an update on the greener measures undertaken on Council owned housing.

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

9. AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation by the Affordable Housing Delivery Manager which informed Members of the progress with the Fareham Housing sites and other relevant strategic housing matters. A copy of the presentation slides is attached at Appendix A to these minutes.

In discussing the regeneration of some of the properties in the Council's housing stock, Members commented on the need to achieve best value for money when considering capital expenditure on some of the older and more challenging properties in the portfolio.

Members were interested to hear that, wherever possible, the opportunity is taken to redevelop existing buildings that are identified as having spare rooms or communal areas that are no longer in use to create additional accommodation. Members put forward some suggested sites across the Borough that, if in the Council's ownership, could be considered for redevelopment.

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

10. NEW CONSUMER STANDARDS FROM THE REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Housing which provided Members with details of the new Consumer standards from the Regulator of Social Housing.

Members acknowledged the huge amount of work that will be required in the implementation and delivery of the new standards. It was hoped by Members that a similar standard will be brought forward for private landlords.

In discussing Housing disrepair claims, the Panel was advised that numbers are still very low and that no new claims have been received. Members were advised that one claim has been brought under the Environmental Protection Act and that a settlement is progressing.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel notes:

- (a) the content of the report and the current anticipated performance against the draft emerging Consumer Standards;
- (b) the intention to produce an action plan relating to compliance with the Standards, to be reported at a later meeting of the Panel;
- (c) the section of the report relating to governance; and

(d) that a further report will be produced for the Council's Executive in 2024. This will relate to the Standards and any proposed changes of the governance structure.

11. HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL PRIORITIES

Members considered and discussed the Scrutiny Priorities for the Panel.

An update was requested and agreed in respect of Affordable Housing at Welborne due to the potential impact that the unexpected funding gap in delivering the required improvements to Junction 10 of the M27 motorway may have on the provision of affordable housing.

RESOLVED that the scrutiny priorities for the Housing Scrutiny Panel were discussed.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 6.50 pm).

..... Chairman

..... Date