

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Housing Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on
Tuesday, 1 April 2014 at 5.30 p.m.

Portfolio Holder: Mark Howell

Councillors in attendance: Val Barrett, Kevin Cuffley, David McCraith and Ben Shelton

Also in attendance:

Gill Anderton	Resident Involvement Team Leader
Susan Carter	Head of Housing Advice and Options
Julie Fletcher	Housing Performance Improvement Team Leader
David Gill	Repairs & Quality Assurance Manager
Anita Goddard	Head of Housing Property Services Manager
Callum Hatch	Youth Councillor
Wendy Head	Chairman of the Tenant Participation Group
Stephen Hills	Director of Housing
Maggie Jennings	Democratic Services Officer
Schuyler Newstead	Housing Development & Enabling Manager

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following interests were declared:

Councillor Mark Howell

A non-pecuniary interest as an employee of the Papworth Trust, a charity that includes a Registered Social Landlord.

Councillor Ben Shelton

A non-pecuniary interest as an employee of a letting agent in Cambridge.

20. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

It was brought to the Portfolio Holder's attention that reference to 'Explore Housing Foyer' in the table of service plan priorities, minute 15 refers, was not included in the final service plan and that due to operational circumstances would be delayed.

21. WILFORD FURLONG/BRICKHILLS, WILLINGHAM

The Resident Involvement Team Leader presented the report that sought authority to undertake resident and property surveys on dwellings located at Wilford Furlong/Brickhills, Willingham to begin scoping an estate renewal project.

The Portfolio Holder noted the following:

- All 3 local members, together with the Parish Council supported the proposals
- Residents views would be sought on their likes and dislikes within the area

- In addition to the surveys, local information and resident engagement events would be held
- Owner/occupiers of properties on the site would also be surveyed for their opinions

The Housing Portfolio Holder **APPROVED** the initial steps for the Wilford Furlong/Brickhills Project at Willingham as follows:

- (a) To undertake a more in-depth survey of residents about where they live and how they feel about their home and current surroundings,
- (b) Re-survey all our 82 tenanted homes for consistent Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)¹ and Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings and asset information work with Saunders Boston, Architects to plan Open Days / Planning for real days to explore options with residents,
- (c) Approach the scheme as an infill re-generation and renewal scheme; giving better neighbourhoods to existing residents and added value of additional homes to let, and
- (d) Explore the option of an additional new build site in the locality.

22. REPAIR AND REFURBISHMENT OF COUNCIL HOUSES OF NON-TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION

In presenting the report seeking authority for the adoption of a strategy to deal with the long term maintenance needs of homes owned by the Council built using non-traditional methods, the Head of Housing and Property Services reiterated the contents of the report. In particular the Portfolio Holder was informed that, subject to approval of the strategy, the focus would be on Airey properties and Hauxley bungalows. Residents of the Airey properties would be required to vacate the dwellings whilst remedial work was being carried out.

Following discussion, the following comments were made:

- Selling some of the properties in line with the Council's Asset Management Strategy would not be the preferred route. Consideration would be given to the preferences of proposed tenants
- Concern was expressed about the financial cost of the proposed refurbishment. It was noted that it was more financially viable to refurbish than purchase new property, although properties that required substantial improvement may be sold or re-built. The financial element of the costs involved overall had been reflected in the recently approved Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.
- It was anticipated that savings relating to responsive repairs would be made

The Housing Portfolio Holder requested that regular updates on this project be given to future meetings and **APPROVED** the Non-Traditional Construction Strategy as appended to the covering report.

¹ The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the methodology used by the Government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings. Its purpose is to provide accurate and reliable assessments of dwelling energy performances that are needed to underpin energy and environmental policy initiatives.

