

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Housing Scrutiny Panel

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 11 July 2024

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs K Mandry (Chairman)

Councillors: R N Bird, D J Hamilton, S P Ingram and L J Whittle

**Also
Present:**



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs P M Bryant and Mrs L E Clubleby

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2024 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) Tenant Engagement Strategy

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

7. FAREHAM HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SITES UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation by the Affordable Housing Delivery Manager which presented members with an update on the progress with the Fareham Housing sites and other strategic housing matters, including a look back at completed projects to provide newer Members with a more detailed overview.

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

8. HOUSING CONSUMER STANDARDS: INFORMATION AND ACTION PLAN

The Panel received a report by the Director of Housing which provided Members with an update on the new Housing Consumer standards which came into force in April 2024. The report also presented the draft Fareham Housing Action Plan which has been developed to ensure that confident compliance with the new Standards is achieved.

Members asked if there were any areas of the new housing consumer standards that Officers were concerned there may be a risk of not being compliant. The Director of Housing explained that some areas, such as stock surveys, may take a little longer to reach compliance. Officers also explained

that the initial focus had been on those more pressing actions such as developing an Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, and a Tenant Engagement Strategy, and that the outcomes from Inspections of other providers will also help to inform any further actions needed.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) agrees the content of the draft Action Plan as attached at Appendix A to the report;
- (b) notes that the Action Plan will be an iterative document, to be kept up to date and relevant by the Director of Housing in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing; and
- (c) provides the comments and observations as detailed above for referral to the Executive for consideration at its meeting on 15 July 2024.

9. FAREHAM HOUSING REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE POLICY

The Panel received a report by the Director of Housing which provided members with an overview of the Draft Housing Repairs & Maintenance Policy and the need to update current information in line with the changes introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing by way of 'Awaab's law' and new consumer standards.

The Fareham Housing Repairs & Maintenance Policy was tabled at the meeting for consideration.

Members asked several questions for clarification to provide a greater understanding of the new Fareham Housing Repairs & Maintenance Policy and enquired as to the timescales for the next steps following Executive approval in September. Officers explained that once approved, a period of 6 weeks public consultation will begin following conclusion of the call-in period.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) considered the report and Draft Fareham Housing Repairs & Maintenance Policy as attached at Appendix A to the report; and
- (b) refers the comments detailed above for consideration by the Executive when the Policy is presented for approval.

10. FAREHAM HOUSING ANNUAL REVIEW

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Housing which presented the Fareham Housing Annual Housing report 2024 for information.

Members enquired if hard copies of the final published document will be made available to tenants who may not have easy access to the website. The Director of Housing explained that hard copies will be made available, on request, for those tenants that wish to view a hard copy.

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

11. CHANGES TO GOVERNMENT SHARED OWNERSHIP GUIDANCE

The Panel received a presentation by the Housing Delivery Manager which provided Members with information on the Government affordability guidance updates in the Capital Funding Guide for grant funded shared ownership schemes and how these updates will be reflected in the Council’s Shared ownership Policy and Processes.

The Housing Delivery Manager explained that the changes to the policy will be considered by the Executive on 15 July 2024 to ensure that the Council’s grant funded shared ownership scheme at Ophelia Court is compliant with the updates ahead of the homes being marketed.

RESOLVED that the Housing Scrutiny Panel notes:

- (a) the contents of the presentation; and
- (b) the requirement for grant funded share ownership schemes to reflect the updated affordability guidance.

12. HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL PRIORITIES

The Panel considered the ongoing scrutiny priorities for the Housing Scrutiny Panel.

Members asked if an item could be brought to the Panel that provides an analysis of the Council’s waiting list. The Director of Housing advised that a great deal of work is currently underway to provide some analysis data on the website. The purpose of this data will be to set expectations for prospective tenants as to how long they may be waiting to be housed and to provide information on alternative housing providers if appropriate. Once this piece of work is complete, Officers will bring an update to the Panel.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Priorities for the Panel were reviewed.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.11 pm).

..... Chairman

..... Date