23. COUNCIL HOUSING - NEW BUILD STRATEGY UPDATE

The Head of Housing Strategy and Development updated the Portfolio Holder on the current status of the New Build Programme and Action Plan, attached as appendices to the report; these were:

New Build

- **Linton** completed
- **Foxton** due to commence Autumn 2014
- **Gamlingay** number of units may be increased with a commence time of Spring 2015
- **Bourn** due to commence Spring 2015
- **Willingham** to be confirmed
- **Northstowe** to be confirmed

Action Plan

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Appoint external design team | completed |
| • Identify Risk Log | completed, updated and to be presented to Corporate Governance Committee |
| • Agree a set of parameters | staff training completed |
| • Quality Standards Charter | completed |
| • Asset Management Policy | completed |
| • Equity Share delivery | progressing |
| • New build target | as per the above and Action Plan |
| • Development Opportunities (SCDC land) | on course |
| • Development Opportunities (elsewhere) | negotiations have been initiated |
| • Monitoring New Build Strategy | will be reported to Portfolio Holder meeting in December 2014 |

The Housing Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the contents of the report and the information provided above.

24. UPDATE ON THE PROVISION OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

The Portfolio Holder, having been informed that the units at Robson Court, Waterbeach would be managed by Sanctuary housing, **NOTED** the report containing an update on the provision of temporary accommodation within the District.

25. SERVICE PLAN 2014-15

The draft Affordable Homes Service Plan was presented to the Portfolio Holder with the following points particularly highlighted:

- The Corporate long-term vision and aims
- Housing service objectives
- Eleven projects were scheduled within the plan period
- Project scoring and securing resources

- Value for Money
- Mitigating risk
- Inter-dependency links showing involvement of other services
- The Project Plan showed how the individual projects would be managed
- Regular updates would be given to the Portfolio Holder
- The Service Plan was a 'live' document and may be subject to change

The Portfolio Holder requested that the Tenant Participation Group and Youth Council be involved in the review of the Mears Contract.

In conclusion, the Portfolio Holder expressed his thanks to Julie Fletcher, Housing Performance Improvement Team Leader and Grace Andrews, Data Quality Officer for the innovative way in which the Service Plan was presented; the template could be adapted for use in all the Council's future Service Plans.

The Housing Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the contents of the Service Plan.

26. TENANT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Wendy Head, Chairman of the Tenant Participating Group (TPG) addressed the Portfolio Holder informing him that the Group had had 3 learning sessions relating to IT including the use of Excel and Word and were involved in officer interviews relating to the Estate Inspection project, due to be considered by the Portfolio Holder at his meeting in October 2014. An invitation to attend the next meeting of the TPG on Monday 7 April was extended to all those present.

The Portfolio Holder expressed his delight at the level of tenant involvement within the District in comparison with other councils.

Callum Hatch, Youth Councillor informed the Portfolio Holder that he had attended a meeting of the TPG and had found it both useful and enjoyable.

27. WORK PROGRAMME

An up to date work programme was tabled at the meeting as follows:

Housing Portfolio Holder – Work Programme

Date of Meeting	Title of Report	Key or Non-Key?	Purpose of Report, i.e. for Recommendation/ Decision/ Monitoring
June 2014			
October 2014	Robinson Court, Gamlingay update	Non Key	Decision
	Tenant Scrutiny – Estate Inspection	Non Key	Monitoring

	Gypsy & Traveller Site Enhancement update	Non Key	Monitoring
	Community Impact Strategy	Non Key	Decision
	Older persons housing related support service update	Non Key	Monitoring
	Service Plan	Non Key	Decision
March 2015	Wilford Furlong, Willingham	Key	Decision
	Housing Advice & Options Performance Review	Non Key	Monitoring
	Disabled Adaptations in HRA stock Review	Non Key	Monitoring
	Mears Contract Review	Non Key	Decision
	Estate Inspection update	Non Key	Monitoring
	New Build Strategy Update	Non Key	Monitoring

28. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting of the Housing Portfolio Holder would take place on Wednesday, 18 June 2014 at 5:30pm.

The Meeting ended at 7.03 p.m.
